**New Leadership at Outreach**

With the start of the new year, financial advisor Mike Ashworth has taken over as president of Thermal Belt Outreach Ministry, succeeding Joe Epley who has held that position for the past two years. “Mike brings tremendous leadership and business management abilities needed for a successful non-profit organization the size of Outreach,” Epley said.

Other new officers for 2015 include Betty Ramsey as Vice President, David Scherping as Treasurer and the Reverend Robert Barrows as Secretary. Jeff Harris, pastor of the First Baptist Church of Tryon, is a newly elected member to the Board of Directors.

The officers and new board member were elected at Outreach’s annual meeting in November. Reelected to another three-year term on the 12-member board are Robert Barrows, Ambrose Mills and Betty Ramsey.

Ashworth joined the Outreach board in 2012 and served as Vice President and chair of the development committee last year. A graduate of N.C. State University with a degree in accounting and business management, he moved to Tryon in 2010 as a financial advisor with Wells Fargo Financial Advisors.

Ramsey, president and publisher of the Tryon Daily Bulletin, has been Treasurer of Outreach for the past two years. She also chaired the finance committee. The veteran newspaper executive recently served as head of the association for daily newspapers in North Carolina.

For the past 11 years Scherping has been the Technology/Accountability Director for Polk County Schools. He joined the Outreach board in 2014 and serves as chair of the technology committee. He has a degree in education from Illinois State University.

The senior pastor for the Congregational Church in Tryon, Barrows has served on the Outreach board for three years, the past year as chair of the personnel committee. He has a Bachelors’ degree from Wake Forest University, Master of Divinity from Duke University and a Doctorate of Ministry from Drew University.

As he rotated from his officer position, past-president Epley said, “The commitment by the new officers and all of our Board of Directors to Outreach’s mission is inspirational. It has been an honor to work with them. I marvel at the skills and dedication they have exhibited in making Outreach more effective and efficient in serving people in need.”

Outreach is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization founded in 1991. The organization's mission is to provide compassionate assistance to Polk County residents who are unable to provide for their basic life needs. For more information on Outreach, please visit www.tboutreach.org or call 828.894.2988.