

# BLUE RIDGE CHRISTIAN NEWS

## Thanks for Remembering Me!

Smoky Ridge Health & Rehabilitation

Yancey County Hospice

### It Takes a Village...

By Heather Steuer  
Yancey County

We are all familiar with the age-old adage "it takes a village". Automatically we think of this proverb in terms of raising children and the benefit of community rallying around our youth to love, support and teach them. We know the importance of agreeing upon a team approach, which influences character, quality of life and a sense of worth in our young people. These principles are so important and should always be a way of life. That being said, it seems that there is a certain portion of our population that could and should benefit from those very same principles... Our Elderly.

I have worked with and for the elderly for most of my career. I have had the honor on many occasions to sit with 90 year old women and just listen. I listen as they share their life stories. I listen to all that is and has been important to them. They share their accomplishments, the people that they love and the life challenges that have brought them sorrow. As they recount their life stories the validation is evident and the joy that comes forth is recognizable. In one small act, just listening, they are blessed and so am I. Their life story now, not only matters to them; it now matters to me too. We have just had an exchange woman to woman, not 90 year old to 40 year old. You see, she has been me and one day I will be her. I am reminded I will need someone to listen to my story and remind me that I matter. I will need someone to overlook my wrinkles and declining health and remind me that I was, I am so much more than my appearance, age and health condition.

Let's remember to always be the village. Let's look for opportunities to love on our children and our seniors. Let's remember how important it is to talk and teach our children to listen and learn from our elders. Let's take the time to pay attention to our elderly family members, church members and neighbors and find ways to serve and honor them. They so desperately need and deserve it. We will all come to a space in time when we will need our village, let's make sure that while we have the ability to, we do it well. Always remembering we belong to each other.

~ Blessings

*I have worked in health care for 16 years, 10 as an LPN and the last 6 years in community relations.*



### "Holiday Grief"

By Jacob Willis  
Yancey County

The Holidays are depicted as happy times of family and friends gathering around the table to celebrate life and faith. This depiction is true for some people as they are healthy, close to relatives, and gainfully employed. Holidays can be a different story for some people, however. Many people spend the holidays alone. This time is particularly difficult for elderly people who live alone. Many of them rely on public transportation, meals on wheels, senior centers, and neighbors for food and support. Their lives are made better by these services. During the holidays, many of these services aren't available. Many of our local seniors are left without meals, or any way to get out of the house. Many seniors in nursing facilities miss their homes the most during the holidays. The memories we all celebrate can haunt them. Many seniors sadly are abandoned by their families, or they outlive their families. Thanksgiving and Christmas are holidays that many elderly people spend alone and hungry. What can we do during this time, and all year, to honor those who have given so much to us? First of all, we can open our eyes and hearts to see a need. Many times during the holidays we can focus on our families, food, and presents. Getting all of this together can be overwhelming. During this time it is really important to remember the "Reason for the Season". Jesus came to serve the marginalized people of this world. This season is about giving, loving, and sacrifice. I think it is important to remind our children that people who are less fortunate are our responsibility. We have a responsibility to care for those who cared for us. We have a calling to minister to those who are hungry, imprisoned, sick, and homeless. We are called to do this not only at Christmas and Thanksgiving, but all year long. If you choose to volunteer serving food to the homeless, prisoners, or shut-ins, it will open your eyes to the great need in our world. Delivering gifts to the nursing home and spending time with them enhances our lives beyond measure. In giving we receive. People need someone to love them. They need someone to care about them regardless of what they have done or been. Secondly, we can identify people in our own community that have needs. We can visit them, identify their need, and make them our adopted family. We need to make our churches aware of the needs

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*"How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace: that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation: that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!"*

Isaiah 52:7 KJV



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# Church Directory

## Altapass Baptist Church

3631 Altapass Hwy  
Spruce Pine, NC  
828-765-0660  
altapassbaptistchurch@ccvn.com  
www.altapassbaptistchurch.org

**Dr. Marcus R. Benfield**

Sunday School - 10:00am  
Worship - 11:00am  
Sunday Evening - 7:00pm  
Sunday Youth Program - 7:00pm  
1st & 3rd Sunday  
(Conductors for Christ ages 5-11)  
2nd & 4th Sunday  
(Teen Discovery ages 12-18)  
Wednesday - 7:00pm

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Bible Believing Church"

## Spruce Pine United Methodist Church

11090 Hwy. 226 South  
Spruce Pine, NC 28777  
www.sprucepineumc.org  
spumc3@bellsouth.net  
828-765-7446

**Pastor Rev. Jeremy Troxler**

Sunday School - 10:00am  
Sunday Worship - 11:00am  
Choir Wednesday - 7:00pm

The mission of Spruce Pine United Methodist Church is to be a beacon on a hill spreading the Good News of Jesus Christ through: Worship, Fellowship, Education, and Nurturing Service

## Pine Branch Baptist Church

48 Church Road  
Spruce Pine, NC 28777  
Phone: (828) 765-9101  
www.pinebranchbaptist.net

**Reverend Bobby Joe Greene**

Sunday School • 9:45-10:40am  
Worship Service • 10:45am  
Sunday Evening • 6:30pm

A Bible-believing Fellowship  
Loving God and Loving People

## The Bridge Church of WNC

207 Pinebridge Avenue  
Spruce Pine, NC 28777  
TBCWNC.org

**Pastors - Tom & Tammy Anglin**

Sunday Service 10:30AM  
Wednesday Service 7:00PM  
Church Office M-F  
9:00AM-3:00PM

Our passion is to help connect the Body of Christ in this area in order to see the Fire of God transform our community, state, nation and world! (See John 17:21)

## Berry Chapel Baptist Church

280 Chapel St.  
Spruce Pine, NC 28777  
828-765-6590  
www.berrychapelbaptist.com

**Pastor - Steve Williams**

Sunday School 9:45 AM  
Worship Service 11:00 AM  
Sunday Evening Care Meal/  
Ministry - 5:30 PM  
Wednesday Evening  
Service 7:00 PM

Where Everybody is Somebody  
And Jesus Christ is Lord!

## First Advent Christian Church

211 Lenoir Road  
Morganton, NC 28655  
828-437-8206  
www.fccmorganton.org

**Pastor Patrick Bradshaw  
Associate Pastor Javier  
Guzman**

pbradshawfccmorganton@gmail.com

Sunday School 10:00 AM  
Sunday Worship 11:00 AM  
Wed: Youth Meal 5:30PM -  
Meeting 6:30PM  
Adult Bible Study/Prayer 6:30PM  
Choir Practice 7:15PM  
Sat. Band Practice 4:30PM

Preaching Christ Crucified, Risen  
and Coming Again!

## Morganton Seventh-day Adventist Church

2187 Jamestown Road  
Morganton, NC  
828-684-8212

**Pastor Rick Mercer**

Sabbath (Saturday)  
Bible Study - 9:30 am  
Sabbath Worship - 11:00 am  
Vegetarian Buffet after church  
Wednesday  
Praise, Prayer & Proclaim -  
7:00 pm  
www.morgantonsda.org

## Pleasant Grove Church of the Brethren

1717 Harrell Hill Road  
Bakersville, NC  
(828)-458-1947

**Pastor: John Smith**

Sunday School - 10:00 am  
Worship - 11:00 am

We are a small, Christ-centered family of believers and would love to share God's Word and love with you and yours!

## Horizon Church

500 East Fleming Drive  
Morganton, NC  
828-437-1212

**Pastors: Senior Pastor  
Timothy Fortune &  
Associate Pastor Mike Stroud**

Sunday Worship 10:30 AM  
Wednesday 6:30PM

www.myhorizonchurch.org  
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## Grassy Creek Baptist Church

793 Old NC 226 Hwy  
Spruce Pine, NC  
828-765-4620  
www.grassycreekbc.org

Sunday School 10:00am  
Morning Worship 11:00am  
Sunday evening 6:30pm  
Wednesday:  
J.A.M. (Jesus and Me) 7:00pm  
Seekers (young adults) 7:00pm  
Mid-week worship 7:00pm  
"That Mitchell County  
may know Christ"

## Banner Elk United Methodist Church

486 College Dr.  
Banner Elk, NC  
(828) 963-6640

**Reverend Dan Brubaker**

Sunday School - 10:00 am  
Contemporary Service - 9:40 am  
Traditional Worship Service - 11:00 am  
AA Open Step Meeting - Mon. 7 pm  
AA Closed Big Book Meeting - Wed. 7pm  
UMW & UMM Meeting - 2nd Sat. 10:00 am  
English Classes - Tues. & Thurs. 6 - 9 pm

## Roan Mountain Missionary Baptist Church

37 Sandy Branch Road  
P.O. Box 668  
Bakersville NC 28705

**Pastor: Dr. C. Timothy Fowler**

Sunday School - 10:00  
Worship Service - 11:00  
Sunday Evening - 6:30  
Wednesday Bible Study - 7:00

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### O Holy Night

O holy night the stars are brightly shining  
It is the night of our dear Savior's birth  
Long lay the world in sin and error pining  
Till He appeared and the soul felt its worth  
A thrill of hope the weary world rejoices  
For yonder breaks a new glorious morn  
Fall on your knees  
O hear the angels' voices  
O night divine  
O night when Christ was born  
O night divine o night  
O night divine  
A thrill of hope the weary world rejoices  
For yonder breaks a new glorious morn  
Fall on your knees  
O hear the angels' voices  
O night divine  
O night when Christ was born  
O night divine o night  
O night divine  
Ooh yes it was  
Ooh it is the night of our dear Savior's birth  
Oh yeah, oh yeah, oh yeah, yeah  
It was a holy holy holy, oh oh oh

Songwriters: Adolphe Adams, John Sullivan Dwight



# Church Directory

## Plumtree Presbyterian Church

4527 Hwy 19E  
Plumtree, NC 28664  
828-765-6919  
www.plumtreechurch.com

**Pastor Ryan Bridgeo**  
pastor@plumtreechurch.com

Sunday School 9:45 am  
Worship Service 11:00 am  
Life Groups Tuesday-Thursday evenings, 7:30 pm  
Fusion Youth Wednesday's, 6:30 pm  
Healing Services 2nd Sunday of each month, 8:30 pm

John 15:16 You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit—fruit that will last. Then the Father will give you whatever you ask in my name.

## Bear Creek Baptist Church

327 Bear Creek Road  
Bakersville, NC 28705  
www.bearcreekbaptist.com

**Reverend Bruce Cannon**

Sunday School 9:45 AM  
Worship Service 10:45 AM  
Discipleship 6:00 PM  
Evening Worship 6:45 PM  
Wednesday Worship 7:30 PM

"For God so loved the world, he gave his only Son..."

## West Burnsville Baptist Church SB

222 West Burnsville Church Rd.  
Burnsville, NC 28714  
(828)-682-3990

Sunday School: 9:45 a.m.  
Morning Service: 10:50 a.m.  
Evening Service: 6:00 p.m.  
Wednesday Service 6:30 p.m.

Church vision: To become passionate followers and servants of Jesus Christ while ministering to the spiritual and physical needs of our church and community.

## Burkemont Baptist Church

4668 Burkemont Rd.  
Morganton, NC 28655  
828-437-2357

For more information,  
please visit  
www.burkemontbaptist.org

**Dr. David Mills, Sr. Pastor**

8:30am - Early Worship  
9:45am - Sunday School  
11:00am - Worship  
6:00pm - Evening Worship

## St. Lucien's Catholic Church

503 Summit Street  
Spruce Pine, NC 28777  
Phone (828) 765-2224

Sunday Mass 9:00 am  
Wednesday Faith Formation  
6:00 pm

## First Baptist Church of Spruce Pine

125 Tappan Street  
Spruce Pine, NC 28777  
828-765-9411  
www.sprucepinefbc.com  
www.sprucepinefbc.blogspot.com

**Dr. Rocky Branch**  
Senior Pastor

Sunday School - 9:45 am  
Sunday Worship - 8:30 and 11:00 am  
Sunday Evening - 6:00 pm  
Wednesday Evening - 6:30 pm

Knowing God, Seeing God, Serving God, Submitting to God!

## Burnsville Seventh-day Adventist Church

283 Crest View Road  
Burnsville, NC  
828-682-7476

**Pastor Ed Couser**

Sabbath (Saturday)  
Pot Luck Lunch every Sabbath  
after the sermon for everyone  
Bible Study - 9:30 AM  
Sabbath Worship - 11:00 AM  
Tuesday Upper Room  
Fellowship (Prayer Meeting) Wed.-6pm

## Faith Fellowship Church

Champ Ray Rd.  
Micaville, NC 28755  
(828)-675-9284  
www.ficn.org  
www.ficnradio.org

**Pastor: David Gillespie**

Sunday School - 10:00 am  
Worship Service - 10:45 am  
Wednesday Bible Study - 7:00pm  
"The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord:  
And he delighteth in his way."  
Psalm 37:23

## Bakersville United Methodist Church

119 S. Mitchell Avenue  
Bakersville, NC 28705  
828-765-9015

**Pastors -**  
**Dr. Louis H. Woodard, &**  
**Rev. Gene Lanier**

Sunday School 11:00 AM  
Morning Worship 10:00 AM

"Come grow with us"



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## Yancey County Hospice

*continued from page 1*

of others and challenge them to reach out and help. If we look in our communities; it may surprise us with what we see. Taking action speaks louder than words. Preach the gospel everywhere and when necessary use words. Finally, we need to develop meaningful relationships with elderly people. As we get older our priorities in life changes. When you are young climbing up the ladder of success seems to be very important. When you are older relationships are the most important aspect of life. Working with Hospice is not only about a patient's physical needs, but emotional, socio-economic, and spiritual needs. We provide comfort and family to our patients regardless of circumstance or ability to pay. Our clients become a part of the Hospice family. Many of them have no other family present in their lives. Many times after being placed on hospice our patient's lives improve. Seniors need companionship and community. They have much to share when it comes to life experiences and love. If you choose to make them a part of your life, you will certainly receive more than you give. Our challenge during the Holidays is not to buy our kids all they want, or cook the best meal, nor is it to have the best decorated house, it is to be Jesus to marginalized people. If we can make people's lives better, we are sharing.

Jacob Willis is an ordained pastor and Bereavement Coordinator for Yancey County Hospice. You may contact him at [jacobw@hospiceofyancey.org](mailto:jacobw@hospiceofyancey.org).



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## Snow Hill Baptist Church

### No Regrets Family—Miracles – Do They Really Happen?

By Pastor Dean Honeycutt  
Mitchell County



Melissa and I were walking in Marion Square looking at the Christmas lights on the palm trees in Charleston, South Carolina. My mind was at ease and we were taking a break between hospital visits where my mom had undergone a radical 12-hour tongue cancer surgery at the University Medical Center. We received a dreaded phone call that explained my mom's Flap (artificial tongue) was dying and she needed emergency surgery once again. My heart sank we began to cry because Mom had been through so much already. The flap was a piece of tissue they had removed from her thigh and attached it to the bottom of her throat simply for cosmetic reasons. During the first surgery Mom's tongue was removed revealing a cancer tumor the size of an orange. Leeches had been placed around her mouth and attached to the flap to draw blood to the front of the flap to keep the tissue and blood vessels alive. Mom was severed from ear to ear and her jaw had been sawed in two to allow the surgeons to do what needed to be done. She was stapled back together and I had never seen anything like that before. Now Mom was being rushed back in to surgery to remove the dead flap.

The flap was removed and she was recovering once again. I know Mom was nervous and scared but she did not know at this time what had been done. After a while she realized that she did not have a tongue. We were told that she would never talk again. In other word, medically speaking it is very difficult if not impossible to talk without a tongue, and there is nothing that doctors can do to make an artificial tongue work the way a natural tongue does. On top of all this Mom was living on a feeding tube and had been for a year. She would never again take anything by mouth; she would never drink anything or eat any food.

We began to make plans on how to care for her, and how to communicate with her. I will never forget there was one intensive care nurse who was not very pleasant to mom. Mom would try to communicate with her but this one nurse would not even try to understand what she was saying. We got Mom a dry erase board and she would write down what she wanted to say or ask. My heart was broken because she loved to talk and I would never hear her voice again.

Mom would write "I do not mind not being able to eat, but I pray I can talk again." One time she was trying to do something at our house and she could not fix the problem and Pam said before thinking, "You are not holding your tongue right." We all got a big laugh out of that one. You never know how much you miss something until it is gone. Things we take for granted like walking, holding, eating, or even talking. Mom never gave up that she said she would talk again. And she prayed about it.

Christmas was at my house that year and I will never forget Mom was sitting on the couch and my sister said Mom had something she wanted to share with us. Alright what is it as we all gathered round as she still had her dry erase board. Mom spoke "Merry Christmas". We were all amazed I had just witnessed a miracle of God. I could not believe what I had just heard, something I thought I would never hear. Come to find out just a week or so before our gathering, Mom had spoken her first words to my brother in law. And as she explained the words just came out. God had answered her prayers.

Mom still lives on a feeding tube, but she will tell you she does not want her tongue back because she talks more about Jesus without a tongue than she ever did with one. I have experienced two genuine miracles in my life and both were with my parents. Doctors have recorded my mom talking and are amazed at the viability of her life.

I consider my salvation a miracle; it is medically and scientifically unexplainable how Jesus Christ lives in me and has transformed my life. I have eternal life because God sustains all of life. Eric Metaxas describes "the essential meaning of miracles, then, is to point us to the God behind the miracles. What makes it a miracle is that God performed it specifically to make himself known, to communicate with us." (Miracles, Eric Metaxas, 21)

Would you consider that the Virgin birth of Jesus Christ is a miracle? That God through the Virgin Mary conceived of the Holy Ghost would birth His only Son into the world for you. That baby Jesus wrapped in grave clothes would die on a cross for you. That night when Jesus was born God spoke, "Merry Christmas."

God Bless you and Merry Christmas from our family to yours,

*Pastor Dean Honeycutt shepherds Snow Hill Baptist Church in Bakersville, NC. He may be reached at 828-385-0213, [snowhillbaptist@gmail.com](mailto:snowhillbaptist@gmail.com), or visit their website at [www.snowhillbaptist.com](http://www.snowhillbaptist.com).*



*These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world. John 16:33*



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Pray for Our Nation  
By Franklin Graham

Dear Friend,

God is never surprised. The election of Donald Trump shocked the pundits and Washington elite and even surprised some of the candidate's own voters—but it is God who cleared the way for him, whether he fully realizes that or not. That's because, whichever person had been elected, the rise and fall of a nation's leaders happens under the sovereignty of God, who is often working in larger ways and with a longer perspective than we can know. The Bible says, "Wisdom and might are His. And He changes the times and the seasons; He removes kings and raises up kings" (Daniel 2:20-21, NKJV).

No one should think that electing Donald Trump will fix our country. America is still a sin-saturated and divided nation, and Trump himself is a leader with human flaws. Elections matter, and this one will have lasting consequences, but only God can heal and restore a nation—and that comes through committed, faithful prayer.

When the people of Israel asked for a king after centuries without one, God gave them one. But the Prophet Samuel reminded the people that ultimately, they did not choose their national leaders: "Take note, the Lord has set a king over you" (1 Samuel 12:13). The new king was inexperienced in governing, and God made no promise that things would automatically turn out well for either the new king or the nation. Instead, Samuel presented the people with God's pathway to success, placing responsibility on both the people and their leader.

"If you will fear the Lord and serve him and obey his voice and not rebel against the commandment of the Lord, and if both you and the king who reigns over you will follow the Lord your God, it will be well. But if you will not obey the voice of the Lord, ... then the hand of the Lord will be against you and your king" (1 Samuel 12:14-15, ESV).

After anointing the newly chosen ruler, Samuel made a personal commitment to his nation, the king, and the people. I hope you take his words personally to heart for our own country today:

"As for me, far be it from me that I should sin against the Lord by ceasing to pray for you" (1 Samuel 12:23).

Will you make that same commitment to pray?

During the tumultuous national election of 1860, America was in political chaos. The man who emerged to become the next president had very limited Washington experience, was considered uncouth by a significant part of the electorate, and won the election without a majority of the popular vote. Abraham Lincoln became one of our most effective presidents, and several years into his presidency a well-known pastor in New York pinpointed the reason: "The prayers of God's people made President Lincoln what he was to the nation."

Donald Trump is, of course, a far different man than Lincoln, and the conflicts and issues in our country today are entirely different than in 1860. But we know that God can use any leader. We as God's people can have a huge impact if we take our responsibility seriously and are diligent "always to pray and not lose heart" (Luke 18:1). Will you personally be part of that? Ask God to use this man He has allowed to be put in place, despite human shortcomings, to further His great purposes in the nation and the world. And pray also for the incoming vice president, Mike Pence, a man of faith who said he was "grateful to God for His amazing grace" in his speech right after the election.

The one sure path to national restoration is through repentance. The Bible says, "Repent therefore, and turn back, that your sins may be blotted out, that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord" (Acts 3:19-20). Pray for America. Only the Gospel of Jesus Christ has the power to change hearts, across our nation or anywhere in the world.

In the new year, I look forward to preaching the life-changing message of the Gospel at evangelistic events in cities like San Juan, Puerto Rico; Vancouver, Canada; and Oslo, Norway. I am also looking forward to preaching the Good News of Jesus Christ during multi-city tours in the U.S., starting in two states, Tennessee and Texas. I will tell you more about these tours soon. Our associate evangelists, including Robert Cunville and my son Will Graham, are scheduled to lead Crusade events in two dozen other cities in India, Thailand, Mexico, Canada, and the U.S. Pray that God will open hearts to the Savior in each place.

So far this year, more than 1.3 million people across America and around the world have told us they made a life-changing decision for Christ as a result of God working through the ministry of the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association. We thank Him and give Him the glory! As we press forward to the end of this year and into the next, we are grateful to you for your continuing partnership with us through your prayers and gifts.

May God richly bless you.

*Reverend Franklin Graham is President and CEO of the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association and of Samaritan's Purse, an international Christian relief organization.*



Sixteenth Annual Christmas Pageant  
By Wanda Harding  
Yancey County

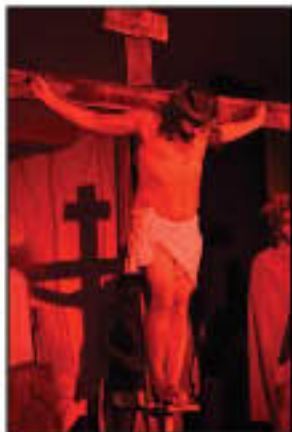
**Jesus - His Story**

We invite you to begin your Christmas season this year with a celebration of the life of Christ through drama and music at West Burnsville Baptist Church. Thrill to the proclamation of the angels that Jesus is born. Marvel at his ministry as the blind see and the lame walk. Mourn with Mary and his disciples as Jesus is crucified and rejoice with them as they discover that He is alive! His story does not end there but proclaims the promise of life everlasting in our heavenly home.

The Pageant opens on Wednesday, November 30 at 7 PM, continues Thursday, December 1 and Saturday, December 3 at 7 PM and concludes on Sunday, December 4 at 3 PM. West Burnsville Baptist Church is located one mile west of Burnsville town square, just off US 19E on West Burnsville Church Road. Seating is available forty-five minutes before the performance.

Reservations for groups of six or more may be made by calling 828-675-4729 or 828-682-3990. While there is no admission charge, your love offering is gratefully accepted.

Sixteenth Annual West Burnsville Baptist Church Christmas Pageant  
Jesus - His Story



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*Wanda Harding is pianist at West Burnsville and has been part of the creative team that produces the pageant since its inception.*

*And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid.*  
Luke 2:8-14

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## Getting the Life You Truly Desire

By Joyce Meyer

I have made it a priority to study about love in the Word of God. Getting a revelation about how much God loves me and learning to receive His love has been life-changing for me. It's been the key to being able to really enjoy my life because when I received God's love, then I could love others. And I've discovered that the best way—the only way—you can have a happy, powerful life is to get your mind off yourself and do something for someone else. Helping people, being a blessing and adding value to other people's lives is what it means to walk in love and follow the example of Jesus.

Ephesians 5:2 (AMPC) says, "Walk in love, [esteeming and delighting in one another] as Christ loved us and gave Himself up for us, a slain offering and sacrifice to God...." The NLT says to "live a life filled with love, following the example of Christ. He loved us and offered himself as a sacrifice for us...." Jesus—our perfect and holy Savior—gave His life for us, took all of our sin upon Himself, and shed His blood so we could have a personal relationship with Him and become the righteousness of God. That was His gift to us. Once we experience the gift of salvation, our gift to God is how we live our lives.

Jesus says in John 13:34 (AMPC), "I give you a new commandment: that you should love one another. Just as I have loved you, so you too should love one another." If we will learn how to follow this one commandment, everything else in our lives will fall into place. Because everything we need to be and do to follow Jesus' example is covered when we live a life filled with God's love.

Be a Good Samaritan

In Luke chapter 10, Jesus tells the story of the Good Samaritan to demonstrate what it means to love God and your neighbor as yourself. In verses 30-37, we read that a man was traveling from Jerusalem down to Jericho when "he fell among robbers, who stripped him of his clothes and belongings and beat him and went their way, [unconcerned] leaving him half dead" (AMPC).

A priest and a Levite both passed by him and neither stopped to help. Verse 33 says, "But a certain Samaritan, as he traveled along, came down to where he was; and when he saw him, he was moved with pity and sympathy [for him]" (AMPC). Notice that he "was moved with pity and sympathy" for this man. He had compassion for him and was moved to do something to help him.

He dressed his wounds and took him to an inn where he could get the care he needed. He paid the innkeeper and told him, "Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, I [myself] will repay you when I return" (v35, AMPC).

There are a few things I want you to notice here. First, the Samaritan was traveling the road and was probably going somewhere he needed to be; he had a plan but he was willing to stop and help this man even if it meant his plan was interrupted. Also, he gave his best effort to make sure the man had good care and then paid for him to get it. He was obviously willing to pay whatever it was going to cost because he told the innkeeper, "Whatever more you spend, I [myself] will repay you when I return." So he was planning to come back and make sure everything the man needed was covered.

This Is Love!

Jesus is showing us in this story what real love looks like. And 1 Corinthians 13 lists the characteristics of God's love: it is patient and kind, never envious, boastful or inflated with pride; it is not rude, does not insist on its own rights or its own way; it is not self-seeking, touchy or resentful; it takes no account of the evil done to it and rejoices when right and truth prevail; love bears up under anything that comes and is ever ready to believe the best of every person; its hopes are fadeless under all circumstances...love never fails!

Now, if you're thinking, "There's no way I can live up to this list!" I want to tell you, "Yes, you can!" You can love others like this because as a born-again Christian, you have everything you need to be like Jesus. It's not always easy because we have to resist the temptation to be selfish, but 1 John 4:4 says that the Spirit of God in us is greater than our enemy. So in Christ, we have the power we need to walk by faith and live a life of love.

It's important to understand that God is not expecting you to be perfect in your love walk or to do it alone. He knows you can't do it without His help. What He wants is for you to seek Him through prayer and studying the Word, and as you do, lean on Him for the grace to do what He's asking you to do each day. He is love, so you can rest in the truth that He is patient with you, He's always with you, He believes in you and will not give up on you. And with God's love in your life, you can learn how to live a life of love!

Joyce Meyer is a New York Times bestselling author and founder of Joyce Meyer Ministries, Inc. She has authored more than 100 books, including *Battlefield of the Mind* and *Overload: How to Unplug, Unwind and Unleash Yourself from the Pressure of Stress* (Hachette). She hosts the *Enjoying Everyday Life* radio and TV programs, which air on hundreds of stations worldwide. For more information, visit [www.joycemeyer.org](http://www.joycemeyer.org).



## Haiti: Continued from November Issue

By Reverend George Patton  
Burke County

Once we heard the gun fire, the driver of the Tap Tap (a Haitian cab service) jumped in his truck and we took off. I asked the driver what was happening, he said that the police had started firing on the protesters. Not many people have guns in Haiti, only the criminals and the police. The average person can hardly afford food let alone a gun. We continued down the road to the city of Les Cayes in the south. We paid our fare and got out. By this time it is beginning to get dark and we still have 3 hours to go by motorcycle. I could see a storm coming in the distance, but we all thought that it was going to pass. I asked my other 2 brothers who were with me what they thought. They thought that the storm would miss us as well. We found 3 motorcycle drivers who said they would be willing to take us the 3 hours up the mountain roads to our village for \$50 a piece

which was not a bad price considering the roads we were going to be traveling on. We strapped down our things and headed up the road. We were not but about 40 minutes into the trip when the rain started. It was light at first and we really thought it was going to pass over, but about 30 minutes later the bottom fell out of the sky. It was raining sideways and there was nowhere to take shelter all we could do was to continue on. By this time it had already gotten dark and wouldn't you know it but the motorcycle I was on lost its lights. They just went out. The other 2 motorcycles came on each side of us to try to help us along the way. Once the fog came and we really did have a problem. The road we travel goes through canons and across mountains and rivers. So many times we had to stop because the way got too difficult. I do not think I have ever been more wet and muddy in my life. We had water inside our shoes and of course the motorcycles were kicking up mud along the way. There was one point in the trip one of the drivers pulled over

and said this is going to cost \$10 more per motorcycle or he was going to set us off beside the road. I was already thinking to myself I was going to give them at least \$20 more but because of his rudeness I said ok, I will give you \$10 more per motorcycle. It was quite the journey that night. What usually takes us about 3 hours took us 5 and 1/2 hours. We finally arrived at our pastor's house. He said "Who is there?" I said pastor it is me Pastor George. He said "Pastor. Oh my goodness we did not expect you because of all the rain and the bad roads." I told him how that the devil was really fighting us with the blockade and then also the rain and the driver threatening to put us off on the side of the road, but how that the Lord finally got us here. I really understand now why the devil fought us so much. In those 3 days that we were there we saw 2 people commit their life to Christ and had the largest pastor's conference we have ever had up in those mountains before. Over 70 pastors came from all over the mountains to the conference. Some of those pastors left their area at 6 am to get to a 10 am pastor conference. I praise the Lord for the hunger we are seeing around the world. I am excited about getting back out on the trail. Please continue to pray for us. We will be in Africa December 7 to March 14. We have 7 countries in which we are going training pastors and doing evangelistic crusades. God is so awesome!!

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Tap Tap



Pastor's House



Muddy Road



Muddy Road

George Patton is an evangelist/missionary to the world from Grace Baptist Church in Morganton.



Honoring Our Parents

By Doug Harrell

Exodus 20:12 Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.

This Commandment is the only one of the Ten Commandments to carry a promise and I truly feel that it means more than just long life here on earth. I think it also means a fulfilled and happy life. This does not mean that everything is going to go smooth, that never happens, but it does lend itself to inner happiness I think.

As I was growing up Dad and I often butted heads on things; we were both very strong willed and opinionated and would sometimes get in some heated arguments. Dad, being Dad, usually won those arguments! I remember one day in the milk house I smarted off big time and the next thing I knew I was lying on the ground outside, having been kicked out the door by Dad's foot. I am sure they would probably put him in jail for that these days but, in reality, it served me right. I don't remember exactly what I said, but I did know that it was not what I should have said.

One of the biggest challenges our society faces today is that we do not have strong, Christian men leading our families and teaching their children how to honor themselves, their mothers, their siblings and their fathers with respect. This leads to a total breakdown of the family structure. God is very clear on how the family needs to be structured and the man is to be the leader in the family. When this happens in a Christian manner with the father taking his wife and children to church; the facts are that 83% of the children will be true to the faith. Our society today sees so many families that the father is absent entirely and the teaching of respect is not there. Many times, we are focusing on helping the children and mothers and that is good, but what about the forgotten dads of the world. We need to be in constant prayer about how the church can reach the forgotten dad that is only a father in a biological sense. The numbers are that if a mother takes the children to church only 18% of the children will remain true to the faith, hence the great divide!

My Dad, A. D. Harrell, was a strong man in a man's world and he taught me at an early age to respect that.

He was not a Bible thumper, but he always took us to church whenever there were services going on at the little church on the hill, Pleasant Grove Church of the Brethren. Many times, over the years we would wash each other's feet at the Lord's Supper. In that church that was part of Communion Service. The only vacation we got to take as children was to get a week off from the dairy during the summer to go to church camp, Camp Carmel, in Linville.

When the man leads, the son will usually follow if the man leads with love. Along with following, the son will learn to honor his father and mother. The father must always strive to be true to the Lord, his wife and his children. One thing Dad always taught was that you, as a man, always treated women, especially your mother, with respect. The wrath of God and Dad would come down on me if I did not show respect for my mother and my sisters. I also taught that to my children. We, as men, must take the responsibility square on our shoulders to teach these principles to each of our children.

Another thing the man should teach is how much fun it is to spend time together doing fun things, not just all work. We worked so hard growing up on the dairy that DSS would probably invoke the child labor laws today, if we did it. Our days started at 4:30 each morning and usually went until about 8:30 in the evening. Dad taught school, coached basketball at Tipton Hill High School, and we ran the dairy along with growing burley tobacco. There was not a lot of time left, but somehow Dad always found time to take us hunting and fishing, we would go on family picnics and do fun stuff. He and Mother were masters at making fun things out of the day to day things that went on. We would go to fields to pick up rocks after the ground was plowed and he and Mother would talk with us about looking for arrowheads; the person that found the most or the best would get some little prize and that kept us interested. Mother was not just a yes person and they both took great pride in the family, and in making sure we were headed down the right path. It takes a man and a woman, working together, to make a family that grows and teaches the children in the admonition of the Lord. The structure that God created is the only one that will ever truly work.

In families, today the respect for the parents too many times is entirely missing; in the holiday season, far too many elderly mothers and fathers are forgotten, and

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Dad and Mom



Teaching me how to have fun.

continued on page 11

Gossiping is dangerous and wrong in God's eyes

Q: A person I work with claims to be a Christian and talks about her church a lot, but she's also one of the worst gossips I've ever met. How can anyone claim to be a Christian and yet be such a nasty gossip? I even doubt if what she says is true. — Mrs. T.W.

A: Only God knows this person's heart, and whether or not her faith in Jesus Christ is real; God alone is her judge. The Bible, however, warns us against "faith" that isn't really faith at all, but is only a shallow pretense or an outward show. The Bible says, "Such a person is double-minded and unstable in all they do" (James 1:8).

But the Bible also clearly tells us that gossiping is wrong, and shouldn't be part of any sincere believer's life. One reason is because its purpose is wrong. You don't gossip about someone to build them up; you do it to belittle them or cast doubt on their character. How many lives have been destroyed by gossip? The Bible wisely says, "Without wood a fire goes out; without gossip a quarrel dies down" (Proverbs 26:20).

But gossip is also wrong in God's eyes because (as you suspect) it's often based on lies. Even if it's based on facts, the temptation to shade the truth is almost overwhelming. The Bible says, "Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up" (Ephesians 4:29).

Don't let this person's bad example keep you from Christ. Instead, open your heart and life to Him, and let Him remake you into the person God created you to be. Then pray for this person, and urge her to face her own need for Christ's forgiveness and love.



Like almost any invention, the internet can be used for good or evil

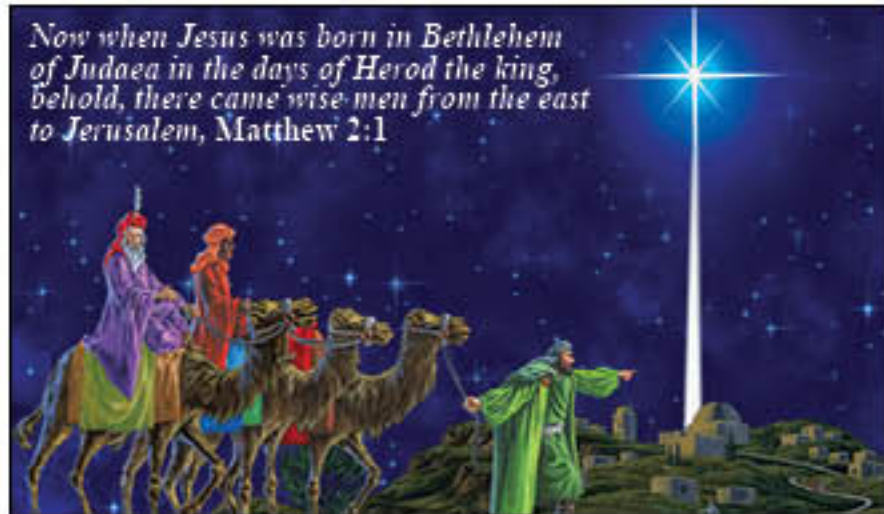
Q: Is the internet a good thing or a bad thing? I accidentally opened a pornography site the other day on my computer, and maybe I'm naïve, but I was shocked at just how terrible the internet can be. It's even made me wonder if the devil is behind it. — Mrs. J.McK.

A: The internet is like almost any other invention: it isn't evil in itself, but it can be used for either good or evil.

In our own ministry, for example, we are using the internet to reach people across the world with the Gospel — and countless men and women (especially young people) are coming to Christ as a result. Some live in parts of the world that have no other Christian witness, and may even forbid the preaching of the Gospel. I can't help but think of Jesus' statement concerning His return: "And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world... and then the end will come" (Matthew 24:14).

At the same time, whenever God begins to act, you can be certain that Satan will do all he can to counterattack. You're right; the widespread use of the internet to promote pornography is appalling — and is a sign of Satan's attempts to turn people away from God. Satan's methods may change — but Satan's goal never changes. His sole purpose is to oppose God in every way he possibly can. Jesus said, "When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies" (John 8:44).

Thank God for every tool He gives us to declare the life-changing message of Jesus Christ to a world that desperately needs Him. And pray that Satan's efforts will be seen for what they are, leading only to corruption and emptiness and death.





Shining a Beautiful Christmas Light on Our Elders

By Barbara Harrell

"Thank you so much for what you do for me". "If it weren't for you I would not be able to be here! Night after night Grandmother tells me this. Sometimes she even has tears in her eyes. Then she reminisces about all the times she has visited or been in nursing homes or retirement homes over her 92 years, and how lost some of these people are.

When we decided to shine a light on our elders in Western North Carolina for this December issue, we wanted to motivate anyone who has family or a long ago friend in a nursing home or long term care facility to remember them at this time of year. Sometimes this is the saddest time of year for many people. People who have no one or has lost loved one can become unhinged at Christmas time.

In working with Grandmother, I have realized these elders have physical needs but even more they have emotional needs. The most prized gift you can give them is to listen as they talk about how it used to be. Time spent listening, touching, and hugging is the ultimate. Even when their mind is not completely there anymore the need is still there. It so reminds me of a story about an old man in the hospital. He was dying and he wanted to see his son one more time. The hospital personnel tell the story of a young marine coming to see him one night and he realized he was dying. He sat with him all night long and in the early morning he died. The nurses were talking to the young man and thanking him for caring enough for his dad to stay by his bedside all night. The young man looked at them with tears in his eyes and told them this man was not his father, but he was someone's father. What if we all had that kind of compassion and made time for these wonderful people in their waning years.

Listen to this wisdom from the Bible:

*Proverbs 23:22*  
*Listen to your father who begot you, And do not despise your mother when she is old.*

*Psalms 71:9*  
*Do not cast me off in the time of old age; Do not forsake me when my strength fails.*

*Deuteronomy 32:7*  
*"Remember the days of old, Consider the years of all generations. Ask your father, and he will inform you, Your elders, and they will tell you.*

*Isaiah 46:4* *And I will still be carrying you when you are old. Your hair will turn gray, and I will still carry you. I made you, and I will carry you to safety.*



I Love You Even Though  
By Barbara Harrell ©

*I can't always remember who you are  
But I love to see you come with your smile  
Sometimes I don't answer appropriately  
When you ask me a question  
But does it matter, when I look at your smile  
I want to tell you about what happened today,  
But my mind keeps going back years ago.  
Can't you see how much I love your hugs  
And when you scratch my back for me.  
I just can't always tell you how I feel.  
I love how you take care of me,  
But please don't move my things.  
They represent my safety and security.  
Won't you come and sit a spell  
Let me tell you stories from the past  
The things that mean so much to me.  
Please remember who I was  
Because I am not sure who I am now.*



Barbara Harrell loving mother, grandmother and great-grandmother. Part owner Blue Ridge Christian News.



### Joining Forces

Amber Dillinger  
Mitchell and Yancey Counties



Healthcare Providers Plan to Partner to Expand Health Access in Yancey County (Bakersville, NC) Bakersville Community Health Center and Celo Health Center are working together to improve access to health care in Yancey county. The plan, recently approved by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), permits Celo Health Center to provide their services under the umbrella of the Bakersville Community Health Center. Celo Health Center will retain its name and location. Current Celo Health Center patients should experience very little in the way of changes to the care they receive. The intent of the merger is to improve access to affordable, comprehensive health services for residents of Yancey and surrounding counties, whether patients have insurance or not.

The merger will increase both organizations' capacity to expand access to services including family medicine, behavioral health, pregnancy care and community education. Access to a discount pharmacy for uninsured patients is anticipated to be added later in 2017. Celo Health Center will continue to accept most insurance plans, including Medicaid and Medicare, and those without insurance will pay on a sliding scale based on family size and household income. The same Celo Health Center providers and office staff will continue after the merger to ensure continuity of care for patients.

Celo Health Center will be able to continue its mission of promoting and enhancing the health of the people of Yancey and surrounding counties, but will be adding much-needed wrap-around and support services, such as care management and behavioral health services to enhance the patient-centered experience at Celo Health Center.

As community-based and patient-directed organizations, Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHC) like Bakersville Community Health Center are well positioned to be responsive to the specific and ever-changing health care needs of their communities. Today, approximately 1400 health centers operate almost 9800 service delivery sites that provide care to over 23 million patients across all 50 states. Celo Health Center is proud to partner with Bakersville Community Health Center because the partnership will result in a healthier Yancey County. The organizations anticipate the Celo Health Center will provide over 12,000 visits to 3,200 patients in the next year.

Bakersville Community Health Center is a nonprofit community health center that has been providing high quality and affordable medical and behavioral health care as well as promoting health awareness and education since 1974. Services are conveniently provided in 2 locations in Mitchell County. For more information, call (828) 688-2104 or visit thebchc.org

Likewise, Celo Health Center is a nonprofit community health center that has been providing high quality and affordable medical care and health education since 1946. Services are provided at their Yancey County location. For more information call (828) 675-4116 or visit celohealthcenter.com.

CONTACT: BCHC - Tammy Hoilman, 828-688-2104  
CHC - Tim Evans, 828-675-4116



Amber Dillinger is the Outreach and Enrollment/Certified Application Counselor at Bakersville Community Health Center



this again is because of the breakdown of respect being taught in the homes. Our school teachers cannot right this, I am sorry to say this but, in many cases, our education system is teaching the very opposite of traditional family values. Our pastors cannot correct this from the pulpit alone, we, the people, must be living our lives as an example to our children, remaining true to our spouses until death do us part and showing our children how to live, not just telling them. As the old saying goes, our actions speak louder than our words.

Some of my favorite times have been spent with Mother and Dad and my wife on hunting trips together in Wisconsin. The bonds that were built have stood the test of time and will always be treasured in my mind. Memories that created lasting respect and honor. There were years that Barbara and I could not afford to make the trip, and Mother and Dad would help with the expenses. Loyalty was developed that went beyond words and, hopefully, Barbara and I have passed and are passing that loyalty along. For the past several years I have been taking sons and grandsons on the same trips we used to take with my parents. Barbara has been gracious enough to stay home and look after my mother who lives with us now and requires 24-7 care. The bond that she and mother have is truly amazing and was formed over all the years of doing things together.

In 1990 Barbara and I decided to sell our business in Burlington, NC and move back home. When we made this decision to come back home to the farm I told Barbara that I was not going to fuss with Dad but was going back to help him and enjoy his and mother's company. For the next 20 years we worked together on the farm, hunted together and worshiped together. I think we had one argument in that 20 years and it did not last but a short time. I always told Dad to do whatever he wanted to do on the farm and if he fell over out on the farm I would pick him up and bring him home. That happened one day right before his 96th birthday and I carried him home, two days later he had gone on to be with the Lord. I promised him shortly before that that I would take care of Mother for as long as she lived, and we are blessed to be doing this. I know circumstances are different in many cases but we as children, parents, grandparents and great grandparents should always strive to honor our fathers and mothers in all that we do or say. Again, this is the only commandment with a promise. Please remember and pay special attention to the elder members of your family this holiday season, they are so special. Merry Christmas to all.

Doug Harrell is a life-long resident of Mitchell County, Owner of Harrell Hill Farms, Inc., a member of Bear Creek Baptist Church and Publisher of the Blue Ridge Christian News.

Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost. Romans 15:13

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Full Circle

By Timothy W. Tron  
Burke County

*"that in the dispensation of the fullness of the times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth—in Him."*  
-Ephesians 1:10



All I can remember was the journey, the trip back in time.  
The farther we traveled, the more mountainous became the terrain until it was obvious we had reached a point high above the tree line. My guide was a younger man whose demeanor evoked a strength no mortal could match, yet, he carried himself in such a manner that I felt more than comfortable in his presence. His clothes were those of an ancient warrior, tunic across his broad, massive chest, with a leather strap around his waist that could have held a broadsword at one time. His hair was long and black blowing in the high-altitude winds lapping at his shoulders. If I didn't know better, I could sense him being something more than human, something of a higher power, yet not willing to use that force unless called upon.



I followed him past large dark foreboding boulders whose shadows gave me a chill and then onward past cliff faces where the depths beyond their fragile edges were bottomless blue vistas of certain death. Yet, as we traveled this pathway of terror, I did not fear for anything as he comforted me in a way his countenance embodied that of an angelic being. Effortlessly up the steep climb we hiked until we rounded a turn in the trail that came upon a cleared but hilly pasture. The ground was punctuated with objects strewn all around us. At a glance, I thought them to be large rocks. In this field stood a woman of later years, dressed as the warrior, in an ancient wardrobe unlike any I'd ever seen. Her age could not contain the inner beauty which shone through the physical years; yet when she spoke, her beauty was matched only by her wisdom. Although she evoked a loveliness, her face was shadowed from the sun so that I could never get a clear view; shrouded as if in secrecy.

My escort introduced me to her and then left us, vanishing before I could thank him for his efforts. The woman then began to explain to me why I was here and what it was we were to do. It was then I realized the rocky cleft of a field was littered not with rocks but with aged tombstones, all wrapped in cloth, as if ready to be shipped away. The lady then explained that we were transporting all of these back to where I had come from, to return them to the present; this was my mission. She explained that we would be loading each of the headstones into a trailer. Then she asked what seemed to me to be an odd question. She wanted to know if I thought we should use a closed trailer, sealed off from the air or if I thought an open trailer, one that could breathe and have air flow through it would be better; for some reason, I chose the latter, unbeknownst to me why. She smiled and agreed that I had chosen well.

There were others there, yet they never became bright enough to shine more than mere shadows. These beings helped us load the heavy stones into the tractor trailer, and when we had finished, I too climbed in. Before I departed in the trailer with the tombstones, the woman spoke to me and said, "You are the first to have come full circle; thus, you've been chosen as their escort back in time," and with that, the trailer was off, flying. The clouds and sky shone below the wire mesh floor upon which I stood, speeding past as we flew. Above me, through the wire mesh ceiling, I could see more sky, filled with deep shades of Prussian blue dotted with the sparkling lights of distant stars. How long we flew and where or if we landed I don't know.

I awoke and turned to look at the clock; too soon, too soon.  
My life has become a passage in time where the clock becomes merely an ob-



servation, not a limitation. To understand it all, or to even attempt to grasp the reality from whence we have come to now is an attempt to grab the wisp of a cloud in the distant sunset; futile. The only thing that belies a steady keel of comfort is the Word and the truth therein.

As fall gently slips into winter, I sip from my mug the bitter, dark brew each morning by the light of the fire and embrace every sentence with reverent awe. Coming full circle in life at times with the voices of those gone on before is the sweetness for my drink.

These are my days as we walk down this new path. Every step another page in the journey.

My paradigm shift has brought me back to so many beginnings that only the recognition of God's hand at work can fathom the innerworkings of this story. Someday, when we are gathered around His throne, we'll be able to understand the how and why. For now, we should not tarry but carry on, His mission for us is yet to be fulfilled.

These and many more blessings are just a few of the things for which we can be thankful this November.

And as always, Thanks, Be to God!

*Timothy W. Tron is the Executive Director of the Waldensian Trail of Faith. He lives in Valdese with his family. He is the author of, "Bruecke to Heaven," and an active blogger, artist and musician. Timothy also has a BSEE from UF, is an Eagle Scout and is Vice President of the Valdese Merchants Assoc. He has been Ordained to perform weddings at the Trail and attends several area churches seeking to serve the Lord every day.*

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What Christmas Is All About

By Rev. John McCoury  
Roan Mountain, Tennessee

To Christians, Christmas will always be for us a time to reflect on Christ. The most wonderful gift God gave to all the world was the gift of His life. We know Christmas is not about tinsel, nor fancy Christmas wreaths, nor is it about all the decorations that adorn our Christmas trees. It's not about holly or mistletoe hanging from our doors, nor is it about the gifts that are left by the jolly Santa Claus. Christmas is more than all of this. It is the only reason why we celebrate Christ's birth together and the wonder of His life; so, remember as you celebrate, just what it's all about and invite the Lord to join with us, instead of leaving Him out, for He will always be the reason we celebrate this day. No substitute the world may offer can take that meaning away.



As Christmas is approaching may we be reminded: let the Christmas presents remind you of God's greatest gift His only begotten Son, the Christmas candles remind you of Him who is the Light of the world. May the Christmas tree remind you of another tree on which He died for you. May the Christmas cheer remind you of Him who said, "Be of good cheer." May the Christmas feast remind you of Him who is the Bread of life. May the Christmas snow remind you of the cleansing power of Christ. May the Christmas bell remind you of the glorious proclamation of his birth. May the Christmas carol remind you of His glad tidings which we proclaim to all mankind. May the Christmas season remind you in every way of Jesus Christ your King. I would like to say to all. Merry Christmas!

John McCoury is pastor of Evergreen church in Roan Mountain, Tennessee and also chaplain at Roan Highlands Nursing Center.



I Have Been Reading A Book

By Timothy Eller  
McDowell County

I have been reading a book by Dr. Henry Cloud "Never Go Back: Ten Things You Will Never Do Again". One of the first chapters talks about never going back to something that has not worked. This is often the area of people's lives that is the most problematic. Often Christian individuals have found themselves within patterns of life and behavior where they become stuck. People cannot seem to find their way out of destructive patterns and habits. Moses and the children of Israel wandered in the desert for 40 years due to a lack of understanding. Solomon said in Proverbs 4:7 "in all your getting get knowledge, wisdom, and understanding." Often I counsel with people who have continually made the same mistakes every single year, and wonder why their life is in a mess. The true path to abundant life takes work. Most Christians desire to have a better life. They do not have an understanding that God will not work in their life unless they are willing to cooperate with him. God is willing to cooperate with us when we are willing to cooperate with him. We need to understand what is dysfunctional and wrong in our thinking that continues to cause us to make wrong decisions which lead to poor choices in life. As we continue to make wrong choices we develop strongholds that will eventually destroy our life. We need to have the "spirit of this world" removed from our eyes so that we may be able to see what God would desire for us to do. Allowing ourselves to become who God desires us to be is the way to have a better life. Becoming a fully mature person in Jesus Christ is the only way that we are able to have the fulfilling, joy filled, life that God wants us to have.

Tim Eller graduated from Carolina Graduate School of Divinity and has been involved in prison and jail ministry for the past fifteen years. Currently he is operating in the capacity of a servant of Jesus Christ.



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## Crossword Solution

H	A	S		I	N	S	I	S	T		O	W	L	S
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## Sudoku Solution

6	1	5	7	2	8	3	9	4
3	2	4	5	9	1	8	6	7
9	8	7	6	4	3	2	5	1
4	9	2	1	8	6	7	3	5
7	6	1	3	5	2	4	8	9
5	3	8	9	7	4	1	2	6
8	4	9	2	1	5	6	7	3
2	7	6	4	3	9	5	1	8
1	5	3	8	6	7	9	4	2

## Can't Buy me Love

By Kurt Bomar  
Avery County

Song of Solomon 8:7 *Many waters cannot quench love; rivers cannot sweep it away. (But) If one were to give all the wealth of one's house for love, it would be utterly scorned.*

Remember back in the 60's when the Beatles (the great philosophers of their day) told us that you just can't buy love?

We all get that and am sure we agree as well.

Why is it then that we try to buy love from God? What I mean is, don't we often think, "The Lord must really love me today because I had my devotions for an hour! I'm really going to be blessed today. After all, I earned it." Perhaps we expect blessings because we did a good deed for some unfortunate person or maybe we just said "no" to a temptation. Conversely, when we sin, we think God doesn't love us as much.

The good news/bad news (depending on how you look at it) is that that kind of love is useless because it is based on your works instead of His grace. Don't try to buy the Lord's love.

Here's the really good news. God loves you just as much when you miss your devotions, you lose your temper, or you fall yet again to a temptation. (I'll prove that later).

So why, some might ask, do we even try to do the right things if it doesn't make a difference? I didn't say it didn't make a difference, I said it won't affect how much God loves you.

All you have to look at to prove this is your relationship with your children. Do you love them any more when they clean their room, do their homework or mow the grass? We don't love our children based upon their works, but rather because they are OUR'S! They can't earn our love, it's already there.

So why should they mow the grass or help with the dishes? In a healthy relationship, it's because of appreciation. They love their parents and they want to please them and spend time with them.

The blessing of daily devotions and good works is that WE are changed by it. We get a clearer understanding of the depth of the love that our Lord has for us and we just want to be around Him all the more.

Paul said it so clearly: Rom 8:38 *For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, 39 neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

I can't earn that kind of love, but I sure like basking in it.

Selah (think about it)

Kurt Bomar is pastor of Walnut Grove Presbyterian Church.

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The Rest of the Story

By Farmer Doug

This story brings many things to mind today. We were producing 300-400 gallons of pure sorghum syrup molasses when Farmer Clint was writing this story and this past year we only produced 140 gallons. The spring weather just did not agree with plant germination so we never got a good stand of sorghum. The process had changed from using a tobacco hatchet to a John Deere corn binder so we had an easier time with the harvesting. Clint would have enjoyed watching that process, but it would never have done to let him run the machine! As I have matured more, I personally realize that some of the things that have taken place on the farm must change with my physical ability to do the manual labor that Clint never enjoyed, but was always so willing to try and do.

The Christmas trees are another facet that has changed dramatically with this harvest that we just finished this past week. We started growing Christmas trees on Harrell Hill Farms in 1978. That folks, was a long time ago. When Clint was helping me shear the trees, we had 50-60,000 trees on the farm to take care of. He actually sheared 5 trees while I sheared two full rows of trees. We started in two rows together and I went to the end of my row and came back to him in his row, it was more like 50 to 1, but his trees did look good.

This past Saturday I was on the same hill that Clint was talking about, as we cut the last Christmas tree for wholesale that will probably be cut on Harrell Hill Farms in my lifetime. I have reached the ripe old age of 73, and am still, thank God, able to do a lot of things on the farm. The time has come to cut back on some of the things like this. Clint would have looked at me in disbelief if he could read this. He thought I was invincible and could do anything. Sorry Clint, I can't do it anymore either. I know that Clint would want me to wish each of you a blessed and Christ filled Christmas. Merry Christmas to all.  
Doug

From Goopy Sorghum To The Perfect Christmas Tree  
By Clint Pollard – Editor

The varied communiqués I receive indicate that you enjoy reliving my close encounters and personal perils at Harrell Hill Farms. Oftentimes I wonder how it is that Christian brothers and sisters can derive such perverse pleasure from Farmer Clint's near misses with eternity ☹. You may be surprised to learn that my entire lifetime, even pre-farming days, could be characterized by bizarre occurrences. One day I will recount for you how I was run over by an out-board motor after falling into one of Alaska's most frigid and dangerous rivers. But not now, after all this is Christmas Season and I need to share a holiday farm story.



No "Tap" On A Tree

Call me crazy, but as a boy I remember seeing pictures of syrup coming from a spigot tapped into a tree. It is little wonder, then, that I imagined molasses freely flowing from a tree trunk somewhere in the hills of Western North Carolina. So when Doug first mentioned a "cane field" I conjured up the image of bamboo, thinking we would be harvesting fishing poles! Imagine my surprise when he took me into a thicket of bamboo-like plants and told me it was time to make molasses.

I vaguely remembered him giggling whenever he warned me of the coming cane harvest. He would say things like, "You will really enjoy cutting cane, stalk by stalk, on your knees with a little hatchet." Having no frame of reference I simply ignored my mentor's attempt at humor and went about the business of trying not to kill myself in day-to-day farming. Anyway, the premonition of medieval torture was accurate and I spent many an hour chopping down sorghum cane stalks with an itty bitsy hatchet-like thingy. How hard can that be, you may ask... well when you repeat that tomahawk motion 5,000,000,000,000 times without a break it is a chore! Then comes the dubious pleasure of loading TALL cane stalks onto pickup trucks and hauling it back to the barn. How hard can this be, you may ask... well when you pick up 5,000,000,000,000 LONG sticks and put 'em on a truck it is a chore!

Arriving back at the barn it's time to unload the cane and feed it into a GIANT munching thingy... Doug calls it a cane mill, but that's pretty technical if you ask me. Fact is I call things what they do, and that thing munches cane – pure and simple. As always, I was warned about the hazards of this machinery... I am amazed at the gazillion ways a man can die while producing food products for you folks to eat! And, of course, I had visions of being swallowed up by the GIANT cane muncher, being spit out the other side flattened like Pillsbury Christmas cookie dough!

When ya squish the cane, aka munching it, putrid looking green liquid oozes out of the stalk, drips into a pan covered by a screen, is then siphoned into a stainless steel vat, and squirts out a hose into a heated maze-like contraption where it meanders down various channels for hours on end. All the while ya have to scoop the green slime from the top of the traveling liquid and dump the sludge into a 5 gallon pickle bucket (or whatever comes in the bucket... who the heck cares!) And, FYI, while you are desperately avoiding the boiling substance it is important, also, to fight off the 5,000,000,000,000 yellow jackets which descend upon the sweet, sticky stuff hoping for one more taste of life before being frozen for the winter. And, someday I need to tell you about feeding 5 gallons of the sludge/slime/molasses to 4 little piggies ☹. But that's not for today, it's Christmas, remember?

Wonder of wonders, after about six hours of boiling the pale green stuff it morphs into the most beautiful amber liquid and pours out a sweet, delectable

molasses product that is to die for! (Not literally to die for, although I nearly fell into the boiling mixture on one occasion.) But I'm here to tell you, if you haven't sampled Harrell Hills Farms Pure Sorghum Molasses you are a deprived human being.

All that to say, I had to finish making molasses before being taken to the Christmas Tree patch.

Farmer Clint Turns Samurai...

One thing I know for certain, every facet of farming is hard...every product is hazardous...every tool a weapon of mass destruction. (Hmmm, that's actually three things I know for certain.) Anyway....

Early on Saturday morning, after molasses season, Doug took me someplace on a BIG mountain over at Tipton Hill. He explained that we would be shearing Christmas trees in advance of the annual harvest. As with every other crop field I've worked, this one was on a BIG hill and my fused ankle strained to cooperate with the hillside. (If you've never tried walking sideways on a hill with an ankle that doesn't bend, it's no small chore.)

Farmer Doug Exhibit 1.... "Clint, this is a shearing knife," he said with that Cheshire cat grin. Folks I'm telling ya, I looked at that implement and trembled. This "knife" is really a 3' razor blade on a stick...in fact I'm pretty sure it's what they string around a fence to keep inmates in prison. Regardless, what in the heck was I supposed to do with THAT? Quickly I was able to transform my thinking and transport my spirit back to the days of Genghis Khan... here I am, Farmer Clint Samurai Warrior!



Farmer Doug Demonstration 1.... "Clint, you shear the trees like this" (and he saunters his TALL mountain man self around that tree, raising the blade high overhead and dropping it with precision on the uneven branches).

Farmer Doug Caution 1.... "Clint, the most important part of this entire job is KEEP THE TREE BETWEEN YOU AND THE KNIFE, or you will SLICE YOUR LEG OFF." (Now I see why people are converting to artificial trees, these real Frasers are dangerous!) By the way, friends, I'm imagining pain, anguish and severed limbs by this point. After all, despite what you may have heard, I am not the world's most coordinated farmer.

Alone At Last...

Don't get me wrong, I love Doug Harrell; there's nothing I wouldn't do for the man. But I enjoy working ALONE...being "one" with the farm...the solitude of the soil...the peace of NOT HAVING HIM LOOKING OVER MY SHOULDER. And, sure enough, Doug finally set out to begin shearing trees. I was convinced that before long I would OWN the shearing process and my trees would look far better than Doug's ☹.

Making Dreams Come True...

I must say, I began to "get into" this activity...it became somewhat of a waltz for me, a bit like "Farmer Clint Wins Dancing with the Stars." Granted I occasionally tripped over my fused ankle and nearly amputated myself, but the dance was worth it. Think about it, here I am only months into my apprenticeship as a REAL FARMER; I am now making families' dreams come true by shaping their Christmas tree. This is a romantic notion I don't care who you are... me, Farmer Clint, carefully and skillfully shaping each Fraser Fir in my path with tender loving care. I'm envisioning the glee-filled squeals of little children as they "choose and cut" MY tree out of this patch. I, Farmer Clint, am helping God to put the finishing touches on THE PERFECT CHRISTMAS TREE.



Doug The Dream Squisher...

3-4 hours into our day of shearing, I sense Doug approaching down my row. His face is contorted a wee bit, an expression I've come to read as..."Ummmm, Pollard, what are you doing?" Or, "What have you been doing?" Not to be dissuaded, I inquired, "Now, tell the truth, Doug... have you ever seen more beautifully sheared Christmas trees than these?" I could tell that my friend was indeed awe stricken.... "Well, he began...they are beautiful, Clint, honestly, they are. But I don't want you to fall in love with the tree...we just don't have time to make it a part of our family...I want you to shear it!"

"Douglas," I began, "this is a family's dream, their tradition, their hope for the future; this may be their last Christmas together and I want their tree to be perfect!" Crooked grin in place, Doug replied, "And you've done that with the 5 trees you've finished, Clint. The problem is I'm shearing 25 trees to your 1 and the truck will be here next week to take more than 1,000 trees up north. At the pace

continued on page 19



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## It's The Most Wonderful

**Time Of The Year**

**Rev. Bruce Cannon**

*Mitchell County*



This song was made popular by Andy Williams in 1963 and has been a huge hit and traditional Christmas song since. Yet, for many, Christmas is such a lonely, depressing time. According to the National Institute of Health, "Christmas is the time of year that people experience a high incidence of depression. Hospitals and police forces report high incidences of suicide and attempted suicide. Psychiatrists, psychologists and other mental health professionals report a significant increase in patients complaining about depression. One North American survey reported that 45% of respondents dreaded the festive season."

What a tragedy! When we should be the most joy-filled, many are sad. How can we get through the holidays joyfully? May I offer a few suggestions:

- Don't buy into the "perfect Christmas" media portrays families as having. The truth is there is no perfect Christmas. Problems come and disappointments happen in every family. The perfect holiday gift sometimes can't be found. And, decorations just don't turn out like we had wanted. That is just life. Life happens.

- Be grateful for what you have and don't focus on what you do not have. We all want family to be together at Christmas but sometimes it just can't happen. Obligations and distance often keep families apart. Try to settle on a phone call until a visit can take place. One of the very hardest things to deal with at Christmas is having to experience the loneliness due to the loss of someone dear. In this instance, try to imagine what kind of Christmas will they have this year if they are in the presence of the Lord!

- Try to spend some time making others happy. Giving of one's time, cooking a dish for a shut-in or doing something for someone who can't do it for themselves is a sure fire way to get into the Spirit of Christmas.

- Finally, focus your thoughts on the real meaning of Christmas. Imagine, God loved us so much that He wrapped His Son, the GREATEST Christmas present, in swaddling clothes so He could be the Savior of the world.

There are so many opportunities to really enjoy Christmas: a Children's Christmas play, a band concert, a cantata, caroling to shut-ins and the list goes on. All of these events will be taking place at Bear Creek Baptist Church, and all of our sister Churches, over the next 6 weeks and I can hardly wait.

May you have the greatest Christmas ever! May you be well and your family able to spend time together over the Holidays. May you experience the Lord in such a powerful, gentle way as He communicates His love to you this Christmas.

From my family to yours, "Merry Christmas!"

*Rev. Bruce Cannon currently serves as the Senior Pastor of Bear Creek Baptist Church in Bakersville. Formerly he served as Director of Missions for the Bladen Baptist Association and has served on the General Board of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina.*

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# Zion Hill Baptist Church- Foothills Baptist Bible College

## Necessities For Successful Christian Living

by Dr. Tom Walker  
McDowell County



1 Peter 5:6-9 says:

*"Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time: Casting all your care upon Him; for He careth for you. Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: Whom resist steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world."*

Any believer should desire to live a successful Christian life. None of us are perfect in our daily living, but we can live successfully as we are dependent upon the Lord. To be a success for the Christian is to achieve things for the glory of God and His kingdom.

Joshua 1:8 says, *"This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success."* From that statement, it is clear that success can be the portion of the people of God. It is not an unattainable matter. Success should be desired for God's saints!

There are several necessities if one is to enjoy true spiritual success.

### We Need Humility (v.6)

Verse 6 says, *"Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God that He might exalt you in due time."* It is less painful for us to humble ourselves than it is for God to humble us. "Humble" is translated in other places as "abase" and "bring low."

Because of our old Adamic nature, our tendency is to lift ourselves up instead of bringing ourselves low. Someone said, "The way up with God is the way down in our own attitude."

Why should God exalt us if we are doing our best to exalt ourselves? When we exalt self, we are saying that we are sufficient within ourselves, and really don't need God.

The number one thing that hinders submission is pride. If you will remember, pride is what turned a beautiful, prominent angel into a devil. Of all the things that God hates, which is listed in Proverbs 6:17, pride is at the top of the lists.

With pride comes shame (Proverbs 11:2). Proud people are hard to work with simply because they will not listen. They are stubborn and their pride won't let them submit to leadership.

Humility is the attitude that puts others before one's self. Read Phil. 2:3-4.

### We Need Dependence (v.7)

Verse 7 declares, *"Casting all your care upon Him, for He careth for you."* "Casting" is in the present tense in the Greek New Testament. It should be a way of life to turn our anxieties over to the Lord; it should be a practice of our lives.

This verse is tied with verse 6 and the matter of pride. Instead of worrying about prominence and prevailing over others, we ought to stop worrying over trivial, self centered things, and turn them over to God. God cares constantly and continually about us. We worry too much about the material things and problems of this life. Self centered living is detrimental to our spiritual and physical life.

Psalms 55:22 tells us to, *"Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee: he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved."* Believe it! Count on it! He will never suffer or allow the righteous to be moved. Since the Lord has all power, why should we not turn over to Him those things that are beyond our control?

Dependence upon God is not a sign of weakness but rather one of strength. A person is never stronger than when he or she depends upon the strength of the Lord.

### We Need Sobriety (v.8a)

"Sober" has the idea of being discreet and cautious and has the thought of being a discerning, discreet person. Christians must develop discernment. Without discernment a person becomes prey to the flesh, the world and the devil. Too many believers are easily deceived and misled.

Noah Webster defines discernment as: "The act of discerning; also, the power or faculty of the mind, by which it distinguishes one thing from another, as truth from falsehood, virtue from vice; acuteness of judgment; power of perceiving differences of things or ideas, and their relations and tendencies."

The sobriety Peter is talking about is the ability to see things in their true light. While none of us are perfect, we need the ability to see things as they really are, not just like someone presents something, but as things actually are. It is God who gives wisdom to his people that we might discern and see what we otherwise could not see.

### We Need Vigilance (v.8b)

We are told to "be vigilant." That is commanded because we have an adversary, an opponent, called the Devil. Satan is likened to a "roaring lion" here in verse 8, but he is also likened to a serpent (Rev. 12:9) and to one who can be transformed into an angel of light (2 Corinthians 11:14).

The word "vigilant" was used by the Greeks to describe crossing a river, carefully stepping from one slippery stone to another. If they did not pay close attention to what they were doing, they would fall into the river.

Satan is out to devour souls and lives. That is why we are not wise to live care-

lessly or sloppily. We are to be on the lookout for Satan attack, then, we can resist him in the power of our Almighty God.

### We Need Steadfastness (v.9)

We should be steadfast. The word "steadfast" means to "to stand or be unmovable." We have two main weapons of warfare that allow us to stand firm in the faith. First, there is God's Word. It is called the "sword of the Spirit" (Eph. 6:17) for it is the weapon the Spirit of God uses to drive back the advances of Satan.

The second main weapon is prayer. Many battles are won on our knees. Eph. 6:18 says, *"Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints."* Prayer calls in all the resources of God that enable us to live successfully, even when we are hounded by our adversaries, and faced with fear and confusion.

Let's not fail the Lord in attitude or action for we are on earth in the place of Christ, inviting people to be reconciled to God.

Tom Walker is President of Foothills Baptist Bible College and Pastor of Zion Hill Baptist Church in Marion, NC.

*And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn. Luke 2:7*

## Holiday Event Calendar

### Trail of Lights at the Trail of Faith

Nov. 24-Dec. 24 from 6-9pm

Lighting Ceremony will be held Nov. 24 at 6pm

### Merchant's Association Tractor Rides

Nov. 25, Dec. 2, 9, 16 from 6-9pm

Start at the Trail of Faith or Village Park Mural  
Enjoy hot chocolate stations and the Christmas lights of downtown Valdese

### Valdese Annual Christmas Parade

Dec. 3 at 10am: Grand Marshall Pat Draughn  
PWRR Museum Open House at Old Rock School

### OCP Production: "Babes in Toyland"

December 8, 9, 10 & 11 at the Old Rock School

Thursday through Saturday 7:30pm

& Sunday Matinee at 3pm

\$10 Adults/Seniors/Students \$5 Pre-School

### Celebrate Christmas in Valdese

Dec. 9 from 6-8pm on the steps of the  
Old Rock School. Enjoy Shop Hop, Christmas  
Caroling by the Valdese Elementary School &  
Christmas Tree Lighting with SANTA!

### Blue Christmas Alzheimer's

Benefit Concert: Dec. 17 at 7:30pm

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For freedom's sake, bring back civility

By Rev. Mark H. Creech

"Thousands across the USA Protest Trump Victory," said the headline of USA Today on Thursday. The news source said the protestors had taken to the streets in at least 10 cities.

In cities like Chicago, New York, Los Angeles, Philadelphia, Boston, Washington, D.C., Portland, and St. Paul, protestors angrily chanted, "Not My President" and laced their shouts with expletives. In Los Angeles, they torched a giant Trump effigy. In other places, protestors burned the American flag, started fires in the city, damaged private property, harassed and assaulted commuters, and delayed trains.

Only a couple of weeks before the election, in my home state of North Carolina, the GOP headquarters in Orange County was firebombed. The day after the election, signs at the Republican headquarters in Raleigh were vandalized.

It appears that we are at a juncture in American history where we've lost sight of civility in politics. We seemed to be shocked by the anger, the violence, and lack of restraint that we're witnessing. However, much of it, in my estimation, is the harvest we've been sowing for quite a while.

It's interesting to note, according to media reports, these protests are largely made up of college students.



Stephen L. Carter, a professor of law at Yale University, has rightly argued: "Teaching civility is an obligation of the family."

I can remember growing up and being taught good manners by my parents. You always said, "Yes sir and No sir or No Ma'am and Yes Ma'am" to authority figures. Showing respect to your elders and such was an indispensable lesson of life. If an adult came into the room, you were required to stand and offer up your seat. The home wasn't a democracy, at best it was a benevolent dictatorship, where parents ruled and children obeyed – otherwise you would experience a discipline you wouldn't likely forget.

Perhaps the reason so many of these young people today, who ought to be in the classroom, are tearing up things in the streets because they've never had their backsides torn up at home. Instead, they've been coddled, babied, and overindulged by their parents. They've grown up with a sense of entitlement and not enough emphasis on responsibility.

They've not only been raised this way, but treated the same when they go off to school. The USA Today story said after the election, when Hillary Clinton, failed to win, "[a]cross the country, universities and even a few high schools organized post-election civil disobedience. Some teachers sent notes to students postponing tests and offering support. Student unions offered sessions of meditation, discussions and tea."

Oh for heaven's sake, give me a break! It's time these youngsters grew up. Life is full of disappointments. When we treat them with kid gloves every time something doesn't go their way, we're setting them up for failure. We're making emotional wimps out of them. We're fostering psychological fragility.

This is not the way to build a strong civil culture where democratic principles flourish. Without respect for authority, without developing a tough constitution in facing setbacks, without a healthy appreciation for one's responsibilities over one's perceived rights, civility ends up trampled under the feet of insolence and contempt.

Furthermore, I believe our national politics and its rhetoric over the years have also contributed to this present crisis.

The late Edward Brooke, a Republican, who became the first African American popularly elected to the United States Senate, once said, "The polarization of Congress; the decline of civility; and the rise of attack politics in the 1980s, the 1990s, and the early years of the new century are a blot on our political system and a disservice to the American people."

Brooke was right. And this wretched form of politics grew to a crescendo in the presidential campaign between Secretary Clinton and Donald Trump. It was a terrible example to the generations that will someday take the reins of our great Republic.

I have to admit; sometimes I don't understand why politicians feel as though they have to respond to every criticism of their person or political position. Civility, I suggest, would often require them not to respond.

The former and deceased Archbishop of St. Louis, John L. May, used to tell the story about a heated debate that occurred in the U.S. Senate, when one of the senators told another "to go to hell." The senator that was verbally castigated appealed to the presiding vice president, Calvin Coolidge, concerning the propriety of the remark. Coolidge, who had been idly leafing through a book, looked up and said, "I've been looking through the rule book. You don't have to go."

What an ingenious way to encourage civility. Often, the best response is no response.

Please don't misunderstand me. I'm not suggesting civility always requires the dousing of strong words or negative comments. Jesus was the most civil individual who ever lived. Yet for the misguided religious leaders of his day, Jesus provided severe and passionate critical analysis. He called them "white washed graves," and a "brood of vipers." But without exception, at the heart of his words was a loving motive of redemption, not a carnal spirit of animosity.

Jim Wallis, founder of Sojourners, and the late Chuck Colson, founder of Prison Fellowship and Breakpoint, were essentially polar opposites on many matters both theological and political. In the aftermath of the horrific shooting of Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords and the senseless killing and wounding of 19 of her constituents in 2011, Wallis and Colson, wrote an article together and published it in Christianity Today. In the piece, they admonished that democracy depended on the virtue of civility.

"The scriptural admonition to pray for those in authority is more than a religious duty, it promotes good civic behavior. It is more difficult to hate someone when you are praying for them. Jesus' commandment to love our enemies, including those with whom we politically disagree, is even more challenging and defies the ideologies of both Left and Right," Wallis and Colson wrote.

"These commitments are as demanding as they are necessary...in their secular forms, to the working of democracy," they added. "Therefore we call on all citizens to model better behavior in the public square – in word and deed."

Yes, we have to bring back the blessed quality of civility. This type of respect has to be taught in the home, and demonstrated by our educators and public servants. If we don't, we'll lose liberty and become a society of anger and unquestioned, unyielding, forms of control. Let's not sell freedom's birthright of dialogue and debate for incivility's mess of pottage.

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Preparing for Christmas

Pastor Steve Williams  
Mitchell County



Howdy Friends,  
"Preparing for Christmas," said one fellow, "is a Wrap race." At least, wisecracked another, "I've learn what the Yule means. My wife says, you'll buy this, and you'll wrap that, and I do.  
But, really, that's not the way to get ready for Christmas. This is:

- 1st We Need to Review.  
You and I need to take a good look at our hearts and homes. Christmas is Christ's birthday. But we invite everyone to the party, except Christ. Christmas is more than a time for shopping and Santa. It's a time for the Savior. Let's Not crowd out Christ.
- 2nd We Need to Repent:  
Repentance is a change of mind. In repentance one says, "I'm wrong. I'm sorry. I've been putting fun and gifts ahead of God and His unspeakable gift. But from today on its Jesus first, others second, and me last.
- 3rd We Need to Renew:  
A man said to Mark Twain, "I wish I had never read Huckleberry Finn." Why?" demanded the author. "So I could have the pleasure again of reading it for the first time" he explained. Has the Christmas story lost its excitement because you've read it so often? Then Get alone with the Lord and His Word and read anew Luke 2:1-20, asking the Lord to make your heart burn within you as you read it.
- 4th We Need to Rededicate:  
Give the Lord first place in your life. Delight in everything He wants you to do. Day and night meditate on His word and think about ways to follow Him more closely. Do these things, and this Christmas will be the Merriest Christmas of your Life.

As Christians we need to understand we have the greatest gift anyone can ever receive. You say how is that? Simple. There's no prayer too hard for Him to answer, no need to great He can't supply, no problem too difficult for Him to solve. So when we are facing a day of calamity, we can experience calm, in our days of perplexity, we can experience peace, in our days of temptation we can experience triumph, in our day of sorrow we can experience a song. God's Salvation and Grace is a gift that never goes away.  
My Family Would Like to Wish All of You a Merry Christmas, and our prayers are that God will Bless you with Good Health and Strength as we go into a New Year.

Pastor Steve Williams

Words of Wisdom

- God can't be defeated nor can they who trust Him.
- The loneliest place in the world is the heart where the Lord Jesus is absent.
- The best teachers are those who live by example.
- No one can make you sin without your consent.
- Got something to do? Do it with all you got.

Question of the month:

Why don't you exchange gifts with God by accepting the gift of His Son and giving Him the gift of your body?

Joke of the Month

An atheist complained to a Christian friend, "You Christians have your special holidays, such as Christmas and Easter. Jews celebrate their national holidays, such as Passover and Yom Kippur. But we atheists have no recognized national holidays. It's unfair discrimination."  
His friend replied, "Why don't you celebrate April the First" (April Fool's Day).

Steve Williams is the Pastor of Berry Chapel Baptist Church in Spruce Pine.



you're going we will only have a dozen or so finished!"  
That day, back in early November, I submitted to Doug's authority as Harrell Hill Head Honcho and completed my shearing task with warp speed – well, as fast as a man with a fused ankle, swinging a 3' long razor blade can finish. But later on...

Getting Even At The Christmas Tree Lot...

One weekend in early December Doug and Barbara asked me to "man the tree lot", selling Christmas trees to friends and neighbors. I knew this was my chance to make things right, to correct the error of Doug's ways...so while he was away I got one of the Samurai Christmas Tree Swords and trimmed, ever so carefully, EACH of the trees on that lot...at last creating THE PERFECT CHRISTMAS TREES. I am thinking the heavens rejoiced at the beauty of these symbols of the season.  
And just think, Doug doesn't know about it, to this day @ ! Merry Christmas friends.

Humbled in the hills,  
Farmer Clint



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# Mine Creek Baptist Church

## Don't Blink...

By Chris Rathbone  
Mitchell County

Many times I hear people say that the older they get, the faster time seems to pass. That certainly seems to be true. Here we are in December and many of us are wondering where all these months have gone. When we were kids, summers seemed to last forever and unfortunately for those of us who didn't much care for schooling, so did those long days at school! As kids we seem to think that we will be forever young and then the next thing you know, boom!!!! We're forty, fifty, or sixty something! I sure would like for some things to stay the same but, unfortunately, time has a way of changing us and the circumstances of our lives.

In our family, as with most families, we had many traditions especially when it comes to Thanksgiving and Christmas. The gatherings we had were really family reunions. It seemed that for the most part the only time we could get everybody together was around the holidays when everybody had a few days off from work. All of us cousins would pick up right where we left off the last time we were together. It was pretty well a given that every Thanksgiving and Christmas we would all be together. There were times that some couldn't make it for whatever reason, but for the most part we were all there.

On my Dad's side, we would gather at Paw and Maw's house. I have to say it was what I call organized chaos. Children running everywhere playing and laughing; Paw fussing because we kept getting between him and his TV; and Maw and all the women of the family working to get all the food prepared and ready. It would sound like a herd of cattle running through the house when they would call everybody to eat.

Mama's side wasn't much different, just different faces. Christmas is what I remember most at Mammy's house. Her house was pretty small and it was pretty interesting trying to find a place to sit down and eat. Mammy was one of those grandmothers who always over did it when it came to cooking. She was so afraid there wouldn't be enough to eat, so she would cook till 2-3 in the morning just to make sure there was plenty for the whole family to enjoy.

I don't remember everyone really exchanging gifts. There were so many of us on both sides that there was no way to afford to buy a gift for each and every one. For the most part just being together was gift enough. We were all so excited to see each other and play together we didn't really think too much about presents. The gifts that were given were mostly to my grandparents. Sometimes we received gifts from them if they could afford it.

Sadly after Paw, Maw, and Mammy passed away, those family gatherings faded away to memory. Time has passed and new traditions have taken place of the



old ones. My boys always look forward to Christmas Eve breakfast at my Dad and Mom's house. We have named it the Rathbone shindig. Some years everyone is able to make it in and some years they can't.

Looking back now that I'm older, I realize that I didn't really appreciate the times and people that were in my life. God really blessed us with large families on both sides. Sometimes our youth gets in the way of recognizing how blessed we were back then. Some of my extended family I haven't seen in years. Some of my extended family I haven't even met because they were born after these family traditions faded away!

The Lord has blessed with new traditions and, as time goes by, even those will be replaced as time changes things. The point to all this rambling is this: Look around in your life and thank God for the people you have now. Make the most of the opportunities He gives us to share life with those we love. You know as well as I do that maybe even next year there will be faces missing from our gatherings. Love God most importantly, and love the ones He has given us. Don't blink...because before you know it...things will not be the same.

Merry Christmas, Preacher Chris

*Preacher Chris Rathbone serves as Pastor at Mine Creek Baptist Church.*



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A Prayer for America

By Jerry Lewis  
McDowell County

This prayer is still exactly what we need today! Prayer prayed for the National Day of Prayer by Pastor Greg Laurie, honorary chairman for the NDOP in Washington, DC, May 2nd, 2013:

Father, we come to You to pray for our nation, the United States of America.

How You have blessed us through the years, Lord! We rightly sing, "America, America, God shed His grace on thee." Yet we see trouble in our culture today. We see the breakdown of the family, crippling addictions, and random acts of horrific violence.

Lord, we need Your help in America. In recent days, we have done our best to remove Your Word and Your counsel from our courtrooms, classrooms, and culture. It seems, as President Lincoln once said, that we have "forgotten God." But Lord, You have not forgotten us! You can bless and help and revive our country again.

Scripture tells us that "Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people" (Proverbs 14:34). Lord, in Your mercy, we ask that You would exalt our country again. We have had a number of great awakenings in America. We have experienced times of refreshing, and revivals that changed not only the spiritual but also the moral landscape. As the psalmist said, "Will You not revive us again, so that Your people may rejoice in You?" (Psalm 85:6).

That is our prayer for America today, Lord. Send a mighty spiritual awakening that will turn the hearts of men and women, boys and girls, back to you. You have told us if we will humble ourselves and pray, and seek Your face and turn from our wicked ways, that You will forgive our sins and heal our land (2 Chronicles 7:14).

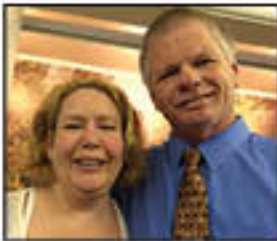
Forgive us today, Lord, and heal this troubled land that we love so much. We ask all of this in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

Jerry Lewis is Senior Pastor at Grace Community Church in Marion.



Christmas!

Pastor Terry Cheek Th.D.  
McDowell County



With Christmas approaching, born again Christians find themselves face to face with the conflict of worldly fantasy and spiritual reality!

As we approach Christmas let's think about the incarnation. In John's gospel chapter 1 and verse 14 we read, "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth."

The birth of Jesus was unique to say the least. The birth of any other child is the creation of a new personality. New life is created, a life that never existed before. The birth of Jesus was NOT the creation of a new personality; it was the coming of a person who had existed from eternity. This alone illustrates why the angels awoke the Judean hills with their praise.

John describes the incarnation using three words. John tells us Jesus "dwelt among us." The Greek word σκηνώω skēnoō (dwelt) gives us the meaning of pitching a tent. Said another way, Jesus Tabernacled among us. This word is significant in John's gospel when describing the incarnation. Some scholars believe Jesus was actually born on the first day of the joyous annual Jewish feast of tabernacles (15th of Tisri or on our calendar September 29 in the year 4 BC). If this is the case, Jesus circumcision which took place on the eighth day would have taken place on "the great day of the feast" mentioned by John in 7:37. Regardless of where you stand on this thought it is an interesting study.

When we hear the word Tabernacle it reminds us of the rich typology of the Old Testament Tabernacle and its concealed glory. Have you ever given serious thought about the tabernacle? It possessed no outward beauty! The furniture of the outer court was made of brass (copper). The curtains were linen bleached white by the sun. The only color was the entrance gate which gave access to the brazen (bronze) altar of sacrifice. Looking on from the outside there was nothing glorious about the Tabernacle. It appeared to be just another tent placed among the tents of the common people, only the Tabernacle was larger. When the Tabernacle was moved from place to place the gold furniture was carefully covered from the eyes of the curious.

The covering of the golden furniture represented the glory of the Lord being a concealed glory. Likewise, when Jesus came to pitch His tent (dwell among us), He did not lay aside His deity, He simply concealed it for a short time.

Further reading of the Apostle John reveals "we beheld his glory," "the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." These remarks should direct our minds to the Shekinah glory that filled the Tabernacle. The Lord Jesus' concealed glory permanently resided within Him. John realized this glory, he saw God in Christ, "the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." John was referencing the days he had spent in the company of the Lord Jesus. When John tells us "we beheld his glory" John is describing the glory that an only begotten Son receives from a Father. Also, John tells us they saw one "full of grace and truth". This is a Hebraism for the sum total of divine revelation; grace is a reference to the revelation of God, as love and truth is a reference to the revelation of God as Light.

As we observe Christmas let's look upon it as more than a new born baby in the manger. Let's look upon it as a celebration of the Incarnation of God who Tabernacled among us and resides in the hearts of everyone who calls Him Savior today. If you know beyond a doubt that you are born again by Grace and through Faith in Jesus alone you have much more than gifts, dinners, parties, or personal desires to cling to, you have the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords as your savior. Do you worship Him, serve Him, adore Him and most of all Love Him as He deserves? If we love Him the way we should the typical issues with family, friends, work or the many other stresses we seem to hear so much about during the season will be insignificant. I want to encourage you, Keep Jesus First and everything else will find its proper place!

Merry Christmas and until next time, May God keep you Firmly in His Grip!

Terry Cheek is Pastor of Calvary Baptist Church in Marion.

For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Isaiah 9:6



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Gift Opening Time

By Lana Ellis  
Tennessee

For several years, I played a game with our grandchildren on Christmas Eve. I wrapped several gifts with no nametags attached and placed them in a pile on the floor. They took turns choosing a gift and opening it. Even if the gifts they chose were obviously not for them, they kept them until all were opened. The object is to see who can randomly choose the most gifts that were purchased originally for them. What makes our gift opening so much fun is the fact that there are three females ranging from five to sixteen years old and one male who is a tall lanky twenty-year-old college student! In most cases, the gifts they choose are obviously not for them because of male and female preferences and in no way does "one size fit all". At the end of the game I distributed the gifts to the child I had in mind when I made the purchases.

As hard as we try to choose a perfect gift for others, we will never outdo God who is the Ultimate Gift Giver. He has offered the most precious, one of a kind gift to us. It's the gift of salvation and the forgiveness of sins and it cost the life of His Son, Jesus. If we had no other gift that would be over and above all we need, but God has other gifts for those of us who have trusted Jesus as Savior. They are perfectly fitted "Spiritual Gifts" made especially for each believer. Often with good intentions, some attempts are made to fill voids in areas of service without having the proper gifts and that results in frustration and confusion. Like the pile of my grandchildren's gifts "one size does not fit all" when it comes to spiritual gifts.

There's a big difference in our gift giving and God's. We give gifts to others for their use. God gives gifts to us but they are not for us! They are meant to be used for the benefit of others. *As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another.* (1 Peter 4:10 NASV) Also, spiritual gifts were never meant to put the spot light on us but rather on Christ. In 1 Corinthians 12:7 we're told that spiritual gifts are the manifestation of the Spirit. The word "manifestation" means to make visible. In other words when spiritual gifts are used properly they are making Jesus Christ visible to others through us. Think about that. Others can actually see Jesus through us!

Do you know your gift? Are you willing to let God use it in His service? Are you making Christ "visible" to those around you? Hopefully all of us can answer "yes". If you answered "no" you have a perfectly fitted gift in God's "pile of gifts." Ask Him to reveal to you the one that has your name on it. Then "open" that special present and begin using it as the Ultimate Gift Giver intended. In so doing others will see Jesus in you and your local "Body of Christ" will be healthier.

(The gifts are listed in Romans 12, 1 Corinthians 12 and Ephesians 4. Please take time to make these an object of study.)



Lana Ellis resides in Kingsport TN, next door to grandchildren. Church is West Colonial Hills Baptist Church.



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This year's Camp Erin of the Carolinas will be held from Friday, November 13th through Sunday, November 15th at South Mountain Christian Camp in Bostic, NC. For more information, please contact Cy Miller at (828)245-0095 or [cymiller@hospiceofrutherford.org](mailto:cymiller@hospiceofrutherford.org)



Please note that space is limited, and campers are accepted on a first-come, first-serve basis. Preference is given to campers who have not attended Camp Erin before.

## Pleasant Ridge Baptist Church

### "You Are With Me"

By Shawn Thomas  
Burke County



*"Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for You are with me. Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me." (Psalm 23:4)*

Those words, "YOU are with me" are everything to the follower of the Lord. The word "YOU" is emphasized in Hebrew ("atah" is an emphatic "YOU"! It reassures the Lord's sheep that if we know that God is with us, we can face anything — even death's shadow.

The most important thing in all the world is to have the presence of God with you, to know that He is "with us." Because there's nothing we can't face if He is with us.

Moses knew this. That's why in Exodus 33:15, after God told Moses to take the people to the Promised Land by himself but that He would not go with them, Moses said, *"If Your presence does not go with us, do not lead us up from here."* He knew that the ONE thing they could not do without was the presence of God.

Who cared if there was a river to cross, if God was with them — He'd just split it!

What did it matter if there were giants in the land — if God was with them, He'd slay them!

So what if there were cities with walls so thick you could drive chariots on top of them — if God was with them, He could make them all just tumble down! Moses knew that the most important thing, the only thing that really matters, is that God was with them.

In the Book of Daniel, they threw Hananiah, Mishael & Azariah into the fiery furnace, and they saw a 4th man with them, like a Son of God. Those 3 men could go through ANYTHING: even a fiery furnace, if the Lord was with them.

That's why it is my constant prayer for our church, that GOD WILL BE WITH US. It doesn't matter who the preacher is, or what songs we sing, or how the program is organized, or whatever projects we try to do — the only thing that really matters is that GOD IS WITH US. If HE is with us, then none of that matters; He can bless and use anything. And if He is NOT with us — then likewise it doesn't matter what we do; because nothing will work if His presence is not here. So, my prayer for our church has been Psalm 67: *"God be gracious to us, and bless us, and cause HIS FACE TO SHINE UPON US."* The thing we need more than anything else is for God to be with us.

The same thing is true for our individual lives. We can face anything life throws at us, if we know that God is with us. This is why it's so significant that in Matthew 1 Jesus is called "Immanuel" — "God with us." If you know Jesus as your Savior, then God really IS "with you"; He is IN you through His Holy Spirit; He is with you to the end of the age; He will never leave you nor forsake you. And just like David says here, there is NOTHING you can't face — not even *"the valley of the shadow of death"* — when you know that HE is "with me."

Shawn Thomas is Senior Pastor at Pleasant Ridge Baptist Church in Morganton. His messages and devotionals are available at [www.shawnethomas.com](http://www.shawnethomas.com)

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# Horizon Church

## It Only Takes A Spark.....

By Mike Stroud  
Burke County

I am reminded of the old youth group song we would sing at camp; it only takes a spark, to get a fire going, then soon all those around can warm up in its glowing. That's how it is with God's love, once you have experienced it, it's fresh like spring, you want to sing, you want to pass it on. I'm singing in my head to that tune right now. With all the wildfires we are experiencing now, our prayers are for the firefighters, home owners and for the Lord to please send rain. We are so used to seeing the west coast on fire, it is unusual that we are dealing with this. It is crazy to see all the smoke rising up and how it has affected everyone near and far. Once a fire gets going, it is hard to stop.

I pray that is what happens to us as Christians and the Church. We catch on fire and are unstoppable. How can good news and love not spread? I desire true passion in people's lives, full of miracles and testimonies of God's goodness and grace. Our country is still divided in so many ways. We have humbled ourselves



as the church and prayed that God would heal the land. I believe that is taking place right now all across America. It is the responsibility of the church to rise up and catch fire. To reach a lost and dying world that is looking for hope and answers. We have the mysteries of the Kingdom of God revealed to us. Christ is the answer, The Way, The Truth, and The Light of all men. I believe it is our moment for our generation to catch fire, to not grow weary in well doing, to stay the course and win this world for Christ. It starts with us having the fruit of the Spirit. Love, kindness, gentleness, longsuffering, and patience with all those we come in contact with. We are the light of the world, a fire, a blaze of His Glory revealed through our testimony. Catch fire today and be unstoppable for the commission Christ gave us is to go into all the World and preach the Gospel. Like my old wrestling coach would say..." Now, you are cooking with Gas."

Mike Stroud is a pastor at Horizon Church in Morganton, Music Director at [www.AmazingGraceRadio.com](http://www.AmazingGraceRadio.com), and owns Stroud Building Supply in Morganton.



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Each year we look forward to certain family traditions, like baking Granny's gingerbread cookies or watching *It's a Wonderful Life* with the kids. But sometimes all those fun traditions can get overwhelming.

That's why we're giving you permission to choose what you want to do this year. Ignore the pressure to people-please, and instead pick the traditions that don't stress you out.

It's your holiday, after all. And it's going to be awesome as long as you're with the people you love — no matter how you celebrate. The key to deciding what stays and what goes is to ask yourself: Do I actually want to do this? Can I actually afford this?, and Do I really have time for this?

Here are eight holiday traditions to get you started:

**1. Annual Christmas Bash**

Some people love hosting Christmas parties. Cooking for 50? No problem! But if you'd rather not spend two precious weeks in December planning and prepping for your annual Christmas open house, then don't. Forget the cheese ball, sherbet punch, and mini gherkins, and just get together with a few close pals at a local restaurant. Split the check and enjoy a simple, stress-free evening with your nearest and dearest.

Or, if you love throwing parties but hate the cost, invite less people. Make it a potluck, or ask someone else to co-host and share the responsibility. It's your party — do what you want!

**2. Competitive Lights Display**

Don't let your Christmas-crazy neighbors guilt you into a lights display worthy of Rockefeller Center. If your family enjoys looking at lights, pack a thermos of hot chocolate and drive around town to admire the best of the over-the-top yards. It's free, and you don't have to freeze your tail off!

If you prefer decking out your house with lights but don't have the time, start early and stop when your energy does. Make sure you're decorating your house because you like it, not because you're trying to match the neighborhood. Your time and money matter more than how many cars drive by.

**3. Elf on the Shelf**

This one is a hot-button issue. So, we won't get into the pros and cons. We'll just say this: If you're pro-Elf, make it easier on yourself by not getting too elaborate. Sparkles doesn't need to build a Rube Goldberg machine in the middle of the night. Keep it simple and keep it fun. And if you're over Buddy, just tell your kids he went back to the North Pole this year — for good. They'll be fine, we promise.

**4. The Shopping Frenzy**

We like a deal as much as the next person, but if you're shopping "for sport," take a time-out. It's okay to get a rush from the shopping season — buying stuff should be fun! But don't let the pressure to spend destroy your budget.

Take control of your money by creating a Christmas-specific money plan and a detailed gift list. And stop shopping when your list is complete! If you have extra

energy to burn, try a family game of flag football. It's much less dangerous than the mall (well, maybe).

**5. Family Portrait Christmas Cards**

Photo cards are a sweet tradition, but they aren't a must. It's okay if you didn't have time or money to schedule a photographer, buy matching red-and-white outfits, and order hundreds of glossy prints this year. Cards are a meaningful gesture, but don't make them more difficult or more expensive than they have to be. You can still have a great tradition by limiting your card list and having the kids help you craft some sweet letters with stickers and glitter — how fun is that?

**6. Price-Inflated Plane Tickets**

Instead of heading home for the holidays, why not visit your family in January or February when the prices have come down? You could even start a new tradition, like meeting your folks in a fun city between your two towns. Imagine a calm, post-holiday vacation for half the price and half the crowd. Now that's peace on earth.

Or if you're looking forward to being with your parents and siblings over Christmas but need to save money, grab your tickets and skip the bulky presents. You'll save on baggage fees and the stress of making sure your stuff doesn't get crushed. Make it easy with gift cards, or going up a day early and having a fun shopping day with a family member you rarely get to see.

**7. A (Sort of) Freshly Cut Tree**

Christmas trees are a must in most households, but if you dread the drama of picking the perfect, overpriced specimen from your local Boy Scouts, try something else. As in use the garage-sale special from your attic. (You know it's in there.) Or buy one at your local hobby store with a coupon. A tree is just a base anyway. It's how you decorate it (and who you decorate it with) that counts.

**8. Swanky Gift Wrap**

For some, it's fun to see how Pinterest-worthy you can wrap your presents. But it can take some pretty pennies to buy all those handcrafted bows, spray-painted twigs and gold leaf paper bags that will be trashed on Christmas morning. Why not cover your presents in newspaper (which you can dye for a cool effect) or butcher paper instead? Then have your kids decorate the paper with stickers, stamps and crayon creations. Trim it with some bulk twine and you're done!

**Keep This in Mind**

As you budget for the holidays, don't break the bank in the name of tradition. Decide which customs are important to you and then see how they fit into your overall budget.

If anyone asks why you're not doing something this year, simply explain you want to spend more time with them and less time doing stuff for them. We have a feeling they'll understand and love you more for it!

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District Judge Eggers-Gryder

By Doug Suddruth  
Mitchell County

The Hon. Rebecca Eggers-Gryder, District Judge of North Carolina's 24th Judicial District, was guest speaker Nov. 3 at the weekly meeting of the Rotary Club of Spruce Pine. Eggers-Gryder spoke about the 50th anniversary of the unification of North Carolina's courts, which was a decision that created the district court system. "There were 256 small courts across North Carolina with wildly varying districts," she said about the systems before unification. "Those courts handled everything from speeding tickets to child custody issues." The district court system now handles around 80 percent of cases in North



Judge Rebecca Eggers-Gryder receiving a locally handmade Rotary mug from President Alex Glover

Carolina. Calling herself a "country lawyer with home-spun wisdom," Eggers-Gryder was appointed to the position of Judge of the 24th District by Gov. Pat McCrory in January of 2015 to fill the seat vacated by Judge Gregory Horne's appointment to the North Carolina Supreme Court. "I grew up hearing about law," she said. "I drafted my first contract when I was 9 years old. I had a strong sense of justice and what I wanted to do with my life early on. I wanted to help people and I wanted to serve with a servant's heart. It was only natural that I would go to law school and then come back to my community to practice law with my father and brother in the firm of Eggers, Eggers and Eggers." Eggers-Gryder is the bass player and lead vocalist for bluegrass band Amantha Mill and led Rotary Club members in a rendition of "You Are My Sunshine" before concluding her speech. The Rotary Club of Spruce Pine would like to congratulate Rebecca Eggers-Gryder on her election win.

Doug Suddruth is the Public Relations Officer for the Spruce Pine Rotary Club.



Carolina. Calling herself a "country lawyer with home-spun wisdom," Eggers-Gryder was appointed to the position of Judge of the 24th District by Gov. Pat McCrory in January of 2015 to fill the seat vacated by Judge Gregory Horne's appointment to the North Carolina Supreme Court.

Dear Dave,

I've been out of college for a few years, and I have no debt. I'd like to start investing, so I'm thinking about buying a triplex, living in one of the apartments, and renting the other two. Should I get an interest-only loan for this?—Chad

Dear Chad,

Never, ever get an interest-only loan! If you can't make this idea happen on a 15-year, fixed-rate mortgage that takes no more than 25 percent of your take-home pay, then you can't afford this project.

Think about this too. If you buy a complex and live on the property, you'll have to set down and enforce some strict renter's guidelines. Living with renters can be tricky, because they'll have access to you 24 hours a day, and some of them will abuse the privilege. Then again, you'll have that kind of access to them as well. Not exactly a bad thing when you have people living in a complex you own.

Here's an option. What if you just bought a nice, inexpensive single family home for yourself? You wouldn't have the cash flow, but you will have the appreciation and a better chance of reselling down the road. Plus, if you want to invest further, there are always mutual funds.

Real estate plans work out just like you want them to only about half the time. Don't discount the risk and expense either!—Dave

Dear Dave,

I have to make a four-day business trip to Hawaii soon, and my wife would like to go along. It's okay with my boss, as long as we pay her way, and I would love to have her along. It will cost about \$1,500 for her to join me, and I make a little over \$100,000 a year. We're also debt-free, except for our home, and we're working hard to pay that off as soon as possible. What do you think?—Michael

Dear Michael,

If I were in your situation, and I told my wife I didn't think it was a good idea or we couldn't afford it, there's a good chance I'd be sleeping on the couch for a month. Take your lady with you!

You guys have a six-figure income, and you've got no debt but your home. So, a four-day trip to Hawaii for \$1,500? Yeah, I'm definitely doing that. It sounds to me like you two have done a great job with your money. That being the case, you deserve a little fun — like a trip for two to Hawaii for \$1,500. Even if you have to work, you'll still have lots of time together, and she'll be able to relax on the beach, swim and sightsee while you're taking care of business.

Have a great time, you two!—Dave

Dave Ramsey is America's trusted voice on money and business, and CEO of Ramsey Solutions. He has authored seven best-selling books, including *The Total Money Makeover*. The Dave Ramsey Show is heard by more than 12 million listeners each week on 575 radio stations and multiple digital platforms. Follow Dave on the web at [daveramsey.com](http://daveramsey.com) and on Twitter at [@DaveRamsey](https://twitter.com/DaveRamsey).

*His name shall be called Emmanuel  
Prince of Peace and Godly Love*



## Avery County

**Crossnore Christmas Bonfire**—Come celebrate the season singing carols with hot cider and cookies hosted by the Crossnore Community Enhancement and Town Council. Friday December 9 from 6:30 - 9:00 Bonfire is meant for everyone hosted by our small community for the greater high country area!

## Burke County

### **Burke County Chamber of Commerce-Morganton—**

Food Lion is joining forces with Feeding America and Our local food bank agencies for the Food Lion Feeds

2016'Holidays Without Hunger' Campaign.

The 2016 'Holidays Without Hunger' Campaign will be

Wednesday, Nov. 16 through Tuesday, Dec. 20, 2016.

We will donate Holiday Food Boxes to our local agency which is Burke United Christian Ministries. Cash Donations

purchased by our customers will be donated to BUCM as well.

Our goal is to sell 280,000 'Holidays Without Hunger' Boxes to provide 3 million meals and \$250,000 through cash donations or 2.75 million meals in our Food Lion Stores operating area. With the local Burke County Food Lion Stores contributing around 17,000-20,000 of those Meals during this 2016 Holiday Season.

The Casting for Hope team is super excited to officially announce our headlining band for the 4th Annual Casting for Hope Winter Music Fest at CoMMA Presented by John Greene Chrysler Dodge Jeep Ram, Morganton NC for December 17, 2016!

Mipso is coming back to Morganton for their fourth annual performance at the 4th Annual Casting for Hope Winter Music Fest at CoMMA—and we can't wait—and we know you can't either.

Here's the full line up of entertainment for December 17:

12:00-1:00: Michaela Pittman and Friends

1:15-2:15: Sweet Revenge

2:30-3:30: Bob Sinclair and The Big Deals

3:45-5:00: Carolina Blue

7:00-10:00: Jon Stickley of Jon Stickley Trio and Travis Book of the The Infamous Stringdusters will be opening the Mainstage event before Casting for Hope's favorite band, Mipso, takes the stage to end what is sure to be a great day of music and fundraising for a cause near to the heart of Morganton.

We have a dwindling number of VIP and Deluxe tickets left. Contact John or Taylor today to claim any remaining ones as they are going fast—just as a reminder, VIP tickets grant the bearers dinner at First Baptist Church-Morganton at 5:30 (if you've been to this before, you know what a great meal this is every year), entry to the after party, serviced by Countryside Barbeque, Appalachian Mountain Brewery and Cidery and Brown Mountain Bottleworks for free food and drinks after the show, and all day music; Deluxe tickets grant the bearer all day music and entry to the after party, serviced by Countryside Barbeque, Appalachian Mountain Brewery and Cidery and Brown Mountain Bottleworks for free food and drinks.

Music only tickets can be purchased from City of Morganton Municipal Auditorium at [www.commaonline.org](http://www.commaonline.org).

We can't wait to spend this awesome day with you! Be sure to get in touch with us if you have any questions via e-mail at [john@castingforhope.org](mailto:john@castingforhope.org) and [taylor@castingforhope.org](mailto:taylor@castingforhope.org)!

**Christian Business Men's Connection (Morganton)** - We are a movement of Men to Experience the Power of One God, the Value of One Man and the Leverage of One Team, resulting in the Spiritual Reproduction among Businessmen. Please join us for lunch at one of our weekly Bible study meetings: Tuesday, 12:00 noon at the Community House, Morganton. Contact: Wayne Giese, 828-413-5819.

### **Morganton Seventh-day Adventist-Burke County**

Drive-Thru Nativity - December 17th., at 5:00 p.m. Hop in the car, bring your family and friends and enjoy this live, free event! The Drive-Thru Nativity will take place at Silver Creek Adventist School, 2195 Jamestown Road, Morganton, N.C. 28655.

**Natural Remedies Demonstration by Lee Wellard** - December 4th., from 2:00 p.m., until 5:00 p.m. This event is free and will take place at the Morganton Seventh-day Adventist Church Gymnasium, 2187 Jamestown Road, Morganton, N.C. 28655. For more information, please contact Cindy Mercer at 870-510-8048.

**Agape Meal and Communion** - December 31st., at 5:00 p.m. Start the New Year off right with this special service. Enjoy a beautiful meal and fellowship, followed by candlelight communion service. All are welcome! This event is free and will take place at the Morganton Seventh-day Adventist Church, 2187 Jamestown Road, Morganton, N.C. 28655.

### **Bluegrass at the Rock:**

Blue Christmas Alzheimer's Benefit Concert  
December 17, 2016

**Pleasant View Baptist Church, Morganton, NC**, a theologically conservative SBC church, is seeking a pastor who is a dedicated teacher, counselor, proactive

leader, committed to community outreach. Prefer a graduate of seminary or similar college with some experience. Send resume to PVBC-SEARCH TEAM, 1834 US 70 E, Morganton, NC 28655

**Aglow International Hickory Lighthouse** -Hickory Lighthouse meetings are the second Saturday of each month.

**Valdese, NC** – November 14, 2016 – The Old Rock School will once again be lit with memory candles this holiday season. Starting on November 14, citizens are invited to sponsor a candle in the window of the building to honor a loved one. Last year the windows of the old schoolhouse burned bright with candles in memory of family, friends or classmates, and this year the tradition will continue. "We had a great response last year," states Morrisa Angi, Director of Community Affairs and Tourism for the Town of Valdese. "People loved the idea of driving by the Old Rock School during the holiday season and knowing that the candles in the windows were shining for their loved ones. We hope to continue this tradition annually." Candles may be sponsored for \$5.00 each and participants may pay by check, cash or credit card. The candles will shine through the end of the year and honorees will be mentioned on the Town of Valdese Facebook page. For more information, call the Valdese Community Affairs office at 828-879-2129.

## McDowell County

**Clinchfield Baptist Church (Marion)** – We are accepting resumes for Minister of Music. Current worship style is blended, using both traditional hymns, choral, and contemporary arrangements with soloist and choir. The position is a paid part-time position and involves organizing and leading the church's music ministries both adult and children. Baptist background preferred. Send resumes with references to [Clinchfieldbaptistchurch@frontier.com](mailto:Clinchfieldbaptistchurch@frontier.com) or to address 1150 East Court Street, Marion, NC 28752 Attn: Personnel Committee.

**Grace Community Church** - 5182 US 70 W Marion  
Christmas Eve Candlelight Service - Saturday, December 24th @ 5pm  
Christmas Candlelight Service- Sunday, December 25th @ 11am

**New HOPE of McDowell (Marion)** - New HOPE of McDowell is seeking a full-time Associate Director - Shelter Manger. New HOPE of McDowell is a non-profit domestic violence and sexual assault agency located in McDowell County, NC. This position includes benefits such as employee health insurance and paid vacation, personal, and sick time. The primary purpose of this position is to provide direct client services and advocacy to victims of domestic violence and sexual assault and their children as well assisting with carrying out the strategic goals and objectives of the organization, providing direct leadership and supervision to all Client Services Advocates, and operating under the direction and expectations of the Executive Director/Court Advocate and Board of Directors.

## Mitchell County

### **Bear Creek Baptist Church-Ledger**

Women's Prayer Breakfast at Helen's Restaurant on Friday December 2,2016 at Helen 8:00am. Ordering from menu. All women are invited.

Bear Creek Baptist Church Family would like to invite you and your family to join us as we celebrate the reason for the season----Jesus.

December 4, 6:00 pm Adult Christmas Cantata December 11, 6pm Christmas Music Concert---Refreshments following December 18, 6:00pm Children's Christmas Program followed by Youth Christmas Program Refreshments following December 25, 10:00 am Christmas Candlelight Service For more info contact Linda Duncan at 828-688-4331 or Rev. Bruce Cannon at 910-876-2109.

### **Calvary Chapel Asheville - Spruce Pine**

Calvary Chapel Church in Asheville is sponsoring a home fellowship and Bible Study in Spruce Pine. The fellowship is held on Thursday evenings at 7:00pm at 79 Sean Dr. (Estatoe area—off Brushy Creek Rd). We are studying the Gospel of John currently. Call John Jackson 760-793-3799 for information and directions. And bring your Bible.

### **First Baptist Church Spruce Pine**

First Baptist Church of Spruce Pine is seeking a part-time childcare provider for their toddler nursery. The position will require approximately eight hours per week consisting of 4.5 hours on Sunday morning, 1.5 hours on Sunday nights, and 2 hours on Wednesday nights plus other hours during special events as needed. The position will require a spirit-filled caring and responsible childcare provider who will focus on providing a safe environment for toddlers. Qualifications include experience in caring for young children, and the physical ability to meet their active needs; 2-3 references; and willingness to submit to a background check. CPR is required and First Aid is recommended and can be completed once employed. The hourly pay is \$15-\$20 per hour and is negotiable based on experience and qualifications.

Applicants should contact First Baptist Church, 125 Tappan Street, Spruce Pine, NC 28777. Phone # 828-765-9411 Ext. 301.

**NC Baptist Men & Women Assisting Firefighters:** Our local Baptist Men and women have been called to assist in serving the NC Forest Service Firefighters at the Mountain Training Facility in Crossnore, NC for approx... 14 days. If you are able to serve, call Dale Duncan 828-766-8282 or Angie 828-467-1091. We will be assisting the ladies who are cooking with cleaning and packing lunches. This will be done in 3 shifts, FIRST SHIFT: 5:30am-10:00am, SECOND SHIFT: 10:00am



# Bits 'n Pieces

– 5:00pm, THIRD SHIFT: 5:00pm – 10:00pm.

**Operation Christmas Child:** A total of 2,189 shoeboxes were collected this year during our annual relay drive. We will be traveling to Boone on Wednesday December 14th. and Thursday, December 15th to work at the processing center. If you're interested in joining them, please see Rodger or Nancy Hinshaw.

## **Historic Courthouse (Bakersville)**

The Historical Society will be co-sponsoring a Christmas Tour of Homes. Please keep watch for future info for details.

We now have our Christmas ornaments for sale in our office at the Historic Courthouse.

Every year since 2012, the Mitchell County Historical Society chooses an historical site in Mitchell County to be commemorated on these lovely ornaments. Our 2016 ornament honors the Old Kona Baptist Church.

## **Mitchell Baptist Association-Spruce Pine**

Mitchell Baptist Association is sponsoring a collection of things to be sent to those affected by the Hurricane.

## **Spruce Pine Farmer's Market Moves Indoors!**

This week is our first indoor market of the season on Saturday November 19th. We will have baked goods, fresh eggs, pork, grass fed beef, and more. The market is inside the Pizza Shop and Dry County Brewing Company from 12-4pm. Our next market is only a few weeks away on Saturday December 3rd with more holiday goodies for the season. The indoor markets will be once a month the 1st Saturday of the month from December through April. Come shop local with us.

## **Spruce Pine Main Street-Spruce Pine**

The Gingerbread House display will be November 26th-December 31st at the Visitors Center

Studio Tour will be December 4th-6th in Mitchell and Yancey Counties

## **TRAC Holiday Studio Tour Coming!**

The tour takes place December 2-4. Participating studios and galleries will be open from 10 to 5pm each day. The Toe River Arts Council hosts a reception the evening of the first tour day, December 2 from 5:30 to 7:30 at their Spruce Pine Gallery (269 Oak Avenue).

Each day determined visitors travel the highways and back roads in search of that perfect piece of art and the creative artist behind. This is the second of two open Studio Tours sponsored by the Toe River Arts Council this year. And it has been happening for over two decades in the beautiful Toe River Valley.

## **Holiday Events at Trinity Church!**

Christmas Eve at Trinity Church, Saturday, December 24, 2016, 5:00pm, will begin with a pre-service concert of music for three ladies followed by a Solemn Eucharist.

Christmas Day will be Christmas Lessons and Carols with Eucharist at 10:30am. Join us in singing all of your favorite Christmas carols.

Trinity Church is located in the English Woods neighborhood of Spruce Pine at 15 Hemlock Ave.

**Tipton Hill Community Foundation (Tipton Hill)** – Country Breakfast, the first Saturday each month, 7:30 – 10:30 am, at the old Methodist Church, across from Jerry's Store. Come join us for homemade sausage, scrambled eggs, gravy, jellies, juice and coffee. Eat in or take-out, all funds support the Tipton Hill Community Foundation.

## **Yancey County**

## **Calvary Chapel Asheville - Spruce Pine**

Calvary Chapel Church in Asheville is sponsoring a home fellowship and Bible Study in Spruce Pine. The fellowship is held on Thursday evenings at 7:00pm at 79 Sean Dr. (Estatoe area—off Brushy Creek Rd). We are studying the Gospel of John currently. Call John Jackson 760-793-3799 for information and directions. And bring your Bible.

## **Higgins Memorial United Methodist Church**

Bible Study Fellowship (BSF) Men's Class meeting in Burnsville announces that its new study year will begin September 13th at 6:55 pm and the class is being hosted by Higgins Methodist – 101 N. Main Street, Burnsville. This year's study will focus on the Gospel of John.

Bible Study Fellowship (BSF) is an international and interdenominational Bible class for men of all ages, denominations, geographic locations and backgrounds – all men living in Western North Carolina are encouraged to join the study. The group, for beginner or advanced Bible students, will meet from 6:55 to 8:55 pm each Tuesday evening through May – just show up any Tuesday evening beginning September 13th to join the group and the study.

For more local information, call Mike Lawrence – 904-254-6303 (jamesmichaellawrence@gmail.com) or Harvey Schestag – 828-284-0707 (harveyschestag@gmail.com) or go to [www.bsfindernational.org](http://www.bsfindernational.org) for comprehensive information about BSF.

**Laurel Branch Baptist Church (Burnsville)** – Seeking bi-vocational pastor, please email resume to [fioreecapps@frontier.com](mailto:fioreecapps@frontier.com).

## **TRAC**

Its annual meeting time at TRAC—40 years of connecting our community with the arts. It starts at 5:30pm on Wednesday, December 14 at the Arts Resource Center above the Spruce Pine Gallery. It's a potluck repast (We'll provide the paper goods and beverages) followed by a short meeting to talk over the year's happenings and introduce the new members of the Board of Directors. It will be fun and it will be filling, friendly, and festive. Any questions, call the Burnsville office, 828.682.7215.

## **HOLIDAY STUDIO TOUR**

AND, oh my goodness. It's almost time for the Holiday Studio Tour featuring some of the best artists in the nation and the best setting for a journey to the arts.

**December 2-4/Friday-Sunday**

**10am to 5pm**

**with an open-to-the-public-please-come reception**

**December 2/Friday**

**5:30 to 7:30pm**

## **West Burnsville Baptist Church**

Sixteenth Annual West Burnsville Baptist Church Christmas Pageant Jesus - His Story

We invite you to begin your Christmas season this year with a celebration of the life of Christ through drama and music at West Burnsville Baptist Church. Thrill to the proclamation of the angels that Jesus is born. Marvel at his ministry as the blind see and the lame walk. Mourn with Mary and his disciples as Jesus is crucified and rejoice with them as they discover that He is alive! His story does not end there but proclaims the promise of life everlasting in our heavenly home. The Pageant opens on Wednesday, November 30 at 7 PM, continues Thursday, December 1 and Saturday, December 3 at 7 PM and concludes on Sunday, December 4 at 3 PM. West Burnsville Baptist Church is located one mile west of Burnsville town square, just off US 19E on West Burnsville Church Road. Seating is available forty-five minutes before the performance.

Reservations for groups of six or more may be made by calling 828-675-4729 or 828-682-3990. While there is no admission charge, your love offering is gratefully accepted.

**Yancey County Meals on Wheels (Burnsville)** – Volunteers needed to deliver meals to Yancey County shut-ins, any weekday, 10:30 am - noon. If you would like to volunteer, please call the Yancey County Senior Center at 828-682-6011.

## **Mayland Community College**

Small Business Center- Allen Cook, Director, E-Mail: [tcok@mayland.edu](mailto:tcok@mayland.edu)  
Address: 200 Mayland Ln, Spruce Pine, NC 28777, Telephone Number: 828-766-1295 To register for free classes, call Alan Cook at 828-766-1295 or email [tcok@mayland.edu](mailto:tcok@mayland.edu)

Free online webinar: Tax Tips for your New Business: This webinar covers the major tax issues faced by your small business. Topics discussed include selecting a business structure, understanding business taxes, IRS recordkeeping requirements, and IRS help available to you. Call 828-766-1258, if you would like a copy of the accompanying power point to this webinar or would like to schedule free confidential business counseling. Register online: <https://www.ncsbc.net/workshop.aspx?ekey=310360161>

Free online webinar: Avoiding the Biggest Tax Mistakes in your Small Business. Learn on your schedule at your convenience with this online class: Learn about tax benefits available and how best to avoid common mistakes small business owners may make. Topics include common questions to small business owners: best practices, record keeping tips, mileage/personal/business use of vehicle, IRS requirements for hiring new employees, home office requirements. Register for this class online: <https://www.ncsbc.net/workshop.aspx?ekey=310360162>

# Rumours Beauty Salon

Women • Men • Children  
*By Appointment*



- Hair
- Perms
- Cuts
- Highlighting

Hours:  
M-F  
8-6pm

  
2272 Hwy 70 East  
Marion, NC 28752  
**828-659-8159**

Vicky Hutcherson/Niki Hess  
Owner/Hairdresser



# Morganton Seventh-Day Adventist Church

## The Joy of Giving!

By Rick and Cindy Mercer  
Burke County

When I was younger I loved to throw a ball upon the roof of our house and watch it roll up and then roll back down to me. I would repeat the process multiple times...only to watch it roll up and then roll right back down, over and over and over again. I could stand there doing that for what seemed like an eternity!

Believe it or not, some people would actually describe their Christian experience like that--up and down, up and down. Day in and day out, the process seems to repeat itself. They attempt to pray, they study the Bible regularly, but it seems there is no life to their Christian experience.

Is it possible to attend church consistently, feasting on a spiritual banquet each week, and still die of a spiritual heart attack? Without a clear focus on service, our spiritual arteries become clogged so it seems. For this reason, Jesus said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35).

You see, it is in giving that we truly get the blessing. As we share with others what Jesus has done for us, our own spiritual experience is strengthened. The more we give away our faith, the more our faith grows. It grows when we share it.

In one of my favorite books *Steps to Christ* we read, "If you will go to work as Christ designs that His disciples shall, and win souls for Him, you will feel the need for a deeper experience and a greater knowledge in divine things, and will hunger and thirst after righteousness. You will plead with God, and your faith will be strengthened, and your soul will drink deeper drafts at the well of salvation."

That sounds like a pretty awesome plan!

I know from experience if we really want to be overcomers, we will do everything and anything necessary to reduce "self" and the only way to achieve this is to completely immerse yourself in becoming interested in the salvation of others. In other words, shift from being "inward-focused" and become "outward-focused."

If you want a vibrant, growing Christian experience...simply share your faith. Make a prayer list. Begin praying for your family members, neighbors, or co-workers who do not know Christ. Share truth-filled literature with people God leads into your life. You may even find that the Lord leads you to open your home for a small group Bible study. The Lord may even lead you to become a missionary...abroad or possibly in your own community!

No matter the direction that God leads you, be sensitive to His leading. You will be amazed at how you will grow spiritually by getting involved in sharing your faith. When we witness to others, the soul that is saved may very well be our own, for it is always "more blessed to give than to receive."

Let this be a Christmas season like no other!! A great way to begin is to share the timeless story of the birth of Jesus Christ and his amazing redemptive story. Simply give the gift that keeps on giving---the gift of Jesus.

Blessings from your friends at the Morganton Seventh-day Adventist Church!

Pastor Rick and Cindy Mercer pastor the Morganton Seventh-day Adventist Church at 2187 Jamestown Road, Morganton. They can be reached at 870-820-3549 or [cjmercer@tds.net](mailto:cjmercer@tds.net). Check out [www.morgantonsda.org](http://www.morgantonsda.org). Their passion is to share the love of Jesus with all who will listen.



## Judgement

### Six Biblical Words We're in Danger of Losing Forever (Part 6)

By Jason Koon  
Burke County

This is the sixth part of a series dedicated to exploring some of the great historical truths of the faith, that I believe, seem to be in danger of disappearing or being forever altered.



#### Judgement

"Only God can judge me!" We've all heard somebody use this phrase; we know where they're coming from and if you're like me you recognize a certain level of biblical truth in it. Yet, it still makes my hair stand on end just a little bit. While it is true that only God has the authority to judge, this statement leaves out one important piece of perspective; God will judge me one day. I know what that sounds like in this culture. I recognize that the Church growth experts tell me I should not even be attempting to write this article, but the truth remains that the Bible says that you and I, and all of humanity will one day stand before God in judgement. According to Scripture that is reality, a reality that our church-culture seems to be losing sight of.

It seems that many professing Christians today take God's Glory and Holiness much more lightly than even a generation ago—and to be honest—it scares me a little bit. Nobody in Scripture who experienced God's presence took that kind of attitude. Look at a few examples with me: Joshua 5:14 when Joshua stood before the angel (or deity, we're not quite sure) who identified himself as the commander of the Lord's Army, "Joshua fell facedown to the ground." In Isaiah 6:5 the prophet came face to face with the Glory of God and replied, "Woe is me! For I am lost...a man of unclean lips," and Job after God answered him in the whirlwind responds by saying, "I had heard of you by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees you; therefore, I despise myself, and repent in dust and ashes" (Job 42:5-6). Scripture is clear that coming face to face with the Lord, is an humbling—and likely—a terrifying experience, the biblical witness is unequivocal on this topic.

That's not to say that God isn't a God of Grace, Love, and Compassion, He is. He has always related to His people with Grace and there is forgiveness freely offered to even the vilest offender. Truly our God is a God of Love forgiveness, and compassion, but He is also a God of justice; a God who is furiously angry toward the sin, oppression, and pain that we cause one another by our selfishness and callous disregard for His truth. God is supremely patient with us, but there will come a day when He will have had enough and Jesus will return to finally put an end to the sin, shame, suffering, pain, and death that has plagued humanity for Millennia. We usually take these kinds of statements as comforting thoughts, and they are for those of us who believe, but what about sin? What of the people who refuse to let go of their sin and trust Christ's work on the cross? What of the rebel who refuses to lay down his weapons and concede defeat? One day our sin will be eternally banished from the presence of God. I pray I never hold on so tightly to it that I am in danger of being banished with it. It is true that only the all-powerful creator of the universe can judge me, but that is not something to take lightly.

Jason Koon is Pastor of Bridge42 Church in Morganton, NC.



## Seasons Greetings



Jesus is the  
**REASON**  
for the  
Season



**828-678-3388** 394 East Main St.  
Burnsville, NC



**ASHEVILLE ELDERLY AND DISABLED VAN  
GOES TO ASHEVILLE MON. THRU FRI. 7:00 AM - 4:30 PM  
CALL: 828-682-6144**

### "Serving the Community"

**Trips for December Merry Christmas!**

December 6th - Hamrick's

December 15th - WNC AG Center for Shadrack's Light Show (\$3.00 per person for van to enter light show) Leave at 4:00pm from Senior Center 12/15

December 20th - Walmart/Khols - Eat at Cheddars



# Concord Baptist Church

## David's "Golden Years" song

By Bradley Boone  
Yancey County

2nd Samuel 22 records the "great song" of David. It is 51 verses long and deserves to be read by anyone who is down trodden or distraught with the circumstances of life. It is interesting to note that this chapter mirrors almost exactly the 18th Psalm which again shows us that the book of psalms is made up in large part with the songs that David wrote at different times in his life and they are not recorded in any particular chronological order. This particular Psalm that we have before us today, most Bible scholars agree, was probably the last psalm that David wrote. If you will study the 21st Chapter of 2nd Samuel, you will find that David went out to battle and "waxed faint" in verse 15 and was almost killed by a giant of the Philistines. This event in David's life prompted the men of Israel to demand that David not go back into battle for fear of him losing his life. This event shows us the failing health of David as his body has given way to the ravages of time. The shadows are now long in David's life and this man who as a young boy killed bears and lions and even a Giant is now relegated to sitting at the palace while others went forth to battle. David's spirit was still in the fight, but his body had simply worn out.

This is the backdrop for the song we find recorded in 2nd Samuel 22. This psalm is most instructive to us about how David approached his senior years. As folks grow old there seems to be two options one can take. You can become bitter about the limitations that your body has placed on you, or you can become sweeter as your relationship with the Lord becomes more real and your fellowship with the Lord becomes more sweet. In this Psalm, we see David with his heart fixed on God during his "Golden Years". He shows us that though his body may not be able to perform as it once did he can still be used of the Lord to be a blessing to others. As you read through this psalm you will find that David gives all credit for any good thing that he has done in his life to the Lord and that he has depended on the personal relationship that he has had with him all the days of his life. We see in this song that the Lord has made David's way perfect and one of the most profound utterances is that he has done all this for David because he "delighted" in David (VS20). No one can tell why God would decide to delight himself in a human being but I sure am glad that he does! This song ends with David looking into the future and thinking on what will be in years to come for his family. The last verse says that God has shown mercy to David and will continue to show mercy to his seed for evermore. As David looks at Solomon, who is being prepared to take over the kingdom, it must have brought David much joy to see that he was continuing in the path of serving the Lord. No doubt many of you reading this today find comfort in knowing that your children and grandchildren are in Church and interested in the service of the Lord. It is a testimony to your prayers and commitment to raise children in the way that they should go.

Bradley Boone is the pastor of Concord Baptist Church in Burnsville, NC





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# YOUR GOVERNMENT PAGES

## NC Senate District 47

As I prepare to begin my fourth term next month as your state senator, I am profoundly grateful for your support and the opportunity to serve the citizens of the 47th Senate District. I will continue to work on policy issues that are important to my constituents and align with my core values. In reflecting upon the story and celebration of Jesus' birth during this Christmas season, my thoughts turn to the miracle of each and every birth and the knowledge that we are all the children of God and made in His image. Unfortunately, not all babies experience this miracle; their lives are violently ended before they draw their first breath. I am thankful that two thousand years ago, a mother, in difficult circumstances and against many odds, made the decision to give birth to our Savior and light of the world, Jesus Christ. May we reflect on this during the season of celebration of His birth.

As always, please share your thoughts with me on this or other issues related to state government by emailing me at [ralph.hise@ncleg.net](mailto:ralph.hise@ncleg.net) or calling me at 919-733-3460.



Sen. Ralph Hise  
[Ralph.Hise@ncleg.net](mailto:Ralph.Hise@ncleg.net)  
919-733-3460

## NC House District 85



Representative  
Josh Dobson  
[Josh.Dobson@ncleg.net](mailto:Josh.Dobson@ncleg.net)  
919-733-5862

I don't think anybody was more shocked than I was at the results this past week. Anything can definitely happen in politics! I like everyone else was going to have concerns regardless of who won the election. Although, his demeanor is not always as I had hoped, I agree with many of his policies. I agree that bad trade deals has cost areas like Western North Carolina jobs, I agree that China has manipulated it's currency at the expense of the United States, and I agree that we need to continually strengthen our military. I am hopeful that the Trump administration can correct many of these bad policies.

However, the thing I am most optimistic about is the straightforward way he has addressed the matter of the Supreme Court. I take great comfort in the fact that President Elect Trump has given the American people a list of 21 individuals he would consider for the Supreme Court. This, I believe is the most important decision the next President of the United States will make. I take great comfort in this list of 21 potential nominees. Mr. Trump said he wanted judges who are pro-life and pro-2nd Amendment. Each of these potential justices meets these criteria.

I too am very much in support of our 2nd amendment rights and I continue to believe our rights should be protected and expanded. I am also unapologetically pro-life and will continue to fight for the rights of the unborn. There are many complicated issues that we at the state level and our elected representatives at the federal level must address such as education, healthcare, and taxes. I believe we should always work to find common ground on these issues and work together to find solutions. However, on issues such as our second amendment rights and the issue of life, I frankly don't see much room for compromise. I am encouraged and hopeful that Mr. Trump will nominate a justice to the Supreme Court that upholds our conservative view on expanding gun rights and our sacred belief that all life was created by God and should be cherished.

## NC House District 118

Thanks to prayers and support from my constituents, I was honored to win election to a third term in the N.C. House of Representatives.

There is no better scorecard than the one revealed after Election Day. Voters in Haywood, Madison and Yancey Counties showed on Nov. 8 that they approve of the job my colleagues and I have done in turning our great state around.

From lower taxes and fewer regulations to more than 300,000 jobs created and the highest teacher pay in state history, the record shows North Carolina is heading in the right direction. We have much to look forward to in the coming years, and I am humbled to be a part of our continued progress.

Getting the word out to constituents about our successes during the campaign was hard work, but it doesn't compare to the hard work that comes with a legislative session of the General Assembly. My constituents need a voice in Raleigh, and I am looking forward to tackling the challenges of a legislative session on their behalf.

As always, please get in touch with my office or me with any questions or concerns about state government. Whether you need help dealing with a state agency, or you would like to share your thoughts about legislation before the General Assembly, I am always happy to hear from my constituents.

To all my constituents: thank you for your vote of confidence on Election Day. With your continued support, there is nothing we can't achieve together.



Rep. Michele D. Presnell  
[Michele.Presnell@ncleg.net](mailto:Michele.Presnell@ncleg.net)  
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# YOUR GOVERNMENT PAGES

## US House of Representatives NC District 11



Congressman  
Mark Meadows  
202-225-6401  
[www.meadows.house.gov](http://www.meadows.house.gov)

I am overwhelmed with gratitude that the voters of this district placed their confidence in me to continue serving them in Congress. I want to thank all of the volunteers, supporters, and staff who worked extremely hard and dedicated their time to make this possible. It's an honor to be your Congressman, and moving forward, I remain committed to fighting for conservative principles and to using my voting card for the people to whom it truly belongs -- the constituents of North Carolina's Eleventh District.

Enjoyed spending time with the next President of the United States, Donald J. Trump!



*Enjoyed spending time with the next President of the United States, Donald J. Trump!*



*With Governor Mike Pence and his wife, Karen, in Greensboro NC*



*With Donald J. Trump and Rep. John J. Duncan, Jr. at the #TrumpPencerally in Fletcher, NC! Unbelievable turnout and energy in the room*



*Spending time with Shirley Hise of Mitchell County.*

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## It Takes Two...Mediums That Is

By Kate Groff  
Yancey and Mitchell Counties



Visitors on the Toe River Arts Council's Holiday Studio Tour are often surprised to find more than one craft showcased at their favorite artist's studio. But it's not unusual. The diversity of the arts in this area is infectious, and many artists train in more than one medium. TRAC invites tour takers this December 2-4 (10 to 5pm each day), to enjoy and appreciate these multi-skilled creators, painters who sculpt, potters who paint, and some who seem to have a hand in everything.

Rolf Holmquist (#32) is an accomplished sculptor and draftsman. His whimsical birdhouses and birdfeeders are made from recycled architectural bits and pieces, door frames, windowsills, tin roofing, as well as furniture parts such as chair legs. "I don't throw much out," says Rolf. "I often find boxes of odds and ends dropped off on my porch." However, Rolf is also known for his renderings in graphite, his portraits of mountain folk, especially those associated with arts and crafts. He was recently commissioned to complete a "portrait" of Mt. Mitchell for its centennial event.

Shawn Ireland (#71) is another artist who works in both 2 and 3-dimensions. Although he admits that most of his days are spent at the wheel, his evenings are devoted to painting and drawing—landscapes from Italy, buildings that seem cemented to the ground, transient still-lives. "I love making things at the wheel or the easel, and I love being lost in the moments of making or "in the search".

Lisa Joerling (#34), an artist who works in figurative clay and metal. Her aluminum Christmas tree ornaments are as popular as her bent wire earrings that she often combines with iridescent semi-precious stones. Her work in clay is commonly of human, caricatured, and animals that beg to be picked up and stroked. Of her jewelry she says, "it's very simple yet subtle, with lines and forms that are hammered and textured." And her clay work? "Whatever interests me on that particular day."

Interested in fanciful art? Kate Miller (a visiting artist at Selena Glass and Metal, #52) is just the clay artist. She moved from rural upstate New York a few years ago, returned to working in clay after 40 years, and picked up creating fairy houses—of course for fairies and for fun, fantastical creatures. But when she wants a quieter time, she sews landscape collages rendered from her own photographs of the environment around her new home. "I feel so lucky living here. I never get bored."

And finally, Yaffa Todd. (#77) She and her partner Jeff have been working in glass for over two decades, creating handblown art from paperweights. But her education spans two mediums—glass and clay. "Clay has always been a way to create a 3-dimensional canvas, an extension of my early paintings. Each piece is a study of color, representing a one-of-a-kind expression of a moment in time."

Studio Tour visitors may add to the pleasures of their journey through the Blue Ridge by reflecting on the talent behind the fabrics that glisten with gems, the books covered in textiles, paintings framed in ceramic designs, pots that tell stories, or sculptures that carry paintings. Some people paint within the lines, others are only content when stretching, crossing, or blending the lines. Many TRAC artists wear many hats; this December we invite you to meet as many of these versatile and multi-talented folks as you can. One of the best things is that these artists and the other participants have a sampling of their work on display (geographically arranged) at the Spruce Pine Gallery, located at 269 Oak Avenue, until December 31. So if you want to know who's doing what where, stop by the gallery between 10:30 and 5pm, Tuesday-Saturday. And if you miss the tour, the showcase will remain up until December 31. And remember, both the tour and the exhibit at the gallery are free and open to the the public.

For more information, call 828-682-7215, 828-682-0520, visit [toeriverarts.org](http://toeriverarts.org), or email [trac@toeriverarts.org](mailto:trac@toeriverarts.org). Guides are available at both TRAC galleries and at businesses around the region. TRAC is a non-profit arts organization dedicated to connecting our community with the arts—all the arts.

*Kate Groff is the Programs Coordinator for the Toe River Arts Council.*

*Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel. Isaiah 7:14*





Christmas at Mitchell County SafePlace

By Tracy Black  
Mitchell County

As the Christmas season of 2016 begins, I want to tell you about one Christmas miracle that happened here at SafePlace.

Several years ago, a group of teenagers who worked the evening shift at one of our local fast-food restaurants pooled their money together to "adopt" a large family for Christmas, and we had just the family staying in our emergency shelter. Our beleaguered mother of four provided a Christmas wish list for her children.... ranging in age from 2 to 16. The fast-food elves' enthusiasm was contagious, and soon their shift manager joined in on the fun. The shift manager adopted the mother, the girls shopped for the two little girls, and the boys took on the two older boys. After weeks of exhaustive shopping for dolls, makeup, video games, boom boxes, music cd's, and winter coats, I was called to pick up the gifts on December 23rd. By the time I got back to the shelter I was told that the mother had decided to take her family to another state, and they were indeed already gone! How was I going to explain to these young people that their gifts were not going to go to their intended recipients? I just knew they would be disillusioned about giving so generously and would, in all probability, never want to extend themselves again. After a fitful night of fretting, I awoke Christmas Eve and then it happened!

My phone rang and it was the voice of my friend who worked at a domestic violence shelter program in another county. Through her panic she explained that on that very morning they had gotten a large family into the shelter. Since her Christmas gift money was down to less than \$25 she had no idea of how she could come up with gifts for these children. She wondered if we might have an extra toy or two we could spare. I told her I would be right there. My friend and I went through the gifts and they were all appropriate for these children. My friend took the clothes back to Wal-Mart and exchanged them for the correct sizes. This family had one of the best Christmases they had ever had and they were comforted to know others cared about them when they had to flee their home on Christmas Eve! I called the teenagers from the fast food restaurant and explained to them what had happened. They were not disillusioned at all; in fact, they were thrilled to know they had been able to play a part in a Christmas miracle.

If you would like to help provide a Christmas miracle for a family fleeing domestic violence, call SafePlace or a shelter program where you live. I guarantee you will gain far more than you give!!!

Tracy Black is the Associate Director for Mitchell County SafePlace. She can be reached at 828-765-4015 or [tracyblack@bellsouth.net](mailto:tracyblack@bellsouth.net).



Retirement

By David Burleson  
Mitchell County

Over the last 35 years I have been one of the most fortunate people alive. I have been given the opportunity to work with wonderful people and live in the greatest place in the world. There is no doubt that Avery County is blessed with some of the finest educators, students, parents and citizens as any place in our country.

Over the last six years I am very proud of what we have been able to accomplish together for children in Avery County. Our test scores have risen as the number of families on free and reduced lunch has also risen. Our students with disabilities and those who speak English as a second language along with our most gifted students, have made excellent progress. Our students, as a whole, have continued to excel in academics, the arts, and athletics and in also giving back to our community. Our school system has become a model in drop-out prevention strategies, alternative suspension programs, pre-school programs, and safety and crisis programs for students, staff and the community. We have much to be proud of because of the wonderful students, excellent staff, and supportive parents and community.

I want to personally thank our entire community for what you have done for me and my family, the support we have had, the prayers we felt, and the commitment you have made to children over the last six years. I truly believe that when one door closes another one opens for me and my family and this is the case now. At this time in my life and after much prayerful consideration, I have decided to retire on June 30, 2017. For some time, I believe the Lord has been leading me to full time Christian ministry. That opportunity has been provided to me as the Executive Director of Burke United Christian Ministries, a position I will begin on July 1, 2017.


I want to thank everyone in our community for the lessons you have taught me over the last six years, and for the opportunities to work with you to help our students in Avery County. Those lessons I learned and experiences we shared will be tremendous assets as I move to another phase in my life. Please know that you remain in my prayers, and thoughts as I hope we remain in yours. Never forget what we have been able to do together and remember the foundation that has already been laid. I especially want to thank the Avery Board of Education for providing me the opportunity to "come home" to finish out my career.

I encourage you to do all possible to focus on the needs of our students; to work collaboratively to help each student be successful and to continue to do all possible to move Avery County forward. We still have several months together to make a difference for our students.


Please know I wish you the very best and I look forward to hearing of your many future successes.

David Burleson is Superintendent of the Avery County Schools





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# Making Each Moment Count

Most people I've met have a to-do list written down somewhere in their heart of hearts. It has nothing to do with chores around the house or errands that need to be run. No naughty or nice. No checking it twice. This list is different from the reminders we might leave stuck to the refrigerator or beside the coffee pot.

It's a list of things I'd like to do when I have time, a catalog of friends I haven't spoken with in years.

People I need to thank and forgive. Misdeeds and hurts that call out for grace and forgiveness.

Memories that need to be cherished and stories that need to be shared.

Now is the season of hope and new beginnings. It is the time of possibility and opportunity rooted in love that is bigger than us all. Embrace each moment and squeeze out every ounce that you can.

Call up an old friend and celebrate the journey. Pile the kids in the car and seek out the lights of Christmas.

Hold your breath, swallow your pride and say, "I'm sorry." Stand in the yard one night all by yourself.

Look to the stars and find the one that is calling you to follow. Then follow with all your heart.

May God's love and grace fill your heart as you prepare a place for the Christ child to be born.



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## Community of Promise for Tipton Hill

Mitchell County

In a time of complexities and uncertainties, there is still a lot of "great" taking place right here at home in western North Carolina. A celebration of the work of 64 rural communities in the mountains took place on November 12th at the 67th WNC Honors Awards Program. Over 250 community leaders from 15 counties and the Eastern Band of Cherokee attended the luncheon to be inspired, recognized and rewarded for their exceptional community development programs at the DoubleTree by Hilton.

"Our rural communities are dedicated and work tirelessly on numerous projects," states Linda Lamp, Executive Director of WNC Communities. "These communities make a great difference in the quality of life for all of us in the mountains. It is only appropriate that we honor them and draw on their continuous positive example of neighbor helping neighbor."

Communities of Promise receive a cash award of \$1,000 and were chosen because of the initiatives implemented by the community that show promise and can be replicated around the region. The Tipton Hill Community Foundation garnered this prestigious award for 2016.

Tipton Hill Community Foundation was honored for their plans to collaborate with the Mitchell County and North Carolina Historical Societies, as well as the County Commissioners to declare the approximately 100-year-old church a historical site. This would aid in completing improvements to the second floor for a community museum when occupancy is granted. To raise funds, Tipton Hill mailed letters to former members of the church providing opportunities to purchase plaques in honor or in memory of a loved one to be mounted on a designated memory wall in the facility. This letter campaign realized over \$4,000 with contributions still coming in. In addition, Tipton Hill is a hot spot for Internet access, which has enabled them to collaborate with the Center for Rural Health opening a tele-medicine clinic, providing remote diagnosis and treatment of patients through telecommunications technology.

Generous sponsorships from Harrah's Cherokee Casino Resort, Harrah's Valley River Casino & Hotel, Biltmore Farms, Inc., Duke Energy, Mission Health, The McClure Fund, Buncombe County Farm Bureau, Carolina Farm Credit, First Citizens Bank and Wells Fargo made it possible to award a record amount of \$39,500 to the 64 community centers and clubs throughout the mountains for innovative approaches to addressing community needs.

Community centers and clubs across the region voluntarily participate in the annual WNC Honors Awards by submitting an application to WNC Communities in September. The 64 communities involved in this year's program represented a total of 5,375 volunteers with an impressive 158,000 hours in outreach programs dedicated to beautification, conservation, education, health and wellness, as well as collaborative efforts with government, extension, community colleges, nonprofits and businesses, all in service to rural communities. In addition, the collective fundraising efforts of these communities brought in over \$635,000 for everything from neighbor helping neighbor to after school programs, senior meal sites, farmland preservation, a tele-medicine clinic, and events highlighting our region's great art, craft, and music traditions.



Tipton Hill Community members (left to right): Kit Faulk, Arlene Byrd, Anne Peterson and Mack Peterson presented Community of Promise Award by Jo Ray with Harrah's Cherokee Casino Resort. Photo provided by rbmcgee portraits



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# Graham Children's Health Services

## Summer Food Program

Schell McCall, Executive Director  
Yancey County

Giving Thanks for Food and Volunteers – 2016 Summer Food Program a Success.

Burnsville, NC (10/26/16) – The 2016 Summer Food Program was once again a tremendous success! Spearheaded by Graham Children's Health Services, this collaborative effort provided 100 families with 600 food deliveries directly to their doorsteps. Recipient families all have children who benefit from the free/reduced lunch program at school or Head Start during the school months – an important resource considering that the poverty rate for children under 18 in Yancey County far exceeds the statewide rate.

Thanks to incredible community volunteers, this summer's deliveries included fresh and locally grown produce that was purchased from local farmers through



Children, Reconciliation House, Helping Hands of Yancey County, and generous community donors. This season's fresh produce included broccoli, bell peppers, blueberries, cabbage, collards, corn, cucumbers, garlic, green beans, jalapeños, kale, lettuce, okra, onions, potatoes, rainbow chard, squash, tomatoes and zucchini...all locally grown!

This year, through a generous monetary donation, we were able to include a copy of the New York Times bestselling cookbook GOOD AND CHEAP: Eat Well on \$4/Day. The Good and Cheap project began as author Leanne Brown's



graduate thesis in food studies. Her goal was to create truly delicious, healthful recipes that meet the SNAP (food stamps) budget of \$4 a day. "Eating is one of life's greatest pleasures, and GOOD AND CHEAP teaches that kitchen skill, not budget, is the key to great food." The cookbook features 152 recipes that maximize every ingredient and offers tips on economical shopping and cooking methods, and the simple extras that make everything taste better. "There are thousands of barriers that keep us from eating in a way that nourishes our bodies and satisfies our tastes—but money should not be one of them" states Jennifer Mandel from Workman Publishing.

The Summer Food Program is truly a collaborative effort that involves tremendous community volunteer dedication to make it happen. Many thanks to volunteers from Graham Children's Health Services, Reconciliation House, Dig In! Community Garden, Yancey County Cooperative Extension Office, Blue Ridge Partnership for Children, AMY Regional Library – Bookmobile and Yancey



TRACTOR and donated by Dig In! Yancey Community Garden; food staples purchased through Reconciliation House; healthy recipes; Chop, Chop cooking magazines for kids; listings of area resources; and donated children's books that were collected by the Yancey Library, Blue Ridge Partnership for

Children, Reconciliation House, Helping Hands of Yancey County, and generous community donors. This season's fresh produce included broccoli, bell peppers, blueberries, cabbage, collards, corn, cucumbers, garlic, green beans, jalapeños, kale, lettuce, okra, onions, potatoes, rainbow chard, squash, tomatoes and zucchini...all locally grown!

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Branch, TRACTOR, Yancey County DSS, Yancey County Schools, Yancey County Transportation Authority, Burnsville Ingles, First Baptist Church of Burnsville, Higgins Methodist Church, St. Thomas Episcopal Church, Helping Hands of Yancey County, residents of Mountain Air community, and the Yancey community at large for providing over 420 volunteer hours.

Some quotes from this year's program:

• "My son liked to wait by the window, watching for our box to be delivered. He tried food that he normally wouldn't eat." – Food Box Recipient

• "Helping to pack and deliver boxes was a really valuable experience for our employees. It gave them a really important insight into the lives of their clients, and I think they are doing their job with more compassion." – Volunteer

According to Schell McCall, Director of Graham Children's Health Services, "Working together, the amazing volunteer agencies and individuals provided over 300 Yancey County children with nutritious food to get them through the summer. We are so grateful for the tremendous outpouring of volunteer effort and the generous support from The Yancey Fund and Community Foundation of Western North Carolina. The Summer Food Program is a wonderful example of what can be accomplished when many agencies and committed volunteers come together with a shared mission."

Program funding from previous grantors has ended and we are looking for funding for 2017 for this established, respected, broad-based community initiative. This program is a proven way to reach Yancey County families living with food insecurity and poverty – often the hardest to reach – and to engage these families and share community resources.

To learn more, to donate, or to get involved with the 2017 Summer Food Program, contact Graham Children's Health Services at 682-7899 or schell@grahamchildrens.org.



Schell McCall is the Executive Director of Graham Children's Health Services (GCHS). Since 1997, GCHS has implemented initiatives designed to address community-identified health needs in Mitchell and Yancey Counties. Each initiative is a collaborative effort that involves, educates, and unites the community.



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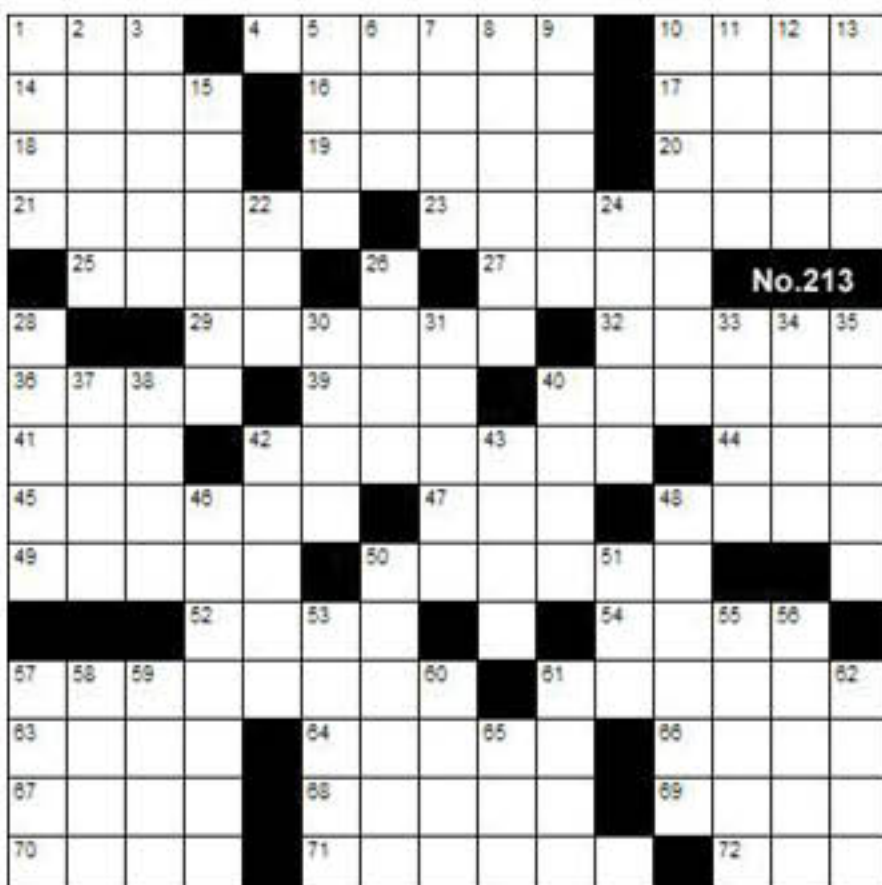


# Crossword

## ACROSS

1 God \_\_\_\_\_ raised this Jesus to life (Acts 2:32)  
 4 No, I \_\_\_\_\_ on paying you for it (2 Sam 24:24)  
 10 \_\_\_\_\_ shall dwell there, and satyrs shall dance there (Isa 13:21) (KJV)  
 14 the poison of \_\_\_\_\_ is under their lips (Rom 3:13) KJV  
 16 In the beginning God created the heaven and the \_\_\_\_\_ (Gen 1:1)  
 17 Consider the ravens: for they neither sow nor \_\_\_\_\_ (Luke 12:24)  
 18 Jacob's first wife (Gen 29:16-18)  
 19 the men \_\_\_\_\_ an oath to each other (Gen 26:31)  
 20 give notice of the \_\_\_\_\_ when the days of purification would (Acts 21:26)  
 21 the \_\_\_\_\_, and the chameleon, and the lizard (Lev 11:30) KJV  
 23 even the very hairs of your head are all \_\_\_\_\_ (Matt 10:30)  
 25 stagger (Isa 28:7)  
 27 close by (1 Sam 17:26)  
 29 as one wipes a dish, \_\_\_\_\_ it and turning it upside down (2 Kings 21:13)  
 32 on board as shipwrights to caulk your \_\_\_\_\_ (Ezek 27:9)  
 36 At Beth \_\_\_\_\_ of the Shepherds, he met some relatives (2 Kings 10:12-13)  
 39 bitter as gall, sharp \_\_\_\_\_ double-edged sword (2,1) (Prov 5:4)  
 40 when thou art \_\_\_\_\_, go and sit down in the lowest room (Luke 14:10) KJV  
 41 Now there arose up a \_\_\_\_\_ king over Egypt (Exodus 1:8)  
 42 concerning the daughters that \_\_\_\_\_ in this place (3,4) (Jer 16:3) KJV  
 44 No \_\_\_\_\_ sews a patch of unshrunk cloth on an old garment (Matt 9:16)  
 45 Set on the great pot, and \_\_\_\_\_ pottage for the sons (2 Kings 4:38) KJV  
 47 Moses said to God, "Who \_\_\_\_\_, that I should go (2,1) (Ex 3:11)  
 48 Next to him was Shammah son of \_\_\_\_\_ the Hararite (2 Sam 23:11)  
 49 and do good; let him seek peace, and \_\_\_\_\_ it (1 Peter 3:11) KJV  
 50 whoever \_\_\_\_\_ out of the pit will be caught in a snare (Isa 24:18)  
 52 "Don't call me Naomi," she told them. "Call me \_\_\_\_\_ (Ruth 1:20)  
 54 \_\_\_\_\_! for that day is great (Jer 30:7)  
 57 all the house of Israel are \_\_\_\_\_ and hardhearted (Ezek 3:7) KJV  
 61 a man will leave his father and mother and be \_\_\_\_\_ to his wife (Gen 2:24)

63 O Sovereign LORD, \_\_\_\_\_ well with me for your name's sake (Ps 109:21)  
 64 a garland to grace your head and a chain to \_\_\_\_\_ your neck (Prov 1:9)  
 66 King Solomon made a \_\_\_\_\_ of ships in Ezion-geber (1 Kings 9:26) KJV  
 67 saw his star in the \_\_\_\_\_ and have come to (Matt 2:2)  
 68 He \_\_\_\_\_ him with many questions, but Jesus gave him no answer (Luke 23:9)  
 69 But when I stumbled, they gathered in \_\_\_\_\_ (Ps 35:15)  
 70 \_\_\_\_\_ are creatures of little strength (Prov 30:25)  
 71 He \_\_\_\_\_ reflects on the days of his life (Eccl 5:20)  
 72 from one \_\_\_\_\_ of the heavens to the other (Matt 24:31)  
 DOWN  
 1 Here and now I give \_\_\_\_\_ of my possessions to the poor (Luke 19:8)  
 2 the prophet of today used to be called \_\_\_\_\_ (1,4) (1 Sam 9:9)  
 3 my father's hired men have food to \_\_\_\_\_ (Luke 15:17)  
 5 The owl will \_\_\_\_\_ there and lay eggs (Isa 34:15)  
 6 I \_\_\_\_\_ something like a large sheet being let down from heaven (Acts 11:5)  
 7 You will rule them with an \_\_\_\_\_ scepter (Ps 2:9)  
 8 Their arrows are sharp, all their bows are \_\_\_\_\_ (Isa 5:28)  
 9 Your decrees are the \_\_\_\_\_ of my song (Ps 119:54)  
 10 He \_\_\_\_\_ the centurion to keep Paul under guard (Acts 24:23)  
 11 neither shall they \_\_\_\_\_ a rough garment to deceive (Zech 13:4)  
 12 vain for you to rise up early, to sit up \_\_\_\_\_ (Ps 127:2)  
 13 The creatures \_\_\_\_\_ back and forth like flashes of lightning (Ezek 1:14)  
 15 be as \_\_\_\_\_ as snakes and as innocent as doves (Matt 10:16)  
 22 the two sons of \_\_\_\_\_, Hophni and Phinehas, the priests (1 Sam 1:3)  
 24 dip it into the blood in the \_\_\_\_\_ (Exodus 12:22)  
 26 Instruct a \_\_\_\_\_ man and he will be wiser still (Prov 9:9)  
 28 the \_\_\_\_\_ forest has been cut down (Zech 11:2)  
 30 and she shall shave her head, and \_\_\_\_\_ her nails (Deut 21:12) KJV  
 31 His name was \_\_\_\_\_ and his wife's name was Abigail (1 Sam 25:3)  
 33 Am I \_\_\_\_\_, that you come at me (1,3) (1 Sam 17:43)  
 34 the inscription that was written: MENE, \_\_\_\_\_, TEKEL, PARSIN



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(Dan 5:25)  
 35 look of contempt or scorn (Isa 57:4)  
 37 was found to have a \_\_\_\_\_ mind and knowledge (Dan 5:12)  
 38 female sheep (Gen 33:13)  
 40 your vats will \_\_\_\_\_ over with new wine (Prov 3:10)  
 42 because he was looking \_\_\_\_\_ to his reward (Heb 11:26)  
 43 Tell them everything I command you; do not \_\_\_\_\_ a word (Jer 26:2)  
 46 In stripes, in imprisonments, in \_\_\_\_\_, in labours (2 Cor 6:5) KJV  
 48 David fought Goliath with \_\_\_\_\_ and a stone (1,5) (1 Sam 17:50)  
 50 Neither do men light a \_\_\_\_\_, and put it under a bushel (Matt 5:15) KJV  
 51 trouble on Israel by violating the \_\_\_\_\_ on taking devoted things (1 Chron 2:7)  
 53 Thus the saying 'One sows and another \_\_\_\_\_' is true (John 4:37)  
 55 we spend our years as \_\_\_\_\_ that is told (1,4) (Ps 90:9) KJV  
 56 the thin ears devoured the \_\_\_\_\_ good ears (Gen 41:24)  
 57 The man who was healed had no \_\_\_\_\_ who it was (John 5:13)  
 58 What I \_\_\_\_\_, brothers, is that the time is short (1 Cor 7:29)  
 59 which for ages \_\_\_\_\_ was kept hidden in God (Eph 3:9-10)  
 60 through painful \_\_\_\_\_ you will eat of it (Gen 3:17)  
 61 loose the bands of wickedness, to \_\_\_\_\_ the heavy burdens (Isa 58:6) KJV  
 62 for the tent a covering of ram skins \_\_\_\_\_ red (Ex 36:19)  
 65 an enormous \_\_\_\_\_ dragon with seven heads and ten horns (Rev 12:3)

Solution on page 14

## Rent and Work!

Looking for a Christian couple to rent a nice 4-bedroom home in the northern end of Mitchell County. Some of the rent could be earned by working on a farm part time. If interested please call 828-467-0280 for more information!





# Emergency Preparedness

## A Safe Water Supply

By Nancy Yantchook  
Mitchell County

Part 2 of a Series on Emergency Preparedness: A Safe Water Supply



A safe and ample supply of clean water is top priority in an emergency. It is recommended that a normally active person should drink at least 1 gallon of water daily. This amount should be increased during hot weather. Never ration water, even when supplies run low. Drink the amount of water needed and work to find more water for the next day.

Every family should save water for their family members. We learned two lessons from the flood and snowstorm of 1998. One was that our well pumps run on electricity and 220 watts and the power was off for nearly a week. Second was that springs, wells, and city water can become contaminated from flood waters. When storing water, plan for at least one gallon of water per person per day. It is recommended that families have enough water stored for at least two weeks.

### How to store Water:

Store fresh water in thoroughly washed plastic, fiberglass, or enamel-lined containers. Two-liter soft drink containers are the best. Milk Jugs will work, but may crack over a period of time. Food grade plastic buckets or drums are also good. Never use containers that held toxic substances. Seal these containers tightly, label them and store them in a cool, dark place. Change the water every six months.

### Emergency Outdoor Water sources:

If you need to find water outside the home, you can use water from natural springs, streams, rivers, and other moving bodies of water, and lakes, and rain water. Avoid water with floating material, odor or a dark color. Salt water can be used-only if distilled first. Contaminated water may have a bad smell and taste, but can also contain microorganisms, that can cause diseases such as typhoid, hepatitis, or dysentery.

### To Purify Water:

There are several methods of purifying water, but none are perfect. Sometimes a combination of methods is the best solution. Suspended particles in the water can be strained out through layers of paper towels or a clean cloth.

1. Boiling water is the safest method of purifying water. Bring the water to a boiling boil for 8-10 minutes. Water must be heated to its vaporization point (212 degrees F or 100 degrees C at sea level.) Remember some of the water may evaporate! Cool the water before drinking. Boiled water will taste better if you put oxygen back into it by pouring the water back and forth between two clean containers. This can be done with stored water as well.

2. Disinfection is the next best method. Regular household liquid bleach (5.25 percent sodium hypo chloride) will kill most microorganisms. Do not use scented bleaches, color safe bleaches or bleaches with added cleaners. Do not use other chemicals or agents to purify water. Some of these are iodine or products sold for camping.

Add 16 drops of bleach to each gallon of water, stir and let stand for 30 minutes. If the water does not have a slight bleach odor, repeat the dosage and let stand for another 15 minutes. If the water is then exposed to the air for a few hours or poured back and forth between containers, it will taste better.

Paul and Nancy Yantchook moved to NC in 1996 and are very happy in Red Hill with their dog. She served as the Chairperson for the MCHP for nearly 12 years. She focused on the emergency readiness programs as that is a real concern in these rural areas.

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# HAPPY BIRTHDAY, Jesus



## Pause...and Consider

### The Rhythm of a Gracious Pace

By Ken and Jan Merop  
Avery County



My friend Mary moved in quiet confidence gently spilling serenity over all who met her. It didn't take long being in her presence to know that her gracious spirit wasn't of her making, but a result of a worshipful trust in her Savior, Jesus Christ.

When, as a single mom, I prayed for remarriage to a Christian husband and dad for my son, she would gently remind me that God saves the best for those who leave the choice with him.

If I was feeling overwhelmed, inevitably a note of encouragement would arrive in the mail as if she knew of my need. Sometimes she'd include a small monetary gift that reminded me of the widow's mite. A widow herself, she blessed me immeasurably.

When the Lord brought Ken and two more precious sons my way, she rejoiced with me and our friendship continued through the mail and the occasional phone call. She has been with the Lord for some time now, but I can still hear her voice and sense the rhythm of the gracious pace in which she lived her life. She exuded quietness and calmness.

It makes me think of another Mary.

Mary, the Mother of Jesus, was just a teenager when the Angel Gabriel appeared to her. When he announced God's plans for her, she questioned how it could be. But, once assured of God's sovereignty and ability to overcome the impossible, she bowed to his will as seen in Luke 1: 38, NLT saying, "I am the Lord's servant. May everything you have said about me come true."

She could have reacted with a list of her own design. After all, she was betrothed to Joseph. Plans were being made. And, how would she ever explain this to him.

But Gabriel gives us a clue as to why she was chosen. He said, "Greetings, favored woman! The Lord is with you!"

We know from Scripture that God's favor rests on those who worship him in spirit and truth; who seek him and live their lives according to His will and purposes. She was already exhibiting a gentle rhythm of life in obedience to God – despite the tumultuous times in which she lived under the heavy hand of Rome.

For Mary there was no more gracious way to respond than to accept God's 'interruption' to her plans for the far greater purposes of her God. She adjusted her rhythm to His and trusted Him for the outcome.

Let's adopt Mary's tranquility and approach Christmas in gracious step with the Lord. Selah

### Nature's Gentle Reminder

*Pine cones dazzle against a snowy white Christmas ball.  
Suspended on a live, Evergreen Christmas tree,  
each little cone resting on a snowball  
reminds one of nature's natural beauties.*

*We can recreate it artistically,  
but only God creates from nothing.*

*"Have you entered the treasury of the snow?"  
"All things were created through Him and for Him...  
And in Him all things consist."*

*Job 38: 22 and Colossians 1:16b, 17b*



Jan Merop writes an inspirational column, *Pause...and Consider*, for the News Sun in Sebring, FL. She and her husband Ken love our mountains and hope, God willing, one day to relocate nearby. You may contact her at [kenmerop@gmail.com](mailto:kenmerop@gmail.com)

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One More Thing

By Doris R. Thompson  
Mitchell County

*The trees are trimmed with a star on top.  
The candles in the windows are aglow  
All the goodies are baked and ready,  
And every child wishes for snow!*

*The halls are decked with holly.  
The lightposts are trimmed with bows.  
The mailbox has donned a new cover.  
The warm fire sparkles and glows!*

*There's "last minute" shopping and wrapping.  
The streets are crowded each day.  
All the shoppers are excited and calling,  
"Merry Christmas," as they go on their way!*

*The presents are stacked 'neath the tree.  
A wreath is placed on the door.  
Everything seems to be ready,  
But wait...Is there not one thing more?*

*Is there room for Christ in our holidays?  
Do we celebrate His birth Christmas Day?  
Or do we say, "There's no room in our inn,"  
As we rush on our merry way?*

*If we'll take time for the sad and the lonely,  
And reach out and do our small part...  
Then we'll truly put Christ in our Christmas,  
And we'll make room for Him in our heart!  
(written for "Bethlehem Marketplace")*



Doris Thompson is the world's greatest nature lover. Spruce Pine's angel that brings a smile to our businesses.

A Priceless Ornament

By Marlene Houk  
Burke County



The exquisite Christmas ornament fired shards of brilliancy into the darkness. With 1,578 diamonds encrusted on its solid 18 carat white-gold surface and two rings adorned with 188 rubies each surrounding its stunning sphere, the world's most expensive Christmas bauble goes for a mere \$ 136,000. Mark Hussey, a Hallmark jeweler, designed this spectacular mini-globe to benefit charity.

But the above paragraph contains an error: the extraordinary orb mentioned above is not the most expensive ornament that exists. That honor belongs to an invisible ornament found in a secluded section of an ancient manuscript and brought to light here:

1 Peter 3:4 *But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.*

An evaluation of the ornament mentioned in this verse was made by the most imminent Jeweler himself, the LORD God Almighty. In His estimation, this ornament is valued at a "great price" capable of escalating as the years pass on into eternity. This rare masterpiece has been carefully crafted out of stunning jewels from His Word and encircled with 2 rings that traverse its magnificent curve. Their spectacular stones shine with an ethereal brilliance because they are cut from the Rock which is Jesus.

When we hang the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit on the branches of our lives, suddenly the ordinary twigs of the mundane light up with the spectacular image of Him, clothed in the brilliant fire of glory. Our lives can become priceless displays of His power and majesty.

Just as Mr. Hussey, the Hallmark jeweler, used a small pile of diamonds to fashion an exquisite unforgettable ornament, so we obtain the ornament of a meek spirit when we allow God to use the diamonds of His Word to form the character of meekness within us. Meekness is controlled strength and it is demonstrated by the life of Moses as he learned to control His words and actions so that the nation of Israel could see the glory and power of their Savior God. In his intimate daily walk with God, the LORD formed within Moses the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, and the world was blessed for eternity as God took a Lion out of Judah to save His people, and to rule and reign.

Just as the English jeweler designed this exquisite ornament with 1,578 diamonds and 188 rubies, so the Master Jeweler, God Himself, designed His priceless ornament of a meek and quiet spirit and adorned it with the diamonds and rubies from His Word. The word, quiet, in the Bible is associated with peace (Proverbs 1:33), wisdom (Ecclesiastes 9:17), and strength (Isaiah 30:15). According to Isaiah 32:17, it is an effect of righteousness. When we focus on the righteousness of God, we become changed into His image according to 2 Corinthians 3:18. Then, the beauty and luxury of His Presence emanates from within our souls and others are drawn to the magnificence of Christ, attracted by our ornament: that of a meek and quiet spirit.

Isaiah 32:17 *And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance forever.*

Mark Hussey, the creator of the world's most expensive ornament, decreed that a portion of the proceeds would benefit the National Autistic Society of the United Kingdom. So God decrees that part of the proceeds from his gift to us of this ornament of a meek and quiet spirit will benefit those in need of its hidden treasure. People need the Lord and what better way to point them to Him than by a shining Christmas ornament of our meek and quiet spirit, shining like the star that drew wise men to the Light of the world that dark night so long ago!



Marlene Houk is a regular contributor to The Blue Ridge Christian News. She and Sid, her husband, attend Mount Home Baptist Church.



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## Mitchell-Yancey Habitat for Humanity

*For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. John 3:16*

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### Habitat ReStores Support Fayetteville Families

Robin Warden  
Yancey-Mitchell County



Habitat for Humanity ReStores across North Carolina will donate all or a portion of their proceeds from sales on designated dates to help rebuild the 93 Fayetteville Habitat homes that sustained severe damage last month in the flooding from Hurricane Matthew.

Mitchell-Yancey Habitat for Humanity ReStore will participate in this program on Saturday, Nov. 19th and donate proceeds from all their sales on this day. Shop at our local ReStore on this day and support the rebuilding of Habitat homes in Fayetteville. The ReStore is located at 563 Oak Street in Spruce Pine and will be open from 9 AM to 2 PM.

"We all need to rally behind an affiliate that has had that much tragedy," said Mitch Rhodes, chief operating officer of Habitat for Humanity of Wake County. Wake's five ReStores—together with Asheville's and Charlotte's ReStores, among many others—are already designating the proceeds from customers who agree to "round up" their purchase to the next \$1 or \$5 to help Fayetteville.

The 93 Fayetteville Habitat homes that were swamped by the flooding on Oct. 8 represented more than half of the 154 houses built by the affiliate over the past 30 years.

Greg Kirkpatrick, executive director of Habitat for Humanity N.C. in Raleigh is coordinating the effort to get all 78 ReStores in North Carolina behind the drive to respond to the crisis in Fayetteville's Habitat village.

"We asked the ReStores to consider doing something we're calling ReStore Fayetteville," said Kirkpatrick, who added that the response has been wildly enthusiastic. He hopes that the 78 ReStores across the state can raise as much as \$100,000 for Fayetteville.

Many of the flood victims are staying with friends or family; many have had to find rooms to rent. Only 27 of the homeowners had flood insurance. But Tammy Laurence, director of Habitat's Fayetteville area affiliate, sees light amid the chaos that has engulfed the homeowners.

"The support from our partner affiliates again reveals the best that Habitat calls out in each of us. Thanks to our Habitat partner affiliates, these funds will help us rebuild homes and restore hope. We are grateful. Hurricane Matthew tore through Fayetteville's Habitat village leaving broken hearts and broken homes. But the flood cannot quench the great spirit that animates these homeowners and this community. We will rebuild."

**Habitat Hero Phillip Hunsucker**

Philip Hunsucker passed away on November 1, 2016. He was formerly a resident of Burnsville, North Carolina where he served Mitchell-Yancey Habitat for Humanity since the early 90's and worked on multiple builds of Habitat homes in Mitchell and Yancey counties. During these years, he worked alongside members from his church, Higgins United Methodist, on the Wednesday Crew. Phil also provided invaluable leadership to our local affiliate as President and Vice President of the M-Y Habitat Board of Directors. He never missed an opportunity to say, "Thank you for all you do".

Mitchell-Yancey Habitat for Humanity is a locally run affiliate of Habitat for Humanity International, a nonprofit, ecumenical Christian housing organization. M-Y Habitat works in partnership with families in need of decent, affordable, and energy-efficient housing. Houses are sold to families who are able to pay a no-interest monthly mortgage and are willing to partner with Habitat and provide 200+ hours of sweat equity helping to build their home or the homes of others. Habitat serves people in need of decent housing regardless of race or religion. Volunteers, pictured here are some of the many Habitat Heroes providing most of the labor, while individuals and corporate donors provide money and materials to build Habitat houses. We welcome volunteers and supporters to join us in "building homes and changing lives. Become a Habitat Hero. Contact: 828.766.9000, [www.mitchellyanceyhhabitat.org](http://www.mitchellyanceyhhabitat.org), Email: [Mitchell.yancey.hfh@gmail.com](mailto:Mitchell.yancey.hfh@gmail.com)



*Robin Warden is the Public Relations for Mitchell, Yancey Habitat for Humanity.*

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Be a Job!

By Jason Webb  
Burke County

Don't we all have that friend...the one that seems to know it all? The one that's jealous of us and the peace we have in our lives? You know, that person who can never stay out of our sandbox.... You have fussed over being faithful to your sandbox time after time after time. You even asked your dad how your sandbox looked. If things were built well. If he approved of what you were doing. You talked to him all the time about the new toys he gave you, thanking him constantly. I mean, hey, those are some nice toys for your sandbox. They are the envy of your neighborhood. When your dad gives you each new possession, you ask how to use it right - you know, you don't want to mess it up or use it in the wrong way.

So, your dad has gifted you all this stuff, and your closest friends all come over to play with it all the time. They play a little rough, but are really just enjoying themselves, so after they leave you always wash it all & completely restore it all so your dad is proud.

Then one day, this new kid comes to town.

And then it starts.

He's jealous. He doesn't want you to have the nice things your dad has given you, so animosity starts to build. He runs off all your friends. He breaks the toys. He kicks over things you've built. After he causes damage to each thing of yours, he runs away laughing.

Once you see all the damage done, you simply sit down in the ruined bits of toys and sand and dreams. You call out to your dad, but he doesn't come.

He doesn't even answer you.

Nothing.

Then one friend shows up and asks, "why don't you get mad at your dad?" You look at her like she has 3 heads and answer, " He knew what he was doing when he didn't stop that bully." So, she gets mad and leaves.

Now here come three more friends back. But they don't get too close. They don't want to make you mad, or cause you to act out. Finally, one of them ventures back into the sandbox with you. Then the other two follow after him.

Then you all four sit in silence running your fingers thru your destroyed sandbox. You start to shed tears, knowing that these three must be your closest friends cause they are sitting with you when you are at your darkest.

Each one takes a turn speaking to you, but as they all speak, your disbelief grows greater and greater! You can't believe that the three people who you thought had come to help you thru this crisis were actually bashing you for not standing up to the bully. As if the destruction of your sandbox was just a game! Where is your dad when you need him!!!! Why isn't he out here with you!!!! Why is he still letting you endure all this nonsense!!!! The world is spinning and falling apart -- and he doesn't even care!!!!

Then it is still....

Your so-called friends leave.

You look up and there he stands.

Your dad.

You look at him, in part disbelief, in part anger, in part despair and a whole bunch of unhappy. But instead of quietly waiting for him to speak, your impatience mounts up and overflows. It erupts from within! You want to know why!!!

WHY didn't he come stop the bully?!? Surely that bully was no match for him! WHY didn't he come get that ill girl and handle her too?!? And boy oh boy.... those three boys who all ran when the bully showed up... WHY OH WHY didn't he tell those boys the quit it or hit it lecture?!? He's dad. None of those problems could stand up to him! WHY didn't he intervene instead of disappearing while your world was kicked to pieces!!!! WHY? WHY?! WHY?!?!? You want to cry out as this burning question pours from you...but you have spent all your energy.

He looks at you and with a smile says, "In all you went thru, you never once turned on me. You didn't speak ill of me. You didn't curse me. You stayed true to who I knew you were. Want to know where I was?"

Eagerly you say yes and nod your head so violently it looks like it may come unhinged from your neck.

"I was out replacing your stuff my child. I love you and don't want you to do without. Please come let me show you."

Now you are given a bigger, better sandbox. One that nobody can get in to tear stuff up unless you or your dad give them permission. Twice as many new toys as you had old ones. Your joy, returned by the overflowing of blessings from your dad, consumes you.

Did you feel for the kid in this story? Well, that kid was/is you. Now we see what Job dealt with, and also his reward for staying true to God. Remain faithful.

Remain pure.  
Remain strong.  
Remain patient.  
Remain watchful.  
Wait on God.

Be Job. Not the bully.



Christmas Card Project Article

By Steve Gunter  
Mitchell-Avery County



Mayland Community College has an exciting new student project that is helping spread holiday cheer through custom Christmas cards featuring artwork by students. The Life Works project is a nonprofit service learning venture operating as a simulated small business, allowing students with intellectual disabilities to design, create, produce, market, and sell their own handmade products in order to learn and practice valuable skills and move toward greater independence. A set of beautiful cards for Christmas is the latest product the group has put together.

The Life Works project involves students from the college's two new educational programs designed for adults with mild to moderate intellectual disabilities or similar challenges. These two educational programs, called Life Skills and Work Skills Academy, are geared toward helping adult learners broaden their opportunities for the future. Even better, both programs are completely free, with class options available in Mitchell, Avery, and Yancey Counties. Students from these classes collaborate to operate the Life Works project.

The items produced through the project are sold at local festivals and community events or donated to local nonprofit partners. Among the Life Works items created are fabric dog toys, parachute cord survival bracelets, key rings, and handcrafted fabric pumpkins.

Creating the items allows students to practice critical workplace skills such as measurement, counting, following step-by-step processes, and managing quality. Students learn about the community through donating items to benefit local organizations and gain a sense of well-being from giving to others. Plus, by selling items at local events, students have an opportunity to practice customer service skills such as communicating effectively, making change, writing receipts, and operating their own, unique mini-enterprise. Any proceeds from product sales are used to fund future products and to support additional educational opportunities for these adult learners.

"I really enjoyed doing the artwork, and I feel very confident about my pieces," says Orion Johnson, a project participant.

The group will be offering the cards for sale in packs of ten, each one featuring a unique design. The set of ten cards will be available for sale before Thanksgiving for fifteen dollars per pack. Mayland Recruiter Joyce Boone says, "Buyers are going to be thrilled with these treasures!"

For information about the Life Works project, the free educational programs for adults with disabilities, or any of the products available for sale, contact Virginia Alvarado, Employability Specialist, at 828-766-1329 or valvarado@mayland.edu.

Steve Gunter is the Dean of the Adult Education Program at Mayland.



Sudoku

		5		2	8			
	2			9			6	
			6		3			
								5
7	6		3					9
	3			7	4			6
8			2		5		7	
				3	9		1	
1			8					

© StatePoint Media

Solution on page 14

Jason Webb is involved in Prison Ministry at The Summit Church in Morganton.



Accentuate the Positive

By Cheryl Shuffler  
Burke County

Heritage student places in poster contest

Lyvia Turpin, a seventh grader at Heritage Middle School, placed second in the middle school division of the 2016 NC School Bus Safety Poster Contest. Her winning entry is posted on the School Bus Safety Website at [www.ncbussafety.org](http://www.ncbussafety.org). The slogan for this year's contest was



#StopOnRed. Lyvia's colorful poster illustrates this as well as incorporates smiley face emojis and Bus No. 247 with a happy driver and students. The posters were judged by participants from around the state at the NC Pupil Transportation Association Conference in Asheville.



Parents turn out for Lights on After School

Families of the 21st Century grant program at WA Young and Glen Alpine elementary schools came together at Glen Alpine to celebrate the 17th annual Lights on After School. This is a nationwide event that celebrates after-school programs and their important role in the lives of students, families and communities, as well as the need for more quality programs for students in the after-school setting. Staff from Me, You, and Some Glue assisted with art stations set up for students to participate in unique art opportunities, including glazing a light bulb ornament to celebrate the cause. Every student received a free pass to Me, You, and Some Glue, and participated in a raffle for a free glow-in-the-dark T-shirt party - all donated by Me, You, and Some Glue. Missionary Ridge donated food for event. Site director of the Burke County Public Schools' 21st Century program, Cindy Pendleton said, "I appreciate our sponsors for this event and everything they do to support us in making our program the best we can for students and parents."



Second graders make hats for a good cause

Second graders at Forest Hill Elementary School recently completed lessons on the production of goods by designing, making and selling felt hats and bookmarks. They turned their profit into a fundraiser for a fellow student at Forest Hill. All four second-grade classrooms participated in the project, which is becoming an annual event for the grade level. The students sourced felt from a company in Asheville that recycles plastic bottles to make the material. The students also came up with their own pattern for the hats, and Opportunity Threads in Drexel used the pattern to sew the hats together for the students. The students then designed felt embellishments for each hat. The students also designed and crafted felt bookmarks. They sold their wares at the schools' Spooky Science Night on Oct. 27. Their profit totaled \$401, all of which they donated to a first-grade student who has battled cancer.



Former student is illustrator of Dr. Seuss book

Children's book illustrator Katie Kath, a 2007 graduate of Freedom High School, returned to Morganton in late October to autograph copies of "Come on Over to My House," a book Dr. Seuss wrote and Kath illustrated. Kath did a presentation at Mull Elementary School for the students, giving them a behind-the-scenes look at what it's like to illustrate children's books. She also talked to the students about the anatomy of a book, how they are printed and gave insight into how she comes up with illustrations for characters in books. Kath's visit included a live drawing of a giraffephant - a combination of a giraffe and an elephant, which was the students' choice in what she should draw. Kath has a master's degree in illustration from Savannah College of Arts and Design and in 2013 won a Society of Children's Books Writers and Illustrators scholarship. The Dr. Seuss estate liked her work enough to choose her to illustrate the re-release of "Come on Over to My House," a story about how much kids from all over the world have in common with each other. Kath now makes her home in Winston-Salem.



Garden Club helps beautify North Liberty

Quaker Meadow's Garden Club conducts an annual project with North Liberty School to fill the school's planters with pansies each fall. Principal Lisa Ervin said they volunteer their time and resources every year to help beautify the school grounds. Quaker Meadows has done this along with other projects for more than 24 years.



Honors Calculus goes virtual

Honors Calculus students at Freedom and Draughn high schools have a unique connection this year. Freedom High math teacher Kelly Baker can be at one school and teach students at the other through a virtual classroom. A live camera feed in the classrooms erases the 16 miles between the schools and allows their honors calculus class to be one.



Eleven students from Draughn are in the class and 15 students from Freedom are in the class. And they never know which classroom Baker will pop up in in person. "This is my first time doing a virtual class," Baker said. "So far I am enjoying it. I work with a website called Padlet that allows all of the students in the class to post a picture and tell a little about themselves. This information will only be accessible to those in the class. It's definitely a learning curve, but I am excited to be a part of this class."

Each class is taped and saved for additional students whose schedules do not allow them to meet with Baker at a set time. Students from the four high schools who have taken virtual classes at the STEAM Academy through the NC School of Science and Math are accustomed to this type of learning environment.

Burke County Public Schools Superintendent Larry Putnam said, "Today's students are digital natives. They learn in different ways than we did and not in desks in rows with a teacher lecturing from the front of the classroom. This is one way to fulfill the need for a different learning environment. Online classes allow students flexibility in when they take the class, especially if it is only offered one time a year or one semester. It allows for flexible schedules for a fifth period class for, say a band student, who has a really tight schedule. It allows students to interact with other students from different high schools and experience a teacher from a different high school. Ms. Baker is one of our best teachers and I love her passion and energy and her love for teaching and that comes through in person and virtually."

BCPS has offered virtual classes taught by its own teachers previously with an ACT prep course and Personal Finance. Putnam said he hopes to be able to offer more virtual classes soon.

Transportation department passes inspection

The Burke County Public Schools Transportation Department received an 11.8 score on the NC Department of Public Instruction transportation inspection. State transportation officials inspected the school system's fleet of 101 buses and each year assigns a score to help bus garages track improvement from one year to the next. The low score is an indication of fewer defects found during the inspection. Last year's BCPS inspection score was 19.60. The average score for the school districts in the Western region last year was 24.09. BCPS Director of Transportation John Cansler said there are 400 items on the state inspection checklist that can park a bus and Burke's buses passed all checkpoints. "This score is one of the best in the state," Cansler said. "It is a reflection of our staff at the garage. We have a great staff even though like most departments we are short staffed. Our guys care about the safety of the students and the buses and this score is a reflection of them." Cansler said Burke's buses carry 5,500 students 6,500 miles a day. All are equipped with GPS tracking devices, 44 have stop-arm cameras and seven new buses have seatbelts with four more equipped with seatbelts expected for next year.



Cheryl Shuffler is the Public Relations Officer for the Burke County Public School System.



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Corbin, age 9 and Camden, age 6, live in Florence's Cottage and are part of a sibling group of five brothers.

**MORE NEWS** will be coming in the next few months. But for now, we wanted you to know that we are working to serve more children in western North Carolina through our programs in residential foster care, community-based foster care, education, and out-patient therapies. For more information, visit [www.crossnoreschool.org](http://www.crossnoreschool.org)



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