

November  
2016

FREE

# BLUE RIDGE CHRISTIAN NEWS

## These children lived...



"Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations."  
Jeremiah 1:5

## 3,000 a day in America do NOT! *Please Pray and Vote!*

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# She Made Her Dream a Reality.

Amy Hill had been overweight most of her life.

At 360 pounds, she was offering the world a happy face, but she secretly dealt with low self-esteem, depression and bullying.

Amy believed her ability to overcome obesity was only a dream. Even after both of her parents underwent successful gastric bypass surgery and began losing weight, Amy was resigned to always being heavy.

Then her doctor said she would likely be unable to have children unless she managed her weight.

Fueled by determination to become a mother, Amy chose the Mission Weight Management program, the same program trusted by her parents, to help her meet her weight-loss goals. Under the direction of an expert team including Dr. Peeter Soosaar of Regional Surgical Specialists, Amy committed to following significant lifestyle changes and underwent a successful gastric bypass surgery, the last necessary step toward living a new, healthier life.

Now Amy is 180 pounds lighter. As a family, she, her husband and her parents have lost over 670 pounds.

Having achieved a healthy and manageable weight, Amy can now focus on making her biggest dream come true – becoming a mom.

Whether you're trying to be well, get well or stay well, Mission Health offers you and your family access to the best people, resources and advanced technology to help you achieve and exceed your goals.

To hear more personal stories like Amy's, visit:  
[mission-health.org/AmyBCRN](http://mission-health.org/AmyBCRN)



*Be Well. Get Well. Stay Well.*



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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

"A Christ-Centered,  
Bible Believing Church"

## 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!

## 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

## 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  
Transforming Lives Through  
The Power of Jesus Christ!

## 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

Please join us in worship.  
The Church where Christ is proclaimed  
and His Word is believed.

## Franklin Graham

### Vote Vote Vote

Dear Friend,

The most critical election of our lifetime is only a few days away. I'm writing to ask you to please make sure you VOTE.

In the last presidential election, it's estimated that 20-30 million Christians stayed home. We can't let this happen again! The future of our nation is riding on this election: religious freedom, the Supreme Court, protecting the unborn and our families, and so much more. The Christian voice needs to be heard on November 8.

In many states, it's still not too late to register, and some allow you to register and vote on the same day. Find out if your state is one of them.

Before you cast your ballot, research the party platforms (in the special Decision election guide) on the issues that are important to you—and above all, pray! When you head to the polls, offer to take your neighbors, friends, and family who may need a ride.

If God's people are silent during "such a time as this" (Esther 4:14, NKJV), I fear for what will become of our once great and blessed nation. What kind of country will we leave for our children and grandchildren?

Let's pray together that our nation will turn back to God and that He will heal our land.

Sincerely,

Franklin Graham

P.S. Will you join me in prayer live on Facebook at 9 p.m. ET on Nov. 7? Encourage your loved ones to pray with us, too, by sharing this graphic on social media:



## PRAY WITH ME

ON FACEBOOK LIVE



THE NIGHT BEFORE ELECTION DAY  
NOV. 7 AT 9:00 PM ET



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

pray  
LIKE Jesus



# 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

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

**Pastor: Charlie Carroway**

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.spfbc.blogspot.com

**Dr. Rocky Branch**  
Senior Pastor

Sunday School - 9:45 am  
Sunday Worship - 8:30 am 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"



You can let tourists, visitors and even neighbors know where your church is and when you meet by listing in the BRCN Church Directory. This visible and effective advertising is specially priced at \$300.00 per year for our churches - approximately \$5.75 a week!

Call us at 828-765-6800 to enroll in this important outreach effort.

## Foothills Baptist Bible College

### Winter Quarter Begins

By Dr. Tom Walker  
McDowell County



FBBC soon begins its winter quarter. Registration will take place from 5:00 P.M. until 6:30 P.M. on November 15th. The courses which will be taught are Creation-Science, Revelation I, Cults, and Bible Doctrines II. To register for any or all of these classes, call 828-460-4053 for more information.

The courses in FBBC are set up on a quarterly basis.

The classes meet on Tuesday evenings from 6:30 P.M. until 9:10 P.M. at 1036 Zion Hill Road in Marion.

The president, Dr. Tom Walker said, "We are in our fourth year of operation here at Foothills. The school graduated its first class in June of this year. Three students received Associate degrees and ten graduated with the Bachelor's degree. Most of those who qualified to graduate this past summer are going for more advanced degrees at our institution."

The professors are well qualified and have a heart for instructing and helping those who desire to serve Christ. All the faculty has at least one Doctoral degree and some multiple ones.

Dr. Walker said, "This is an opportunity for those who want to study to work for Christ to receive a good education in a local setting. People who are going to be preachers and pastors, those who are going to the mission field, or folks who just want to gain more insight into the Word of God, are welcome to apply for admission at FBBC."

The school web site can be found at [www.FoothillsBBC.org](http://www.FoothillsBBC.org).

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



Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations.  
Jeremiah 1:5



## Snow Hill Baptist Church

*Thus saith the Lord that made thee, and formed thee from the womb, which will help thee; Fear not, O Jacob, my servant; and thou, Jesurun, whom I have chosen. Isaiah 44:2*

### No Regrets: Who is really in Control?

By Pastor Dean Honeycutt  
Mitchell County



I love this time of the year. And this fall has been wonderful in the mountains. The leaves are beautiful and the cool crisp mornings make me feel alive. I am so grateful for God's goodness toward me and my family. He has done some wonderful things for us. Most wonderfully, He has rescued us from sin and death and set us on a path to Heaven.

Pam and I are both involved with children and families now on a daily basis. We are teaching and sharing God's word five days a week. God opened a door for us and we are very thankful for the opportunity. The responsibility we have is tremendous; every child is precious in the sight of the Lord. We definitely believe in Christian education and the power of God's word to change lives.

By the time you read this article the next President of the United States will have been elected. Regardless of who that person may be God is in Control. There are a lot of people out there who are worried about the future of America and the financial burden our country is in. They are concerned about right to life, family values and protection, religious liberty, and public education. And we are in a mess it seems like. This topic is usually brought up at least once during conversations I have with people. But I want to let you know that as bad as things may appear, God is still in control. Not one thing escapes God or takes Him by surprise. He is never thrown off guard or unaware of what is going on. God never makes mistakes, never takes a break, and He is present everywhere... at all times. Folks, God is setting the stage for The Second Return of Christ and we better be ready to meet Him.

Little do we realize we are puppets in the Master's hands. Yes, we have free will, but our freewill ends where God's sovereignty begins. God is sovereign over all things. God did not create the world and life and then turn it loose to function on its own. He, however, created everything for His divine purpose so that Jesus Christ might have the preeminence. (Col. 1:18) The Bible says all things were created by Him and for Him. God is not playing a chess game with us, waiting to see what we are going to do, and then respond accordingly. God does not wait for us to make our move and figure out what He is going to do to counteract. God has a divine plan and only God can orchestrate every event perfectly even in the plight of sin to bring glory to Himself. Therefore, God is in control. I may not know what the future holds, but I know Who holds the future. The Bible says "heaven is His throne and earth is His footstool". We are under Him.

This Thanksgiving I want to think about all the good things God is doing. God has blessed me with a wonderful family, church family, and friends. And I know that God is going to make all things right one day. I have the greatest health care plan any one could ever have... it is called "Eternal life".

*Psalm 103: 1-5*

1 Bless the LORD, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name.  
2 Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits:  
3 Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases;  
4 Who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies;  
5 Who satisfieth thy mouth with good things; so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's.

*Psalm 103:19-22 (KJV)*

19 The LORD hath prepared his throne in the heavens; and his kingdom ruleth over all.  
20 Bless the LORD, ye his angels, that excel in strength, that do his commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word.  
21 Bless ye the LORD, all ye his hosts; ye ministers of his, that do his pleasure.  
22 Bless the LORD, all his works in all places of his dominion: bless the LORD, O my soul.

May the Lord bless you and Keep you.  
Live life with "No Regrets"

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).



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# Congressman Mark Meadows

*Principled Leadership • Conservative Values*



"Since I was elected to Congress in 2013, I have made a commitment every day to uphold and defend the Constitution, fight for conservative values, and to listen to the voices of my employers -- the constituents of North Carolina's Eleventh District. With the election right around the corner, **I would be honored and humbled to have your support on November 8th** as we continue fighting for the principles that our founding fathers held dear."

Sincerely,  
-Mark Meadows

**Mark**  
**MEADOWS**  
C O N G R E S S

Paid for by Meadows For Congress  
[meadowsforcongress.com](http://meadowsforcongress.com)



# Return America

## Restoring our Judeo-Christian Heritage

In 2006, some of the board members of the North Carolina Christian School Association became gravely concerned about the increasing lack of knowledge and respect for our Judeo-Christian heritage and decreasing morality in America. As a result, Return America was officially started in April 2006, of which Dr. Ron Baity is the founder and president.



- 2007**
- Brought over 12,000 to Raleigh in support of the Marriage Amendment
  - Brought 3,000 to Yadkin County to counter the ACLU's threats against county commissioners' longstanding tradition of prayer in Jesus' Name.
  - Worked to unseat Midway community officials who opposed prayer in Jesus' Name, completely replacing them with faith-friendly candidates.

- 2008**
- Worked with Yadkin County pastors in successfully voting down a liquor referendum and voting out two commissioners who opposed prayer in Jesus' Name.

- 2009**
- Despite snow and ice that affected the majority of the state, including 12-F temperatures, 5,000 were once again brought to Halifax Mall in Raleigh to support the State Legislature to bring the Marriage Amendment out of the House and Senate to allow the people to vote.

- 2010**
- Worked with pastors to bring over 4,000 to the town of King, NC, to counter the ACLU's threats against the city for flying a Christian flag at their veterans' memorial park. Thanks in part to these efforts, the flag still flies today.

- 2011**
- Brought over 5,000 people to Halifax Mall in Raleigh to encourage the State Legislature and State Senate to pass the bill to allow the people of North Carolina the opportunity to vote for the Marriage Amendment to the State Constitution. Although there were torrential rains across the area, the Lord miraculously held the rain off of the crowd.

- 2012**
- Held the final Marriage Amendment Rally in April to encourage the people to get out and vote for the Marriage Amendment. According to Capitol Police, over 8,000 were in attendance.

Since 2006, Return America has achieved astounding success.

- May 7, 2012 - The Marriage Amendment passes in North Carolina at 61-39%.

- 2013**
- Assisted in providing the McDowell County school system with a policy that gives the students of McDowell County the right to use the Name "God" in a public school setting. The new policy also gives school staff the same privileges.
  - Brought over 3,000 people to Salisbury to show their support for the Rowan County commissioners who have chosen to continue to pray in Jesus' Name despite threats for the ACLU.

*Dr. Ron Baity is President of the Return America Foundations, an organization dedicated to building a network of churches and individuals to educate, motivate and mobilize citizens in a united effort in promoting Judeo-Christian values; to educate and influence government in these principles upon which our state and nation were founded.*

Crowd of over 12,000 in support of marriage



3,000 assemble in Yadkin County



Dr. Baity-Christian Flag Rally



The mile march from Calvary Baptist Church begins to the Veterans' Memorial-4,000 strong



Dr. David Gibbs, Jr. speaking at the 12 Rally



Board of Return America and over 110 pastors who attended



Assembling for the '11 Marriage Rally



Rally in Rowan 2013



By Doug and Barbara Harrell

Back in the early 90's one of our daughters asked me to go to an appointment with her and her husband to Duke. She was expecting her second child. After the birth of her first she was told that, because of her high risk, she would need to deliver any subsequent children at Duke. With great anticipation of seeing the ultrasound, I quickly accepted. There was some concern because Greta was born with spina bifida and Shaun's older brother had died at birth with spina bifida. The technician began to move the machine over her small baby bump and I almost lost my breath. Even I could see the disruption in the spine. We were all devastated. Even as they were finishing the ultrasound, the hospital room filled with people. There had to be 12 to 15 doctors, nurses and even a chaplain who had come to assure Greta that she qualified for an abortion and when did they want to set it up. With big tears running down her face she looked at them, as only she can, and told them in no uncertain terms that this baby would never be aborted. Turning to me as this learned group looked on, she said to me with tears streaming down her cheeks, "Where would I be Mother if you had aborted me?" Much to the dismay of these doctors she carried this child to full term. He was born with spina bifida, bladder problems, and severe club feet. He wore casts for the first 6 months of his life.

Not worth much some folks would say. What can people like Greta and Bradley accomplish in this life?

Well, they can do a lot. Greta has had an awesome family of four children, all Christians serving in so many ways it would take too long to tell you. She has run marathons and is now becoming a nurse with high honors. Many times, as she was growing up, she would get to feeling sorry for herself and we would go out to the talking log. It consisted of talks about "I don't know why you are like you are, but God had a reason and sometimes we don't know." Now she looks at me and says "I wouldn't change a thing about who I was and who I am." If I had not dealt with these obstacles, then I would not be the person I am today." God Bless her, He has used her in so many ways.

Bradley is now 22 and he has played baseball, wrestled, fishes, hunts and plays the guitar and sings like an angel. Oh, what the world would have missed if these children had been aborted.

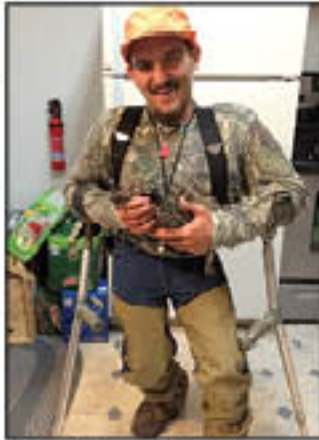
Barbara (Mimi)  
The Rest of the Story

Two years ago, we were planning our annual grouse hunting trip to Wisconsin and Bradley called, asking if he could go as well. I was planning at that time to take several of the grandsons and meet one of my sons, Greg, in Hiles, Wisconsin on this trip. Bradley loves to hunt and fish, but when he called about this trip my first thought was, I would love to have him but how in the world would he be able to walk 10-12 miles per day on crutches through the woods and carry a gun as well? After only a moment of hesitation I replied, "Yes, come on and go with us."

As Barbara has mentioned, the doctors wanted to abort Bradley before he was born, he walks with crutches and has had numerous operations on his legs and feet, so I shook my head; but knowing Bradley's determination, I thought, what the heck? During the week, Bradley did not complain, he did not sit in the truck, he hunted. On one of the hunts he and I went down a trail about two miles and we came to a dead end at a swamp out in the middle of the forest. I looked at Bradley and told him, "Bradley, we can cut across this swamp and it is about 200 yards to the trail where we came in or we can backtrack around the trail we came in on, which do you prefer?" He thought for just a second, looked at me and said, "let's go through the swamp." Bradley had a sling for his gun that he carried on his back when we were walking, so I told him to give me the gun and I would carry it across the swamp. As we started across the swamp, Bradley would try to find firm places to put his crutches, but they would often sink in up to his hands. Bradley would just pull them back out and try again. We made it across the swamp, I sat down on a rock, looked at Bradley with tears in my eyes, "come over here and sit down with me a minute Bradley." He came over and we sat there for a moment, I looked at him with tears rolling down my cheeks and said "Bradley, you have the outstanding stud hoss award as far as I am concerned". We must remember, God has a purpose for each of us. We don't have handicaps in His eyes, we have opportunities to bring glory to Him. As He replied to Paul, my grace is sufficient!

Doug (Papaw)

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.



As our nation drifts towards secularism, pray for God to bless us with a spiritual revival



Q: It seems to me like we're becoming less and less religious and moral as a nation. Isn't this what some of the recent polls are suggesting? Could this ever change? — Mrs. A.Q.

A: Yes, in recent decades our nation certainly has been drifting from its Judeo-Christian roots, and in many ways has become increasingly secular. We've come to tolerate attitudes and ways of living that would have been frowned upon only a few generations ago, and the number of people who say they have no religious belief continues to grow. And eventually we will pay a price for this, because when a nation abandons God, it also abandons living by God's moral standards. And once this happens, we could end up in moral anarchy and social chaos, in which everyone does what he or she wants to do — even if it hurts someone else. We will become like ancient Israel during one stage of its history: "In those days Israel had no king; everyone did as they saw fit" (Judges 21:25).

Can this be reversed? Yes, it can — if God intervenes and brings spiritual revival to our land. It has happened in the past, and it can happen again, as we repent and pray and ask God to bring us back to Himself. This is especially important, I believe, during an election year. The Bible tells us to pray for "all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness" (1 Timothy 2:2).

Regardless of what happens in the future, however, make it your goal to live for Christ. If you have never done so — or if you're uncertain — commit your life to Him today. Then ask Him to help you to be "blameless and pure ... in a warped and crooked generation" (Philippians 2:15).



The pain and scars abortion causes runs deep, but God won't turn his back on those involved

Q: Maybe some women can go through an abortion and never feel guilty, but I'm not one of them. I feel terrible over what I did, and every time I drive by a school playground I'm almost consumed with grief. Will I ever get over this? — J.N.

A: One of abortion's unseen (and unacknowledged) consequences is exactly what you have experienced: deep regret and guilt over what happened.

Tragically, however, sometimes a far different consequence takes place: spiritual and emotional insensitivity to what happened. This, I fear, is the reaction of far too many in our society today. The reason is because we have become centered only on ourselves and what we want, rather than on God and His will for our lives (and the lives of our children, both born and unborn). The Bible warns, "Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness" (Isaiah 5:20).

What you did was wrong in God's eyes — but He has not rejected you or abandoned you. He loves you, just as He loved the child that was growing in your womb (and is now, I am confident, safely in His presence). Furthermore, when Christ died on the cross, all your sins — without exception — were transferred to Him, and He took upon Himself the judgment you deserved. As the Bible says, "He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins" (1 John 2:2).

Accept God's gift of forgiveness today, by turning to Christ and by faith inviting Him to come into your life. Then believe that His promise of forgiveness is true, and that someday you will go to be with Him forever. In addition, ask Him to help you reach out to others whose hearts and minds have been scarred, as yours has been.





By Barbara Harrell

Oh, God! Please send Revival!  
What would happen in this country if true Revival would come!  
The Lord has given us this message: *"If my people who are called by my name will humble themselves, and pray and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sins and heal their land."* 2 Chronicles 7:14.  
First of all, he is talking to His people, not all the people. I had read this many times and would get depressed because it looked hopeless to me. Then I realized he is only talking to His people.



What would revival look like in this land corrupted by every sin imaginable? What would it look like in our small corner of NC? Brother helping brother, Love for all but courage to stand up for God—for His code of conduct. All "God's people" willing to stand up and say they belong to Him. Concern for fellowman instead of a fat pocketbook! Concern for babies being killed! Concern for the state of our moral decay!  
Well! What can just one person do? Sometimes (most of the time) changes come when one person makes a decision! I read a story about a man named Evan Roberts. He was deeply concerned about the spiritual condition of Wales, his native land. He began to pray and in a very short period of time revival had come and 100,000 were added to God's role. God hears!  
Let's look at the rest of the verse God has given us to follow. We are to "humble ourselves"! How hard is that? Very hard! Pride—We are a prideful people! We are proud of our country, our church, our home, our friends, our position! Our everything! If we admit sins people will think less of us—maybe, we could just mentally admit it and other people wouldn't have to know.  
We have "all" fallen short and sinned. No, I haven't murdered someone! I haven't robbed anybody! But I have sinned. I have looked at that outfit and coveted. I have looked at that person who is grossly sinning and felt so superior. I had money and kept it. I have not followed God's guide for giving—and the list goes on and on. God says these small sins are just as bad as one of the "big" sins. Our superior attitude just might be our biggest sin.  
God says for us to Pray and Seek His face—Maybe even down on our knees begging for forgiveness for ourselves and our country.  
And to turn from our wicked ways—Great and small—Personal and corporate. Everything from personally for giving a brother for a slight to corporately for the death of 3000 babies being killed every day.  
God's part is to hear us from heaven and if we come to Him He will hear us. And He will forgive us!

And hopefully it is not too late for Him to spare our land for a time!  
Heal our Land! WHERE IS AMERICA IN THE END TIMES? Well we know from the prophets that America is not mentioned, so we have to believe that she has already fallen. Is it too late NOW?  
Let's look at the story from 2 Kings 22 and 23. These verses tell us that Josiah became king when he was 8 years old, but he did what was right in the sight of the Lord. When Josiah was 26 years old, he was having the House of God cleaned up. A scroll was found and we know today that it was God's Word. When Josiah heard it, he tore his clothes. He wanted to know what they needed to do to get right with God.  
He was told the Lord was going to destroy them because they had not been faithful to Him. But read the message God sent to him. 2 Kings 22: 19 *"because your heart was tender, and you humbled yourself before the LORD when you heard what I spoke against this place and against its inhabitants, that they would become a desolation and a curse, and you tore your clothes and wept before Me, I also have heard you,"* says the Lord." Now see what God has for him now: 2 Kings 22:20 *"Surely, therefore, I will gather you to your fathers, and you shall be gathered to your grave in peace; and your eyes shall not see all the calamity which I will bring on this place."* 2 Kings 23:3 *"The king stood by a pillar and made a covenant before the LORD, to follow the LORD and to keep His commandments and His testimonies and His statutes, with all his heart and all his soul, to perform the words of this covenant that were written in this book. And all the people took a stand for the covenant."*  
Josiah followed through and burned all the idols, removed the priests of other gods, and everything that was not of God.  
This story gives me hope that it is not too late to turn back to God. Pray for our country and Vote your Christian beliefs.

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



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Haiti

By Reverend George Patton  
Burke County

Here just a few months ago I had the opportunity to be in Haiti once again. Haiti is a very troubled country. It has been since the country became its own nation, escaping the clutches of the French back in the 1800's. Haiti is a country full of corruption, greed, poverty, disease, and dread. There is no middle class in Haiti. The rich get richer and the poor remain the poorest of any other nation in the world. Americans have not helped the issue very much. Well-meaning missionaries have gone in and passed out so many clothes that it has killed the Haitian clothing market. For years we have sent in large cargo ships of rice, killing the Haitian rice market. Many of the farmers have left their fields in hopes of finding jobs in one of the cities seeing that they can no longer compete with free rice. Because of the desperation of the people, there are many road blocks that can pop up anytime. While there we were stopped at a road block. I had taken a bus from Port au prince, the capital, to Les Cayes. My plan was to hire a motorcycle from Les Cayes and travel the 3 and 1/2 hours through canyons, across rivers and up mountain roads to our base in the remote mountains. On my way out we stopped at a bus stop to get lunch. I noticed so much traffic gathered there. Upon asking about all the traffic, I found that there was a road block up ahead. These road blocks can last for days until the police can get enough of a force out to remove it. After a couple of hours I noticed the motorcycle drivers were getting through. I asked my interpreter to find out from one of the drivers if they were getting through. He came back and said no they were not. So we waited another hour. Still watching the motorcycles come from around the corner. (The road block was about a mile from the bus stop). I asked my interpreter to ask another motorcycle driver if they were getting through. One of the drivers said, I can get you through. I asked him if he had two more as there were 3 of us plus our luggage. He came back and sure enough there were 3 motorcycles. The bus driver did not want to give us our luggage as he was thinking it would be too unsafe for us to travel around the road block especially with an American. Finally he conceded, but he told us that he was not responsible for our safety. We packed what we had on the motorcycles and got it strapped down and then off we went. As we began to approach the road block you could see that they had taken a shipping container and blocked the road. No one could pass through. Suddenly we turned off to the left on a pig trail. It was nothing more than a small foot path. We traveled for some distance, past many mud houses. Then we turned off into a field, once again traveling for some distance. All of the sudden there were some of the people that came running when they saw we were getting past the blockade, but when they saw my priest collar, they said, it is a man of God, let him pass. We took another turn and before long we were at the road, but the protestors had put a shipping container in front of the trail so the motorcycle could not pass. We had to go the rest of the distance by foot, but Praise the Lord we made it past the blockade. We found a truck not far up the road. These little trucks are called tap taps. It is the taxi service. It is a little truck where you pay a small fare and get into the back. When you get to the place you want to stop, you tap the side of the truck and they will pull off the road, you pay the fare and they continue on. They put me in the front of the truck with my interpreter and our other Brother got in back. We were waiting for the truck to get full before he would go. It was not long until we heard gun fire. The driver jumped in the truck and took off. The police had started firing on the protestors.

To be continued.



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

"Dangerous Grief"

By Jacob Willis  
Yancey County



Hopefully you are reading this article because in some way this title caught your eye. Maybe you wonder what could be dangerous about grief, or maybe you think you already know. In bereavement we speak about a positive grief progression. Moving from feelings of denial, anger, resentment, bitterness, hopelessness, and depression to feelings of acceptance, peace, and hope. This, by definition, is the goal of bereavement programs. To assist people in this gentle progression. Some people have these feelings in order, others have these feelings all jumbled up, and still others have them all at the same time. The most important thing is not getting stuck in depression and bitterness. It is ok to embrace these feelings. In fact it is essential to embrace the negative emotions of grief. If you run from these feelings then you run the risk of never truly making a positive progression through grief. You do not get over grief, you get through it.

At Yancey Hospice we offer a thirteen month follow up for families that have lost loved ones. Our hope is to walk beside them during this most difficult time of grief. We provide mailings, phone calls and visits to families experiencing grief. During this time I observe all different types of grief and people of all different ages grieving. I see all different kinds of coping styles. Each style is unique to the person and their relationship with their loved one. I feel there are three major inhibitors to a person experiencing a positive grief progression. If not recognized and dealt with a person may never get to a place of peace and acceptance. I believe they are as follows: being too busy to grieve, being too strong to grieve, and being too sad to grieve. Over the next three months we will attempt to break down each of these and identify their meanings and pitfalls.

Being too busy to grieve is easy to do. It may even seem like a legitimate way to get over a loss. Certainly work, especially physical labor, can be a stress reliever and a good way to cope. However, work taken to the extreme may become an escape from grief. It may seem as though the more I work the more I appear to be over it, and when I finally get home I collapse in bed due to exhaustion. I feel that I have climbed Griefs Mountain now. In some sense I may be convinced this is really working for me, but this only leads to two things: one is exhaustion and two is lasting depression. When I burn my candle at both ends to avoid the silence of an empty home, or I work till I am so tired seven days a week rather than face a Sunday at church, or at home alone; I slip into a dependence on exhaustion. I am relying on work to replace my loved one's presence, and no matter how much you love your job it cannot replace the pain in your heart. It can mask it till you become sick physically, sick mentally, and right back at square one. No closer to a positive progression than before.

Remember if grief is Hell, then the key is on the inside of the door. The more I work for the sake of ignoring grief, the longer I remain in this cycle of pain. When I begin to take a few moments each day to embrace my feelings, no matter how dark or depressing, I will begin to slowly turn the key to my cell. Remember you can't help your feelings, but you can help what you do with them. If I totally ignore them, they do not just magically disappear. They fester into a deep bitterness and depression we may not even be aware of. This dangerous packing of feelings is more prominent with men than women, although, women can be equally as guilty. It is only when we take our feelings to Jesus that we begin to truly deal with our pain and depression. This takes time. It takes us being intentional for a space of time each day. Each of us need to be keenly aware of how much time is enough. Listen to the Spirit and allow Him to direct your grief. Remember Psalm 65: 4-5 "Happy are those who choose to bring near to live in your courts. We shall be satisfied with the goodness of your house, your holy temple. By awesome deeds you answer us with deliverance, O God of our salvation you are the hope of all the ends of the earth and the farthest seas."

Jesus is waiting to meet you in your darkest place of grief and bring you to a positive place of hope and peace. Take the time today to grieve in His presence.

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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# Mine Creek Baptist Church

## A Thanksgiving to Remember

By Preacher Chris Rathbone  
Mitchell County



Every year in November my family looks forward to the Thanksgiving holiday with great anticipation. There are a couple of reasons for this anticipation. The first is the opportunity for our family to gather together and spend time with each other and give thanks to the Good Lord for all He has blessed us with throughout the previous year. Our family is scattered from Maine to South Carolina and the holidays are usually the only time of year we have the opportunity to be together. Secondly there is a tradition that the outdoorsmen in my family have looked forward to for many years: the opening of the rifle season for deer hunting. This may sound silly to most people but where I'm from, it is practically a holiday in itself.

Growing up in Western North Carolina as a boy brought many opportunities to enjoy the outdoors in God's beautiful creation. In those days, video games and satellite television were not even heard of at our house. Even if they had been available, my parents could not have afforded them. Many of my uncles and cousins were heavily involved in fishing and hunting. Not only was this a great pastime, but it put some mighty fine eating on the table for the family. When I was in grade school, my older brother Mike would share with me that he would be going squirrel hunting the next day, so somehow I always managed to miss the school bus that next day (Don't tell Mama!). Daddy drove our only vehicle to work and Mama had no way to get me to school, so me and my brother would set out on those cold and crisp fall mornings in search of oak trees and gray squirrels. My grandmother would clean what she called "a mess of squirrels" and make us squirrel gravy and biscuits for lunch. As a young boy, I thought it was the best eating ever.

As the years passed and we got older we moved on to hunting big game such as deer. The older men in our family passed down the "know how" of hunting to us younger ones. Many times, I would see a big buck hanging from a skinning pole or tree limb and day dream of the time I would harvest my first deer. Eventually, that time would come and go and the tradition of hunting deer every year became my own tradition. Though harvesting a deer to me is quite enjoyable, it's all the things that go along with hunting that I look so forward to each year. Unless one has spent the time in the woods when the sun is rising and the morning is "coming alive", one can never understand the feeling of awe and inspiration that is felt. I sometimes wonder as I observe the wildlife around me or the beauty of the view from atop a mountain how people can say they don't believe there is a God who created it. The quietness of God's creation gives a time for prayer and contemplation and sometimes while reading my Bible, God has spoken to me through His Word something that my heart needed. There is also the enjoyment of sharing the successes of a fellow hunter or hearing the story of the big one that got away before offering a shot. Seeing the smiles, hearing the stories, and simply enjoying the camaraderie that goes along with the season can really make some great memories.

Over the last couple of years, I have endeavored to pass along this tradition to my sons. I want them to understand that there is more to do than just play computer games or watch a 24-hour cartoon channel. God has given us His creation to enjoy and use for our benefit. It's important to try to take advantage of every opportunity I have to spend time with them. Hunting and fishing gives many opportunities to let them be boys by exploring, running, climbing trees, seeing wildlife, etc. Often there is not much hunting or fishing involved but at least we are together. They are taught to respect God's creation and to give Him thanks for the time He allows us to spend together enjoying it.

November of 2009, brought a day that neither me nor my boys will ever forget. The weeks prior to Thanksgiving I had promised the boys I would take them hunting. As many kids do when looking forward to a special date, almost every day they would ask, "Daddy, how many days until we go deer hunting?" I would count the days on the calendar and that would satisfy them until the next day and the question

would come again.

Thanksgiving Day finally arrived and we rolled out of bed around 4:30 a.m. When I woke the boys, I asked them, "Do you want to go deer hunting?" Their reply was a loud, "Yea!" They jumped from their beds, staggering from sleepiness. They put on layer after layer of clothing that their Mama had laid out the night before and walked like robots to the truck. The morning was crisp and clear with stars shining brightly in the sky. A heavy frost was laying on the ground that looked as if a light snow had fallen during the night. We drove in the cold morning air the 20 minutes to our hunting destination while I listened to the boys talk excitedly of the potential that the morning hunt may bring. As we exited the truck and our boots hit the frozen, crunchy ground, steam rose from our mouths as we breathed in and exhaled the cold pre-dawn air. We offered a prayer to God to watch over us with safety and bless us with a successful hunt. I told the boys to be as quietly as possible, but with every step we made there was a loud frosty crunch. We made our way to the hilltop above our ground blind and walked down the other side. The blind was covered with the white frost which made the zipper on the side tough to unzip. We entered the blind and settled our gear on the ground and waited for daylight to break. The boys laid down on the ground wrapped in all the layers of clothes and fell asleep. I could hear them softly breathing, fast asleep, in the quiet morning. I partially unzipped the sides of the blind as daylight began to break. Gabriel woke up and decided to have some breakfast. I poured some milk from a thermos into a bowl of Fruit Loops for him to enjoy. Reuben remained asleep on the ground at my feet, snoring quietly. Gabriel and I whispered back and forth for a while as we occasionally gazed out of the blind to look for deer.

Suddenly we heard the faint sound of something walking on the frosty ground. Closer and closer it came. To the left of the blind the buck appeared, walking as if he was purposely heading to a certain destination. I whispered for Gabriel to be as quiet as possible, for the buck was only about 20 yards away. Gabriel whispered, "I see him, Daddy, I see him!" Slowly I raised my rifle, careful not to make any noise. My heart began to race and my breathing became labored as if I had just run in a race. (You hunters will understand that!). I could hear Gabriel breathing heavily as he looked over my shoulder at the buck. The buck was now quartering away at about 40 yards as he traveled along the trail. I flipped off the safety on the rifle, held my breath, steadied my aim, and squeezed the trigger. The buck flinched and started to run. He expired within sight as we watched him go down. I turned to Gabriel to see a smile spread across his face. "We got him, Daddy!" he shouted with excitement. Reuben quickly jumped to his feet. Still rubbing sleep from his eyes, he proclaimed, "Daddy, I didn't even get to hold my ears!" I hugged the boys as they jumped up and down with excitement.

We exited the blind and made our way to the downed animal. The boys stood and looked with awe and amazement at the beautiful animal. They rubbed their hands across his coat and lifted his head with the huge antlers. "He's a 9 pointer", they exclaimed as they counted his points together. I knelt down in front of the boys, gathered them in my arms and we thanked God for allowing us to be together and keeping us safe. Oh, yea, for the 9 pointer too. The boys looked on as I field dressed the deer and then we took some pictures and loaded him in the truck bed. As we began the drive home to share our success with our family, Gabriel said, "Daddy, this is the best Thanksgiving ever". Reuben spoke in agreement, "Yea, the best ever". As I looked in the rear-view mirror at their little cheeks red from the morning cold, I whispered under my breath, "Yea, the best ever." It wasn't because of a successful hunt, but because God had given me life and was allowing me to share it with my two sons. Now that is a Thanksgiving to remember!



*Psalm 100:4-5 Enter into his gates with thanksgiving,  
and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name.  
For the Lord is good; his mercy is everlasting;  
and his truth endureth to all generations.*

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



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The Gift That Brings the Greatest Joy

By Joyce Meyer

Of all the gifts we could ever receive, God's gift of salvation is by far the most amazing and important one! Ephesians 2:8-9 says, "For it is by free grace (God's unmerited favor) that you are saved...through [your] faith. And this [salvation] is not of yourselves [of your own doing, it came not through your own striving], but it is the gift of God; not because of works...lest any man should boast. [It is not the result of what anyone can possibly do, so no one can pride himself in it or take glory to himself]" (AMPC).

We are saved by the grace of God through our faith in Him; our faith does not buy our salvation—it merely receives it. As Ephesians 2:8 says, salvation "is the gift of God." It is impossible to buy a free gift and this can be hard for us to understand. Our flesh wants to earn and deserve this free gift and take credit for being worthy of it.

But salvation is given to us freely, by God's grace, and the same way we receive Christ's salvation, is the same way we have to live—by grace. God gives us His forgiveness and grace daily; we just have to believe and receive it.

In Christ, You Are Sin-free in God's Eyes

When God forgives your sins, it means all of your sins: past, present and future. You do not have to be afraid of sin because God has taken care of the problem. This is why the Gospel is such good news!

Some may worry that if we don't fear sin, we will keep sinning on purpose, but that's not true. If you are truly born again and really have a relationship with God, there is a new nature inside of you.

Second Corinthians 5:17 (AMPC) says, "If any person is [ingrafted] in Christ (the Messiah) he is a new creation (a new creature altogether); the old [previous moral and spiritual condition] has passed away. Behold, the fresh and new has come!"

Now, no one is perfect, and we all make mistakes sometimes. But if the Holy Spirit is living in your spirit through salvation, you won't be comfortable with those mistakes because God's nature is at work in you. The devil would love for us to feel like God is mad at us for our mistakes, but the truth is, God is love and we need to humbly accept His love and grace.

Changed by Grace

In John 15:5 (AMPC), Jesus says, "I am the Vine; you are the branches. Whoever lives in Me and I in him bears much (abundant) fruit. However, apart from Me [cut off from vital union with Me] you can do nothing." I love this scripture because it reminds me that God doesn't expect me to change on my own. He is the power source and gives us the grace and strength we need to do what's right and make changes in our lives.

Here's how we cooperate with Him, doing what we can do to bring about change:

1. We hear the truth in God's Word and we're convicted by it. It's the Word that shows us who we are and reveals the sin in our lives. We have to realize what we're doing wrong before we can know what needs to change and how.

2. Then we repent of our sin. Being repentant means we're sincerely sorry and willing to turn away from it. (See 1 John 1:9.)

3. The next step is to study the Word in the area we need change. For example, if I have a problem with anger, I need to study scriptures about anger and forgiveness. Use the Word like medicine and take it into your heart and mind. James 1:21 (AMPC) says to "welcome the Word which implanted and rooted [in your hearts] contains the power to save your souls." There is power in God's Word to bring change to our souls!

Receive All God Has for You and Enjoy Your Life

To receive God's blessings and enjoy everyday life, we simply need to make



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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).



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But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven. Matthew 19:14

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G	E	N	T	L	Y	P	O	S	T	G	A	D
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## Our Privilege . . .

## Our Responsibility

By Rev. Bruce Cannon  
Mitchell County



The right to vote is a privilege and the responsibility of every American citizen eighteen years of age or older. Yet, so few take advantage of this opportunity. In the last presidential election only 57.5% of those registered to vote did so. The estimate for this upcoming election is expected to be only slightly higher.

The question "Why?" begs to be answered. Is it that we think our vote does not count? How many races in the United States have been won by just a few hundred votes? In the 2000 presidential election George Bush defeated Al Gore by a tremendously close margin. In the 1960 race between Richard Nixon and John Kennedy the election was decided by a 0.1% margin. Or, are we simply unaware or confused about the direction our Country is really heading?

Too many issues will be affected by this current presidential election for us to not cast our vote. The next president of the United States will likely appoint four Supreme Court Justices: one to replace Justice Scalia and the other three to replace the aging Court Justices Kennedy, Ginsberg and Bryer who are at or well above retirement age. All indications point toward the fact that Mrs. Clinton will appoint those who share her values and will swing the Court to a very liberal stance. She has promised to protect and expand abortion rights, to increase same-sex rights and benefits, to greatly reduce the right to own guns, and, will by her choices, enable the national debt to grow at an extreme rate after having almost doubled under the current administration to \$19.7 trillion.

This pro-Hillary website details her stand on LGBT issues: <https://www.hillaryclinton.com/issues/lgbt-equality/>

This pro-Hillary website details how the national debt will grow under her administration: <https://www.hillaryclinton.com/feed/five-important-steps-hillary-clinton-will-take-reduce-inequality-and-grow-our-economy/> Under this plan, every home will be connected to broadband, college will be free (but who will actually pay for it?), she will stand with unions (which has the capacity to destroy smaller businesses) thereby increasing the size of government and spending for bureaucracy.

Who will you vote for? That is between you and our Lord. But you must vote. You must vote for that candidate whom you believe will be the best choice of the two. You must vote for the one who will genuinely help our country be a bit better for our children/grand-children coming behind us.

Early voting began on October 18th and ends on November 5th. Election Day is Tuesday, November 8th.

Be a good citizen. . . VOTE!

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.

## Sudoku Solution

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



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The Rest of the Story

By Farmer Doug

As I reread this article I could not help but miss the laughter and joking that Clint, and I always shared. His many strengths in writing were so evident in this Funny Farm story. There is nothing that I can add to it that would improve it in any way. Clint was always one of the people that had extremely high intelligence and not always down to earth experience with real-life situations on the farm. As he himself would freely admit, his mechanical ability was next to zero and that often got him in uncomfortable situations on the farm and with machinery. I was blessed to have had him as a dear friend and partner.

Dear friends,

Three years ago I was invited to take part in the Mineral City Heritage Festival in Spruce Pine. A trusting soul, who shall remain nameless...although I believe it was Chris McCurry...asked my friend Doug if he would provide the tractor for hayrides at this extravaganza. Always the community supporter and overall nice fellow, he consented to loan his farm tractor and trailer for the event.

When Farmer Doug first told me about the "OPPORTUNITY" I believed it was a positive move for Blue Ridge Christian News. After all, it is important for our company to support the community. "Just think about it, Pollard," he exclaimed, "Hayrides with Farmer Clint will be a huge success!" I'm still trying to remember how Doug providing a tractor for hayrides morphed into Farmer Clint providing hayrides! To be honest, I was astonished that my pal would subject our town to the antics of Farmer Clint on a tractor. Nevertheless, I began to mentally prepare for the coming out party, "Farmer Clint's Debutante Ball", if you will ☺.



Festival Fun

God protected Farmer Clint on Heritage Festival Day, at least while he was driving local kiddos around on the hay wagon. There were no "near misses", no scary mishaps (at least none that I will admit), and everyone enjoyed the hayride. Well, to be totally truthful Farmer Clint's Hayride was not exactly the headline event others expected ☹. I sat aboard the tractor from 8:30 am – 1:30 pm and had exactly 2 – that's right, TWO – hay-riders. The good news...the two little passengers I had were thrilled to be aboard the Farmer Clint Express!

Farmer Clint "Sent Packing"

Every now and then, as I sat aboard the Kioti tractor I've come to know and love, Starli McDowell, then the Executive Director of Spruce Pine Main Street, would stop for a visit. Actually I think she was hoping to collect the vast wads of cash I amassed to support the new Central Park project on Lower Street. I am happy to report that I gave Starli the entire \$4.00 I earned making trips up and down Oak Street. How embarrassing ☹.

Starli and I watched Roger Pitman's mule drawn carriage, a beautiful and majestic rig, make its way up and down the street. Riders, young and old, blew right by old Farmer Clint on their way to pet the mules and board Roger's mule limousine. It was about that time, as I recall, that Starli suggested, "Farmer Clint, you're OUTA HEAH!" I looked deep into Starli's eyes and could tell she wasn't kidding...Farmer Clint was "The Biggest Loser!" It was time to skedaddle, va-moose, get-the-heck out of Spruce Pine!

Rejection Turns to Fanfare

Oh how I dreaded the LONG drive from Lower Street to my home in Minpro...nearly 2.5 miles of torture. What would I tell my beautiful bride Kay? Rejected and dejected, my Farmer Clint overalls drooping, I eased the trusty Kioti and trailer into the flowing traffic. My thoughts were of unfulfilled dreams, dashed hopes, and public humiliation. And then, I mused to myself "Don't run over anyone with this tractor!" Then, "I hope there's no traffic when I try to cross Hwy 226S."

As I meandered down Upper Street people began to call out to me, "Hi, Farmer Clint!" Cars and trucks honked and waved, I returned the gestures. As I motored past The Market on Oak, Shirley Hise and others waved excitedly at me...Doug Crosby, Mark Meadows' Regional Coordinator, called out to me...Syvana Monroe, Doug's then-fiance, smiled and waved happily. And I thought to myself, "What a day for Farmer Clint!" I was baaaack ☺!

No Good Deed Goes Unpunished

Arriving home safely I decided to position the tractor and trailer in a way that would make it easy for Farmer Doug to rejoin it to his truck.

Now earlier that day, recall that I had been warned "Farmer Clint, DO NOT MAKE TOO SHARP A TURN or it will jack-knife." I don't know why Doug is forever barking warnings to me!

I drove the tractor into our lower lot, thinking..."I will just do a circle, and get everything lined up for Doug; that way he won't have to hassle with it when he comes to fetch the equipment." Well, I made a circle as planned...WHAM! The tractor groaned and belched, the trailer spun, the wheels spit sod and dirt in my face...I was stuck! Better said...on a scale of 1 to 10...this was a perfect 10 jack-knife.

Déjà vu to that earlier rebuke, "Farmer Clint, DO NOT MAKE TOO SHARP

A TURN or it will jack-knife ☹." I was frantic, had no idea what to do...so I did what came natural, I gave the Kioti more gas, pedal to the floor...wheels spun, then hung-up on the tongue of the trailer. It seemed like the tractor wheels were sinking ever deeper into the soft soil.

Dang it...rats...doggone...now what????? I looked to heaven and said, "Lord, not now...don't let me screw up now! I don't want Doug to have to bail me out AGAIN!" But the harder I tried the worse things became. This tractor was STUCK...the trailer was eternally affixed to the tractor tire...and, for all I knew, it was about to plunge to the center of the soft earth.

Honey I'm Home!

Well, I disembarked from my stuck machine and crawled along the ground, wondering if I could lift the trailer to straighten it out...I conjured up ways that I could hook that tractor to a rope and my waist, then pull it straight...all without breaking my back. Nahhhhhh, it was a lost cause and I needed to face the music with Kay.

I found her in the bedroom getting all gussied-up, preparing to attend the Festival. Perhaps it was my despondent facial expression, maybe that sickly smile and haunted look that comes upon me whenever I mess up...regardless, she asked, "What in the heck is the matter?" So much for surprise.

Calmly, expertly I explained that the farm equipment can be very finicky...and, after all, I am inexperienced with some maneuvers...and that grass in our lower field is rather soft...AND I was now hopelessly stuck. "The good news," I said feigning humor, "is that it could be viewed as rural yard art!" Kay could tell my heart wasn't in it.

Then I imploded..."I hate myself, I can't do anything right, why couldn't I be successful just once...I want to be someone else. I want to leave here and never come back!" Gently, tenderly Kay inquired, "Who would you like to be? Where would you like to go?" "I don't know," I bellowed, "but I'm not telling Doug about this!" Gently, tenderly Kay replied, "Yes you are. Doug knew what he would get when he asked you to do this event. He can fix it, you'll see."

Why, Lord, is the woman always right?

We walked down the hill together, she gazed in amazement at my debacle. After a while we began to chuckle, well she chuckled more than I did! "Doug can fix it, you'll see," she reiterated.

Informing Farmer Doug

Given a choice, I'd much prefer to have a dozen root canals than explain ONE MORE plight of idiocy to my friend Farmer Doug. So, sheepishly and cowardly I sent him a TEXT message..."Tractor stuck...HELP!" (Call me a chicken if you must, but it was a heck of a lot better than head-to-head admission!)

Minutes passed, then a half hour...still no reply from Farmer Doug. I remarked to Kay, "Well, that's it...he's done with me. As Popeye always said, 'That's all I can stand, 'cause I can't stands no more!' I've finally driven Doug over the cliff!"

Gently, tenderly she said, "Doug can fix it, you'll see."

Staring into the Eye of the Tiger

When we arrived Downtown Spruce Pine I told Kay, "You feel free to check out the festival while I face the music with Doug." She patted my back and wished me luck.

Farmer Doug was peddling homemade Harrell Hill Farms molasses out of his truck bed as I made my tentative, stealth approach. I walked briskly toward him, then slowed to a mere snail's pace...unsure how he would receive me. His eyes did double duty as he looked at a molasses buyer with one eye while peering at me over his glasses with the other. Uh oh!

The customer left and I did the only thing I knew to do...I swooped in on Farmer Doug and gave him a bear hug ☺. "Pollard, I had to laugh when I got your TEXT message," he began. Poised to strike and defend myself, suddenly the air exploded from my lungs; as if a hot air balloon expelled it's lift. "Doug, I was trying to get the tractor..." He put his arm around my shoulders, drew me close and said, matter of factly, "Not a problem. I'll just put it in 4-wheel drive, lock down the wheels and move it out."

I was immediately insulted..."What, do you think I don't have it in 4-wheel drive? Do you really believe I am that stupid???" Always the teacher, he again smiled that crooked grin, looked at me over his glasses, and remarked, "Well, we know you've had challenges with 4-wheel drive in the past." Oh sure, now he's remembering the time I nearly burned up "Blackie the Jeep" on some dauged mountain, thinking I had it in 4-wheel drive and didn't!

I was greatly relieved that my friend didn't disown me; delighted that his renowned sense of optimism remained intact. Somehow he always gives me hope when I am overwhelmed by dark clouds. But, truth be told I didn't care how he did it, I just wanted this nightmare to end.

All's Well that Ends Well

Yeah, yeah, yeah...we arrived home to find I had failed to engage the 4-wheel drive AGAIN! GRRRRR ☹.

It took Farmer Doug approximately 3 ½ minutes to dislodge his tractor and trailer from the quicksand that WAS our lower lot. But, always the gentleman and friend, he remarked, "Pollard, every bit of advice I give to you comes from having made lots of mistakes. So don't feel bad, I've done exactly the same things and then some!"

What a friend...what an encourager...what a farmer. But, I am still Farmer Clint...and he's not ☹!

Humbled in the Hills,

Farmer Clint



Important Words for Pastors

by Dr. Tom Walker  
McDowell Count



1 Peter 5:1-4 says:  
1 The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed:  
2 Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind;  
3 Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock.  
4 And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.

There is a great deal of controversy about the role of the pastor in a local church. These verses before us as well as other verses in the Word of God (esp. Hebrew 13) clarify for us what the role of the pastor in the local church actually is. Since what God wants for us is what really matters, there is no better place to look than the Scriptures to find out what God desires the pastor should be. In this brief study, I want to show you a part of what God expects of His men.  
It is important to note the term "elder" does not just apply to a person of advanced age, but it can also refer to God's preachers. Context will aid us in understanding how that term is to be applied. In our passage before us, it is the "elder" that is commanded to "feed the flock of God." It is clear that the pastor is in view in I Peter 5:1-4. Let's see what we can learn from this portion of God's Word.

Exhorter

There should be no debate that Peter penned what is written in the verses in consideration. He is indisputably the author of this epistle and the most prominent among Jesus' disciples. Let's notice how he identifies himself in verse 1.  
Peter is identified as an elder(v.1a). With that title comes tremendous responsibility. It is one thing to desire a position and another matter to determine you are going to diligently fulfill all the responsibilities of that office. After denying the Lord by the enemy's fire and seeing the risen Lord, any recklessness about Peter's life for Christ disappeared. He became willing to lay his life down for the Lord Jesus. I see no evidence in the Bible that Peter was the first pope, although Peter was the most prominent among the followers of Jesus.  
Peter also recognizes he is a witness(v.1b). He had actually witnessed the sufferings of the Lord Jesus Christ. Those sufferings were not just something he heard or merely read about, Peter saw them first hand. Since Peter was actually there and saw Christ suffer, we know He is not writing or giving information on the basis of specu-

lation. He was an eye witness of what Jesus had done for us and for Peter himself. Christ's sufferings were very real to him.  
Importantly, Peter saw himself as a partaker(v.1c). According to verse 1 he would be a partaker of glory that will be revealed. The apostle had seen Christ unveil a part of His divine glory on the mount of transfiguration. It was only a little taste of the glory to come. For instance, Jesus said the believer would experience the glory of the resurrection of the believers that will come in the future (Matt.13:43; Matt.19:28-29).

Exhortations

There are words about feeding. It says in v.2 to "feed the flock of God." Those words not only deal with preaching and teaching the Word of God to people, but to tend to and shepherd the flock. When a man of God opens up the Bible and declares the Word of God to the people, he is obeying the Scriptures. Children often want to eat a great deal of sweets, which is not good for them physically. Parents, who really care for them, want to give them what they need, not necessarily what they want.  
The apostle Paul could rightly say: "For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God" (Acts 20:27). Compare Ezekiel 33:6 concerning the watchman giving a warning. Paul's testimony should be the claim of every teacher and preaching in the church. He saw all of the Word of God as important, both Old Testament and New Testament. That is why he held back none of it! Making contact with the sick is an important responsibility of the pastor, but preaching the Bible as it is to men as they are being is the preacher's greatest responsibility.

Notice words about leading. That concept is found in the words, "Taking the oversight"(v.2). The word "oversight" is actually made up of two Greek New Testament words. It means to closely inspect, to oversee, or to take the lead. Pastors are to be strong leaders, although often there are those opposing them in doing what God expects of them. Some are antagonistic about pastoral leadership because they want to do the leading instead of the pastor. In the local church do things God's way if you desire God's blessings. If you have a man of God in your church, you would be wise to allow him to lead as God leads him.  
Observe words about serving- "not by constraint but willingly" (v.2). As we serve the Lord we should do so, not because we are being forced or pressured to do so, but because we love Christ and just want to serve Him and do His will. When we love Jesus as we should, we desire to serve Him as He leads, even if the work becomes difficult. We should have a mindset like this- "By God's grace I will do what He tells me to do."

Next, there are words about gaining- "not for filthy lucre" (v.2). That speaks of dishonest gain. It is commendable for a church to take good care financially of God's man, but no preacher should want to move forward financially through dishonest gain.  
Still, there are words about exemplifying- "being ensamples to the flock" (v.3). It is important for the one who leads God's people to make sure he has the mindset to be an example twenty-four hours a day to those entrusted to his care. Many ministers are more interested in telling people what they ought to be than they are showing people, by example, what they ought to do.

Expectations

There were two things that Peter was expecting in regard to the future. This forward look enabled him to minister more effectively in his present.  
He anticipated and expected an appearing (v.5). The Chief Shepherd, the Lord Jesus, had promised that he would come again (John 14:1-3). Peter took him at his Word and was looking for him to return. His coming will be in two phases. The first will be when He comes for His saints, then seven years later, Jesus will return to earth with His saints.  
He expected a rewarding. He speaks of "the crown of glory" (v.5). That is a very special crown that will be given to the faithful pastor. Not all men have the same abilities, but all can be faithful. Remember, God is just and a rewarder of those who seek and serve Him. Since you know that is true, give God your best.

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



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# The Inspiring Word

## Thanksgiving

By Terry Cheek  
McDowell County

For the next couple of months, we will once again break from our study of the Sermon on the Mount. I promise to continue the study where we left off after the holiday season. As you read this our election will have ended or be very close to ending. Many of us have concerns the America of October 2016 may quickly become an America we pine for. However, for November 2016 may I turn your heart to Thanksgiving. Not just food, family and fellowship; though they are necessary. May I share with you four aspects of biblical Thanksgiving. Notice with me...

First, Thanksgiving should cause us to realize God created us for worship and thanksgiving. He created us to honor Him by giving Him thanks. Being Thankful for grace in both who God is and His actions on our behalf; in creation, redemption and daily sustenance of our lives.

We see this more clearly in Romans chapter 1 where we are brought face to face with what's gone wrong with the world. The apostle Paul gives us a glimpse of our misapplication of thanksgiving in the created order:

Romans 1:21 *Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.*

Part of what Adam and Eve were created to do is honor God by being thankful. Likewise, part of our existence is to honor God by being thankful and enjoining the privilege we have to express gratitude to Him.

We possess a knowledge of God, a knowledge that leads us to thanksgiving. We realize from Romans 1; man has embraced unthankfulness.

Second, Thanksgiving involves confessing we have failed miserably in appreciating God as we should. Man inherited a spirit of unthankfulness from the sin nature we obtained through the fall in the garden of Eden. Satan had an obvious lack of Thanksgiving and he passed it along to us through Adam and Eve. This is so painfully true. We not only fail to be thankful, but we also fail to get the balance right between physical and spiritual. Let's call them "hyper-spirituality" and "hyper-physicality."

Hyper-physicality is too well known in 21st-century Western society. It is being so material minded we are unaware of spiritual reality. When there is gratitude for the material things, spiritual gratitude is neglected, if not outright rejected. We are thankful for the material, while caring less about the eternal.

Then hyper-spirituality is found in many of the so-called "spiritual" types, even in the church. Where we are prone to reject God's physical goodness out of fear that appreciation for it will somehow detract from our thanksgiving of spiritual blessings.

Too often we fail to get the proportions right. Only through redemption can we find a balance that looks something like this: *Philippians 3:8 Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ.*

Third, Thanksgiving understands Jesus entered into our thankless world. He lived in flawless appreciation of his Father, and died on our behalf for our lack of Thanksgiving. It is Jesus, who has manifested the perfect life of thankfulness. Here are some texts where Jesus models Thanksgiving.

Matthew 11:25 [also Luke 10:21]: *"At that time" [note the context of unrepentant and unthankful "cities where most of his mighty works had been done," verse 20] Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes."*

John 11:41: *"Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead was laid. And Jesus lifted up his eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me."* [Jesus then raises Lazarus from the dead.]

Matthew 15:36 [also Mark 8:6]: *"And he took the seven loaves and the fishes, and gave thanks, and brake them, and gave to his disciples, and the disciples to the multitude."* [See also John 6:11 and John 6:23 which refers to the location as "the place where they had eaten the bread after the Lord had given thanks"]

1 Corinthians 11:23-24: *"For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread: (24) And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me."*

Jesus is not only God in the flesh but also the quintessential role model for a thankful human. Jesus not only died to forgive our sin, but also lived the perfect life of thankfulness toward God the Father.

Fourth, Thanksgiving testifies through grace and by faith in Jesus alone, are we redeemed from an unthankful heart, and the eternal penalty of hell. Likewise, we are saved to enjoy the pleasure of being thankful for God's favor toward us — not only as his creation, but also as his redemption.

It is natural for the born again to be in a continuous attitude of gratitude toward his creator and redeemer. The proper life that flows from such amazing grace is the life of continual thankfulness. This is the kind of life in which the born-again Christian is being continually renewed into and becoming more like Jesus.

The apostle Paul encourages Christians to have lives characterized by thanksgiving.

Colossians 1:10-12 *That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God; (11) Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness; (12) Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light:*

Colossians 2:6-7 *As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye*



in him: (7) Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving.

Colossians 3:15-17 *And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful. (16) Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. (17) And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.*

God's word contains many more verses of encouragement, instruction and inspiration for a proper heart of Thanksgiving. So enjoy your family, the traditional meal, the ball game and all of the fellowship that comes with the holiday. Don't forget to renew your heart to a godly Thanksgiving; one which worships your creator and hopefully your redeemer.

Happy Thanksgiving 2016! Until next time may God keep you firmly in His grip!

Terry Cheek is Pastor of Calvary Baptist Church in Marion.



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# The Summit Church-Morganton

## A Worthy Life

By Jason Webb  
Burke County

What does it mean to live a life worthy of the gospel? Paul outlines a specific set of scriptures that tells us to do that very thing. Philippians 1:27 says, "Whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ." Paul is writing this to the Philippian church, urging them to continue to live life for Christ, regardless if Paul is there to see them or not.

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





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# Billy Graham Evangelistic Association

## Can We Rebuild Our Walls?

By Billy Graham



It is important to acknowledge that many Christians are praying for revival in America. We want God to revive His church. In fact, things are so desperate that apart from a widespread turning to God, we will not reverse the trends in American culture. But I fear that we want revival to do what we are unwilling to do ourselves—namely, to personally witness to our culture along the highways and byways of everyday life.

We want God to come in great power to convert people, but the Bible stresses the need for personal evangelism. I believe that America's crumbling walls cannot be rebuilt until Christians—bankers, lawyers, nurses, factory workers—all see themselves as representatives of Christ wherever He has planted them.

One of my greatest disappointments is the number of Christians who work next to unbelievers without ever making it clear that they are Christians. Lovingly and winsomely, we must share the Gospel message through our lips and testify to its transformative power by our lives. Unless that happens, America's walls will not be rebuilt. We as the church, through the power of the Gospel, have the seeds of renewal. Unless they are watered, cared for and cultivated, we will not rebuild our crumbling walls.

Prayer

*Dear Lord, I confess that I have not been as intentional as I need to be about my own personal revival and sharing the Gospel with others. Please fill me with passion for You and a burden for the salvation of those around me. In Jesus' Name. Amen.*



*I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.*  
Philippians 4:13

## Pleasant Ridge Baptist Church-Morganton

### "The Way You Talk Gives You Away"

By Shawn Thomas  
Burke County



"A little later the bystanders came up and said to Peter, 'Surely you too are one of them; for even the way you talk The Holy Spirit (Matthew 26:73)'"

This verse describes what happened as Simon Peter denied Jesus for the 3rd time after His arrest. But it also leads to an ironic twist, with a piercing truth:

The "bystanders" who were watching Peter believed that he was with Jesus' party, and the reason they believed it was "the way you talk." Evidently either his accent, or choice of words, was peculiar to Nazareth or the surrounding area, and indicated that he was an "out-of-towner" and likely with Christ. Peter's response is striking: Verse 74 says, "Then he began to curse and swear, 'I do not know the man!'" How ironic! His interrogators had just asserted that "the way you talk gives you away" — and here Peter DOES indeed "give himself away" with his speech! But it didn't "give away" merely his regional origin; rather his speech here exposed his HEART.

The thing is, our words always do that. They expose our heart. Jesus said, "The mouth speaks out of that which fills the heart." (Matthew 12:34) When you say something unseemly, you shouldn't exclaim, "Where did THAT come from?" — as if you had no idea. Your mouth speaks from the overflow of your heart.

The bottom line is that just like Peter, "the way you talk gives you away." Your daily speech reveals your spiritual condition. It demonstrates what you really love, because what you love, you talk about. And sometimes, like Peter, we show our lack of loyalty to Christ by denying Him before others. One thing is certain: if you want to know where you really are spiritually, just take a close look at your words. For "the way you talk gives you away."

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)



Dave Says

Young, jobless and scared

Dear Dave,  
I'm 23, and I lost a good job a few days ago due to layoffs. My wife has been a stay-at-home mom with our 10-month-old daughter, and we have very little in the way of savings. What can we do to keep our heads above water?

Seth  
Dear Seth,  
I'm really sorry you're going through this. I've been there, so I know this is a scary time for you. There are some short- and long-term goals to think about in a situation like this, but let's look at the immediate future.

Go crazy about finding some kind of income. I don't care if it's delivering pizza during the week and working at the mall on weekends. Even if it doesn't completely replace your previous income, it will give you some cash to pay bills and stay afloat. On your off days, and before and after work, you can line up and do interviews for a more stable, full-time job. You may even have to trade off babysitting duties with your wife so she can earn some money too.

While all this is going on, have a garage sale and sell anything you don't need or want anymore. Just about anything that can be turned into income should be turned into income. In the process, prioritize your bills and other financial responsibilities. Take care of food first, then utilities, the mortgage or rent, then transportation. You guys don't need to see the inside of a restaurant for a while unless you're working there, and if things don't get better by Christmas, any gifts you give should be handmade crafts.

This is doable if you two work hard, pull together, and focus. God bless you guys,  
Seth— Dave  
Accounting 101

Dear Dave,  
I've just started my own small business. As the owner and only employee, how do I determine my profits?

Brittany  
Dear Brittany,  
Here's a basic Accounting 101 definition for you, regardless of how many employees you have or how big your business may be. What you take in, minus expenses — in other words, your revenues minus your expenses — equal profit. Believe it or not, it really is that simple.

Since you're just starting out, I'd strongly advise you to set up a separate checking account for your business. That's the only way to accurately tell exactly what's going on within the business. When you co-mingle business money with grocery money and things like that in your personal account, you'll never have an accurate picture of what's really happening with your business.  
Good luck, Brittany!— Dave

Dave Says:  
We all have dreams about what retirement could look like. Those dreams inspire us and give us hope. However, without a plan, all those dreams could become nightmares. I want to help you start on the path to your retirement dreams. Here are five quick tips to make sure you retire inspired.

1. Understand what your dream is. This is the first step. What do you want to do during retirement—what is your dream? Do you want to travel? Spend time with family? Sit on the beach? If you are married, you and your spouse need to have a dream meeting to discuss what you want your retirement to look like.

2. Determine your financial number. Start by identifying how much it takes to live right now—your monthly budget. Then calculate how much you think you would need to live your dream retirement. Consider the impact of lingering debt on your budget. I developed a free tool called R:IQ\* to help you determine your financial number. The R:IQ will take into consideration any money you already have invested in a 401(k), IRA or other account.

3. Understand where you are now and what you can do to help your situation. This is where you start to make your retirement dreams come true. Your R:IQ number gives you a goal to work toward. Now you know where you are headed and what it will take to get there. Identify money weaknesses (such as debt) and places where improvements could be made (such as working extra). Then activate your plan, making conscious decisions to sacrifice or give up some things so you can invest in your dream.

4. Keep your lifestyle in check. The things that will derail your retirement dreams the fastest are your own decisions. Too many people celebrate getting a raise by going into more debt with a new car payment. Here's a better plan: look at what your raise could do to help you get out of debt or to increase your investing.

5. Make five-year decisions. When you make decisions, look at how you'll feel about them in five years. You will not only slow down and realize the impact of your financial decisions today, but you will also begin to recognize the impact on your retirement dream.

Dave Ramsey is America's trusted voice on money and business, and CEO of Ramsey Solutions. The Dave Ramsey Show is heard by more than 12 million listeners. Follow Dave on the web at [daveramsey.com](http://daveramsey.com) and on Twitter at [@DaveRamsey](https://twitter.com/DaveRamsey).

A Meditation

The Holy Spirit  
By Timothy Eller  
McDowell County



As we are winding down towards the end of the year and I have been contemplating on why so many people are complacent and have not been interested in spiritual things. I have noticed that many people have a desire for spiritual things; however they have trouble understanding the Bible and the things of the Lord. I remember when I received the Baptism of the Holy Spirit and how that spirit enlightened me to the things of the Lord.  
1 Corinthians 15:45-48 King James Version (KJV)  
45 And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit.  
46 Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual.  
47 The first man is of the earth, earthy; the second man is the Lord from heaven.  
48 As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly.

The last Adam is made a quickening spirit in the manifestation of the Holy Ghost living inside of us. It is his Spirit that lives inside of us and gives us the knowledge to understand and to be able to interpret the Bible for ourselves.



1 Corinthians 2:10  
"But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searched all things, yea, the deep things of God."  
John 14:26  
"But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you."

It is the Holy Ghost inside of me that helps me understand the Bible and the will of God for my life. The only chance I have to understand the deep things of God is through the power of God's Spirit living within me.  
My question to every person I meet is, Have you received the Holy Ghost since you believed?

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.



For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

John 3:16

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## Miraculous Manifestations

By Kurt Bomar  
Avery County



Do you ever feel that your faith could be increased substantially if God would just manifest Himself to you miraculously? "Just one time" we ask, "let me see your glory and I will have enough faith to last me for the rest of my life!" We long to see a Red Sea parted, to walk through a fiery furnace unharmed, to see a blind man healed or a dead man raised. We silently ask, "God why don't you do those kinds of things today like you used to?"

The truth is, even if we were to see something miraculous or hear an audible voice from God giving us some special promise, while we would be thrilled, it probably wouldn't change us.

How do I know this? By looking at history. We see others who have witnessed unbelievable miracles and never changed their life. We tell our children the story of Balaam's donkey talking to him, but by reading on in the story we see Balaam never even trusted in the Lord. Even with that remarkable revelation, He is in Hell.

How about a more noble person. Solomon.

1 Kings 11: 9 *The LORD became angry with Solomon because his heart had turned away from the LORD, the God of Israel, who had appeared to him twice. 10 Although he had forbidden Solomon to follow other gods, Solomon did not keep the LORD's command. 11 So the LORD said to Solomon, "Since this is your attitude and you have not kept my covenant and my decrees, which I commanded you, I will most certainly tear the kingdom away from you and give it to one of your subordinates."*

This tells me that miraculous manifestations do not produce spiritual maturity. So what does? It's the Word.

Surprisingly Solomon's father, David, never had a direct revelation from God, but he loved the Lord with all his heart and responded to God's Word. Give me the heart of David over the manifestations witnessed by Solomon any day.

We really don't need the miraculous, we already have the miraculous Word of God.

Selah (think about it)

Kurt Bomar is pastor of Walnut Grove Presbyterian Church.

*And when ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not wholly reap the corners of thy field, neither shalt thou gather the gleanings of thy harvest. Leviticus 19:9-10*

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Lo, children are an heritage of the LORD: and the fruit of the womb is his reward. Psalms 127:3-5

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## Prayer Gathering at Riverside Park

By Monica Henley Kritz  
Mitchell County



On Thursday, October 13, a prayer gathering was held at Riverside Park in Spruce Pine. This was the date that Franklin Graham was scheduled to come and speak with the Decision America tour in Raleigh, North Carolina. For those who could not travel to Raleigh that day, this prayer gathering was another option to meet and pray for our nation, state, county, and upcoming elections. The gathering began at 10:30 a.m. with 70 – 75 in attendance.

We need GOD desperately in America and in our individual lives, as well. The purpose of this gathering was to remind everyone of the importance of prayer and repentance. As a nation, and as CHRISTIANS, we need to turn back to GOD. Many of us have done things our own way for too long. We need GOD's guidance and wisdom in every area of our lives. JESUS said in Matthew 5:14-16, "Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

Sometimes when there is an overwhelming sense of darkness, we tend to grumble and complain about it. Then after we complain for so long and we think that no one listens, we are tempted to give up. We think, "What's the use?" It becomes a never-ending cycle. Evil is present — we grumble and complain — we give up. Nothing changes.

What is the remedy? Is there a solution? GOD says a definite, "Yes!" What if we follow GOD's simple commands? Be a light! When JESUS lives in your heart, your light shines. You don't have to force it; it simply shines. When we walk into a dark room, we only have to flip a switch to turn on the light. Do we have to pound the wall with a hammer to get the light to come on? No. To put it simply, be a light. You don't have to enter every room, pounding your way into it, demanding to be heard. Simply be a light. A smile...a handshake...a song...a friendly greeting...a shared Bible verse...an arm around a shoulder...an encouraging card...a prayer...a helping hand...a listening ear. There are so many ways to be a light! So, when this world seems to be overtaken in darkness, be a light. Don't quit. Don't hide your light. Let it shine! Let HIM shine through you! Romans 13:12 tells us, "The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light."

Think about this: how many candles does it take to lighten a dark room? Only one! If we all do our part and shine for JESUS, the darkness has no choice...it has to flee! Ephesians 5:8 says, "For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light."

After I shared what THE LORD had placed on my heart with the people who had gathered to pray, my husband, Jason, preached and led in prayer. A time of invitation and rededication was extended. It was a beautiful service, and THE LORD blessed us with a beautiful day! Even though October is generally a cool month here in the mountains of Western North Carolina, the sun came out, and we even started shedding our coats! Thank you to all of those who took time out of their day to come and meet with us!

Praise GOD!!! And keep praying!





# Emergencies

Nancy Yantchook  
Mitchell County



Emergencies can be hurricanes, tornados, (which usually break up in the mountains) earthquakes (we have a large fault right under several states here, floods, winds, snowstorms with power outages, forest fires, terrorist attacks, chemical spills with tanker trucks, or railroad cars, or even government failure with the banks, businesses, and stores closing. Here in Mitchell County we have had forest fires, floods, severe snowstorms with power outages and almost chemical spills with the railroad.

Preparation for disasters are pretty much the same for all types. Now there are two scenarios:

a. We could be stuck in our homes and unable to leave because of floods or snow. Do you have water stored for a few days? Do you have extra food put aside for several days? If a power outage, could you keep warm with a wood fireplace, cook stove, or wood stove? Remember that there would not be power for fans with these stoves! Do you have candles or lanterns available for light? Place out of reach of children and pets. Don't forget batteries for flashlights! People who have generators must have gas and operate them outside.

b. You would be asked to evacuate your home to go to a shelter. This could be a school or church. Would you be able to gather up your necessary items in a duffel bag or backpack in a hurry to leave your home? That would include cell phones and batteries, a change of clothes, heavy coats or jackets, shoes, boots, blankets, towels, important papers, money, food and water for a couple days (emergency services may not arrive right away.)

Don't forget your medications, hearing aids, glasses, special needs, canes, walkers, wheelchairs, false teeth, special foods, etc.

Don't forget your elderly and handicapped neighbors or relatives who may not be able to leave their homes by themselves.

Don't forget your pets and animals! Make arrangements for horses, cattle, goats, sheep, pigs-they need a shelter as well as food and water. Can they survive if you and your neighbors have to leave? Pets cannot be taken into shelters because of health precautions, but the Red Cross does have a truck and trailer with cages that can be set up in the trailer or in a separate room for pets. One shelter will be set up for pets. Last I heard the truck & trailer are based in Asheville. And may not get here right away. Be sure your pets have proof of rabies vaccinations and their collars and leashes. Cats are best kept in cages or carriers. Bring your pets' food and dishes, maybe water, a picture of you and your pet for ID. You will be responsible for the care of your pets.

Hopefully all your family will be together, but if not (at school or work) children should know who to contact or where to go. Phone service may not be available. Plus, we do not want to tie up the phone lines for emergency crews.

In case of evacuation you should know how to turn off the water, electricity, gas, & lock the doors, etc.

I suggest that you keep blankets, a change of clothes, jackets or coats, shoes or boots, socks, First Aid kits, water, food in cans with an opener, snacks in packages in your car or truck at all times. One never knows when you might go off the road in a snowstorm or flood or just get stuck. Many of our homes in Mitchell County etc. are isolated and difficult to get to, so be prepared! As you can see, there a lot of things to think about in emergencies!!

During the next months we will make suggestions for water, food, First Aid supplies, tools & cleaning, etc. that can be kept in a box or plastic container or duffel bag or back pack.

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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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.

## Repentance

### Six Biblical Words We're in Danger of Losing Forever (Part 5)

Jason Koon  
Burke County



This is the fifth 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.

#### Repentance

It's no wonder the concept of repentance is in danger today. Sin has been boiled down to a short list of "mistakes" or "boo-boo's to be avoided and as a result repentance has been reduced to repeating a prayer at the end of a Church service and managing to avoid this small list of "really bad sins," at least for the most part. Most in the Church today view repentance as somewhere between saying sorry and feeling bad about shortcomings at best and at worst something more like, "well, it's not a big deal, God understands, He sees my heart, knows where I'm coming from." Of course, knowing that God sees the depth of my heart is not as comforting as it first sounds if we were to take seriously the description of the human heart that we find in verses like Jeremiah 17:9. Needless to say, these popular views don't stack up with a biblical understanding of repentance.

King David was a man who understood repentance. He was called "a man after God's own heart" (1 Samuel 13:14), but was also a man who was haunted by the darkness of sin that still lurked in His heart. "For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me...Behold I was brought forth in iniquity (Psalm 51)." These don't sound like the writings of a man after God's own heart, how do we make sense of this? What does it mean that he was both "a man after God's own heart" and "brought forth in iniquity?"

The key lies in this word repentance. David was not considered a man after God's heart because of His spotless moral record or else sleeping with Bathsheba and having her husband murdered would have disqualified him. In spite of all of his faults, David was a man of repentance. When confronted with the horror of His own sin he immediately responded with repentance praying, "Cast me not away from your presence, Lord" (Psalm 51:11); and, "I am weary with moaning; every night I flood my bed with tears...My eye wastes away because of grief" (Psalm 6). We don't pray like this anymore and we certainly don't encourage this kind of repentance in our "positive, encouraging" worship services – David's words sound rather negative and discouraging.

Here's the difference, David wasn't just sorry, He was broken. He was done; done with Himself, done with His own attempts at righteousness, his own strength. He was wasting away, his eyes growing weak, his couch flooded with tears, bones becoming brittle. This man after God's own heart was completely wrecked.

Rahab the prostitute – In Joshua 2 – was done too. She knew the Israelites were coming to destroy her city, but she's also beginning to see who God is and what He is doing. Rahab says nothing about her city when she talks to the spies, she only asks that they would spare her family. Basically she is saying, "you can have it all, I'm done with it. Tear it down brick by brick, burn it to the ground, if that's what it takes! You can have it all, if I can just have Jesus." That's repentance. It was what God required in the Bible and it's what God still requires of His people today. There is no other way, no other option. Church, if we lose repentance, we've lost everything.

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

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*Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.*  
Philippians 4:6-7



Eye to Eye Contact!

By Lana Ellis  
Tennessee

It fascinates me while walking toward people how few will make eye contact. What I have noticed is that children will and when they do I give them a big smile and what do I get back? Their attention, usually accompanied with a smile on their faces while the adults with them are oblivious. I'm curious to know at what age the transition from looking into a person's eyes to total avoidance occurs.

I like to look into the eyes of the more humble and afflicted among us. They may be poorly dressed, physically or mentally handicapped, sad, worried, old and feeble. Whatever the case they too need to experience eye to eye contact with someone who gives them a smile with an encouraging word. It may be the only one they get that day. By the way the really fun ones to make eye contact with are the grumpy ones! They're usually not sure how to respond to a greeting accompanied with a smile. Ephesians 1:18 makes reference to the eyes of one's heart being enlightened. Jeremiah 5:21 describes people without understanding and senseless as "having eyes but not seeing." In the Cambridge dictionary "sense" is defined as an ability to understand, recognize, value or react to something. Therefore "senseless" people can be described as those who do not, or worse, don't want to understand, recognize, value or react. Can you imagine Jesus looking away as he walked toward people?

The inspiration for the song "Open the Eyes of My Heart, Lord" by Paul Baloche comes from Ephesians 1:18. Using this verse and his song as our inspiration lets make this our prayer:



Open the Eyes of Our Hearts, Lord. We want to see Jesus.  
Open the Eyes of Our Faces, Lord. We want to see Others.  
Open the Eyes of Others, Lord. Let Them see Sisters and Brothers.  
Open the Eyes of Their Hearts, Lord. Let Them see Jesus in Us.

Join me in "Eye to Eye Contact" and give away something you can afford to give over and over again – A Big Toothy Smile!

Lana Ellis is a regular contributor to the Blue Ridge Christian News. She attends Bear Creek Baptist Church in Ledger.



Think about Thanks....

By Pastor Mike Stroud  
Burke County

Say What? Do we ever really give thanks like we should? I know in my own life that is the first thing I try to give, is thanks to the Lord. I can see, give thanks, I can walk, give thanks, I have food (too much food), give thanks, I have a car, bicycle, moped, or feet, give thanks. I have change in a jar, give thanks that I am in the top 10% percent of the wealthiest people on earth. I have water, give thanks that I don't have to hike 8 hours a day to carry a jug of it on my head every day, and then get up the next day and do it again. I have health, give thanks that I am not disabled or in a wheelchair and pray for those who are. I am an American, give thanks that I can share my opinions and live the way I want even though it might not be Godly. I'm still alive, give thanks that I am not dead like so many of my family and friends



who I have lost their lives over the years and pray that I not leave things unsaid or on bad words of hate and divide. That I would make things right while I can with friends, family, and God. Give thanks that the Lord extends mercy to me when I am prideful, selfish, and mean to others who are less fortunate. Give thanks to the Lord, that He sent His son, Christ Jesus, to die for

my sins. Give thanks that there are second, third, fourth, and unlimited chances for me to get it right with the Lord and those around me. To do the next thing right. Give Thanks, in everything Give Thanks.

I guess it is pretty clear on what I am trying to say, Give Thanks. Think about Thanks, think about it every day, every moment, every instance when the thoughts of complaint come. When you feel life isn't fair... Think about how blessed you are compared to the majority around the world. Try to look at things from a thankful perspective and not a grumbling, griping, and complaining point of view. You will be much happier when you realize how much you really have. Think about Thanks.

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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# Brian Center has the best residents

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Ruby Williams was born in 1932 and went to Bald Creek School and feels blessed to have grown up in beautiful Yancey County, North Carolina. One of her good friends that she worked with set her up with a blind date with the young man that was to become her husband. Ruby says, I opened the door and there stood this tall, dark and handsome guy, and I fell in love at first sight. The man, Jimmy, was from Avery County and after dating for a year we got married. We wanted children and Jimmy wanted sons so I gave him two, Hank and Mark. Ruby said, I am a strong Christian so I took my sons to church each Sunday and they are wonderful young men today. I could never have found a more handsome or better husband than the one God provided for me. We both felt that the secret to a happy marriage was always being true to each other and I thank the Lord for him each day.



Vaughn Hughes was born in 1932 and lived in the Tipton Hill area where he went to school and graduated. He feels very fortunate to have graduated at a time when many young men in that area did not finish high school but went to work instead. When he was 22 he enlisted in the army and served from 1953 until 1955. He spent most of his life on the farm and raised tobacco and a big garden. He always made his own molasses, sour kraut and killed hogs to make his lard. There were always apples so he made lots of apple butter to eat on over the winter. He says he always grew lots of potatoes and onions and would dig a big hole in the ground, layer it with fodder and put his taters in, put onions on top of that then add another layer of fodder. It would keep the taters all winter and would keep the onions sweet. Vaughn says, "I never got married but I sure had a lot of good sweethearts. Life was good.



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# The Rotary of Spruce Pine

## Honoring Seniors

By Doug Sudduth  
Mitchell County

On Thursday, October 20, the Rotary Club of Spruce Pine recognized and honored two Mitchell High School Seniors of the Month. They were introduced by Guidance Counselor Grant Sparks. Also present was MHS Teacher Melissa Martin. The students were Justin Green and Oswaldo Hernandez.

Justin Greene is the son of Gary and Pernie Greene. His mom is the daughter of Harless and Dorothy Street, and his dad is the son of Floyd and Mildred Greene. Justin likes being a Mitchell High School student, because you are treated fairly by all the faculty, no matter if you're an honors student or a student who has a little more of a struggle learning. It's not like they expect you to already know everything just based on your classes. The faculty understand that everyone needs help.

Another thing about the faculty is that they help athletes based on their schedules too. Justin has played baseball ever since he was little. He plays through the week and on the weekends, now, so he's very busy. But the teachers still work with him and other athletes like him to help them get their work in and to do their homework.

Overall being a Mitchell High student is a gift, and he's happy where he is. He plans on going on to college and playing baseball and pursuing a pre-med degree to be an orthodontist or a physical therapist. Hopefully he will go on to ETSU to pursue this dream, playing collegiate baseball and getting a degree. But Justin will go wherever he's supposed to and leave it in God's will. He thanked Rotarians for having him at their meeting.

The parents of Oswaldo Hernandez are Veronica and Macedonio Hernandez. His father worked in Grassy Creek Hardware Store for 12 years, and now is working at Appalachian Storage.

Oswaldo moved here from Mexico in 2006 with his family to have a better life. His family is important to him, always helping each other when something is wrong. He has one sister, one brother, and a niece. His hobbies mostly involve work. He likes helping his family by splitting wood. He also likes to shoot bottles, but then must clean up the mess. He also likes to build things in his spare time. Oswaldo is involved in many vocational classes at Mitchell High, with enough credits to graduate early, but choosing to stay in school and learn all he can. He is taking carpentry and automotive classes, and will earn his Welding 1 certificate before graduating. He likes all his classes, because he learns something new every day in every class. There is always some new word or something from history that he didn't know. In Automotive 1, he learns how to fix cars, because everyone knows there is always something wrong with the cars and he likes to be able to fix them. He also enjoys school because he has a lot of friends, having best friends and other friends. But most of the time he'll give his friends a second chance if they're mean to him.

He is inspired by his teachers saying, "all my teachers inspire me and they always keep pushing me forward, because they don't want me to walk backwards. They want me to succeed."

After high school, he wants to go to work and earn as much money as he can, so he can build his own house. Oswaldo has worked since he was a small child in many different jobs. He has experiences in construction, landscape, welding, and a little of automotive, and plans to learn all he can and work hard to make a good life for his family. He does have a dream, but his dream is not for himself, it is for his future kids. He wants them to have a good life, believing that a good dad does everything for their son or daughter.

Oswaldo thanked the Rotary club for this honor.

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



Pictured are Teacher Melissa Martin, students Justin Green and Oswaldo Hernandez with Counselor Grant Sparks

# Evergreen Church

## Ministry of Grace and Mercy

By Rev. John McCoury  
Roan Mountain, Tennessee



*Therefore, since we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we do not lose heart. (2 Cor. 4:1)*

In addition to heavenly liberty, God desires to mark our lives with other spiritual characteristics. One of these is the godly encouragement that comes from living and serving under a ministry of mercy and grace.

The service we now render to the Lord is based upon mercy: "since we have this ministry, as we have received mercy." We deserved condemnation by God and separation from Him for eternity. Instead, God had mercy upon us, forgiving us our sins. "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us" (Tit. 3:5). Furthermore, by His mercy He enlists us in His service. "And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord who has enabled me, because He counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry, although I was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor, and an insolent man; but I obtained mercy" (1 Tim. 1:12-13). Our ministry is also about grace. "I became a minister according to the gift of the grace of God given to me" (Eph 3:7). In light of having this type of ministry (one related to mercy and grace), "we do not lose heart." If we were called to serve God based on our merit and our resources, we would lose heart. We can periodically be tempted to discouragement, as we serve our God. Paul's testimony of service is similar to many of God's servants down through the ages. "For indeed, when we came to Macedonia, our flesh had no rest, but we were troubled on every side. Outside were conflicts, inside were fears" (2 Cor. 7:5). At times, we too are surrounded by impossibilities and threatened by apprehensions. What are we to do in such unsettling trials? "For consider Him who endured such hostility from sinners against Himself, lest you become weary and discouraged in your souls" (Heb. 12:3). No one faced more battles and betrayals than the Lord Jesus. Yet, no one served more faithfully. In battle after battle, the Father brought Jesus through victoriously. We can count on the Lord to have mercy upon us. He will pour out His grace upon us and bring us through victoriously as well. Remember, our service of the Lord is based upon mercy and grace. "Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need" (Heb. 4:16). O God of mercy and grace, You know how often discouragement rolls over me like crashing waves. Please remind me that my service unto You depends on Your mercy and grace, not on my capabilities or performance. Thank You, Lord!

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

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## Avery County

### Avery County Chamber event:

November 21-December 1 Christmas Wreath contest-Newland  
November 26 Festival of Trees Rock Gym in Newland  
November 26 Holiday Market, Beech Mountain  
December 2 Christmas Parade, Newland  
December 9 Tree Lighting Ceremonies, Newland

**Avery Pregnancy and Resource Center** - We here at Avery Pregnancy and Resource Center still have a good selection of slightly used baby clothes to be given away to expectant mothers or to mothers of toddlers up to three years of age. Just come into the Center and visit our Baby Boutique and pick out any three items that you want. This is our "Free Gift" to you.

We here at APRC are a family orientated ministry. It is our desire to provide families with much needed baby items such as strollers, high chairs, toys, diapers and more.

We are open Wednesday and Thursday by appointment. We can also make arrangements to meet you on a more convenient day.

Please call 828-467-9818 or 828-733-2400 and ask for Bob Brown.

**Plumtree Presbyterian Church** - Plumtree Presbyterian Church is having a healing service on Sunday, November 13th, at 6:30 pm. These services consist of praise and worship, teaching/preaching the Word and a special time of praying for the sick. These services are powerful and we have seen many, many healings. We invite you to join us as we believe God with you for your miracle.

## Burke County

**Burke County Chamber of Commerce-Morganton** - Save the Date: November 17, 2016 Location: The Waldensian Mill-Valdese, NC. The Chamber of Commerce and Showcase Venue will Represent "Good Ole" New York! Pick you Big City for a Fun Theme and a Chance to Win Prizes for Best Display Table and Banquet Table. OHH and YES! This Year's event will have a Dinner after the Showcase Stay tuned for more details and sponsorship opportunities!!

**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.

**Hopewell** - Our "Upward Sports" program begins on September 24th for any child that is interested in playing basketball, or being a cheer leader. Jobs for adults include referee and canteen. Interested persons are encouraged to contact Rev. Andrew Whisenant, Associate Pastor/Youth Director at 828-437-4823.

**Morganton Seventh-day Adventist-Burke County** - Silver Creek Adventist School will be having a Yard Sale on Friday, November 4th., from 8:00 a.m., until 2:00 p.m. Also, on Sunday, November 6th., there will be another Yard Sale from 8:00 a.m., until 1:00 p.m., followed by a Fundraising Lunch at 1:00 p.m., and Auction at 2:00 p.m. Please plan to attend one or both of these events to support the Silver Creek Adventist School. SCAS is located at 2195 Jamestown Road, Morganton, N.C. 28655.

**Ancient Bible Mysteries Revealed** takes place November 4th., through November 18th., at 7:00 p.m., each night. This event is free and will be held at Glen Alpine Elementary School, 302 London Street, Morganton, North Carolina 28655. Discover the Bible like you never have before!

**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**: "Shine as lights in the world" (Philippians 2:15), and fellowship with other beacons of Christ, at monthly meetings of the Aglow International Hickory Lighthouse. November's meeting will take place Saturday, November 12, from 10 am - 12 noon. The location is the Highland Avenue Restaurant, 883 Highland Avenue SE, Hickory. Believers from Western North Carolina and beyond are invited to enjoy the fellowship, singing, worship, teaching - and coffee. Ruth Mangiacapre, founder of the School of the Prophets in High Point, North Carolina, will speak on "A Day of Prophetic Impartation and Release." Hickory Lighthouse meetings are the second Saturday of each month.

**Old Rock School In Valdese** - Christmas in November Sponsored by the Historic Valdese Foundation. Vendor Applications for 2016 is now available! Held Annually the second Saturday in November from 9am to 4pm at the Old Rock School. Over 35 Handmade Craft & Gift Vendors. Booth Fee includes one 8' table with 2 chairs and approximately 3 feet behind and in front of the table. The event is indoors and has approximately 600 attendees. Vendors are allowed to setup the Friday before the event from noon to 5pm or the morning of beginning at 7am. Entry \$1 or a Can Good Donation for Burke United Christian Min-

istries. First 250 Shoppers will receive a complimentary shopping tote from the Historic Valdese Foundation. Enjoy an Open House at the Piedmont & Western Railroad Museum, Singing Christmas Tree, Refreshments & Door Prizes

## 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 or to address 1150 East Court Street, Marion, NC 28752 Attn: Personnel Committee.

On Wednesday, November 16th there will be a free Community Thanksgiving meal at Clinchfield Baptist church at 6:00.

**Nebo United Methodist Church** - 117 Nebo School Road - Nebo, NC 28761 Holiday Bazar and Breakfast - All proceeds will go to Nebo Elementary School Saturday November 12th 8:00am to 12:00pm

**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.

### Blood Drive

#### Marion

11/9/2016: 2:30 p.m. - 6:30 p.m., Bethel Baptist Church, 205 Bethel church Rd Nebo

11/4/2016: 2 p.m. - 6:30 p.m., Nebo Elementary School, 254 Nebo School Rd

## Mitchell County

**Bear Creek Baptist Church-Ledger** - Women's Prayer Breakfast at Helen's Restaurant on Saturday, November 5, 2016 9:00 to 11:00am Ordering from menu. All women are invited.

Bear Creek is collecting items for those affected by the flood. Bottled water, paper towels, baby formula, baby food, diapers, baby wipes, toothbrushes, toothpaste, Clorox, toilet tissue, soap, rubber gloves, mops, shampoo, wash cloths. Take to the church or to the Mitchell Baptist Association in Spruce Pine.

**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.

**Habitat for Humanity**: Our local Habitat for Humanity is constructing a house in Mitchell County and volunteers are desperately needed on Wednesdays and Saturdays from 9am until 3pm. If you can help, please contact Kendra Bradford at 828-284-7306 for more information.

**Historic Courthouse (Bakersville)** - The Historical Society will be co-sponsoring a Christmas Tour of Homes. Please keep watch for future info for details.

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

**Mitchell County Animal Rescue-Spruce Pine** - The Seventh Annual Wine and Whiskers presented by Mike Brown Ford-Subaru will be held Saturday, November 5, 2016 from 2:00-4:00pm at the Pizza Shop and Dry County Brewery in Spruce Pine. Wine and Whiskers is an annual fundraiser that benefits Mitchell County Animal Rescue. 100% of the proceeds will support the Rescue's low cost spay and neuter program. "Wine and Whiskers has provided important financial support to MCAR helping underwrite the spay and neuter program which reduces the number of unwanted animals in Mitchell County," said MCAR Director,



Patricia Beam.

**The Mitchell Yancey Substance Abuse Task Force**

meeting will take place November 8, noon - 1pm, Yancey County Library , 321 School Circle Burnsville. We will be celebrating our Drug Free Communities grant award - there will be cake! And, learning more about the Youth to Youth program model that the Task Force will be implementing to reduce youth substance use in our two-county community. There will be time for brief updates or announcements from groups and community sectors.

**Spruce Pine Main Street-Spruce Pine**

- Small Business Saturday is Saturday, November 26th. If you are planning in participating in the American Express event/scavenger hunt, please let me know today so I can get us signed up for the free merchandise. I need a minimum of 10 businesses to qualify. 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

**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.

**Western Carolina Church**

is hosting the 4th annual GriefShare: Surviving the Holidays special holiday program. The program presentation begins with a banquet which is open to the community. It will be held on Saturday, November 12, 2016 at 6:00 PM at Western Carolina Church in Spruce Pine. This seminar gives practical advice for dealing with grief and the holidays. Please feel free to bring family members and friends who might benefit from this program.

**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.

**First Baptist Church-Burnsville**

- COME TO BETHLEHEM AND SEE. . . MARS HILL: Come and see the sixth LIVE, outside drive-through presentation of the life of Christ from the warmth and comfort of your own vehicle. See the angel visiting Mary, where the Savior's birth took place, and live scenes from the ministry of Jesus. Witness Jesus carrying His cross to Golgotha, and His ascension into heaven as well as tour Bethlehem Village as it might have looked in Jesus' day.

As a gift to their community, the Gabriels Creek Baptist Church at 111 Gabriels Creek Church Road in Mars Hill is presenting this production on Saturday, December 3 and Sunday, December 4, 2016 from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. each night, rain or shine. No charge and no reservations are required. The pastor and church family invite and welcome you and your family to come and go back in time to visit with us in Bethlehem.

For information/directions: [www.gabrielscreekbc.com](http://www.gabrielscreekbc.com), Gabriels Creek Baptist Church Facebook page, email [smurphey@mbu.edu](mailto:smurphey@mbu.edu), or call 828-682-6755/828-206-6755

**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](mailto:jamesmichaellawrence@gmail.com)) or Harvey Schestag - 828-284-0707 ([harveyschestag@gmail.com](mailto:harveyschestag@gmail.com)) or go to [www.bsfindernational.org](http://www.bsfindernational.org) for comprehensive information about BSF.

Family Violence Coalition of Yancey County - 21st Anniversary Celebration Saturday, November 5, 2016 - 12:00 P.M. - 2:00 P.M. Higgins Memorial United Methodist Church

Chili Cook-Off (Non-Sanctioned) • Entertainment for the Whole Family • All You Can Eat Chili and Refreshments • Chance to Win Prizes Such as:  
4 Mountain Air Country Club Green and Cart Fees Gift Certificates  
2 Dollywood General Admission Tickets (Valid through January 1, 2018)  
4 Hickory Crawdad Baseball General Admission Tickets (Valid through May 31, 2017)  
1 Asheville Tourists Goody Bag and General Admission Tickets (Number of tickets to be determined)

\$15 Chili Cook-Off Registration Fee (Limit of 20 Entrants) • \$10 Admission Fee (Children Under 5 Eat for Free) • \$25 Donation to be Entered for Chance to Win Prizes • \$50 Business Sponsorship

To purchase your spot in our 21st Anniversary Celebration, be a sponsor, enter

for chance of prizes or request additional information please contact Sarah Carpenter (828-467-2058) or Sonja Peterson (828-284-4415)

All proceeds will benefit the Family Violence Coalition of Yancey County (501(c)3 nonprofit) to help "Stop the Violence"

**Laurel Branch Baptist Church (Burnsville)**

- Seeking bi-vocational pastor, please email resume to [fioreecapps@frontier.com](mailto:fioreecapps@frontier.com).

**Shoal Creek Baptist Church-Burnsville**

- Nov. 13, 2016 The WORD (Worship Outside Routine Distractions) 6-9 PM at the church Nov. 20, 2016. Thanksgiving service and fellowship meal following the 11:00 am service

**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.

**The Mitchell Yancey Substance Abuse Task Force**

meeting will take place November 8, noon - 1pm, Yancey County Library 321 School Circle Burnsville

We will be celebrating our Drug Free Communities grant award - there will be cake! And, learning more about the Youth to Youth program model that the Task Force will be implementing to reduce youth substance use in our two-county community.

There will be time for brief updates or announcements from groups and community sectors.

**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: [tcCook@mayland.edu](mailto:tcCook@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 [tcCook@mayland.edu](mailto:tcCook@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>

Free Business Luncheon sponsored by Small Business Center & Mountain Biz works, (business lending & learning). Whether you are thinking about starting a business or already own one, this luncheon will provide great networking, plenty of business resources, and be conducted in a fun, yet informative fashion. November 9, from 11:30am to 1:30pm/ luncheon location Stuarts on the Green. Register by phone 828-766



# Mitchell Soil and Water

## Area 1 Outstanding District of the Year

By Nell Smith  
Mitchell County

Mitchell Soil & Water Conservation District Board Members Richard Jarrett, Doug Harrell, Alfred Breedin, Ed Terrell, and Steve Wilson pose with District Technician



Mark Byrd and Administrative Assistant Nell Smith with their award for Area 1 Outstanding District of the Year, for accomplishments in natural resource conservation and education presented by the Area 1 Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts. This award was accepted by Mitchell Soil & Water at the Area 1 Meeting held on October 11, 2016.

Nell Smith is the Administrative Assistant at Mitchell Soil and Water Conservation District. She received her Bachelor's degree from Lees-McRae College with a major in English. She currently lives in Spruce Pine and loves spending time with her dog, Marie, her boyfriend, and her family



# Concord Baptist Church-Burnsville

## Small Words

By Dr. Bradley Boone  
Yancey County



Matthew 5:18 "For verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled."

Today I was thinking about the doubt that plagues our uncertain times. As I write this article I have no idea who will be elected president in a few weeks, no idea who's hands the congress or senate will be in, and no idea of the direction of our state government or the many other monumental obstacles that may face us as a people by the time this article goes to press. This, however, I do know: Jesus will still be king, the Church will still be alive and well, and HIS Word will still be settled in heaven and the final authority for all things. As our Lord here speaks about the word he tells us that there will not be one "jot" or "tittle" that will pass away from the law. The word "jot" refers to the smallest letter and the word "tittle" refers to the punctuation marks. How marvelous is the preservation of the Word of God! God is seeing to it that we have all the Bible that we need even in this place at this time! I remember when I started into the master's program in Bible College one of the available electives was Hebrew. I elected not to take it and instead give myself to study in another area. When someone said "Why don't you take Hebrew?" I replied, "Because I speak English!" God has given us a Bible that is true in its verbal plenary inspiration and is inerrant and infallible, it's called the King James.

What I want us to consider today are some of the smallest words that are in our Bible, but are still inspired and important! I hope that this study of some little "jots" will be a blessing to you and cause you to consider the gravity of even the smallest word in our Bible.

First I would consider the word "Now". Isaiah 1:18 admonishes us "Come NOW let us reason together saith the Lord, though your sins be as scarlet they shall be as white as snow, though they be red like crimson they shall be as wool" The word "Now" represents the only period of time in which anything can be done. Yesterday is gone, tomorrow may never come, the only period of time that we have any control over is NOW. Now is ever with us yet it is ever changing, it has endless possibilities but is fraught with the beginning of many regrets. The question then becomes what will you do with your NOW? Right this moment, as you sit and read this article, you are living in the NOW, will you do something with it that is productive? Will you choose to spend it reasoning with God? Will you use the breath that God has given you in the NOW to praise him? One last thing before leaving the word NOW, consider with me Hebrews 9:26 "For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but NOW once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." Notice that here the writer of the book of Hebrews puts the redemptive work at Calvary in the perpetual present tense. God is the only one that can do something over 2,000 years ago and it still be relevant and life changing in the NOW!

Second, consider with me the word "BUT". The word BUT is the great U-turn word of the Bible. Man will again and again be headed in a certain direction and then he will run straight in to the heavenly conjunction BUT. Many times, the word "BUT" is followed by another little word with big meaning and that is the word GOD. How wonderful is the phrase "BUT GOD", even though it is only six letters long it is perhaps the most transformative phrase to ever cross the lips of man. I preach a series of messages of the "BUT GOD" phrases of the Bible but have no time here to touch on the all. I will just take the time to notice one. Romans 5:8 "BUT GOD, commendeth his love toward us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us." As sinners we were all headed in the same direction toward hell, BUT GOD, shows his love toward us and quickens us that we might believe in the redemptive work of Calvary.

Lastly consider with me the word "IF". The word "IF" denotes both an opportunity and a tragic doubt. We can see it used as an opportunity in 2nd Chronicles 7:14 "If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves and pray and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land." What a wonderful thing that God has promised us (the healing of our land) and it is all contingent on the word "IF". If we will, then God will. The word IF also shows us a tragic doubt. This is best seen in Luke 23:39. In the verses of Luke 23 we see two thieves of whom I am sure you are all familiar. One thief go's to heaven, the other to hell. Have you ever stopped to think that both thieves asked the Lord to save him but only one got the goods? What separated these two thieves? The little word "IF". The non-penitent thief said "IF thou be CHRIST save thyself and us." No man has ever gotten saved while saying "IF" to the deity of Christ.

These certainly are not all the little words in the Bible with big meanings, I hope that you will take time to study some more of these little words and realize the great lengths to which God has gone to preserve for us a perfect Bible!

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

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# Happy Thanksgiving





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Each  
Moment  
Count*

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**Hospice & Palliative  
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**WE HONOR VETERANS**



# YOUR GOVERNMENT PAGES

## NC Senate District 47



Sen. Ralph Hise  
Ralph.Hise@ncleg.net  
919-733-3460

A beautiful, sunny October 13th in Raleigh, on the grounds of our state capitol, was the setting for Franklin Graham's last stop on his Decision America tour of all 50 state capitols. I was grateful to stand alongside 14,000 other North Carolinians and hear Franklin Graham's message to "pray, vote, and engage." Clearly, the heart of this message centered on the battle at stake for our nation's soul in this crucial and serious election season, as our world continues to turn away from Judeo-Christian values and toward secular progressivism. In deciding which presidential candidate to vote for, he urged those in attendance to determine the type of appointments each candidate would make to the U.S. Supreme Court. Our Supreme Court hangs in the balance and the appointment of even one justice whose rulings would take our country further down the path of secular progressivism is not something our country needs. I join with Franklin Graham in asking that each of you, before voting, examine all candidates for national, state, and local offices for their views on marriage, rights of the unborn, and religious liberty.



In addition to urging citizens to make informed choices and voting for candidates most aligned with the Judeo-Christian values which served as the foundation of our country and Constitution, Franklin Graham spoke of the need for more Christian men and women to seek public office themselves, whether on town councils, boards of commissioners, or school boards. I agree. And, as your elected state senator, I continue to stand firm on conservative, Christian values and principles on all issues.

## US House of Representatives NC District 11



Congressman  
Mark Meadows  
202-225-6401  
www.meadows.house.gov

As we approach Thanksgiving – probably my favorite holiday of the year – I'm reminded of the foundational principles and values behind this time of year that are so applicable even today. These principles go all the way back to the beginning of our country, when at the request of both houses of Congress, George Washington proclaimed the first "day of public thanksgiving and prayer, to be observed by acknowledging with grateful hearts the many and signal favors of Almighty God."

At that time, Thanksgiving was meant to be a day for citizens of the young republic to give thanks for bringing them through a costly war for independence, for the brand-new form of government established by the Constitution, and for the unprecedented prosperity and liberty available to all regardless of their stations and circumstances. Washington also recognized it as a day to ask forgiveness for our transgressions as a country and to ask that the Lord, "render our national government a blessing to all the people by constantly being a government of wise, just, and constitutional laws."

Decades later, Abraham Lincoln made Thanksgiving a national holiday in 1863. Lincoln proclaimed that we should, as a nation, "solemnly, reverently, and gratefully acknowledge" our many blessings. What is so remarkable about this proclamation is that it came during the middle of the Civil War just a few months after the battle of Gettysburg, the bloodiest battle ever fought on American soil. If there was ever a time in our history to mourn and fear the future, it was then.

It's now 2016 and we still have much to be thankful for: a nation with a history of cherishing liberty, the fact that America is still the freest and most prosperous country the world has ever known, and the idea that we worship a God that loves us and concerns Himself in the affairs of mankind.

Between the turkey and football this month, find some time to thank the Lord for these blessings and implore His grace and pardon for our transgressions and shortcomings. Moreover, let a spirit of thanksgiving transform your hearts and lives that we may continue to be marked by a "great degree of tranquility, union, and plenty." God bless you all.

## NC House District 85

Rep. Dobson and Sen. Hise receive Legislator of the Year Award from MARC



Representative  
Josh Dobson  
Josh.Dobson@ncleg.net  
919-733-5862

Raleigh, NC – Representative Josh Dobson (R-McDowell) and Senator Ralph Hise (R-Mitchell) received the award for the 2016 Legislator of the Year at the annual MARC awards luncheon on October 6th in Lake Junaluska. Rep. Dobson and Sen. Hise were selected to receive the MARC Director's Award for their work in advocating for people with disabilities.

MARC is an organization representing Western North Carolina community rehabilitation programs that advocate on behalf of and provide services for individuals with disabilities. Rep. Dobson stated, "I was pleased to be able to secure funding in the 2016 budget to begin this very important project which targets chronically unemployed and brings them into the workforce again." Many of these individuals have significant health and other related issues. "Retaining this funding was critical to create real and sustainable jobs for people with disabilities and I was proud to be a part of this very important work," stated Sen. Hise.

## NC House District 86



Rep. Hugh Blackwell  
919-733-5805  
Hugh.Blackwell@ncleg.net

Everyone is, of course, aware of the November 8 election and early voting that has already begun. Likewise, everyone is almost certainly aware of the elections for President, Governor, Lt. Governor and U.S. Senator. Obviously, those are important choices to be made, influencing our culture, families and futures for years. Perhaps, too, like many, you are also aware of the significance of the Presidential election as it determines who will receive lifetime appointments to the U.S. Supreme Court. No doubt you are also readily aware of the impact that highest court in the nation has on laws affecting marriage, abortion, immigration, voting and hugely significant issues affecting our lives and those of future generations. Decisions made by the U.S. Supreme Court will determine what kind of country we will have in the future: limited with protections for personal freedoms and rights or a country where government will have free rein to do whatever it declares good, enabled by a compliant, politically agreeable court.

The point of what I wish to say in this article, however, is to call your attention to a similarly critical decision on our NC ballot this year. In NC, we elect our judges. On the ballot is Justice Robert (Bob) Edmunds who is a candidate for reelection. If he is not re-elected, much as with the U.S. Supreme Court appointments to be made by the next president, NC's highest court will switch from one controlled 4-3 by judges committed to protecting our rights and freedoms and interpreting the law in light of the constitution—not making up law for political purposes. If Justice Edmunds loses, Christian conservatives will find NC's high court controlled by leftist judges who are against pro-life legislation, protection of private property rights, fair redistricting of legislative districts and implementation of a fair voter identification law. If Justice Edmunds loses, you should count on the new liberal majority finding a way to okay men using the same locker rooms, showers and rest room facilities as women and girls.

Out-of-state, far-left political groups will spend at least a million dollars on political ads to defeat conservative Justice Edmunds. They are posing as a family-friendly, NC group. However, they're anything but. They are libeling Justice Edmunds by essentially calling him a racist—typical tactic of the left. Don't let them take control of NC's highest court. I urge you to look for Justice Edmunds' name on the ballot. It may be the only one that doesn't say if he's Republican or Democrat. Don't let that throw you. He's the conservative choice to protect our families and futures.



# YOUR GOVERNMENT PAGES

## NC Senate District 46

The NC General Assembly adjourned sine die on July 1, 2016, completing a productive 2015-2016 legislative biennium. The last four years have been a historic period for North Carolina. In 2013, for the first time in 144 years, an incoming Republican Governor met Republican majorities in the North Carolina House and Senate. We have now had three historic sessions of legislative reforms, and have fulfilled many promises to the people of this state, including substantially decreasing the personal income tax to 5.49% and reducing the corporate tax to 3%. This has created what Governor McCrory has called the "Carolina Comeback, and as a result our state economy has added almost 350,000 new jobs since 2013.

Over the past four years, the General Assembly has adopted fiscally responsible state budgets that have resulted in annual surpluses of about \$400 million, increased public education spending by more than a billion dollars, and dramatically increased our savings in the Rainy-Day fund from \$200 million to \$1.6 billion. For the first time in state history, our average teacher salaries are more than \$50,000. That is an average increase of almost \$10,000 since the 2013-14 school year. The General Assembly also stopped the long-time practice of transferring money from the Highway Fund to pay for unrelated General Fund budget items. By doing this, we were able to put an additional \$240 million per year into building new roads, resurfacing existing highways, and repairing aging bridges.

Also of great significance for western North Carolina was the passage in May of the Connect NC Bond, which will infuse \$2 billion into construction needs for our state universities, community colleges, the NC National Guard, and our state parks. This will bring over \$300 million in capital investment to state facilities in western North Carolina, including several significant projects like the establishment of the NC School of Technology and Engineering in Morganton, and the College of Nursing and Health Sciences at Appalachian State University.

On a final note, the conservative government that you have elected has been vigilant over the past four years in fighting for your 2nd Amendment rights and for the rights of the unborn. One of the most recent developments in this area is that the State has prevailed in the court battle over the "Choose Life" license plate, and it is now available for you to purchase at your local tag office!

Thanks to all of you for allowing me the privilege of representing you in the NC Senate. I wish you and your family a blessed Thanksgiving Holiday, and hope that this holiday season will be a wonderful time of fellowship and thanksgiving for each of you.



Sen. Warren Daniel  
Warren.Daniel@ncleg.net  
919-715-7823

## County Manager



Charles Vines

### Urges Tax Payers To Vote For The Article 46, Local Option Sales & Use Tax

This November citizens across our country will go to the polls to choose the next generation of leaders for Local, State, and Federal governments. Mitchell County voters will also be asked to decide how best to fund an additional ambulance for EMS transport. This decision will come in the form of a referendum for Article 46 local option ¼ cent Sales and Use tax. Article 46 Sales and Use tax is unique for local governments in North Carolina because it offers counties a funding stream alternative to local property tax and can be dedicated to fund locally specific projects. Sales tax offers an increased tax base because it includes not only Mitchell County residents but anyone visiting and making purchases within the county.

Roughly 1/3 of North Carolina counties have voted in the Article 46 local option Sales and Use tax. Counties in the western region of North Carolina who have adopted Article 46 tax include: Ashe, Buncombe, Cherokee, Haywood, Jackson, and Wilkes. The distribution method is based on point of sale, meaning that the tax is distributed back to the county in which it was collected. Article 46 taxes are county only in that they are not shared with local municipal governments. Groceries and fuel purchases are not subject to Article 46 Sales and Use tax.

Article 46 local option Sales and Use tax, if passed in Mitchell residents is projected to generate funds equivalent to a 3 cent rise in the local property tax rate. If passed the Article 46 local option Sales and Use tax would help to relieve budget pressures to increase property tax to meet the funding needs of providing a 3rd ambulance for EMS transport. Last year EMS transports increased 6-8%; factors driving the increased demand for service include: our aging population, growth in behavioral health crises, and lack of primary care services. The impact from increased demand for service can result in reduced availability of and/or increase in response times of EMS services especially for rural areas of our county.

When you go to the polls on November 8th I urge you to vote FOR the ¼ cent Sales & Use Tax increase, which will pay for the cost of a third ambulance for Mitchell County.



### JOBS & THE ECONOMY

"I will fight for the economic security of all North Carolinians."

Jobs and the economy must be priority one. Americans should no longer have to settle for the lackluster economy that has become the hallmark of the Obama years. We can and must reignite our economy to produce good-paying jobs.

While the unemployment rate appears low, it hides the harsh truth that many Americans are so discouraged about their job prospects that they've just given up looking for work. And those Americans who do have jobs are frustrated to watch their paychecks stay the same while their cost of living continues to go up.

One area of the family budget that North Carolinians are really feeling the pinch is healthcare. Under Obamacare, North Carolinians have seen their premiums and out-of-pocket costs skyrocket. This has been one more punch to the pocketbook for working families who are already struggling to get by in this economy. We cannot afford to wait any longer. We need to turn our economy around and create jobs, and that means taking action in four important areas.

First, we must reform the federal income tax system. Our current tax system is unfair, punishes the middle class, and is overly complex for both families and employers. In order to jumpstart growth, we need to reform the federal tax code to eliminate loopholes that benefit special interests and lower the tax burden for everyone.

Second, we need to make it easier — not harder — in America to start a business and to hire and keep workers. That means reigning in the excessive Obama regulatory mandates that are choking off our economy and killing jobs with higher costs and red tape.

Third, we need to ensure employers have an educated, competitive workforce from which to draw talent, and that means having better schools and career development opportunities at all levels.

And finally, we need to enforce our fair trade laws. When a country engages in an unfair trade practice — like currency manipulation or illegal dumping — and causes harm to our economy, we need to respond swiftly and directly. And before the United States agrees to enter into a trade agreement, we must first make sure that it's a good deal for American workers, businesses, and consumers. When a trade deal is a raw deal for North Carolina, like the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), I will oppose it.

As we saw after the Great Depression, Americans are strong, resilient and hardworking. We need to get government out of the way so that Americans can bring jobs back from overseas and make our country the standard-bearer of free enterprise and ingenuity once again.

My Plan to Get the Economy Back on Track and Create Jobs:

- Reform the tax code so that it's fairer, simpler, and less burdensome for everyone.
- Eliminate corporate handouts and special interest tax breaks.
- Cut red tape and job-killing mandates so that businesses can grow.
- Make it easier to start a business by reducing regulations.
- Hold bureaucrats accountable for harassing job creators.
- Support fair trade and punish those who refuse to play by the rules.
- Investing in education and career training programs for a more educated workforce.
- Make child care and college more affordable for working families.
- Support the growth of careers, not just jobs.





# SafePlace

## The 2nd Annual Walk A Mile In Her Shoes for Mitchell County SafePlace - A Note to Clint Pollard

By Beth Davis  
Mitchell County

Clint, you would have been so proud. It was almost as though everyone walked a proverbial extra mile to help Mitchell County SafePlace raise as much money as last year. Like you and Dan Barron did, Mitchell County Commissioner Chair Matthew "Vern" Grindstaff and NC State Representative Josh Dobson squared off to win the coveted Clint Pollard Red Pump Passion Award. And, like you and Dan, it was almost too close to call.... but Vern just barely squeaked out the win. Many set personal goals to raise \$500 or \$1,000. Each of them surpassed their goals, and largely because of your contagious passion for it, Mitchell County SafePlace raised \$17,488.80! And we're still getting money in!

Your absence was palpable, but so was your presence. Dan Barron wore one of your old Clemson t-shirts when he walked. Doug Crosby was the very first to sign up for Walk A Mile In Her Shoes, choking up as he told me he was, "one, walking for Clint, and two, walking for SafePlace." Even though we missed you terribly, Clint, Walk A Mile In Her Shoes for Mitchell County SafePlace was a fabulous event. Just ask anyone.



**Mitchell County Commissioner Chair Vern Grindstaff** - It was a pleasure to take part in WAM again this year. It's rare that one gets the chance to make a difference in something so important and so close to home. Mitchell County SafePlace has a great impact in the lives of women, children, men and their pets. My heart was moved and I was humbled as I walked among so many men who genuinely love and care for those who are struggling to rebuild their lives. Thank you SafePlace for allowing me to be a part of something so much larger than me! (With District Judge Rebecca Eggers-Gryder and NC Representative Josh Dobson.)



**Doug Crosby** - "I am not sure how to describe my experience being able to participate in the "Walk a Mile in Her Shoes" benefit this year. We laughed a lot, cried some because of how our feet felt and remembered our friend who was such an integral part of this event last year. But more than anything else we brought awareness to domestic violence that should never be ignored. I have been blessed in my life and I pray that through our efforts on October 15th that others will find the help they need." (With Kay Pollard.)



**Mitchell County SafePlace Executive Director Connie Sedberry** - From the bottom of my heart I thank those who came out to support Walk a Mile in Her Shoes, in memory of Clint Pollard. Survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault will be empowered by your generosity. SafePlace is honored to serve our community alongside our Sheriff, Donald Street, our Police Chief, Billy Summerlin, Assistant Chief of our Spruce Pine Fire Department, Mike Clougherty, our elected officials, Rep. Josh Dobson, County Commissioner Vern Grindstaff, Judge Becca Eggers, Mayor Darla Harding and the many citizens, businesses and churches who contributed money, time, food and prayers! I am especially grateful for the support of Kay Pollard who continues to provide the "wind beneath our wings" with her love.



**Mitchell County SafePlace Board of Directors Chair Dan Barron** - As Chair of the SafePlace Board, I thank everyone who participated in this event, especially our fun fundraisers, Vern and Josh. They represent representatives who engage in the community for the community. Also, someday, I hope our abused women and children and men will not have to depend on this kind of money raising event, but instead gather in celebration of the caring services that SafePlace offers and unite to help stop domestic and child violence all together.



**Spruce Pine Fire and Rescue Assistant Fire Chief Mike Clougherty** - I was very encouraged by the turnout at Walk A Mile. Raising over \$17,000 will certainly help SafePlace help others, as grants and funding are always hard to get. These funds will help so many local families. I hope to see more and more people walking and attending this wonderful function each year. It's always great to see this community come together to support each other and those less fortunate.



**Mitchell County Sheriff Donald Street** - It is my hope that with education and events like "Walk A Mile In Her Shoes" it will show that the public will not tolerate domestic violence. I'm very proud of our deputies and staff, and Spruce Pine Police Chief Bill Summerlin, for being a part of this important event. (With members of the Mitchell County Sheriff's Office.)

Beth Davis is the Resource Development Coordinator at Mitchell County SafePlace. She can be reached at 828-765-4015 or bethbdavis60@gmail.com.



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- Accounting- Income Tax Preparer (C)
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- Air Conditioning, Heating and Refrigeration Technology (D)
- Associate Degree Nursing (A)
- Associate In Engineering (A)
- Automotive Systems Technology (A,D,C)
- Basic Law Enforcement Training (C)
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  - Operations Management (A)
  - Carpentry (D,C)
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- Collision Repair and Refinishing Technology (D,C)
  - Collision Repair: Structural Damage (C)
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  - Cosmetology-Esthetics Instructor (C)
  - Cosmetology - Esthetics Technology (C)
  - Cosmetology-Instructor (C)
  - Cosmetology - Manicuring Instructor (C)
  - Cosmetology - Manicuring / Nail Technology (C)
  - Early Childhood Education (A,D)
- Early Childhood Education-Infant Toddler Care (C)
  - Early Childhood-Special Education (C)
  - Electrical Systems Technology (A,D)
  - Emergency Management (A)
  - General Education (A)
  - General Occupational Technology (A)
  - Health Informatics (C)
  - Health Information Technology (A)
  - Health Information Technology- Billing and Coding (C)
- Health Information Technology-Health Care Informatics (C)
  - Health Information Technology- Medical Coding (D)
- Health Information Technology- Release of Information (C)
- Health Sciences Therapeutic and Diagnostic Services (D)
  - Industrial Systems Technology (A,D, C)
    - Information Systems (A,C)
    - Information Systems Advanced (C)
    - Network Management (A, C, D)
    - Nurse Aide (C)
  - Network Management Advanced (C)
  - Office Administration (A,D,C)
- Office Administration-Medical Transcription (D)
  - Photographic Technology (A,C)
  - Practical Nursing Education (D)
    - School Age Child (D,C)
    - School-Age Education (A)
  - Software and Web Development (A, C)
  - Software and Web Development Advanced (C)
    - Surgical Technology (D)
  - Web Administration and Design (A, C)
  - Web Administration and Design Advanced (C)
    - Welding Technology (D,C)

**Registration begins:**  
**November 7<sup>th</sup>**  
**Classes Begin January 9<sup>th</sup>**

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# Altapass Baptist Church

## Dr. Ron Baity in Spruce Pine

By Marcus Benfield  
Mitchell County



Hello everyone,

Let me begin this article by saying a Big Heartfelt Thank You to all the Pastors who moved their services to join us at The Tri-County Baptist Tabernacle on October 19th. This meeting was a great success. We had a packed house and Dr. Baity did an awesome job with the message from The Word of God. It was a great blessing to have all the Pastors joined me on the platform to Pray for our County, State, and Nation. It does our Church folk good to see us as their leaders work and pray together. To God be the Glory!

For all those who could not attend, I would like to list the highlights of Dr. Baity's message. He read from II Kings 23 and preached about what young King Josiah did to bring the people back to God. First of all he read in their hearing the Word of God. My how we need to get back to the Word of God being our Standard in these last days. Secondly he made a covenant to keep God's Commandments. Thirdly he got rid of all the idols of the people. Fourthly he tore down the houses of the sodomites. Fifthly he stopped the sacrifice of innocent babies to false gods. Lastly he removed the horse stables from the temple because the horses were used to worship the sun god.

May we see the great significance of these verses as we live our lives today? We certainly need sound Bible preaching back in our Pulpits all across our land. God give us some Men



Packed crowd at Tri County Tabernacle

who will preach the Word without fear or compromise. We need to do our best to keep all of our Lord's commands to the best of our ability even when it means change on our part. We as God's people need to be sure we don't have idols in our lives that stand between us and God. We also need to take a Biblical approach to dealing with the issue of sodomy which is becoming more and more prevalent in our day.

May God help us to stand up and defend the innocent unborn babies that are being sacrificed to the gods of choice and convenience? May we see how



Pastors who came to front to pray

desperately we need to get rid of our own little gods and fall in Love Again with the Lord Jesus Christ?

I would like to Challenge every Pastor to Preach on Biblical issues of Morality and the sanctity of human life with Boldness between now and the Election and challenge your people to get out and vote for Godly Principles to be restored to our State and our Nation. Our Children and our Grand children deserve it. Our Nation is at a Serious Cross Roads and we need the voice of the People of God to Prevail. Please Christian friends don't sit this one out! Every voice is needed in this critical hour! May we truly seek the face of God as we make our choices this election? The very future of our Judeo-Christian Values depends on it.

Thank you for reading and may God Richly Bless each of you! In His Easy Yoke.



Dr. Ron Baity

Dr. Benfield is the Senior Pastor of Altapass Baptist Church in Spruce Pine. He formerly pastored in Alexander County, NC for 20 years before coming to Altapass in October 2011.

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# Berry Chapel Baptist Church

## A Guy Named Eddie

Pastor Steve Williams  
Mitchell County

Howdy Folks,

Well here we are entering November, Thanksgiving, a time to be thankful and count your many blessings that God has given each and every one of us. I would like to share with you a True Story I read, in a book called "The Eye of The Storm". You may have heard this story before but it worth another look. It really opened my eyes on why we should all be THANKFUL.

There was a guy named Eddie, the story started. It happens every Friday evening, almost without fail, when the sun resembles a giant orange and is starting to dip into the blue ocean. Old Ed comes strolling along the beach to his favorite pier. Clutched in his bony hand is a bucket of shrimp.

Ed walks out to the end of the pier, where it seems he almost has the world to himself. The glow of the sun is a golden bronze now. Everybody's gone, except for a few joggers on the beach. Standing out on the end of the pier, Ed is alone with his thoughts....and his bucket of shrimp.

Before long, however, he is no longer alone. Up in the sky a thousand white dots come screeching and squawking, winging their way toward that lanky frame standing there on the end of the pier. Before long, dozens of seagulls have enveloped him, their wings fluttering and flapping wildly.

Ed stands there tossing shrimp to the hungry birds. As he does, if you listen closely, you can hear him say with a smile, 'Thank you. Thank you.'

In a few short minutes the bucket is empty. But Ed doesn't leave. He stands there lost in thought, as though transported to another time and place. Invariably, one of the gulls lands on his sea-bleached, weather-beaten hat - an old military hat he's been wearing for years. When he finally turns around and begins to walk back toward the beach, a few of the birds hop along the pier with him until he gets to the stairs, and then they, too, fly away, and old Ed quietly makes his way down to the end of the beach and on home.

If you were sitting there on the pier with your fishing line in the water, Ed might seem like 'a funny old duck,' as my dad used to say. Or, 'a guy that's a sandwich shy of a picnic,' as my kids might say. To onlookers, he's just another old codger, lost in his own weird world, feeding the seagulls with a bucket full of shrimp.

To the onlooker, rituals can look either very strange or very empty. They can seem altogether unimportant...maybe even a lot of nonsense.

Old folks often do strange things, at least in the eyes of Boomers and Busters. Most of them would probably write Old Ed off, down there in Florida.

That's too bad. They'd do well to know him better. His full name: Eddie Rickenbacker. He was a famous hero back in World War II. On one of his flying missions across the Pacific, he and his seven-member crew went down. Miraculously, all of the men survived, crawled out of their plane, and climbed into a life raft. Captain Rickenbacker and his crew floated for days on the rough waters of the Pacific. They fought the sun. They fought sharks. Most of all, they fought hunger. By the eighth day their rations ran out. No food. No water. They were hundreds of miles from land and no one knew where they were. They needed a miracle.

That afternoon they had a simple devotional service and prayed for a miracle. They tried to nap. Eddie leaned back and pulled his military cap over his nose. Time dragged. All he could hear was the slap of the waves against the raft.

Suddenly, Eddie felt something land on the top of his cap. It was a seagull! Old Ed would later describe how he sat perfectly still, planning his next move. With a flash of his hand and a squawk from the gull, he managed to grab it and wring its neck. He tore the feathers off, and he and his starving crew made a meal - a very slight meal for eight men - of it. Then they used the intestines for bait. With it, they caught fish, which gave them food and more bait.....and the cycle continued.

With that simple survival technique, they were able to endure the rigors of the sea until they were found and rescued. (after 24 days at sea...)

Eddie Rickenbacker lived many years beyond that ordeal, but he never forgot the sacrifice of that first lifesaving seagull. And he never stopped saying, 'Thank you.' That's why almost every Friday night he would walk to the end of the pier with a bucket full of shrimp and a heart full of gratitude.

As a child of God there are many times I take for granted the great sacrifice that God has made for me and to have and experience His Salvation. Many times I fail to give Him the Thanks and the Honor He Deserves. I would just like to share with all of you who read this article just how Thankful I am for Jesus Christ Saving my sinful soul from hell. THANK YOU LORD JESUS!!

### Words of Wisdom

- I can't change the direction of the wind, but I can adjust my sails to always reach my destination. *Jimmy Dean*
- There are two kinds of people: those who say to God, 'Thy will be done,' and those to whom God says, 'All right, then, have it your way.' *C. S. Lewis*
- God has given us two hands, one to receive with and the other to give with. *Billy Graham*
- When wealth is lost, nothing is lost; when health is lost, something is lost; when character is lost, all is lost. *Billy Graham*
- Courage is contagious. When a brave man takes a stand, the spines of others are often stiffened. *Billy Graham*

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



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# Crossword

## ACROSS

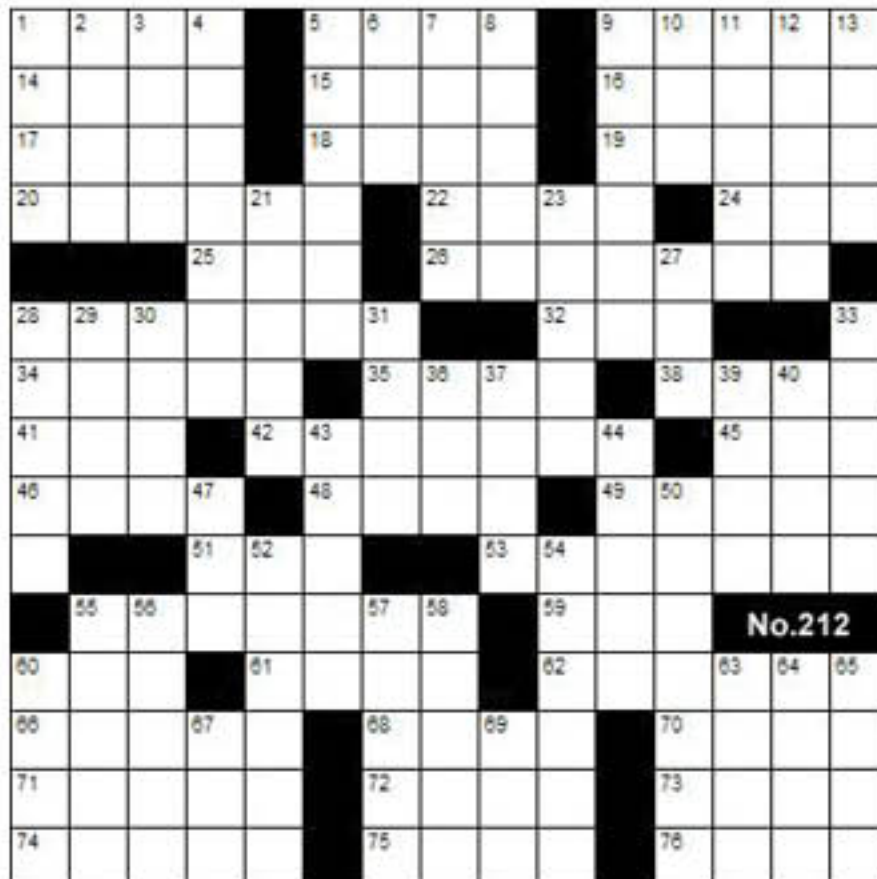
1 brother of Cain (Gen 4:2)  
 5 sold your people for a pitance, gaining nothing from their \_\_\_\_ (Ps 44:12)  
 9 the father of Abram, Nahor and Haran (Gen 11:26)  
 14 \_\_\_\_ them farewell, saying, I must by all means keep this feast (Acts 18:21) KJV  
 15 Thy servant slew both the \_\_\_\_ and the bear (1 Sam 17:36)  
 16 our enemies heard that we were \_\_\_\_ of their plot (Neh 4:15)  
 17 a Levite who lived in a remote \_\_\_\_ in the hill country (Judg 19:1)  
 18 I see \_\_\_\_ of an almond tree (1,3) (Jer 1:11)  
 19 we told him according to the \_\_\_\_ of these words (Gen 43:7) KJV  
 20 He is able to deal \_\_\_\_ with those who are ignorant (Heb 5:2)  
 22 Go, \_\_\_\_ a lookout and have him report what he sees (Isa 21:6)  
 24 Reuben and the children of \_\_\_\_ called the altar Ed (Josh 22:34) KJV  
 25 As for all the hills once cultivated by the \_\_\_\_ (Isaiah 7:25)  
 26 when they \_\_\_\_ as the wounded in the streets of the city (Lam 2:12) KJV  
 28 But we know that when he \_\_\_\_, we shall be like him (1 John 3:2)  
 32 Deliver thyself as a \_\_\_\_ from the hand of the hunter (Prov 6:5) KJV  
 34 the fame thereof was \_\_\_\_ in Pharaoh's house (Gen 45:16)  
 35 how will anyone know what \_\_\_\_ is being played (1 Cor 14:7)  
 38 The price for his release is to be based on the \_\_\_\_ paid to a hired man (Lev 25:50)  
 41 a very long period of time  
 42 one body, and \_\_\_\_ together in the promise in Christ Jesus (Eph 3:6)  
 45 for a \_\_\_\_ and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem (Isa 8:14) KJV  
 46 the magicians tried to produce gnats by their secret \_\_\_\_ (Ex 8:18)  
 48 Observe the month of \_\_\_\_ and celebrate the Passover (Deut 16:1)  
 49 units, parts, points  
 51 That which groweth of \_\_\_\_ own accord (Lev 25:5)  
 53 three thousand and six hundred to \_\_\_\_ them (2 Chron 2:2)

## KJV

55 The husband should fulfill his \_\_\_\_ duty to his wife (1 Cor 7:3)  
 59 They shall still bring forth fruit in old \_\_\_\_ (Ps 92:14)  
 60 to cry (Gen 21:16)  
 61 off the coast of Cilicia and Pamphylia, we landed at \_\_\_\_ in Lycia (Acts 27:5)  
 62 All the birds of the air \_\_\_\_ in its boughs (Ezek 31:6)  
 66 beans, and lentiles, and parched \_\_\_\_ (2 Sam 17:28) KJV  
 68 Ahab son of \_\_\_\_ became king of Israel (1 Kings 16:29)  
 70 They will \_\_\_\_ on wings like eagles (Isa 40:31)  
 71 the furnace heated seven times hotter than \_\_\_\_ (Dan 3:19)  
 72 Then they \_\_\_\_ in his face and struck him with their fists (Matt 26:67)  
 73 Salvation is found in no one \_\_\_\_, for there is no other name (Acts 4:12)  
 74 The LORD hears the \_\_\_\_ (Ps 69:33)  
 75 sent me from Kadesh-barnea to \_\_\_\_ out the land (Josh 14:7) KJV  
 76 to kill (Ps 78:34)

## DOWN

1 earneth wages to put it into \_\_\_\_ with holes. (1,3) (Hag 1:6) KJV  
 2 he tore the lion apart with his \_\_\_\_ hands (Judg 14:12)  
 3 The first home of Adam  
 4 a garment of hair and with a \_\_\_\_ belt around his waist (2 Kings 1:8)  
 5 The sword is made ready for the hand of the \_\_\_\_ (Ezek 21:11)  
 6 Jesus replied, "Foxes have holes and birds of the \_\_\_\_ have nests (Matt 8:20)  
 7 they made fifty \_\_\_\_ along the edge of the end curtain in one set (Exod 36:17)  
 8 for God did not \_\_\_\_ her with wisdom (Job 39:17)  
 9 or put \_\_\_\_ marks on yourselves (Lev 19:28)  
 10 What is the meaning of these seven \_\_\_\_ lambs (Gen 21:29)  
 11 letting your cattle and donkeys \_\_\_\_ free (Isa 32:20)  
 12 who made \_\_\_\_ in the depths of the sea (1,4) (Isa 51:10)  
 13 A large \_\_\_\_ of pigs was feeding on the nearby (Mark 5:11-12)  
 21 boys stagger under \_\_\_\_ of wood (Lam 5:13)  
 23 Of how much \_\_\_\_ punishment, suppose ye (Heb 10:29) KJV  
 27 Abner, the son of \_\_\_\_, Saul's uncle (1 Sam 14:50)  
 28 because he was looking \_\_\_\_ to his reward (Heb 11:26)  
 29 Israel joined in worshiping the Baal of \_\_\_\_ (Num 25:3)  
 30 Like a woman in childbirth, I cry



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out, I gasp and \_\_\_\_ (Isa 42:14)  
 31 When he prophesies, his own parents will \_\_\_\_ him (Zech 13:3)  
 33 the \_\_\_\_ forest has been cut down (Zech 11:2)  
 36 See, the LORD has chosen Bezalel son of \_\_\_\_ (Ex.35:30)  
 37 Bel bows down, \_\_\_\_ stoops low; their idols (Isa 46:1)  
 39 mystery that has been kept hidden for \_\_\_\_ and generations (Col 1:26)  
 40 "The \_\_\_\_ has come," he said. "The kingdom of God is near (Mark 1:15)  
 43 do not be \_\_\_\_ in your heart to utter anything before God (Eccl 5:2)  
 44 The city was kept under \_\_\_\_ until the eleventh year (II Ki 25:2)  
 47 The woman said to him, "\_\_\_\_, give me this water (John 4:15)  
 50 like royal tapestry; the king is held captive by its \_\_\_\_ (Song 7:5)  
 52 Giving an apt reply and how good is a \_\_\_\_ word (Prov 15:23)

54 is grievous unto me: for all is \_\_\_\_ and vexation of spirit (Eccl.2:17) KJV  
 55 the weasel, and the \_\_\_\_, and the tortoise after his kind (Lev 11:29)  
 56 Fasten \_\_\_\_ cord to it (1,4) (Ex 28:37)  
 57 they \_\_\_\_ and worshiped before the LORD (1 Sam 1:19)  
 58 The wise, however, took oil in jars along with their \_\_\_\_ (Matt 25:4)  
 60 Every skilled woman \_\_\_\_ with her hands (Ex.35:25)  
 63 it shall not be lawful to impose \_\_\_\_, tribute upon them (Ezra 7:24) KJV  
 64 will live in safety and be at \_\_\_\_, without fear of harm (Prov 1:33)  
 65 reached for his sword, \_\_\_\_ it out and struck the servant (Matt 26:51)  
 67 unhappy  
 69 or they will tear me like a lion and \_\_\_\_ me to pieces (Ps 7:2)

Solution on page 14





# Worship

By Allen Buchanan  
Mitchell County

Does your church take the time to experience worship? Is your congregation reverent? Do your members respect this time? Personally, I love the music that's played during the offertory, but all too often people are way too noisy. To avoid distractions, I close my eyes and whisper the lyrics of the hymn that is being played. Otherwise, I pray. There are times that I cannot avoid being part of the problem and I find myself missing a blessing.

Barbara Harrell of the Blue Ridge Christian News stated their newspaper serves 1,200 Churches. 17,000 copies reach an estimated 50-60 thousand readers per month. I wonder how many people from 1,200 churches experience a visit from the Holy Spirit during each worship service?

Webster's Dictionary defines worship as "reverence offered to a divine being or supernatural power; an act of expressing such reverence; a form of religious practice with its creed and ritual."

As a child I was taught to be on my best behavior at church. If I misbehaved, I was disciplined. The longer I attend church, the more I understand this time set aside each week is extremely important in my walk with Jesus. Two and a half hours each Sunday morning doesn't seem time enough to worship.

Not only is worship music and preaching, it involves giving both of our time and money. Once you leave the church building, please don't leave worshipping behind, take it with you. Every part of your Christian life should begin with #1: Worship.

Let's take a moment to look into God's word and see what He has to say about worship: First and foremost, worship is due God and God alone.

Worship is to be expressed by God's people: *But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light: 1 Peter 2:9*

We're to acknowledge His greatness, holiness, concern and deeds: *O come, let us sing unto the LORD: let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation. Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto him with psalms. For the LORD is a great God, and a great King above all gods. Psalm 95:1-3*

Let us worship God in praise through music, prayer, thanksgiving, adoration, joy, trust, awe, reverence and wholeheartedness. *By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name. Hebrews 13:15*

*Make a joyful noise unto the LORD, all ye lands. Psalm 100:2*  
*And now, Israel, what doth the LORD thy God require of thee, but to fear the LORD thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the LORD thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul, Deuteronomy 10:12*

I like what Dr. David Jeremiah says about worship: Before we can say anything about worship, we must come to grips with this idea of wonder. For worship, can never be the sole work of the rational mind. In the presence of Almighty God, as the Apostle John discovered, the sense of wonder comes naturally and leaves us changed. But without the capability of awe, where we stand at the edge of ourselves and gaze beyond, we will never come into His presence.

When I get the chance to take a drive on the parkway and pull off at one of the lookouts, I enjoy sitting still and soaking in God and His creation. In this quiet time, I worship Him by offering my gratitude for the sacrifice of His son, Jesus. I also thank God for everything He's provided. To me, this is worship.

Allen Buchanan is a freelance Christian writer. Allen attends Bear Creek Baptist church.



# Morganton Seventh-Day Adventist Church

## Rejoicing and Thanksgiving!

By Rick and Cindy Mercer  
Burke County



Isn't it amazing how some people possess such remarkable inner strength? Have you ever wondered how certain individuals have that amazing ability to deal with adversity? Have you ever considered what made Russian Nobel Peace Prize winner Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn find such freedom, even in the horrible circumstances of a Russian prison? What made Victor Frankl survive three years in a concentration camp where the average life expectancy was 90 days? How did Corrie ten Boom come out of the Ravensbruck prison camp unscathed? The answer lies in one word: "Gratitude." Solzhenitsyn, Frankl, and ten Boom all developed the spirit of thankfulness for what they had. They thanked God for every breath, for every day of life, for the smile of an inmate, for every cup of water, for every morsel of food. This attitude of gratitude lifted them above their dismal surroundings. It took them to another level.

So how do we develop this "attitude of gratitude"? It's one thing to observe others who have it. It's quite another to have it ourselves.

Let's go back 2,000 years to a Roman prison. Here we find a prisoner named Paul who not only survived in a surrounding of dark misery, but thrived. What was his secret to dealing with the enormous stress of his own life?

Reading the letter to the Philippians, penned in a dark, damp, Roman dungeon, we're immediately amazed. The apostle is not resentful; he's grateful. He's not complaining; he's rejoicing. He's discovered joy in the midst of life's adversities.

Paul writes, *"I rejoice, yes, and will rejoice" (Phil. 1:18). "I am glad and rejoice with you all" (Phil. 2:17). "Rejoice in the Lord always. Again, I will say, rejoice" (Phil. 4:4). "But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly" (verse 10).*

This certainly doesn't sound like a man who is in prison! It sounds like somebody who's enjoying his life to the fullest. It doesn't sound like someone separated from his family and friends, but someone surrounded by love. It doesn't sound like someone who's experienced one of life's greatest tragedies; it sound like a man who's certain of triumph.

The apostle Paul tapped into a source of spiritual power far greater than himself. He was able to rejoice because he discovered the Source of all joy. He was at peace because he discovered and found the One who is the source of all thanksgiving. In Christ, we can be thankful today, tomorrow and forever... no matter the circumstances! *Let us come before His presence with thanksgiving. Ps. 95:2.*

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.



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## Stirring and awakening my soul

By Ken and Jan Merop  
Avery County



Some time ago, I wrote a poem that now fits our present situation so beautifully.

*When the world around me sleeps and my heart within me speaks,  
It's the Lord who is stirring in my soul.  
His handiwork I see in a new dawn's majesty  
For the Lord is always stirring in my soul.*

*My voice lifts songs of praise and it will for all my days  
For the Lord is always stirring in my soul.  
His will to me makes known as my all is His alone  
Thank You, Lord, for stirring in my soul.*

At the time, I was longing to write. And God gave me these verses and confirmed in my spirit that my longing was of him.

As you read this, we are now living in North Carolina. At a later time, I will describe our new surroundings. But for now, let me share what God gave me a couple of months ago that prompted me to remember this poem.

I had been remembering a prayer I had prayed about three years ago. I'd been restless, uncertain of why since I wasn't discontent. However, I felt a yearning I couldn't describe and prayed, "Lord, I want to wake up each day knowing who I am, what I do and where I do it consistently."

I had no clue what my words meant...until a few weeks later when the Lord introduced Ken and me to The Crossnore School in Crossnore, North Carolina. He opened our eyes and hearts fleshing out that prayer. Crossnore is also an orphanage to children ages 1-21...a sanctuary of hope and healing. God had captured our hearts for children long before. Here our volunteering would be focused.

Suddenly, that prayer and poem held hands...awakening a profound truth to me. The Holy Spirit had stirred my soul with that baffling prayer. Now I saw that the Holy Spirit had caused the restless stirring and the words of the prayer.

As God's Word says in Romans 8:26, NLT... "And the Holy Spirit helps us in our weakness...we don't know what God wants us to pray for. But the Holy Spirit prays for us with groanings that cannot be expressed in words."

I hadn't been able to articulate this yearning in my spirit. But God's Spirit knew and prayed "in harmony with God's own will."

Romans 8:28 declares that the Lord will work all things together for our good when we love him and are called according to his purpose.

Be sensitive to his stirrings and awakenings. Selah

## A shadow of things to come

*Listen closely and you'll hear the laughter of playing children.  
Look and see their eyes sparkling as they sing their joyful songs.*

*Though somewhat in the shadows now,  
the awakening reality is coming...  
for they are the sounds of the Kingdom.  
Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me,  
and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of heaven."  
Matthew 19: 14*



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## Blue Cross Blue Shield NC Foundation

By Ruthie Styles  
Avery County

A hop, skip, jump and a swing... just a few of the things children who attend Little Faces Child Care enjoy most about the playground areas recently improved by the owner Elvie Shepherd. Improvements to the playground include fencing play areas with separate entrances from the center for each age group, highlighting the natural elements in the play area and repairing drainage problems that made parts of the playground unusable because of safety issues. These improvements were made possible through a Blue Cross Blue Shield of North Carolina Foundation grant, after intensive planning for the outdoor space was completed through the Shape NC initiative.

The Blue Cross Blue Shield NC Foundation and the North Carolina Partnership for Children (NCPC) joined together to create an initiative called Shape NC. The Shape NC initiative is a response to the alarming numbers about childhood obesity. The childhood obesity rate tripled nationally in one generation and North Carolina has the 7th highest rate of childhood obesity for underprivileged children, ages 2 to 5 years old, in the nation. Most childhood obesity prevention programs target school-age children but Shape NC targets children ages birth to five. Extensive research indicates that what happens in a child's early years (First 1000 Days) sets the foundation for all the years that follow. Children who participate in a high-quality early learning program that helps instill healthy behaviors early on are more likely to have less chronic disease and be healthier adults.

Little Faces Child Care, located at 201 Banner Creek Road, Banner Elk, NC, is a Model Early Learning Center in Avery County. To be designated a Model Early Learning Center the director, Elvie Shepherd worked with Shape NC staff and the Blue Ridge Partnership for Children Technical Assistance Specialist, Mimi Nes to develop and implement environments, practices and policies that encourage young children to be healthy. As a result of this MELC designation, BRPFC selected Little Faces as the recipient of a playground improvement grant they had received from BCBSNC Foundation.

When asked about the BCBSNC Foundation grant and what it has meant to her child care center Elvie said "The kids love to climb on the tree and the teachers love being able to take the kids outside. The kids got so bored with the plastic toys but they don't get bored with the natural stuff. They run their trucks down the rocks and they love to play school sitting on the rocks. I love the natural learning environment better, I wasn't sure I would, but I do. We hope to continue building on the concept and incorporate more natural elements into our other playground areas."

For more information about Little Faces Child Care please contact Elvie Shepherd at 828.898.2151 and for more information on Shape NC go to <http://www.smartstart.org/shape-nc-home/> or call 828.733.2899.

*Ruthie Styles is Community Development Manager for Blue Ridge Partnership for Children serving Avery, Mitchell and Yancey Counties.*



## Neighborhood Revitalization Program

By Robin Warden  
Yancey County

Habitat for Humanity's vision is a world where everyone has a decent place to live. Habitat affiliates seek to put God's love into action by bringing people together to build homes, communities, and hope. Our Mitchell-Yancey Habitat affiliate has worked to realize this vision by providing homes for 25 families in our communities since 1992; building one home at a time and alternating our builds between Mitchell and Yancey counties. We now seek to serve more families through the creation of a Neighborhood Revitalization Program.

What is Neighborhood Revitalization? It is more than building new homes. It is a more holistic community development process that recognizes housing as a major component to revitalize and create vibrant, safe and inviting places to live for current and future residents. It involves building community coalitions that include residents, churches, schools, financial institutions, social service agencies, and government, business, and civic groups coming together to support a community's vision of quality of life and well being for its citizens.

Recognizing that decent and safe housing is a critical part of this vision, Habitat affiliates around the country are becoming part of Neighborhood Revitalization community coalitions to help build new homes, as well as, preserve and rehabilitate existing homes, and provide critical home repairs.

Since 2010, over 240 Habitat affiliates in the US now participate in Neighborhood Revitalization Programs. These affiliates now serve more than 60% of all families served by Habitat in the US. More than 80% of these affiliates have reported success working with partners and coalitions to improve

community development planning and mobilizing needed resources to create and revitalize neighborhoods.

The Mitchell-Yancey Habitat for Humanity affiliate recognizes the housing challenges in the counties we serve and seeks to help address these through the development of a Neighborhood Revitalization Program. For example, prior to 1990, 77% of the homes were built in Mitchell County and 67% in Yancey County. The median age of housing is 37 years in Mitchell and 30 years in Yancey. While the median home value in Mitchell is \$115,000 and \$129,000 in Yancey, 40% and 44% of resident's annual income is below \$30,000 respectively in these counties (Sperling, 2016). Neighborhood Revitalization Programs are intended to serve these types of households who may be economically disadvantaged and unable to afford to purchase homes or maintain their existing homes.

Our affiliate is currently seeking training, networking with community partners, and seeking grant funding opportunities to plan and help implement a Neighborhood Revitalization Program in our counties. We welcome your support as a community member to help us in our efforts.

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



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*-H.O. Hirt, ERIE Founder*



Surviving the Holidays

By Carolyn Dotts  
Mitchell County



Western Carolina Church is hosting the 4th annual GriefShare: Surviving the Holidays special holiday program. The program presentation begins with a banquet which is open to the community. It will be held on Saturday, November 12, 2016 at 6:00 PM at Western Carolina Church in Spruce Pine. This seminar gives practical advice for dealing with grief and the holidays. Please feel free to bring family members and friends who might benefit from this program.

With the holiday season fast approaching, you are likely experiencing a jumble of emotions that you've yet to sort out. Facing a holiday after the death of a loved one can be more difficult than your friends and even family members may realize. The video, discussion group and devotional material will help you not only to survive the holidays, but to find strength, healing and tools to move forward in your daily walk through the deep pain of grief.

On the videos, you will meet Christian experts and other people who have experienced the death of a loved one or another life tragedy. These people share honestly about ...

- Being prepared for surprising emotions that may hit over the holidays
- What to do about traditions and other coming changes
- How to handle holiday parties and invitations
- How to survive potentially awkward moments with other people
- Where to find comfort, strength and hope in a seemingly hopeless time

In your discussion group, you'll have the chance to talk with others who have lost a loved one, discuss what you've learned on the video and ask questions about any concerns you have.

There is no charge for this program, but a reservation for the number of persons attending is requested. For more information and reservations, call Carolyn Dotts at 828-765-4633.

*Carolyn Dotts makes her home in Ledger and is a teacher of Exceptional Children at Greenlee Primary School. She is a widow with two sons and five grandchildren. She is a member of Western Carolina Church in Spruce Pine.*

**Happy Thanksgiving**

Christian: Are You Sufficiently Informed and Ready to Vote Intelligently?

By Dr. Mark Creech



We're less than a week from the General Election on November 8th. Early voting has already started.

There are so many critical issues at stake in this election.

Will the practice of abortion find new energy under its freshly elected leadership, or will the destruction of the unborn be slowed, perhaps even stopped? Will the institution of marriage, the building block of our culture, continue its descent into the abyss of political correctness, or will our nation's leaders start steering us back to God's plan of one man and one woman? Will religious liberty be irreparably injured, even lost, or will it be spared?

There are also many other issues to be considered: federal judges, national defense, terrorism, immigration, poverty, law and order, as well as our national policy in relation to Israel.

Prepare to Vote Intelligently

Are you prepared to vote intelligently? As Deborah Dewart has stated in her book, *Death of a Christian Nation*, "Christians are best prepared to take action and make a difference if they are informed."



*Reverend Dr. Mark Creech is Executive Director of the NC Christian Action League. You may contact him at [rev.markcreech@christianactionleague.org](mailto:rev.markcreech@christianactionleague.org) or 919-787-0606*

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Walking in the Spirit

By Marlene Houk  
Burke County

Jewel tones of brilliant orange, sizzling red and sparkling yellow light my life with the beauty of Fall. The effect is breathtaking, and the kaleidoscope of color illuminates God's creative genius. This season, above all, beckons me to walk through the trees who have released their golden treasures, padding my path with an ear-popping crunch and the crisp, smoky smell of Fall.

Ambling through forest paths I dawdle at the maple tree with its crimson and satin gold leaves. They're backlit with the splendor of the sun, and their radiance warms my soul. The walk clears my mind, rejuvenates my spirit and prepares me to return to my life, refreshed and renewed.

It follows naturally that the God, who created us to cherish a simple Autumn walk, would use this word picture when referring to the Holy Spirit's work in us as Christians. As Dr. Gary Smalley and Dr. John Trent, renown Christian psychologists, state in their book, *The Language of Love*, word pictures have at least 5 benefits: Mark Merrill, on his website, [www.familyminute.com](http://www.familyminute.com) summarizes these benefits as follows:

Here are the Five Reasons Why Word Pictures Work:

- 1. Word Pictures Have Been Time-Tested by the World's Greatest Communicators. Smalley and Trent give examples of great speakers, such as Cicero, Benjamin Franklin and Winston Churchill, who have used word pictures in their communications with others. This is a time-tested method.
- 2. Word Pictures Grab and Direct Attention. Studies have shown that word pictures encourage the brain to work faster and expend more energy than when we listen to regular words. Word pictures force your spouse to get past the words and focus on the meaning behind the story.
- 3. Word Pictures Bring Communication to Life. Word pictures "activate a person's emotions, which can lead to positive change."
- 4. Word Pictures Lock Thoughts into Our Memory. Studies have shown that people remember things better when a word picture is used.
- 5. Word Pictures Provide a Gateway to Intimacy. Using word pictures provides a common ground of communication that both spouses can use.

[goo.gl/lidxjc](http://goo.gl/lidxjc)  
In Galatians 5:16, the Bible says,  
*"This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh."* With one word, walk, the LORD opens glorious panoramic vistas of understanding about the benefits of walking daily in a relationship with Him. Just like the spectacular hues of amber, red, and yellow draping the gently rolling hills, walking in the Spirit also displays the splendor of God as we walk with Him. Physically walking is a powerful reminder of the many ways in which walking in the Spirit enriches our relationship with the LORD. Look at the list below for some of the parallels between the benefits of physical walking and spiritual walking.

- 1. Just as physical walking benefits our health, equipping us for life, so, walking in the Spirit boosts our spiritual health, equipping us to handle life.
- 2. Just as physical walking clears the mind, allowing us to refocus on the important, so, walking in the Spirit clears our spiritual mind, allowing us to refocus on the LORD. *1 Peter 1:13, 1 Peter 3:8, Phillipians 1:5*
- 3. Just as physical walking keeps disease at bay, so, walking in the Spirit keeps the devil at bay. *James 4:7*
- 4. Just as physical walking gives us pleasure because our body is cleansed and working together, so, walking in the Spirit gives us pleasure because our body, soul, and spirit are cleansed and working together to God's glory. *Psalms 16:11, Ephesians 2:15, Ephesians 1:7*
- 5. Just as physical walking is even more pleasant with another, so, walking in the Spirit is even more pleasant when we realize Jesus is walking with us and others are helped as they walk with us. *2 Corinthians 1:4*

Rounding the bend in the path, I stare in astonishment at the gigantic tree, shimmering in the sunlight with all the iridescent colors of Fall, just waiting for me to discover it. I would never have feasted my eyes on its glorious magnificence had I not walked the path towards it.

"How beautiful, when a whole tree is like one great scarlet fruit full of ripe juices, every leaf, from lowest limb to topmost spire, all aglow, especially if you look toward the sun! What more remarkable object can there be in a landscape?" ~ Henry David Thoreau

In the same way, walking in the Spirit empowers us to live in the light from the glory of His presence, afire with His love, His power, and His personal attention to us!



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

Who Do You Think Made All This?

by Jerry Lewis  
McDowell County

*When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place, what is man that you are mindful of him, and the son of man that you care for him? (Psalm 8:3-4 ESV)*

Yesterday I read these words from Brennan Manning, author of *Ragamuffin Gospel*. I can't improve on them. Listen in...

As they contemplate the order of the earth, the solar system, and the stellar universe, scientists and scholars have concluded that the Master Planner left nothing to chance.

The slant of the earth, for example, tilted at an angle of 23 degrees, produces our seasons. Scientists tell us that if the earth had not been tilted exactly as it is, vapors from the oceans would move both north and south, piling up continents of ice.

If the moon were only 50,000 miles away from earth instead of 200,000, the tides might be so enormous that all continents would be submerged in water—even the mountains would be eroded.

If the crust of the earth had been only ten feet thicker, there would be no oxygen, and without it all animal life would die. Had the oceans been a few feet deeper, carbon dioxide and oxygen would have been absorbed and no vegetable life would exist.

The earth's weight has been estimated at six sextillion tons (that's a six with 21 zeros).

Yet it is perfectly balanced and turns easily on its axis. It revolves daily at the rate of more than 1,000 miles per hour or 25,000 miles each day. This adds up to nine million miles a year. Considering the tremendous weight of six sextillion tons rolling at this fantastic speed around an invisible axis, held in place by unseen bands of gravitation, the words of Job 26:7 take on unparalleled significance: *"He poised the earth on nothingness."*

The earth revolves in its own orbit around the sun, making the long elliptical circuit of six hundred million miles each year—which means we are traveling in orbit at 19 miles per second or 1,140 miles per hour.

Consider the sun. Every square yard of the sun's surface is emitting constantly an energy level of 130,000 horsepower (that is, approximately 450 eight-cylinder automobile engines), in flames that are being produced by an energy source much more powerful than coal. Still the sun is only one minor star in the 100 billion orbs which comprise our Milky Way galaxy. If you were to hold out a dime at arm's length, the coin would block out 15 million stars from your view, if your eyes could see with that power.

No wonder Isaiah, in the darkness of the night sky, saw the greatness of God: *Look at the night skies: Who do you think made all this? Who marches this army of stars out each night, counts them off, calls each by name - so magnificent! so powerful! - and never overlooks a single one? (Isaiah 40:26, The Message)*

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



Sudoku

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

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Solution on page 14



First 2000 Days Deemed Critical to a Child's Development

By Gregory Stella  
Yancey County

There are only 2,000 days between the time a baby is born and when he or she will begin kindergarten. During that time, brain architecture is forming, creating either a strong or weak foundation for all future learning. Your child's development is a dynamic, interactive process not solely determined by genetics. In fact, the brain is one of the only organs not fully developed at birth. Over 90% of critical brain development occurs in the first five years of a child's life. While the cells are there, the connections between them, or the wiring needed for those cells to work, is not. These connections develop through their early experiences.

Every experience has the potential to form a new connection in an infant's brain that will be needed for future learning. For optimal development and a strong foundation, children require good health, strong families, and high quality early learning and school experiences. With these in place, children are ready for school and can look forward to finishing, and eventually becoming productive citizens and valuable employees.

Here in Yancey County, we're proud to have Community Champions of the First 2000 Days ([www.first2000days.org](http://www.first2000days.org)) and the Yancey Alliance for Young Children (YAY Children), both of which are partnerships of community members and early childhood service agencies (including our schools) seeking to design a community process that supports our youngest children.

As an initiative of the North Carolina Early Childhood Foundation, the First 2000 Days is raising awareness about how children's earliest experiences have a lasting impact on later learning, health, and success, and how addressing these issues impacts our national security, safety, and economic well-being. YAY Children is a community-supported, legacy-building initiative that will coordinate the system of early childhood services so that children's foundational years can support future learning and life success.

Yancey County's continued economic vitality depends on how we invest today for tomorrow. When we focus our attention and resources to the needs of young children and their families, we create the best outcomes in education, health, and economic well-being for everyone here and in North Carolina. Today, public investments in our young children come predominately from federal and state governments. However, towns, cities and counties across the nation are serving as hubs of innovation by using local revenue creatively to expand community early learning opportunities. In our efforts to unify the system of early childhood services so that it better meets the needs of children and families, YAY Children is proud to be one of those innovations.

On September 20 of this year, YAY Children took a first step towards fulfilling its vision, by engaging with families, providers, and children's advocates to explain its goals and objectives. Many signed up to join our efforts. We hope you too will join work groups, participate in community discussions, and support policies and programs that give young children the greatest likelihood of success. They will one day thank you!

To hear more about the First 2000 Days initiative, to get involved with YAY Children, or to learn more about either of the program's plans, please contact Katherine Savage, the YAY Children Program Manager, at [katherine@brpartnershipforchildren.org](mailto:katherine@brpartnershipforchildren.org) or call the Blue Ridge Partnership for Children offices in Burnsville at 828-682-0047. You can also find YAY Children on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/YAYChildren/>

*Gregory Stella has been an advocate for children in Yancey County since moving to the South Toe valley in 2001. He is a Community Champion with the First 2000 Days Initiative and the current chair of the Yancey Alliance for Young Children.*



Fall Pathways Workshops set for Local Nonprofits

By Susan Larson  
Avery County

Two timely topics will round out WNC Nonprofit Pathways' 2016 offerings presented to the nonprofits in Avery, Mitchell and Yancey counties. The first is marketing and the second is succession planning. Both will be led by seasoned nonprofit leaders.

Holly Barrett will teach "Broad-based Marketing for Nonprofits on a Small Budget" on Tuesday, November 15, from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon at Crossnore School. She will guide participants in telling the story of their organization without spending thousands of dollars. She will discuss branding their organization with consistency, developing a comprehensive communications calendar, and creating good content to share with their followers. Holly Barrett serves as the Director of Communications for The Crossnore School, where she is responsible for the development and implementation of all marketing and communication strategies. Planned for the The Guy Building on the Crossnore campus, the workshop will be informal, with coffee and snacks from Miracle Grounds. It is also meant as an opportunity for nonprofit organizations to network and to learn from each other. The cost to attend is \$10.



Holly Barrett

For a link to register, send an email to [sjanelarson@gmail.com](mailto:sjanelarson@gmail.com).

"Leadership Change is Inevitable: Succession Planning for Nonprofits" is the title of a workshop led by Greg Walker Wilson at the Artist Resource Center, upstairs at the TRAC Gallery, on Tuesday, December 6, from 11:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Serious and successful nonprofits do their best to plan for transitions in leadership, which could be of the Executive Director or a long-tenured staff leader or board chair. Whether vacancies are planned or unplanned, it is prudent to have a plan to fill them. Greg Walker Wilson will share the elements of succession planning with nonprofit leaders, boards and staff who may foresee a need to use them in the near or distant future.

Greg Walker Wilson has consulted with nonprofit organizations, large corporations, government entities, and small businesses for more than 20 years on local, state, national, and international levels. He began his career as a management consultant with Accenture, served as executive director of Mountain BizWorks, and currently consults with a broad range of nonprofit organizations including the Toe River Arts Council and WNC Nonprofit Pathways.

The cost to attend includes lunch and is \$15 for the first registrant from a nonprofit and \$10 for each additional registrant up to four from the same nonprofit. For a link to registration send an email to [sjanelarson@gmail.com](mailto:sjanelarson@gmail.com) or call Susan Larson at 765-2652.



Greg Walker Wilson

*Susan Larson is Director of WNC Non-Profit Pathway.*

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By Jim Dennison

Have you ever had something that you knew you had to say but couldn't quite find the words? Courtney Baker had dealt that problem since long before her daughter, Emersyn Faith, was even born. You see, Emmy had been diagnosed with Down syndrome while still in the womb, and Courtney's doctor suggested that she terminate the pregnancy. And, as she told ABC's Genevieve Shaw Brown, the pressure from her doctor to abort continued well after the initial diagnosis.



So, when Courtney finally found the words and courage to write her letter, it seemed only fitting that Emmy, now fifteen months old, help her drop it in the mailbox. As she described, "Every action, from opening and closing the mailbox to raising the red flag, was closure for me . . . I have no idea how the doctor might have reacted to my letter, but I do have faith that God can work any miracle and change any heart."

It's unknown how the doctor responded, but the letter, which she also posted on the Parker Miles Facebook page, has since gone viral and is impacting hearts to a degree far beyond what Courtney could have initially hoped for. It's well worth reading in its entirety and I hope that you will. Her final words, however, are what stuck with me the most.

After describing how the dominant emotion she felt towards the doctor was not anger or bitterness, but rather sadness at his inability to appreciate the beauty and perfection of the child he saw on that sonogram, she went on to say, "My prayer is that no other mommy will have to go through what I did. My prayer is that you, too, will now see true beauty and pure love with every sonogram. And my prayer is when you see that next baby with Down syndrome lovingly tucked in her mother's womb, you will look at that mommy and see me then tell her the truth: 'Your child is perfect.'"

Whether the doctor delivers that message or not, Courtney has. God can now use her pain to help heal the brokenness and allay the fears in the hearts of countless mothers and fathers in a similar position. Often times, the primary way that God redeems our trials

is by using them to help others (2 Corinthians 1:4). While that is not always the redemption we might hope for, it is often far more powerful than anything else he could have done.

Jim Denison often says that God redeems all that he allows (Romans 8:28). While I believe that's true, God usually leaves it up to us to determine whether or not we will experience that redemption. If we choose not to take part in his plan to bring healing from our pain and good from our trials, then those struggles will often result in bitterness rather than joy, and anger rather than peace.

Fortunately, Courtney has embraced that redemption and, by following God's direction in writing the letter, she can help guide others in a similar position to do the same. As A. B. Simpson once said, "You will have no test of faith that will not fit you to be a blessing if you are obedient to the Lord. I never had a trial but when I got out of the deep river I found some poor pilgrim on the bank that I was able to help by that very experience."

So, what deep rivers have you crossed recently? Which ones are you currently swimming through? Whatever they may be, never doubt that God has a plan to bring some measure of good from those trials and know that part of that plan will often involve using you to help others who are going through something similar. That doesn't mean you will understand their circumstances or completely know their pain—and it would be a mistake to think otherwise—but, if you'll let him, God can shape the trials of your past to help others find hope for their future. Will you be a part of that redemption today?

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Jim Denison Ph.D speaks and writes on cultural and contemporary issues. His daily column is distributed to more than 113,000 subscribers in 208 countries. See more on the website [www.dennisonforum.org](http://www.dennisonforum.org). Copyrighted and printed by permission from Denison Forum.



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who gives me  
Strength

Philippians 4:13



Peace in Christ

By Tim Tron  
Burke County

*"Now, Lord, look on their threats, and grant to Your servants that with all boldness they may speak Your word," - Acts 4:29*



He told my sister and me to follow him, that there was something strange he had to show us. We made our way down into a room that faced a large rectangular shaft in the stone wall. There was no grate covering the opening, which was about shoulder height tall. The hole spanned six feet across with an aperture large enough for a good size man to squeeze through. The outer lip of the hole was lined with rough shaped stones. Their surfaces facing the interior of the hole were worn smooth as if this once was a source of water or fluid that slowly eroded the ancient surface.

Our guide explained to us that this was where onlookers could stand and safely watch the demons emerge, without fear of being pulled into the hole. There was a convenient mark on the floor where he stood.

"You don't want to go beyond this point," he said stretching a crooked finger toward the crack in the stone floor where the toe of his sandaled foot stopped. "Don't step one inch closer than this," he demanded, with a glare in his eye. That stare caught my attention. "They can't pull you back into the hole from here. If you go past this line, then your soul becomes theirs."

Something about his gaze felt comforting as if we had been acquainted before.

Our focus returned toward the shaft as a soft breeze brushed past my cheek. A chill filled the room, and my skin began to crawl. Something was coming; ... the darkness approached.

My thoughts returned to our guide as goosebumps rose on my arm. The man's voice sounded so familiar. My mind couldn't let it go.

Yet, the darkness crept closer still.

Turning my gaze from the abyss back to the man pointing out the dangers, I suddenly realized the stranger, was no stranger at all.

He was our late father.

My heart leaped.

The last time we were together, I kissed him goodbye and walked out of the hospital leaving him to God's care. We were to meet again on heaven's shore. I wanted to rejoice and hug him in that moment, but that's not why we were there. The euphoria was quickly replaced with that of sounds emanating from the shaft that caused the hair to stand up on the back of my neck. Haunting screams of horror jerked my focus back to the gaping hole. There wasn't a feeling of reunion in our meeting, but rather, a sense of warning instead. There was no time for pleasantries. Just as he had finished speaking, as if on cue, shadows begin to ebb from the orifice, like hands stretching out for someone to hold, they sought our grasp, reaching, enticing, calling us closer. My sister's eyes widened in horror as the ghoulish images played out before us as if they were taunting us to move closer. Their macabre dance continued for only a brief time then slowly the beasts of hell slithered back into the darkness from whence they came. Their cries of anguish echoed in the hollow of the space from where they had disappeared.

We stood frozen as we listened in horror to their voices retreat.

Darkness, echoes and then silence.

Something inside me suddenly told me to go after them.

There was no sense of fear, no foreboding of danger in my being. Without hesitation, I walked over and began to climb into the opening of the tomb.

"What are you doing," my sister screamed!

"Get him out of there," my father called, as they both grabbed at my feet trying to stop my advance into the chamber beyond. Before they could obtain a firm hold, I was submerged into the blackness beyond. All feeling of dread had left me. It was almost as if my fear had been replaced by a rage that repelled the demonic force

within the tomb. But it was more than a rage; it was if there was a hand on my soul protecting me. As my eyes adjusted to the dimly lit corridor, I could sense the shadows retreating, fearful of my presence. Feeling empowered by the force within, I continued onward. The ceiling was only a couple feet from the surface that my body scooted along, which then eventually opened up into a taller hallway. Cobwebs and dust portrayed an abandoned dwelling left to decay. Looking for a way out, my eyes caught the rays of muted light passing through cracks in the boards along one wall. Pushing my way through the brittle wood, a large room opened up in front of me. Carefully, I stepped down onto what looked like a rooftop, covered only with tar paper.

"Hmm, no roofing shingles," came the thought as I timidly walked out far enough that I could look back from where I had come. It was then the realization hit me from where I had just emerged; the old farmhouse of my paternal grandparents, Victor and Mildred Tron. It never occurred to me that there had been a room on this side of the house, yet here I stood, looking back. The black surface of the floor had no dimension. It was as if my footsteps walked upon a void that reflected no light, only absorbed it or trapped it below its surface, held prisoner for all of eternity. The groans of those trapped below caused a vibration that pulsed into the soles of my shoes, sending shivers up my spine.

"This is no normal floor," I thought to myself, "am I standing on hell?"

"God," I called out turning my gaze to heaven, "Why have you brought me here?"

Overhead there was a sparse rafter system, one that didn't look strong enough to hold much of a snow, let alone a windstorm. The pieces of wood of that upper framework were pieced together in a haphazard fashion, fastened together at odd angles forming a peculiar dome shaped visage. Had I been in my right mind, I would have been fearful of the entire room's collapse or being devoured from below by the inequities which I walked upon. Again, there was still no sense of doom, no feeling of pending disaster; nothing but a feeling of confidence.

Before I could make sense of where or why I was there, my body was suddenly transported into an RV park in another place and time. Once again danger loomed as neighbors screamed pointing in the direction of the trailer where I had appeared. A massive black funnel cloud as far as my eyes could see, from one end of the horizon to the other, bore down upon us. Those who were faint-hearted were frozen with fear and couldn't move but rather collapsed into heaps of angst and gnashing of teeth.

Panic was in the air.

Once more, there was a power within that drove the fear from me as the smoke is driven from the fire. One man who had been running from the cloud of death stopped for a moment beside me. He was bent over gasping for breath with his hands on his knees. As the color began to return to his face, he looked up at me with a puzzled face.

"Why aren't you getting out of here mister? Don't you know if you stay you will die?"

"No, I'm not," I calmly replied.

"What the hell do you mean," his face squinted in question, "can't you see that," his weary arm stretched out behind him as if he didn't even want to face it.

"It's not coming this way."

"Like hell it's not," he screamed, "all the reports have it coming this way and if you can't see that," he now stood and turned pointing with both arms, "Then something must be wrong with you." He shook his head in utter disbelief and slowly took off, joining the river of people that flowed past on the street next to me.

I turned to face the bleak reality of what he had feared and saw the dark cloud, yet there was still no urgency in my being.

"There is nothing to fear," I said speaking to the treacherous, twisting serpent cloud roaring in the near distance. "You are not coming here, for He has told me so."

As I stood watching, the cloud didn't approach any closer, but rather, continued to swirl and pound the earth in the distance. The deafening roar shook the earth like a thundering herd of wild horses. Furniture, pieces of homes, and shreds of all manner of life spun about in the futile darkness and slowly, ever so slowly crept away, like a scolded dog that had been chastised for misbehaving.

As I watched it fade, the boldness within continued to comfort me.

When I awoke the next morning, there was a serene sense of security, a calmness of being.

That morning my scripture lesson began with the book of Ezekiel, and there before me were the words that said it all. Like Ezekiel before his vision, God placed his hand upon him, and comforted him- *"and the hand of the Lord was upon him there."*

Yes, it was perfectly clear now.

His message was pure and simple; be bold and fear not, for I am with you always. *"I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." Phil 4: 13*



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*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.*



Accentuate the Positive

By Cheryl Shuffler  
Burke County

**How does your garden grow?**

How will we keep up with food production as the world's population increases, and what impact will this have on how the farms of tomorrow will operate? Third- through eighth-grade AIG students explored these questions during field trips to the STEAM Academy early this school year. Located at Western Piedmont Community College, the STEAM Academy AIG facilitators used the campus' resources to conduct the lessons. The lessons focused on sustainable agriculture and hydroponics/aquaponics. Students saw WPCC students and instructors in action on the college's own working farm and in the greenhouse and learned the ins and outs of sustainable living. The students made their own sub-irrigated planter out of a 2-liter bottle. The hands-on activity had them planting lettuce to take home. The students also met the goats, rams, donkey and chickens down on the WPCC farm. AIG Director Kathy Amos said for many of the students, the experience was their first time on a farm or around medicinal herbs and garden vegetables.



**Students learn bike safety**

A traveling trailer filled with bicycles will make its way from school to school every six weeks, giving elementary students a thrill similar to finding a new bike under the Christmas tree. Burke County Public Schools is the recipient of a Let's Go NC! grant that provides not only the two-wheeled vehicles with pedals and handlebars, but also helmets for students and lesson plans for their PE teachers. Burke County Public Schools Superintendent Larry Putnam said, "The goal is to not only get students moving but also to teach them bike safety skills. We are thankful to all those involved in this grant opportunity."

The NC Department of Transportation's Safe Routes to School Program and the NC Division of Public Health developed the Let's Go NC! Program, with funding help from the Kate B. Reynolds Charitable Trust.

Salem Elementary School students are the first to experience the bicycle program. They are learning the importance of wearing a helmet, using hand signals on the road, riding with traffic, obeying traffic signs and signals and not riding double.



**A second chance at breakfast**

Burke County high school students who miss breakfast now have a second chance to eat the most important meal of the day. The American Association of School Administrators has awarded Burke County Public Schools the Second Chance Breakfast grant. Child nutrition personnel will take food carts to areas where high school students are changing classes between first and second period. Freedom, East Burke and Patton high schools' free and reduced meal percentages qualify the three schools for the grant, and while Draughn High School did not qualify, they will still participate.

Burke County Public Schools Superintendent Larry Putnam said, "The meals will be quick, grab and go items, allowing students who missed breakfast, weren't hungry before school or hit the snooze button one too many times to eat before second period. Studies show students who eat a healthy breakfast concentrate better and perform better in school, which makes them better students overall."



BOE receives Silver Bell Award

The Burke County Board of Education is the recipient of the Silver Bell Award from the North Carolina School Boards Association. The board received the award during the September Region 7 district meeting in Alleghany County. The Silver Bell Award recognizes those boards where every member has actively worked towards meeting 12 hours of training in a fiscal year. Burke County Public Schools Superintendent Larry Putnam said, "Congratulations to our Board of Education members on this award. Thank you for all you do for our students and our school system and for accomplishing this feat. These training hours our board members put in show they practice life-long learning, too."



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



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# Avery County FFA

## 9 Avery FFA members receive American FFA Degree

By Gwen Clark  
Avery County

On Saturday, October 22, 2016, 9 Avery County FFA Member received their American FFA Degree at the 89th National FFA Convention & Expo in Indianapolis, Indiana. The Avery County FFA Chapter has the most American FFA Degree recipients from the State of North Carolina.

Lucas Oil Stadium was the setting for the American FFA Degree Ceremony.

3,780 National FFA members received the American FFA Degree. The American FFA Degree is the highest honor awarded to FFA members who have demonstrated the highest level of commitment to FFA and made significant accomplishments in their SAE (supervised agricultural experience).

The American FFA Degree is awarded at each year to less than 1% of FFA members making it one of the organization's highest honors. This is one 1 FFA member per 166 of the 629,367 membership advanced to earn the American FFA Degree.

In addition to their degree, recipients receive a gold American FFA Degree key. The American FFA Degree key is symbolic of the highest achievement of the National FFA Organization.

Most FFA members work 5 to 7 years to earn the American FFA Degree. FFA members can remain active until they are 21 years old.

Avery County FFA member receiving their American FFA Degree for 2016 are Graham Avery, Sawyer Avery, John Clark, Austin Daniels, Mckenzie Ledford, Paige Johnson, Katie Masters, Jodi Poore, and Jeremiah Vance.

Graham and Sawyer Avery are the sons of Dawn and Waightstill Avery. Graham and Sawyer both attend Appalachian State University and are majoring in Engineering. Sawyer is concentrating in a construction Management Degree. Graham is concentrating in Structural Sciences for his major. Each worked on their family farm and in the construction industry to meet the qualifications for the American FFA Degree. Both were also active FFA members and served as Avery County FFA Chapter Officers while in high school.

John Clark is the son of Buffy and Reed Clark. John served as a NCFFA Officer for the 2015-16 school year. He is a student at NC State University and is majoring in Agriculture Education including 2 concentration Minors. John worked on his family farm in Christmas trees/ Nursery Operations, and worked at a local Veterinarian to earn his American FFA Degree. John was a Northwest Region Officer and an Avery County FFA Chapter Officer in high school.

Austin Daniels is the son of Valerie and Bill Daniels. He received his Associates Degree in Welding from Mayland Community College in May 2016. He is presently employed at Greenleaf Services, Inc. and works in the Horticulture/Landscaping Services Industry.

Austin worked in the Christmas tree industry and Golf Course maintenance to earn his American FFA Degree. Austin was an active Avery County FFA member and served as an Avery County FFA Chapter Officer.

Mckenzie Ledford is the daughter of Randy and Beckye Ledford and Christy and Mike Coffey. She currently works Children's Castle Childcare facility and is a student at Haywood Community College majoring in Early Childhood Development and she is a student at Mayland Community College working towards her Horticulture Degree.

She worked on her family farm in Christmas trees, worked in greenhouse manage-



ment, and in the food service industry to earn her American FFA Degree. She was active in the Avery County FFA Chapter and served as the 2013-14 Avery FFA Chapter President.

Paige Johnson is the daughter of Cindy and Michael Johnson. She is a childcare worker and is pursuing her education in childcare and Psychology. Paige worked in food service, the school greenhouse, and the Agriculture Department biotech lab to earn her American FFA Degree. In addition, she has worked as a counselor at Teen Valley Ranch Camp for several years. During high school, she was active in FFA and served as a Chapter FFA Officer.

Katie Masters is the daughter of Beth and Jim Masters. Katie is a student at Lees-McRae College where she's majoring in Elementary Education and Special Education degree. She also is a cheerleader and is receiving a cheerleading scholarship. Katie worked in Nursery Operations, and raised Swine for her SAE to earn her American FFA Degree. Katie was an active FFA member in high school and served as a Chapter FFA Officer.

Jodi Poore is the daughter of Patty and David Poore. Jodi is a student at Western Carolina University and is majoring in Recreational Therapy.

Jodi worked with her Uncle on his Christmas tree farm and tree lot to earn her American Degree. She was an active FFA member in high school and served as a Chapter FFA Officer.

Jeremiah Vance is the son of Sharon and Jeff Vance. Jeremiah is a student at NC State University where he is majoring in Horticulture Science with a Landscape Design concentration. Jeremiah served as the 2014-15 Avery County FFA President and was an active member of Avery County FFA. Jeremiah was names the 2015 Avery County Youth in Agriculture and has worked in his family Christmas tree operation, Nursery Operations, and has a Landscape Construction business.

The nine 2016 American FFA Degree recipients from Avery County join 11 others from Avery County to earn this coveted Degree. To date, 20 Avery County FFA members have achieved the highest degree the National FFA allows to be individually earned by a FFA member.

The National FFA Convention is the largest of its kind with over 60,000 FFA members, advisors and guests from throughout the United States, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands, attending this, the 89th annual event.

The National FFA Organization is a national youth organization of 629,367 student members as part of 7,757 local FFA chapters in all 50 states, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. The FFA mission is to make a positive difference in the lives of students by developing their potential for premier leadership, personal growth and career success through agricultural education. The National FFA Organization operates under a federal charter granted by the 81st United States Congress and it is an integral part of public instruction in agriculture. The U.S. Department of Education provides leadership and helps set direction for FFA as a service to state and local agricultural education programs. For more, visit the National FFA Organization online at [www.ffa.org](http://www.ffa.org), on Facebook, Twitter and the official National FFA Organization blog.



Mrs. Gwen Clark is the Agricultural Education Teacher/FFA Advisor at Avery County High School. She is a graduate of NC State University (BS) and NC A & T State University (MA). She is a National Board Certified Teacher and has been teaching for 29 years. She and her husband, Dee Clark, have been married for 26 years and attend Crossnore Baptist Church.





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Thus saith the LORD that made thee, and formed thee from the womb, which will help thee; Fear not, O Jacob, my servant; and thou, Jesurun, whom I have chosen. Isaiah 44:2



# Avery County Schools

## Snow Schedules

By David Burleson  
Avery County

As you well know, our community is one of the most beautiful in the world; however, our unique location and winter weather provide many challenges. As we face the winter, we realize that there is no way to predict how the weather will impact our schools. When considering closings, delays or early dismissals, our goal is to make decisions that are best for students and staff.

When inclement weather approaches, school personnel remain in continuous contact with local law enforcement, the Department of Transportation, Avery Communication, and the Highway Patrol since these groups also monitor weather and road conditions. The decision to close or delay school is made by school officials between 5:00 and 5:30 a.m. Local media are notified of alternate schedules, school cancellation, early dismissal, delay and other pertinent information. If these media sources are not announcing information concerning Avery County Schools, then the schools operate on a normal schedule.

When the decision is made to have school on a two-hour delay or close schools, the Avery County Schools phone and email notification system will offer specific instructions for students and staff. This information will also be posted on our school system website, Facebook Page, and our weather call-in number, (828) 733-6006. Do not depend on local TV stations for two-hour delay information. Please remember that on two-hour delays, bus routes will begin as early as 7:30 a.m.

In the case of inclement or severe weather, homes enrolled in our phone and email notification system will be notified of any school day changes. (To enroll in this system or change your phone number, please contact your local school.) These calls are made at approximately 5:45 a.m. on mornings when the regular schedule is changed. Again, local radio and TV will be enlisted to announce information concerning delay, closing, or early dismissal, and announcements can also be found at [www.averyschools.net](http://www.averyschools.net).

## Early Dismissal

When school is dismissed early due to inclement conditions or other emergency situations, all ten-month employees are to remain at school until students are adequately cared for or until school is dismissed by the superintendent without the use of leave or dock in pay. Principals will closely monitor conditions at each school and make any other decisions based on what is safe for staff and students. All twelve-month employees are expected to remain for their regular working day unless dismissed by the superintendent. If twelve-month employees decide to leave early appropriate policy must be followed.

## Delay Start

When school is delayed due to inclement weather or other unforeseen circumstances, all ten-month employees are expected to arrive at school at their earliest, safest time. Under no circumstances should children have to remain outside on cold and/or snowy mornings. Twelve-month employees are expected to arrive at the normal appointed time or at the safest possible time.

If students are not attending school due to inclement weather, one of three options will be selected:

- 1) **Optional Teacher Workday.** Ten-month employees have the option to report to work, take a vacation day (annual leave), have a full day's deduction if they do not have annual leave, or make up the absence according to state and local personnel policy.
- 2) **Closed for Students and Staff.** Ten-month instructional staff will have a forced vacation day (annual leave) or full day's deduction. The student make-up days will be rescheduled and announced following school board approval. Instructional personnel may have the option to make up the day, with appropriate approval without



the use of leave or dock in pay. Twelve-month employees will report to work, take annual leave or receive a full day's deduction.

3) **Closed for Everyone.** If the school system is closed for all staff and students, all employees receive a forced vacation day (annual leave) or full day's deduction with the option to make up the day at an agreed upon time.

Option one is used for most days impacted by inclement weather, reserving options two and three for situations where the facilities are damaged or when it would be completely impractical to open the schools.

After a change in general statutes during the 2013 summer session, the Avery County Schools now have the option to add time to the end of the school day to make up time missed due to inclement weather. This year 20 minutes has been added to our school day. Our hope is that by utilizing this opportunity, we can avoid going to school on Saturday and taking all of our Spring Break.

The Williams YMCA plans to host Snow Camp for grades kindergarten through sixth on days' schools are closed due to inclement weather when it is an optional workday for staff. Snow Camp will begin on December 1, 2016. Additional information will be distributed to parents in our elementary and middle schools.

If you have specific questions, please direct those to your child's principal or to me. We ask for your patience, support and prayers as we make these very difficult decisions.

Never hesitate to let us know about your concerns or give suggestions.

David Burleson is Superintendent of the Avery County Schools



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### Using Your Handicap

By Lauren Ringwood  
Sent by Doug Suddruth  
Mitchell County



On Thursday, October 27, members of the Rotary Club of Spruce Pine heard a moving presentation from Lauren Ringwood about her dyslexia and the help she received at Camp Spring Creek. She was introduced by Rotarian Reid Duncan and accompanied by her mother, Jessica Ringwood. In Lauren's own words:

Hello Members of Spruce Pine Rotary Club, my name is Lauren. I am nine years old. I am in the 4th grade at Gouge Elementary. And I am Dyslexic.

You all have probably heard of dyslexia and may even know a little about it. But what you don't know is, it is actually a GIFT!

Yes... I might struggle with reading, writing, and spelling, BUT you best believe I will be the leader in problem solving, athletics, and spatial awareness...just ask my Uncle Reid, he says I'm the best golf cart driver around!



Lauren Ringwood

After all, I belong to an elite "club" that includes people like Albert Einstein, Thomas Edison, Henry Ford, and my personal favorite, Channing Tatum.

This past summer I was given the opportunity, through scholarship, to attend Camp Spring Creek in Bakersville. I got to meet campers and counselors from all over the world.

Camp Spring Creek was founded in 2003 by Susie and Steve van der Vorst and is one of three residential summer camps in the US for children with dyslexia.

I spent lots of time with my tutor, Betsy. The tutors at Camp Spring Creek are all trained in Orton-Gillingham, which, my mom says, is a multi-sensory approach to learning. All I know is reading, writing and spelling are easier now.

Besides learning, I got to do some pretty cool stuff... I got to build a table in wood shop, design my own t-shirt the Art Barn, go on creek hikes...where I discovered how badly stinging nettles really do sting, and eat some of the best food you have ever tasted!

I am thankful for them because Camp Spring Creek has given me the confidence to love learning again. Some people see dyslexia and its limitations, but my teachers, my mom and the rest of my family constantly encourage me to put all those "limitations" to the test.

Thank you for letting me speak to you today. If you would like more information on dyslexia or Camp Spring Creek you can check out their website [campspringcreek.org](http://campspringcreek.org)

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



*But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea. Matthew 18:6*



# Mitchell Yancey Substance Abuse Task Force

## Drug Prevention Program-Red Ribbon Week

Nancy Lindeman  
Mitchell and Yancey County

"On November 26, I had the opportunity to attend a Drug Prevention program at Bowman Middle School. As a former educator, I have seldom seen someone who can hold the attention of an auditorium full of 5th through 8th graders. The program was put on by Mitchell Yancey Substance Abuse Task Force. The speaker was Ty Sells from the Youth to Youth International Group. In 2 sentences Ty had that audience in the palm of his hand. His focus was on teens being different and they don't have to be like everybody else." This program was in response to Red Ribbon Week! Barbara Harrell

**WHAT IS RED RIBBON WEEK?** It is an ideal way for people and communities to unite and take a visible stand against drugs. In 1985, angered by the murder of DEA Agent Enrique Camarena, parents and youth in communities across the country began wearing red ribbons as a symbol of their commitment to raising awareness of the destruction caused by drugs in the United States. In 1988, the National Family Partnership sponsored the first official National Red Ribbon Celebration. Today, the Red Ribbon Campaign serves as a catalyst to mobilize communities to educate youth and encourage participation in drug prevention activities.

Ty Sells, a nationally acclaimed speaker from Youth to Youth International with more than 20 years of substance use prevention experience, will challenge local youth to make positive choices regarding alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs. Mr. Sells' message, "The Power of Acceptance," focuses on the positive side of being drug-free as opposed to the negative consequences of choosing to use. It also challenges students to examine the way they treat others who are "different" from them. The Mitchell Yancey Substance Abuse Task Force (a program of Graham Children's Health Services) is pleased to partner with Vaya Health (previously known as Smoky Mountain MCO) and the Toe River Health District to bring Mr. Sells to our community.

The Task Force will be having a planning meeting at the Burnsville Library on November 8, 2016 at Noon.

Anyone can come out and get involved.



Nancy Lindeman introducing Ty Sells



Ty Sells



Students at Harris Middle School

Nancy Lindeman is the Coordinator for the Mitchell-Yancey Substance Abuse Task Force.



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# Gabriels Creek Baptist Church

## Come and See the Greatest Story Ever Told Come Alive

By Sylvia Murphey  
Yancey County

On a Sunday morning during the early Fall of 2011, our pastor Rev. Gary Coates presented a Christmas idea he felt our church could do as a ministry to our community and involve most of our church members. He presented a diagram on poster board explaining the layout of a Christmas Drive-Through Pageant for our Gabriels Creek Missionary Baptist Church using our cemetery as a setting to drive around. It was with much hesitation, thought and discussion, that it was decided to undertake the drive-through rather than our usual church Christmas play. Mrs. Thelma Rice and Mrs. Betsy Greene who normally worked with our youth agreed to direct the pageant. Church members went into fast planning mode to get everything ready for the December 10 and 11, 2011 production entitled "The Life of Jesus from the Cradle to the Cross". Costumes were either made by a seamstress in our church, pulled from costumes used in previous church plays or were put together by individuals with odds and ends from their homes. The men of the church made the lean-to buildings from wooden slabs (among other items) and placed them around the cemetery. Mr. Frank Parks, Our Deacon Chair, arranged the lighting in front of each scene. A live donkey, sheep, and goats were loaned to the church by local residents for the two evening performances.

The attendance was good for the first productions in 2011 and we received many compliments by word of mouth, telephone and notes from the community. One person commented that it was "awesome" and some wanted

to see it a second and third time. It was such a blessing to the community and to those who participated in the production that it was decided to continue it as an annual event. It was the feeling of church members that if one person's life was touched, it would be worth it all. The pageant was given for the next four years—on December 15 and 28 in 2012, on December 7 and 8 in 2013 and on December 7 and 9, 2013. An estimated 70 to 75 vehicles (with at least two or more persons in each) went through during the two nights in 2011; Approximately 115 vehicles came through in 2012; and an estimated 145 vehicles toured the productions in 2013. During 2014, 227 vehicles with a total of 649 persons saw the pageant. Our attendance was off some for 2015 for whatever reasons but numbers don't

matter when it's the Lord's work. We had 494 people to see the pageant according to our Census Taker, Rev. Gary Coates.

Weather presented problems each year but all in all the productions have been very successful and we give God the glory for that! During the 2011 performance, temperatures dropped into the 20's, a sharp wind began blowing and it was a bit of a problem for the cast to keep warm on the first night. However everyone came prepared with double and triple layers of clothing and not one person became sick. The 2012 performances were scheduled for Saturday night and Sunday night, December 15 and 16. Saturday night performance went well but early Sunday afternoon it began snowing and we were forced to cancel for that night and reschedule on December 28. In the meantime, several of our cast caught the flu but the Lord provided and we had just enough cast members to continue the production the second night. The 2013 performances went well until about the last hour of the Sunday performance when it began to rain. We knew the weather forecast was calling for rain so we were prepared with better roofing on the buildings and had ponchos ready for those working outside the buildings. The same weather pattern took place during the 2014 performances. The Lord blessed us with better weather for 2015—no rain, snow, or low temperatures. We're praying he will bless us this year with the same weather.

Scenes have been added each year and improvements made. Due to added scenes in 2012 the name of the pageant was changed to "The Life of Christ from the Annunciation to the Ascension". With added scenes and cast, more costumes were needed and 100+ yards of material was purchased. The ladies of the church gathered in the fellowship hall and cut out the costumes and our seamstress,



Thelma Rice, completed them. Lighting was improved and professionally printed scripture signs were added. In 2013, a radio station GCBC FM at 103.3 was added so guests could listen to Christmas music by our church choir as they drove through the pageant. Two scenes were added for the 2014 performances—The Census Taker and Jesus Bearing His Cross. For 2015 lighted Christmas trees were added in the church yard to the left of the drive where vehicles completed the tour of the pageant.

The Lord has been good to our church and we praise His Holy Name! Members of Gabriels Creek Baptist Church would like to share the 2016 pageant with you and hope that it will make a difference in your life. We invite you to attend our sixth annual pageant entitled "The Life of Christ from the Annunciation to the Ascension" which will be presented on Saturday, December 3 and Sunday, December 4, 2016 (rain or shine) from 6:00 to 8:00 pm each night. Come and see the angel visiting Mary, see where our Savior's birth took place, tour Bethlehem Village as it may have been in Jesus' day and then on to see further scenes from the life and ministry of Jesus with the finale being His ascension into heaven.

Admission is free and no reservations are required. You will remain in the comfort of your vehicle for the entire performance. Our church is located just 4 miles from I-26. Take Mars Hill exit 11, turn left on Hwy 213 and travel 2 miles through the Mars Hill University campus and turn left on Gabriels Creek Road, travel 2 more miles and turn left on Gabriels Creek Church Road, the church is straight ahead. Invite your friends and family to join you. Our pastor and church family welcome everyone!

For further information or questions, please check the Gabriels Creek Baptist Church Facebook page, email [smurphey@mh.edu](mailto:smurphey@mh.edu), or call 828-682-6755/828-206-6755. Photographs courtesy of Denise Griffin



Sylvia Murphey is a member of Gabriels Creek Baptist Church works in the pageant as well as does the pageant publicity. She retired from Mars Hill University in 2012 with 45 years of service as an administrative assistant. Sylvia lives in Bald Creek Community of Yancey County. She is deeply involved with the missions outreach of her church and is a volunteer for both MemoryCare (a nonprofit physicians office in Asheville caring for patients/families affected by dementia) and the Mountain Area Pregnancy Services in Mars Hill. For questions or further information, please contact Sylvia Murphey at [smurphey@mh.edu](mailto:smurphey@mh.edu) or call 828-682-6755 (home) or 828-206-6755 (cell)

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