Plowing for Christ!

1 Corinthians 9:10 (KJV)

Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.

Jesus gave us our commission for serving him and our time is getting shorter and shorter to get his work done. The fields are ripe for plowing right now! No matter where we are God planted us there and He expects a harvest. The first step is to plow the ground and get it ready to plant the seeds. Big groups — small groups — one on one, all need the Lord and He will show us the best way. Our fields are here in the USA, Ecuador, Dominican Republic, India, Africa or anywhere in God’s world. Come all ye saints and help us plow the ground for an abundant harvest before it is too late.

Is your day interrupted with a frequent need to use the restroom?

Bladder control issues are not a normal part of aging. Our specialists are here to help with treatment options to fit your needs.

Call today for an appointment.

(828) 670-5665 wcsc.com
Half of all women have fibroids by age 50.

Symptoms can include heavy or prolonged periods, frequent urination and pelvic pressure. Our specialists are here to help with treatment options to fit your needs.

To talk about your symptoms and treatment options, schedule an appointment with Dr. Megan Daw at Western Carolina Women's Specialty Center.

Call today for an appointment.
(828) 670-5665 | wcwsc.com
Altapass Baptist Church  
3631 Altapass Hwy  
Spruce Pine, NC 28777  
828-765-0660  
atlapassbaptistchurchnc.com  
www.altapassbaptistchurch.org

Dr. Marcus R. Benfield  
Sunday School - 10:30am  
Worship - 11:00am  
Sunday Evening - 7:00pm  
Sunday Youth Program - 7:00pm  
1st & 3rd Sunday  
(Conductors for Christ ages 8-11)  
2nd & 4th Sunday  
(Town 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) 766-9101  
pinebranchbaptist.net

Reverend Bobby Joe Greene  
Sunday School - 9:45-10:45am  
Worship Service - 10:45am  
Sunday Evening - 6:30pm

A Bible-believing Fellowship  
Loving God and Loving One Another

The Bridge Church of WNC  
207 Pinebrook Avenue  
Spruce Pine, NC 28777  
TECWN.org  
Pastors - Tom & Tammy Anglin

Sunday Service - 10:00AM  
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 Name of God transform our community, state, nation and world! (Acts 1:8)

Berry Chapel Baptist Church  
280 Chapel St  
Spruce Pine, NC 28777  
828-765-6999  
www.berrychapelbaptist.com

Pastor - Steve Williams  
Sunday Service 9:45AM  
Worship Service 11:00AM  
Sunday Evening Care Meal  
Ministry - 5:30PM  
Wednesday Evening  
Service 7:00PM

Where Everybody Is Somebody  
And Jesus Christ Is Lord!

Spruce Pine United Methodist Church  
1190 Hwy 226 South  
Spruce Pine, NC 28777  
spumc@bellsouth.net  
828-765-7446

Pastor Rev. Jeremy Troyler  
Sunday School - 10:00am  
Sunday Worship - 11:00am  
Church Wednesday - 7:00pm

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

First Advent Christian Church  
211 Lenox Road  
Morganton, NC 28655  
828-437-6226  
www.firstadventnc.org

Pastor Patrick Bradshaw  
Associate Pastor Javier Guzman  
pbradshaw@firstadventnc.org

Sunday School 10:00 AM  
Sunday Worship 11:00 AM  
Wed: Youth Meal 5:30PM - Meeting 6:30PM  
Adult Bible Study / Prayer 6:00PM  
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  
828-594-8212

Pastor Rick Merck  
Sabbath (Saturday)  
Bible Study - 9:00 am  
Sabbath Worship - 10:00 am  
Vegetarian Buffet after church  
Wednesday  
Praise, Prayer & Proclaim - 7:00 pm  
www.morganton7sda.org

Pleasant Grove Church of the Brethren  
1717 Harrell Hill Road  
Bakersville, NC  
(828) 458-1947

Pastor: John Smith  
Sunday School - 1:00 pm  
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 28655  
828-437-1212

Pastors: Senior Pastor  
Timothy Fortune &  
Associate Pastor Mike Stroud  
Sunday Worship 10:30 AM  
Wednesday 6:30PM

Horizon Church.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.grassycreekbcb.org

Sunday School 10:00am  
Morning Worship 11:00am  
Sunday evening 8:30pm  
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) 863-8640

Rerverend Dan Brubaker  
Sunday School - 10:00 am  
Contemporary Service - 9:45 am  
Traditional Worship Service - 11:00 am  
AA Open Step Meeting - Mon, 7 pm  
AA Closed Big Book Meeting - Wed, 7 pm  
UMW & UMM Meeting - 2nd Sun, 12:00 am  
English Classes - Tues, Thurs, Fri

Roan Mountain Missionary Baptist Church  
37 Sandy Branch Road  
P.O. Box 666  
Bakersville, NC 28715

Pastor: Dr. C. Timothy Fowler  
Sunday School - 10:00  
Worship Service - 11:00 am  
Wednesday Evening Service - 6:30 pm  
Wednesday Bible Study - 7:30

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

---

McDowell Cooperative Extension Center

By Adam Lawing  
McDowell County

At the McDowell County Cattlemen’s Association Annual Meeting that was held at Glenwood United Methodist Church January 20th, two awards were given and a new Board of Directors was installed.

The two awards were for Cattlemen of the Year that goes to a producer, and a Service Award given to someone who has excelled in their commitment to the people and communities of McDowell County as well as their service to the McDowell County Cattlemen’s Association. Recently the McDowell County 4-H Livestock Judging team traveled to NC State University to compete at the judging in January Contest. McDowell County 4-H took 10 kids to compete in this competition. The kids had hard work and determined paid off with all of the awards they won.

---

The senior team was Hannah Ellis, Alyson Biddix, Colton Cox and Shelby Murray. John Eric Ellis competed as an individual.

The junior team was Molly Anderson, Jay English, Abigail Williams and Mattie Duckworth. Kylie Bidal competed as an individual.

The nominated Board of Directors are listed from left to right: John Knight, Dustin Laws, Boyce Pool, David Parker, Steve Cable, Charles Harris, and Robert Wilson.

---

www.brcnewsmagazine.com  
March 2017 - Blue Ridge Christian News page 4
Church Directory

Plumtree Presbyterian Church
4227 Hwy 51E
Plumtree, NC 28664
828-765-6919
www.plumtreepres.church
Pastor Ryan Bridgeo
pastor@plumtreepres.church

Bear Creek Baptist Church
227 Bear Creek Road
Bakersville, NC 28705
www.bearcreekbaptist.com
Reverend Bruce Cannon
Sunday School 9:45 AM
Worship Service 10:45 AM
Discipleship 6:45 PM
Evening Worship 6:45 PM
Wednesday Worship 7:30 PM
“For God so loved the world, he gave his only Son...”

West Burnsville Baptist Church SB
222 West Burnsville Church Rd.
Burnsville, NC 28714
(828) 892-3980

Sunday School: 9:45 a.m.
Worship Service: 10:50 a.m.
Evening Service: 8:00 p.m.
Wednesday Service: 6:30 p.m.
Church vision: “To become passionate followers and ambassadors 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
326-437-2357
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
595 Summit Street
Spruce Pine, NC 28777
Phone (828) 765-2224

Sunday Mass 9:00 am; Wednesday Faith Formation 6:00 pm
Food Pantry Wed. 1:00-4:00 pm

First Baptist Church of Spruce Pine
125 Tappan Street
Spruce Pine, NC 28777
(828-765-3411)
www.sprucepinefirst.com
Dr. Rocky Branch
Senior Pastor
Sunday School: 9:45 am
Sunday Worship: 10:00 am
Sunday Evening: 6:00 pm
Wednesday Evening: 6:30 pm

Burnsville Seventh-day Adventist Church
283 Creek View Road
Burnsville, NC
828-692-7476
Pastor Ed Couser
Sabbath (Saturday)
Potluck Lunch every Sabbath after the sermon for everyone
Bible Study - 9:00 AM
Sabbath Worship - 11:00 AM
Tuesday Upper Room
Fellowship (Prayer Meeting) Wed. 9:00 pm

Faith Fellowship Church
Chapel Rd.
Morganton, NC 28655
(813) 675-3484
www.fcnc.org
www.tcradio.org
Pastor David Gillepsie
Sunday School - 10:00 am
Worship Service - 11:00 am
Wednesday Bible Study - 7:00 pm
“Steps of a good man are ordained by the Lord.
And she delighteth in his way.”
Psalm 37:23

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.

McDowell Cooperative Extension Center

Plumtree Presbyterian Church

Charles Harris, Coy Fender and John Knight Len received the Cattlemen’s Service Award.

The Service Award was given to Justin and Megan Jemison with Foothills Mobile Veterinary Services.

wrnnews.com
March 2017 - Blue Ridge Christian News page 5

Special Meetings with Doug Johnson

By Ryan Bridgeo
Ashe County

You are invited to Plumtree Presbyterian Church for special meetings with Doug Johnson on Saturday March 11th, 7 PM and again on Sunday, March 12th at 11:00 AM and 6:30 PM. Sunday night service will be a healing service. We believe these are going to be powerful meetings that you won’t want to miss. Doug Johnson was radically saved from drugs and alcohol in his early twenties; coming out of the hippie movement he became a passionate disciple of Jesus. After his conversion, he was filled with a fiery Baptism in the Holy Spirit. In his early years, Doug ministered as an evangelist in local jail/street ministries and also as a worship leader in the local church. At the Tokyo Blessing, he experienced a glorious baptism of the Father’s love through the ministry of John Aniso. Doug has since traveled the nations, having the privilege to minister and preach on teams with his heroes of the faith, Randy Clark, Surprise Sithole, Hei Letland, Hei Baker and other apostolic leaders. After ministering the Gospel through the ministry of deliverance and healing in the nations, Doug’s heart is now focused on equipping spiritual sons and daughters in the local church to manifest those same Kingdom realities in the Power of the Spirit through the Father’s love. Doug is also involved in a regional ministry called the Alliance Alliance, encouraging and equipping leaders of precious like unto to establish “Kingdom Outposts” to experience the genuine reality of His Kingdom coming to earth. Doug now resides in Manchester MD and is married to his best friend Betsy for 43 years, he has three wonderful children and four perfect grandchildren.

“More of You in me, so I can be more for You!”

Ryan Bridgeo can be reached at 828-765-6915. For more information you can visit the church website at www.plumtreepres.church or email pastor@plumtree-church.com
Avery Pregnancy and Resource Center

Using Our Resources

By Bob Brown
Avery County

In an effort to share the resources that God has given to us, we are opening our doors to all of Avery County. Our main mission for APRC will remain true to the mission upon which we were founded, providing resources and prenatal classes for new mothers and mothers-to-be. APRC will still reserve Wednesdays and Thursdays for this important ministry.

However, our facility is not being used to its full potential. It is not used on Monday, Tuesday, or Friday. We desire to expand our ministry to all of Avery County, to all men and women of all ages. We are now forming classes in Finance, Technology, Cooking, and Sewing. These classes are being offered FREE to all who wish to participate. Our, our bank in Newland, will graciously provide all the materials and a Financial Expert to teach the class. In addition, a class on the use of iPhones and Androids will also be taught. Our first class, will meet next week. There is still time for you to attend. No registration is needed. If you are interested in joining us, please call Bob Brown at 828-467-9812 any day.

Last Thursday, six ladies from different churches met at APRC to make curry aprons for kitchen personnel at an Evangelistic Sports Camp in Africa. The camp minister's 250 young people at a time during a three-four day period, providing for both their physical and spiritual needs. Over 2,000 young people accepted Jesus Christ as their Savior last year at the camp. Two guest speakers from the Sports Camp will be with us at the Family Life Center at Oak Grove Baptist Church at 8 P.M. on Tuesday, March 21st for a Ladies Night of Enrichment. We do have a need that I must share with you. We still need two volunteers to teach our cooking and sewing class. Classes will be small, two to three people at a time. Please call for Bob Brown at 828-467-9812 for information.

Bob Brown is the Executive Director of the Avery Pregnancy & Resource Center

Orthopedic Rehab Program
We accept Medicare / Medicaid / Managed Care Ins.
VA Contract
Respiratory Therapy In-House
Speech Therapy
Physical Therapy In-House
Occupational Therapy In-House
Licensed Nursing Staff 24-Hour / 7 Days a Week
Beautiful Flower Gardens and Waterfall
Call us for Reservation Program

Brian Center
Health & Rehabilitation / Spruce Pine

NOW
Official 5 Star Medicare Facility

218 Laurel Creek Court, Spruce Pine, NC
Located off 19E, Next to Brad Reagan Park
Phone: (828) 765-7312
Fax: (828) 765-7295

Call to Schedule a Tour or Stop By Today!

March 2017 - Blue Ridge Christian News page 6
On Mission

Rwanda Newsletter
By Rev. George Patton Jr.
Burke County and the World

As the sun begins to rise early on Mahama Camp in the eastern part of the country of Rwanda the day begins. Children come running out of their homes as announcements are made over the loud speakers encouraging them not to be late for school. Water stations begin to fill up with people going after water and smoke begins to rise in the sky from the communal kitchens placed throughout the camp. This is how the day begins in one of the largest refugee camps in the world. This is Mahama Camp. This camp was opened in April 2015 and now holds over 50,000 displaced refugees mostly from Burundi. These people have come by the thousands escaping the violence that erupted in Burundi after the last presidential elections. According to Burundi law a president can only hold 2 five year terms. In the last election, the current president Pierre Nkurunziza refused to step down after serving his 2 five year terms. This caused a great political upset in the country. Many of the refugees here are young people in their early 20’s. So many of them have lost parents, friends, brothers and sister and escaped with what little they had on their back. Last year I had the privilege of meeting about 30 of these young people when I held a conference in the capital city of Kigali, Rwanda. This year I told them I would come to them. It takes a lot of effort to get into an international refugee camp. We had to get special permission from the government of Rwanda. They did a thorough background check on us to make sure that we were not spies coming in to find out who is in the camp and who is not. I am told that many times governments will send spies into these camps. My heart was so saddened once we received our clearance we drove 270 kilometers east of the capital of Kigali. We checked into our hotel and went to meet our friends outside the camp. They had given us 2 days in the camp, one evening and one day. We had such a great schedule planned. We met outside the camp at a restaurant. Once we finalized the plans we were escorted in. In these camps, someone is assigned to you to keep watch over you. Praise the Lord the lady assigned to us was a Christian. We drove through the security gate, had our ID’s checked and proceeded on. One of the relief agencies had loaned them a tent for us to conduct our services. As soon as we arrived I found the young people already singing and praising God. Tears filled my eyes as I saw many of them again. They had all dressed special for the event. They sang so many songs for us. All I could do was weep. I really thought I would never see many of these young people again. Now here we were, on top of a mountain, with the breeze blowing in a revival tent with a youth choir made up of Burundian refugees. Brother Todd gave us an account of how God had delivered him from the bondage of drugs and alcohol and how he was now teaching and preaching the Word of God around the world. It really spoke to the young people. When he had finished, I preached the message. At the end of the message I gave the invitation for whoever to come and commit your lives to Jesus. Nineteen people came to give their life to Christ. It was such a powerful service. Many others wanted to commit to serve Christ in ministry. After the

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

Bridge42 Church Drug Epidemic
By Jason Koon Burke County

On September 2nd, 2016 The Morganton News Herald reported that drug overdoses have now surpassed automobile accidents as the leading cause of accidental death in Burke County. As I began to look deeper into this, however, it struck me that this statistic is by no means unique to Burke County or even Western North Carolina. In fact, as surprising as it sounds, this is becoming quite common in many areas around the country. I knew we had a drug problem in America and I knew that it has grown especially acute in many small towns and rural areas like Western North Carolina, but I was not prepared to realize how severe this problem had become.

Western North Carolina towns are some of the last places you’d think this would happen. Our communities are very religious, many of us are the Grandchildren and Great-Grandchildren of some of the strongest and hardest working people to ever walk the earth. Even today, there are 66 Southern Baptist Churches in Burke County (that just happens to be the denomination I’m affiliated with), and literally thousands more Churches scattered all around these mountains. Yet, drug overdoses are the leading cause of accidental death in many of these places.

I have become increasingly aware of a divide in our region and to some extent across the nation. There is an ever-deepening gulf between “Church People” and who I can only describe as “Non-Church” people. I hear it in my personal conversations all the time, “I don’t think I’d fit in, Church really isn’t for me.” These are not necessarily people who don’t believe in God, many of them are people who just don’t see themselves fitting in to what many of us have defined as “Church.” Honestly, it shouldn’t be that much of a surprise; how many “Church People” reading this article have even one close relationship with someone outside the Community of Faith? I’m not talking about a cousin who only shows up a few Sundays a year or a neighbor who is in a different denomination; I’m talking different world-view, different socio-economic status, different side of town, maybe even different race.

I think these issues are related. I believe the message of the Church, the message of the Gospel and of Jesus is the one thing that can change individual people and the only way societies can truly see transformation and it’s beginning to look like this message is increasingly becoming the intellectual property of certain groups. I believe that in America, our Government is one that is designed to work for everyone, but it seems that sometimes Governments are more concerned with the wants of some over the needs of all. I say this not to point fingers. This is a friendly reminder and not just one for you who may be reading, but for myself as well. As a Believer, I don’t exist for my wants and desires anymore. I exist to sacrifice myself in love; I exist to walk in the light of truth and help others learn to do the same. I say this as a reminder to our local governments: you have a responsibility to lead all of our citizens well, and I say this to those who feel like they’re on the other side. You do belong, your vote does count, and honestly one reason society and Churches are in the shape we’re in is that too many of you have checked out. So, if anyone looks at you like you don’t belong in their Church, just sit back, smile, and know that you do.
Learning to Plow
Doug Harrell

When I turned 12 years old Dad came to me and said, "Doug, you are big enough to learn to plow the fields with Jack and Jim." Jack and Jim were our mules that we used to do the farming which included plowing, diskng, mowing, raking, cultivating and hauling. We had what is called a hillside plow, that is one that the actual plow part of the plow will swing from side to side. When you reach the end of the row you moved the plow to the other side so it would always throw the dirt the same way. Perhaps many of you old timers like me will remember this. It took a little training to get the swing down correctly and turn the plow, latch the blade and start back down the row. Learning to get that first row straight was a key element in the whole process.

From a pride standpoint, you wanted to be able to brag about how straight your plowing was. The way you did this was to pick out a point at the other end of the field and keep your eye on that point making sure the ames kept going straight to that point.

Philippians 3:14 "Press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. This pressing toward the prize is keeping our focus on plowing the fields for Christ. Also when I was 12 years old I gave my life to the Lord at a little church on the hill above our house, Pleasant Grove Church of the Brethren. I would like to be able to say that from that day on I always worked at plowing the fields for our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, but that would be a definite stretch. There were certainly times that I fell far short of this commission and I give thanks to God each and every day for his saving grace. I can say that even when I did things that were not to God's liking, I was aware of it and knew in my heart that I was doing wrong.

Today, I feel that God has given our country another chance to turn back to his teachings, just this morning, I read that our current administration had reversed the federal mandate that bathrooms in schools must be transgender friendly! Praise the Lord! Hopefully the states will follow through on this as well. We do not need our wives, daughters and granddaughters having to go to bathrooms and showers with some male who thinks he feels like a female today or vice versa.

We will have a window of opportunity here, but the battle will be fierce and the forces of evil will be loud and in our face. We must continue to keep our eye on the goal, continue to stand firm but not with malice. With love for our fellowman and a renewed determination to follow the teachings of our Lord and Savior. All the while we must continue to pray for those that so desperately use us and continue to pray for guidance from above for ourselves, our leaders and most of all our pastors. The teacher is held to a higher standard in God's eyes and we need to be aware of this daily. Continue to pray for a great revival in our nation. God bless all of you.

Still Flowing Farmer Doug

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.

Freedom Life Enterprises:
- Marion Fabric & Upholstery
- Freedom Auto Detailing
- Freedom Landscaping - Commercial & Residential
- Cozy Cabin - Coffee, Gifts, Furnishings

78 West Marion Business Park
Marion, NC 28752 • 828-559-2700

www.brcnews.com

Jesus separates Christianity from other religions
Q. I’ve been studying the major religions of the world, but I’m puzzled about Christianity. What makes it different from the other religions? It seems different to me, but I can’t figure out why. — C.D.

A. The difference between the religions you’ve been studying and Christianity can be summarized in two words: Jesus Christ. He is the center and foundation of the Christian faith, and He also is the reason why Christianity is different from all the other religions that people follow.

Let me explain it this way. All the religions you’ve been studying have one thing in common: they all are searching for God (even if they don’t call Him God, or they think there may be many gods and goddesses). They do this in a multitude of ways — but they’re all trying to find God and gain His favor by their sacrifices and good deeds.

But Christianity is different. Instead of us searching for God — God is searching for us! Instead of us reaching up to God — God is reaching down to us! This is why Jesus is so important, because He came down from Heaven to do for us what we could never do for ourselves: bring us to God. God is perfect and holy, and we are separated from Him by our sins. No matter how hard we try, we cannot erase the stain of sin by ourselves. But by His death and resurrection Christ did this for us.

I sense that down inside you are searching for God. But God is also searching for you! By faith turn to Jesus Christ and receive Him into your life today. God’s promise is for you: “Let all who are under the law be under the law for the sake of the faith.” (Romans 7:4).

Habring bad thoughts: is always harmful
Q. I know we’re not supposed to have bad thoughts about others, but to be honest, what difference does it make? As long as I keep my thoughts to myself, they don’t really hurt anyone, do they? — Mrs. T.P.

A. Yes, harboring bad thoughts about other people always hurts someone — it hurts you. The reason is because they aren’t just innocent thoughts. Behind them are other emotions, such as anger, jealousy, envy, or pride — any one of which will harm you.

The Bible repeatedly warns us about the danger of evil or prideful thoughts — and we should take its warnings very seriously. Even if we hide them from others, God knows what is going on in our minds, and He also knows the harm that comes because of them. The Bible says, "The Lord searches the heart and examines the mind" (Jeremiah 17:10).

Why are bad thoughts about others so harmful? One reason is because they not only poison our souls and distort our personalities, but they also cut us off from others. Instead of loving them and seeking to help them, we turn our backs on them — which is wrong. The Bible says, "This is the message you heard from the beginning: We should love one another" (1 John 3:11).

Commit your life — including your mind — to Jesus Christ. Remember: you may have bad thoughts about others — but He has no bad thoughts about you! He loves you with an everlasting love — a love so great that He was willing to give His life for your salvation. Open your heart and life to Him today. Then ask Him to cleanse your mind and heart of evil thoughts, and to help you love others the same way He loves you. And if bad thoughts arise, crowd them out with prayer.

March 2017 - Blue Ridge Christian News page 9
“Seeds Sown During Grief”  
By Jacob Willis  
Yancey County Hospice

“Blessed are those who mourn for they shall be comforted. Matthew 5:4” Can grief be a blessing? It is one of the most paradoxical statements in all of the Bible, Jesus’ “Sermon on the Mount.” Crying out in pain, agony, and despair, we are blessed? I don’t like pain, Mommy or Daddy. If fact I try to avoid mourning at all costs. It means that something awful has happened. It means a marriage has ended, a loved one has died, a child is sick, or we are in the throes of illness. In essence we are there. If we are there to be happy. Happy are those who mourn? Happy are those who wail and cry out to God. When we cry out to God we can be assured that God hears us, that God is mourning us, and that God is in a supernatural way comforting us. When we weep tears we reap a harvest of spiritual growth and dependence.

The McKeen’s hit song, “God on the Mountain” goes like this, “Life is easy when you’re up on the mountain, but it’s down in the valley of trials and temptations, that’s when faith is really put to the test. Because God on the Mountain is still God in the valley.” Trials and temptations prove to us the all-powerful wonder of our heavenly Father. Some people have the mistaken belief that God is a God of the mountain top experience, but is not the God of the valley experience. Israel’s enemy found out the hard way in 1 Kings 20:28 “The man of God came up and told the king of Israel,” This is what the LORD says: “Because the Arameans think the LORD is a god of the hills and not a god of the valleys, I will deliver this vast army into your hands, and you will know that I am the LORD. God not only shows up in our time of deepest despair, but he shows out in our time of deepest despair. He gives us supernatural strength during the valley experiences. It is during our times of grief and despair that our heavenly Father shows up and fights for us. We can be blessed in the valley because we know God is fighting for us.

Sowing tears in the valley, reaps character on the mountain. In the valley we learn lessons about compassion, humility, and forgiveness. In the valley of trials and temptation God allows the pain to mold us into his likeness. This excerpt from the hymn “How Firm a Foundation” explains why God’s plan is with grief.

“When through fire, through tears your pathway shall lie, my grace all-sufficient shall be your supply; the flame shall not burn you, I only design your dross to consume and your gold to refine.”

“Tis the soul that on Jesus has leaned for repose, I will not, I will not desert to its foes; that soul, though all hell should endeavor to shake, I’ll ne’er, no, ne’er, no, never forsake!”

God has a plan for your grief, to use your troubles, trials, and tearaches to mold you into His image. Our transformation during these times is a blessing that we reap from suffering.

Finally, the greatest blessing we receive from grief is God’s grace. God is most real to us when we are in times of great suffering. God leads his dear children through suffering. Some through the fire, Some through the flood, But all through the blood. Some through great sorrow, But gives God a song. In the night season and all the day long.

Jacob Willis is an ordained pastor and Benevolence Coordinator for Yancey County Hospice. You may contact him at jacobw@hospitalsofyancey.org.

---

Marlene’s Meditations

123125123 Repetition and Analogy
By Marlene Fouk  
Burke County

It was a wildly spinning whirlwind of thunderous bears, rippling notes and a mesmerizing collision of sounds that somehow blended together, creating a memory of music that I will echo within me for a long time. Three hours later, although I promised only to attend the concert as a side trip to the weekend event that would carry us back to the mundane world and the lifeless parking garage.

Not a sheet of music, not an iPod full of notes and not a single, monotonous voice was present. How did the musicians perform so flawlessly and with such delightful abandon? The answer lies within the fibers of our muscles. It is called Muscle Memory. And it is a memory that has been firmly entrenched in the neurons, a memory that is so ingrained that it cannot be eradicated.

Muscle memory is the residue of muscular actions. According to the Oxford English Living Dictionary, it is defined as:

The ability to perform a habitual movement without conscious thought acquired as a result of frequent repetition of that movement.

The key is repetition. Those musicians hopped on that treadmill again and again until they could play, write and arrange their music with its unique style and not have to think about each note because their actions did not require conscious thought.

Typing, riding a bike, and playing a musical instrument also relies heaviy on muscle memory. But without repetition, muscle memory would just be flustered, powerless to perform, and lacking the bearers to be proficient. God has masterfully designed us to need and desire repetition because it brings us a great sense of fulfillment and purpose when we accomplish our goals. And repetition aids us abundantly in serving the Lord.

Muscle memory is the residue of muscular actions. According to the Oxford English Living Dictionary, it is defined as:

The ability to perform a habitual movement without conscious thought acquired as a result of frequent repetition of that movement.

The key is repetition. Those musicians hopped on that treadmill again and again until they could play, write and arrange their music with its unique style and not have to think about each note because their actions did not require conscious thought.

Typing, riding a bike, and playing a musical instrument also relies heavily on muscle memory. But without repetition, muscle memory would just be flustered, powerless to perform, and lacking the bearers to be proficient. God has masterfully designed us to need and desire repetition because it brings us a great sense of fulfillment and purpose when we accomplish our goals. And repetition aids us abundantly in serving the Lord.

To emphasize the importance of repetition, God has placed this pattern in the Bible. Repetition is like a beacon from a lighthouse, piercing the darkness of the lack of knowledge and pointing us to great truths found in the Scriptures.

In His diverse and designed Bible, God has many examples of repetition. One of the most famous is the repeating theme of the song of praise in the entire Bible. In seven specific stories filled with the tragedy of barren women, God strengthens the beans of light toward our souls as He reiterates barrenness again and again.

In his book, You Are What You Love, James K.A. Smith talks about the way our habitual actions and thoughts shape our formation without repetition. “A movement becomes practice, and there is no practice that isn’t repetitive. We willfully embrace repetition as a good in all kinds of other sectors of our life…to honed our swing, our piano prowess, and our mathematical abilities, for example. If the sovereign Lord has created us as creatures of habit, we can embrace repetition as redeeming.”

One major question, why, in a God-breathed book with over 781,000 words and intended to nurture and teach Christians for thousands of years, does God repeat Himself? But as we follow the beam of light in the stories of barren women, we discover a method that God uses to help us discover truth. The method is simply using analogies that link everything together.

There are many analogies, for example, a musical instrument the teacher can give the student an analogy. And even though the student may not know what to do with their instrument, they understand what is internal to spiritual growth?

One major question, why, in a God-breathed book with over 781,000 words and intended to nurture and teach Christians for thousands of years, does God repeat Himself? But as we follow the beam of light in the stories of barren women, we discover a method that God uses to help us discover truth. The method is simply using analogies that link everything together.

There are many analogies, for example, a musical instrument the teacher can give the student an analogy. And even though the student may not know what to do with their instrument, they understand what is internal to spiritual growth? headphones and lit matches.

With the word picture of barrenness, our minds capture the emotion and feeling of the physical limitation of women. Then He embeds that word picture in 2 Peter 3:8 when He tells us not to be deceived.

What a strong statement that evokes the sadness of barren women in the Bible. God has prepared us with these stories to finally accept the fact that we have been devasting tragedy of spiritual barrenness. Then, God births within us the power to produce spiritual fruit as we follow the instructions in the two verses above. And beca...
Praying and Peanut Butter and Jelly Sandwiches.

Preacher Chris Rathsone
Mitchell County

Growing up here in the mountains has allowed me to have some wonderful memories. To me, there will always be a special place in my heart for this place I’ve called home for 39 years. I’ve lived in Mitchell, Yancey, and Avery counties and unless I feel God is calling me somewhere else, I plan to stay. The people, the surroundings, the families and church families in this community are special to me. Many times I’ve had people say that was raised a generation too late. Some of the memories I have of childhood are memories that the older generation have. Pinto beans, cornbread, raising chickens, milk cows, hunting, fishing, family gatherings, church services, etc., are memories I will cherish.

Many memories close to my heart are those of my grandma. To me and the other grandchildren she was known as “Mammie.” As a fact of that matter, what’s most everyone who knew her called her. The folks at the Istrohe Church of God would often call her Sister Lucy, but most, once they got to know her, knew her as Mammie. My grandparents on that side of the family was known as Poppy, but he died before I was born. Talk about conviction.

Our family lived just below Mammie’s house. Most would say a “stone’s throw” away. Just a hop, skip, and a jump we could be on her porch. She depended on the family a lot. My uncle cut wood and locust posts and would often bring loads of firewood. Many times, I’ve helped gather firewood, loaded it in the wheelbarrow, and stacked it to the ceiling on the little porch on the side of her house. She never drove that I knew of, so she depended on family a lot to take her to the grocery store or the doctor. The church was just out the hill from her house, so while she was able, she always walked to church.

As a boy in school one thing I always remember is getting off the school bus and running as fast as I could down the driveway to Mammie’s house. I’d sling open the screen door on the porch and go into the kitchen. There on the table was a plate which made a scrunching noise when you leaned against it, it would always be a peanut butter and jelly sandwich and a cold glass of milk. Mammie knew that grape jelly was my favorite, so she always made her sandwiches out of Banna grape jelly and Peter Pan peanut butter. I would gobble down the sandwich and milk as if I hadn’t eaten all day. She always offered something else before I left to go home. All I needed was PB & J!

At the beginning of my 8th grade year in school, I fixed up one of the bedrooms so I could stay at Mammie’s house to help take care of her. I stayed until about a year after I graduated high school. No matter how late I was after school or ball practice, she always had a good supper waiting for me. Often it would be 8 p.m. Many nights I ate alone. She would wait and eat when I got there so we could eat together. One of my favorites was pickled beans, cornbread, and smothered meat with a fresh onion on the side. She drank buttermilk, but I could hardly handle that, so I just drank whole milk. She would pour salt on her plate and dip her onions in it. So did I… just because she did.

Mammie had a deep faith in the Lord. One thing that the family always knew was that she was praying for them. Often, I would sleep in the same room with her when she was sick. I slept on the big bed and she slept on the twin bed on the other side of the room. Every night she prayed and prayed for a long time. One by one, she would call out the names of her family. She would pray for those she knew and if she couldn’t remember their name she would simply say “Lord, you know who I’m thinking about.” She prayed for the sick, the lost, the church, the pastor, etc. I say there many times is that bed across the room from her and heard her call out my name.

When you know you are lost without Jesus and your precious grandma is there praying for you and knowing you are hearing her! She prayed for bill money, broken down appliances, firewood, or anything she needed. If she had prayed for me to die, I would have laid down and got ready. One thing that I knew when I arrived home at Mammie’s house was that if she was praying, she didn’t come to the door until she was finished. Many times, visitors would sit on the porch until she finished praying so they could visit her. I would simply tap on the bedroom window to let her know I was home. Sometimes it would be a few minutes, sometimes almost an hour before she opened the door. She left our family a great legacy of faith and trust in the Lord. Most of us didn’t realize how important this was until later in our lives.

Just a short time before Mammie passed away, I was able to tel her that Jesus had saved me. When I told her, she rose up in that hospital bed and shouted with her arms and hands waving praises to the Lord. She didn’t get to see all of her prayers answered while she was here. Many of them were answered after she went home to be with the Lord, but Delegate she knows. I would like to think that she knew and called me and two of my brothers to preach and possibly God has allowed her to listen in on a few of our sermons to see her prayers were answered. I am going to see her one day and, most importantly, I’m going to see Jesus who made it possible to do so. Though I really loved those peanut butter and jelly sandwiches, I realize now, it was the praying that would mean the most.

Prayvers 31:29 Favor is deceitful, and beauty is vain: but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised.

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

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

“Serving the Community”

Happy St. Patrick’s Day
We enjoy serving you!

www.brcnews.com
March 2017 - Blue Ridge Christian News page 11
**March Madness…**

By Mike Stroud
Burke County

What a crazy February. We had spring and summer like days. Is it possible to by-pass winter and get right into some warm weather? I see the March flowers blooming already. That is a good sign. I know as I write this, things could change and probably will. Here comes the boos, last snow storm. It’s ok with me. A little more snow cream to end the season. On the other hand, basketball rules the air waves. It’s that time of year when all the college hoopsters are in full swing. I think about the Duke Blue Devils, aka the Cameron Crazies. What an appropriate name for fans gone wild. When it comes to our sports teams, we are relentless in our prayers for them to make the buzzer beater. To beat the other team into submission. We tailgate, we high five, and we paint our bodies in team support. We think nothing about being caught up in March Madness. I wish I could say the same thing about those Crazy Christians. Do I show as much passion for the Lord and His work? Do I go beyond the call and give it all? Do I scream and yell to see the prevail of another lost soul come to the light? Sadly, we are not as passionate about the Lord as we are about our sports teams. People would call you a Jesus freak if you were to act like that. You would be frowned upon for showing that much emotion. Besides, you are supposed to be quiet and in order in church. It would be inopportune. Please, be quiet. Don’t raise your hands to the Creator of all Heavens and Earth. Don’t get emotional for being set free from the chains of darkness. Don’t shout for being delivered from drugs and alcohol. That would be out of place. Let me never be around religious people who never have emotion for the Lord. People who stop the movement of God in any capacity. I love being around people who are set free in Christ. Willing to give their life as a sacrifice for the Glory of God. That is something to get crazy about. They say a Jesus freak is someone who loves Jesus a little more than you. So, in this March Madness season, give a shout for Jesus and join the true madness that makes the devil crazy. Yes, I am a Jesus freak and go Tarheels….lol

Mike Stroud is a pastor at Horizon Church in Morganton, Music Director at www.AmazingGraceRadio.com, and owns Stroud Building Supply in Morganton.

**The Centurions Are Watching**

By Pastor Kurt Bomar
Avery County

Mark 15:39 And when the centurion, which stood over against him, saw that he so cried out, and gave up the ghost, he said, “Truly, this man was the Son of God.”

It was at the time of our Lord’s greatest suffering that impressed this loyal Roman Centurion. It is very possible and even likely that this Centurion was very familiar with Jesus’ ministry in Jerusalem had been very public for the last three years.

You don’t miraculously feed 5,000 without the word getting out. Likewise, you don’t keep the blind and lame and cure the leper without getting a name for yourself. He had even raised Lazarus from the dead just a few days earlier.

So, the Centurion had to have heard of some of this, but note this: some of Jesus miracles saved him. It was only Jesus’ cry of anguish that ailed the Centurion’s confession. In fact, we know of at least two confessions of faith at the cross (the repentant thief being the other) but we know of none at the feeding of the 5,000.

What’s the point? It’s that when we cry out to the Lord, “Why are you allowing me to go through this suffering? When will I get some relief?” He just might answer, “because the Centurions are watching and they can only be converted by seeing my light in your dark days.”

Seeing us trusting through life with prosperity and no difficulties will not change most people. Our testimonies about our natural blessings are actually more likely to illicit envy and cynicism from them. But when we are broken, everyone suddenly sits up and takes notice of how we react.

Precious Saints, if you are going through a time of suffering, it may be of great solace to you to know that in Heaven’s eyes, this may be your greatest hour and the Centurions are watching!

Kurt Bomar is pastor of Walnut Grove Church.

---

**Carolina Theological Seminary**

**AFFORDABLE THEOLOGY OR DIVINITY DEGREES**

**EARN YOUR DEGREE AT HOME, ON YOUR SCHEDULE**

**NO TIME LIMIT ON COMPLETION**

**EARN CERTIFICATE, ASSOCIATE, BACHELOR, MASTERS OR DOCTORATE**

Courses like:

- **REVIVAL** - with Ralph Sexton
- **PSALMS** - with Squire Parsons
- **PRAYER** - with Daniel Buchanan
- **THEOLOGY** - with Kent Sexton
- AND MANY MORE!

**Workbook and audio courses**

**GREAT FOR THE LAY PERSON UP TO THE SENIOR PASTOR**

King James Based

General info <info@carolinatheologicalseminary.org>

Apply for free today at www.carolinatheologicalseminary.org

Or call us at 843-742-1945

---

www.bromnews.com

March 2017 - Blue Ridge Christian News page 12
The Importance of the Home

Dr. Tom Walker
McDowell County

The home is a very significant part of a civil and orderly society. I believe our nation is in trouble mainly due to home life that has broken down and has become ineffective in contributing what it should to our society. The Bible says, “The foundation be destroyed what can the righteous do?” (Psalm 11:37). The home is a basic and essential foundation for our society. When the proper function of the home fails, it makes for a failing society.

When we see the importance of the home, then we will be working at making our homes what they ought to be before the Lord and before men. We owe that not only to Our Lord but also to the society in which we live.

Here are four ways the home is central to a society that would bring pleasure to Almighty God.

The Home—A Place of Love

As we look around in our society there is a definite lack of love. People today too often live for themselves, and have little regard for others. The essence of love is unselfishness and giving. The Bible says, “For God so loved the world that He gave his only begotten son...” (John 3:16). Notice from that verse the right kind of love is a giving love.

This is a story of a little girl learning to spell by imitating the sounds that animals make, spelling in this way “dog”, “cat”, and other simple words. Finally, the teacher asked her to spell “love.”

Quickly the little one ran to her teacher, threw her arms about her neck, kissed her and said, “We spell ‘love’ that way at our house.”

That is beautiful,” the teacher replied, “but do you know any other ways of spelling ‘love’?

“Yes,” said the little girl, and she began to put the books away and set the teacher’s desk in order. “I spell ‘love’ by helping everybody when they need me.”

A home built upon love is a home is sure to be a happy home.

I have been in the military, have graduated from three colleges and seminaries, but I have never seen love like I saw in my life as a child.

Children should be able to see love between mom and dad. They should not have to hear loud fussing, cursing and profanities, or physical violence. If they hear those undesirable things all the time, they will face difficulty in being what they ought to be in daily life. So many children have witnessed extreme conflict in word and deed from their parents. As a result, they become violent and abusive themselves.

Love is giving and not taking. If everyone in a family would seek to give what they could to develop the best home possible, they would be doing exactly right. I am talking about mother, dad, son or daughter—the entire home.

Beyond any doubt, the right kind of family relationships manifests love, patience, kindness, gentleness, thoughtfulness and a host of other things. The closer one gets to the Lord who is love, the easier it is to love others, in the family unit and outside of it.

The Home—A Place of Learning

The Apostle Paul said to young Timothy in 2 Timothy 1:5: “When I call to remember the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice, and I am persuaded that in thee also.”

Paul brings attention to the impact of the genuine faith of Timothy’s grandmother Lois and his mother Eunice. Before Timothy ever had faith in the Lord, it was first in his mother and his grandmother.

I am sure Timothy learned many things in the home while he was around Lois and Eunice but the greatest thing he learned was to put his trust in God. He saw that genuine, authentic faith in both of them.

We are affected by those around us in the home. Before I had saving faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, I saw it in the home where I was raised. My dad was a deacon in my home church. I knew I needed to trust the Lord and learned to do so by watching my dad.

No matter what came our way as a family, Dad calmly put his faith in God through it all.

He had Parkinson disease, lived in misery the last few months of his short life, but I saw a man who had absolute confidence in the Lord. As a son, I saw that faith, and decided that was what I wanted for my life.

While in Ben and Betty Walker’s home, I learned how I ought to live by watching, observing and listening.

The Home—A Place of Living

It is one thing for a person to tell a child how to live, but it is another matter when the parents show the child how he or she ought to live. In John 13:15 Jesus said, “That I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.”

Christ not only told His disciples to do certain things, he set an example for them to follow. He is saying to them, “Do as I do.”

Where we live is the place to live our Christian life. What better place could you find to live the Christian life than in this home? If every Christian home would live the Christian life daily in the home, there would be more good examples as people observe our attitudes and reactions of family members one to the other.

The Home—A Place of Leasing

We are living in such a complex, divisive, troubled society. Because of its con-
dition, faith based homes have become more necessary than ever.

Leasing should begin with mom and dad. Mom and Dad are to be the teachers of what is right in the family unit. What should they teach our children about parents?

Let me just list a few: salvation for the fallen, strength to do right and to do the will of God, wisdom to raise the children in the fear of the Lord, to have concern for others who are lost and poor, and power to witness to tell others about the Lord’s face.

Children should be able to learn on the Lord, but it all begins with parents who have given their lives to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Never forget the importance of the home in the economy of God.

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

Sudoku Solution

Sanitation Supplies

Ray's Tree Service

Tools and Sanitation Supplies

By Nancy Yantchook

- Mass kits or paper plates, plastic utensils, paper or plastic cups & glasses (Part 3)
- Aluminum foil, Saran wrap, plastic bags (Part 1)
- Plastic storage containers (Part 3)
- Non-electric can opener (Part 3)
- Utility or pocket knife
- Matches in a waterproof container.
- Battery operated radio and extra batteries.
- Battery operated flashlight and extra batteries.
- Candles of various sizes in containers that will not tip over.
- Fire extinguisher: small canister A-B-C type.
- Tape, Duct, Celotape, & Masking tape.
- Paper, pens, or pencils.
- Needles & thread.
- Pliers & Screwdrivers.
- Shunt off Wrenches to turn off household gas and water.
- Whistle
- Plastic sheathing or plastic drop cloths.
- Compass
- Sleeping bags
- Tube tent
- Map of area (to locate shelters or way out of town)
- Emergency Manaul and Information.
- Signal flares
- Propane camping stove or grill (Part 3)
- Cooking utensils (Part 3)

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.

Check out our new Website- www.brcnews.com
And find us on Facebook

Rays Tree Service

- Hazardous Tree Removal
- View Clearing
- Pruning
- Chipper Service
- Bucket Truck Service

- Hedge Trimming
- Hemlock Wooly
- Adelgid Control
- Landscaping & Grading
- Retaining Walls
- Stump Grinding

Certified Arborist • Insured • Free Estimates
Serving This Area 10 Years
(828) 467-1113
Clint's Chronicles on the Funny Farm

The Rest of the Story

I have no idea how many of you have ever worked in corn field beans, but if you have, I'm sure you have probably walked out of the field itching. I know I have done that many times. Clint was extremely worried, as he should have been about the usage any kind of chemicals, and I was always conscious of warning him when there was a danger. He did have red welts on his arms and neck the day he came in from the bean field. I can still see him before he went to the field with his chemical suit on, respirator and gloves, without fear because I did not want him to get hurt or exposed to anything that might hurt him. When I looked at his neck it was instantly apparent what had taken place. The look in his eyes said, "Am I going to live?" He did look much better after the shower and pieces of Barbara's delicious cake.

Betsy, Barbara and I had a belly laugh about the watermelon situation. Clint was beginning to get the hang of farm life after the time we took over the paper, and he moved to Pine. Those were the days my friend!

Farmer Doug

Funny Farm

Dear Friends,

As I reminisce about my past agricultural prowess, I am still amazed to have survived so many near-misses with death at Harrell Hill Farms. There are nights I awaken terrified of "what might have been," always thankful for God's protective covering over me.

This month I want to share two short stories, more evidence of how easily things can go awry!

Hazmat Suit...

It was a sweltering summer day as Doug dispatched me to spray insecticide on rows of beans and tomato plants. While I don't recall the name of the chemical, I believe it was first cousin to Agent Orange. Despite temperatures in the 90s, my buddy insisted that I wear a ridiculous cage suit, gloves and hat. "Pollard, this is a dangerous chemical and you need to be careful not to get it on your skin," Farmer Doug warned. I listened, donned my then-far-sell into the hunter's green material, donned my farmer's gloves and set out to eradicate the vermin creatures.

I had the presence of mind to stand down-wind of the fine chemical mist so as not to drink too many of the tiny droplets. And spray I did... up and down... all around... bugs gasping for their last precious breath as I bobbed and weaved among the rows. Dodging pig weed, swarms of hornets and all manner of creepy crawlies I maneuvered throughout the vast garden. Mission accomplished.

Returning home that evening the skin on my neck was burning, tingling, and feeling as though a million fleas were feeding on my blood. As I looked in the mirror I noted what appears to be a vast blister, better said leprosy! Alas, my life flashed before my eyes as I envisioned the end... surely the dustily chemical mixture was expelling my trip to heaven. I ventured to the farmhouse kitchen, hoping only to bid farewell to Doug and Barbara.

Running headlong into my mountain-man friend, my eyes telegraphing terror and distress, he asked, "Pollard, what's wrong with you?" I explained how I followed his instruction, "Doug, I wore the suit and gloves even though the heat was nearly exhausting. I even thought to stand upwind of the spray. But, as you see, my skin is being eaten from this inside out."

That crooked smile and mischievous look, the one he always displays just before saying "Pollard, I don't know what I'm gonna do with you," that one... and he asked, "Uh, did you get tangled up in the beans?"

Thinking back I recounted how a couple times the corn rows had wrapped their stringy vines around my neck, once nearly taking me to my knees. "You are a real pest to the bean vine, just like folks are," Doug said. "Take a shower, dry off and you'll be okay in a couple days." Snickering, having a bit too much fun in my opinion, my friend offered me a piece of cake. And I devoured it, thankful that God spared me death from the nuclear material.

Waving Watermelon...

I had been plowing, hoeing, raking and otherwise eating dust all day long. An extended dry spell plagued our mountain farm as Doug lovingly and painstakingly taught me the process of lifting and transporting the round bales (a story for another day) and was returning to the barn with a fresh load.

As you know from previous musings, I love driving the tractor. Tooting along down Harrell Hill Road I was one with the land...content in my role as farm hand extraordinaire...privileged to capture the Kiwi along our rural roads.

I'm telling ya, this was a hot day and I'd had no water in a few hours (Doug didn't give me breaks). As I rounded the bend I saw a lovely lady standing at the intersection of Harrell Hill Road and Byrd Road. Drawing near I recognized Betsy, Doug's cousin and my friend. Her arm was extended as though flying a kite but I quickly noticed that instead she was waving a piece of watermelon.

As I passed by I could almost taste the succulent, dripping, cool red melon. And I wondered aloud, "Why is Betsy standing there waving a slice of watermelon? Such unusual customs in these mountains."

Nonetheless, I smiled, tipped my Farmer Clint hat as a gentlemanly gesture, and went to deposit the hay. All the while wishing I could figure out a way to fizzle that watermelon from Betsy.

A week or so later Doug remarked, "You hurt Betsy's feelings and I think you might want to talk to her about it." I searched the cobwebs of my mind to comprehend what I possibly could have done to offend this wonderful woman. "What did I do now?" I whined. Once again, his eyes two mischievous marbles, my friend explained, "Betsy tried to flag you down for some watermelon last week and you just drove by and waved."

I immediately went on the attack, defensive to the extreme I proclaimed, "How could I have known the rules of etiquette here. What was I supposed to do? You know I like Betsy and you know I like watermelon. What don't you know is that I wanted Betsy's watermelon! But how was I to know she wanted me to share it?" It just didn't seem right to say, "Hi Betsy, may I please have your watermelon?" Or what I had learned from the tractor and said, "Grain me that watermelon Betsy!" Bursting into laughter my friends Doug and Barbara nearly died at the hilarity of that vision.

That was an important day, though, in my education at Harrell Hill Farms. What I learned is that the farm virtually every gesture has meaning and every movement has purpose beyond what is apparent.

A few days later I apologized to Betsy for my faux pas. "That's okay," she said. "There's always another day and another watermelon." So, if you're new here and don't know what to do, remember...never fly by a lovely lady waving watermelon in your direction.

As always, I thank God for the memories and experiences at Harrell Hill Farms...growing more distant now as the year rolls along. Your old pal Farmer Clint enjoyed a special time of heating and resuscitation in the corn rows, sorghum cane fields, at the river, at the farmstead table...among true friends. Thank you, Jesus."

Still humbled in these hills,
Farmer Clint
“Your Heavenly Father Is Watching, So Play Your Heart Out!”

By Pastor Tom Anspach
Mitchell County

I don’t remember any God coming to watch me play a single game. He was working long hours that summer so that I could wear a uniform and have a roof over my head! He was my hero! He is watching me play now from Heaven’s grandstand!

James 4:14 And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account.

In our human nature, many tend to read the preceding verse and cringe. It sounds a bit ominous, does it not? Look at it this way: We are loved by a God that would rather bless us than blast us! His game is tranasformed upon us because He created us to be the object of love and care. Friend, you need to see God the Father this way; He is cheering on because He knows what awesome things can be accomplished through your life if you trust and obey Him!

The following is a heartwarming and inspiring little story. Please read it and I will finish my thought...

When Lou Little was coaching football at Georgetown, he had a player who was definitely third rate but had so much spirit he was an inspiration to the team. He rarely saw action except in the last few minutes of a game that was already decided. One day news came that the boy’s father had died. The youngster came to Little and said: “Coach, I want to ask something of you that means as awful lot to me. I want to start the game against Fordham. I think that’s what my father would have liked most.”

Little hesitated a moment, then said: “Okay, son, you’ll start, but you’ll only be in for a play or two. You aren’t quite good enough and you know it.”

The boy turned the game and played so well Little never took him out. His play inspired the team to victory. Back in the locker room Coach Little embraced the young man and said: “Son, you were terrific. You never played that before... what got into you?”

The boy answered: “Remember how my father and I used to walk around aimlessly?” There was something about him very few people knew—she was totally blind. This afternoon was the first time my father ever saw me play.

Bible and Pieces, Vol. F, #41
The Bible says, “Your Father who sees in secret...” Matt. 6:18
This verse is speaking about doing your good works for and because of the one who secretly is watching every move you make. He is taking it all in! He knows the things you do for His eyes only. He knows when all that you care about is to please Him. He is storing up a blessing for your eternity that will absolutely blow your mind! 1 Cor. 2:9 Play your heart out for Him on this playing field of life. He will never miss a game you play in and your Father will always be your greatest fan. He is watching you and assisting you in every good thing He gives you to do! Matt. 25:21 “His lord said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.’

Play your heart out for Father! Do something bold through the guidance and power of His Holy Spirit! Let Him hear you say, “Watch this Daddy!”

Can you see that the Father cannot see, sees you and is waiting with great anticipation to give you your eternal championship award?

If we will walk on our walk, our walk will work wonders in our world. See 1 John 2:6

Tom Anspach is the Pastor of The Bridge Church of WNC in Spruce Pine, NC. For more information visit www.TBCWNC.org.

Suffering with Fibromyalgia?

Laser Therapy, Healing at the Speed of Light

Laser therapy is effective in relieving pain associated with fibromyalgia. So why choose Laser therapy? It works and has no side effects.

How does that compare with what you are currently doing? Give us a call and see how laser therapy can help you.

CRUZ Life Center
Burnsville, NC
(828) 682-6157
(800) 772-7955
cruzlifecenter.com

Cruz Life Center

Natural Health Care Solutions for Your Life
LASER THERAPY
CHIROPRACTIC
HEALTH COACHING
“Since 1982”

Serving Buncombe and Swain Counties

Scott W. Murphy, D.M.D., P.A
General Dentistry for the Family

We Love To See You Smile!
Always Accepting New Patients - Insurance Filed For You
Monday - Thursday 8-5
Friday 8-2
(828) 433-1223
341 East Parker Road, Morganton, NC 28655

March 2017 - Blue Ridge Christian News page 16
Bear Creek Baptist Church

Share Your Faith
By Bruce Cannon
Mitchell County

Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? Behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest. (John 4:35)

It is estimated that only 2 to 3 percent of today’s Christians share their faith. Yet, we have the greatest story ever told: the greatest news ever to share. It’s the message of love and redemption, and it’s our own story. It’s the story of what the Lord has done for each of us personally, powerfully and perfectly.

Imagine, we were dead in trespasses and sins. We had no way of helping ourselves. Because of our condition, we were doomed to eternal punishment. But, One loved us so much He died for us. He paid the price for our sins and made it possible for us to escape this punishment and live with Him forever in His home...Heaven. How can we not share that Good News? It is literally the news everyone is dying to hear!

We were commanded to share this news in Matthew 28:18-20 — “And Jesus came and spoke unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.” That command was reiterated in Acts 1:8, “But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.” So, we must. Who must share? Men, women, boys and girls. How must we share? Compassionately, regularly, prayerfully and Scripturally.

The overwhelming percentage of those with whom we come in contact are lost. They are in our communities, places of business, schools and perhaps even in our own homes.

This time of the year many of us plan our gardens. We gather the seeds and plants, till the ground, plant and water hoping for a great harvest. Why not do that evangelistically? We have the seed: it’s the Word of God and the story of how that Word has literally changed our lives. The Holy Spirit fills the heart. He gets the heart ready to receive the seed of the Word. Our task is then to plant. Tell everyone we can about Jesus. Who knows, we may just be able to see someone make the greatest decision of their life...to accept Christ as their personal Lord and Savior.

Let God use you to bring a harvest unto Himself. In doing so you change our world one soul at a time.

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.

Check out our new Website
www.brcnews.com
And find us on Facebook

McClure Construction

GRAVEL YARD.

Dyed Red Mulch
Pine and Hardwood Mulch
Top Soil
Now Offering Wood-waste
Recycling Stumps, Limbs, Brush
Call for Dump Fees

12715 Hwy 226 S., Spruce Pine
(828) 766-6169

Services Provided:
- Pool Installation
- Vinyl & Fiberglass
- Open/Close
- Weekly Service
- Chemical Balancing
- Unplug Replacement
- Pool Service and Repair Covers

Big Green Egg
Carolina Spas
Bioguard Platinum Dealer

Ken-Ray Pools and Spas
206 Burkemont Ave, Morganton, NC 28655
(828)-433-1742

Anchored in Family Owned and Operated Since 1973

www.brcnews.com
March 2017 - Blue Ridge Christian News page 17
We Need a Cyrus
By Daniel Whetstone
Mitchell County

January 20th, 2017, was a great day for America. Our God has once again heard the prayers of His people and through this past election, has given us one more chance. Some professing Christians are still unsupportive of our new president. It has been said of him that he is morally corrupt, rude, profane and a lot of other choice descriptive terms. Some doubt that God can use a man like Trump, but I refer you to God’s Word. In Isaiah 45: 3-4, the prophet prophesied about a king that He would raise up for “Jacob my servant’s sake, and Israel mine elect” to deliver them from bondage. That man’s name was Cyrus. He concluded verse 4 by emphasizing that King Cyrus was an ungodly person, “I have even called thee by thy name, I have named thee, though thou hast not known me.”

God’s plan for His people is not subject to the ideas of man. God can and does work through people to accomplish His purposes regardless of what we think. God stated that He was using Cyrus for the sake of Jacob, a reference to the remnant of Israel that was still being held captive. Never in the history of this great nation have we seen such a time as this. Christianity and all things Godly have been under attack while evil has been allowed to run unchecked. Our former president started the assimilation when he declared publicly that “we are not a Christian nation.” Christians have been held captive in their own land by a leader who has endorsed every demonic activity known to mankind.

We needed a Cyrus and God sent him. To say that our new president was not divinely appointed is to say that God turned a deaf ear to the multitude of prayer warriors who have been praying regularly for our nation. To say that he is not divinely appointed is to dash to pieces the hopes of a nation full of people that felt that they had no other recourse but trust in God. To say that he is not divinely appointed is to deny the astonishing events that took place during this election and dismiss them as “coincidence”.

We begged for God’s help and He heard us. Instead of trying to judge someone else’s moral character, let’s just lift our voices to God in praise and appreciation for this victory. Lord knows we need it.

Reverend Daniel Whetstone is Director of Missions for the Mitchell Baptist Association and Chaplain for the Mount Mitchell Marine Corps League Detachment 1565.

Buck Stove

Nothing makes a home cozier than a wood burning stove. They look great and they produce heat for your living room, family room, dining room, or kitchen. Buck Stove offers a wide selection of Wood Burning Stoves in various styles and sizes, proudly designed and produced right here in the USA.

Buck Stove wood burning stoves allow you to use a plentiful and renewable source of fuel to heat your home all winter. Not only do wood burning stoves look pleasing, but they also allow you to rely on your own source of heat. You can heat your home with wood when needed and customize the amount of heat to your liking. They are simple to use and built to last!

Visit our local BUCK STOVE Dealers and check out the selection of Wood Burning Stoves!

Peebles Furniture of Spruce Pine, Blossman Gas of Burnsville, Amerigas, Young’s Fuel of Bakersville and L&B Furniture of Marion
The New Morality
By Jerry Lewis
McDowell County

In their book, Good Faith: Being a Christian When Society Thinks You're Irrelevant and Extreme, David Kinnaman and Gabe Lyons trace the path America has taken toward a new moral code: "the morality of self-suffi-llment." The new moral code comes with six guiding principles:
1. To feel good, look within yourself.
2. People should start considering someone else's life choices.
3. To be fulfilled in life, pursue the things you desire most.
4. Enjoying yourself is the highest goal of life.
5. People can believe whatever they want as long as their beliefs don't affect society.
6. Any kind of sexual expression between two consenting adults is fine.

Today's decade, later changed to a directive (because decades are usually handed down by God and someone must have written the overarching Department of Justice that they might be using a word with religious overtones...which of course isn't tolerated today), that all public schools must give equal access to classrooms to transgender people is the government enforcing these six guiding principles. Russell Moore stated in his blog today:

"The state here wishes to use its coercive power not simply to stop mistreatment of people but to script the most basic human intuitions about humanity as male and female. Even for adults, does one win a culture war against one of the most basic facts of science and life? That is a serious question. One does so by withholding the facts and recognition necessary to operate in public space, unless institutions get in line. Children then, become part of the state for the state to teach what is ultimately a theological lesson, not a scientific one.

According to the state (and Hollywood, ESPN, Zuckerbergs from Facebook and a host of other media elites), one's gender is determined by looking within, not by the biological standards of male and female anatomy. Anyone who disagrees is considered intolerant or bigoted. Since people should do what they desire most and enjoy life is the highest goal, individual assessment of one's own gender takes precedence over safety of others, scientific evidence and basic discretion.

Pastor Kevin DeYoung, in a letter to the Michigan State Board of Education stated:

"The current edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-V) include gender dysphoria, labeled as identity disorder until 2013, as a recognized condition when accompanied by distress over one's biological sex. While some parents may encourage their children to embrace their chosen gender identity, whether it matches their biological sex or not, many other parents will see gender confusion as a natural part of growing through puberty and will encourage their children to embrace their biological sex. It is not the place of the schools to undermine what is taught at home.

We are experiencing a tsunami of cultural change. Underneath the tsunami lies the earthquake that created it: the morality of self-sufficiency. Moore states well: "We must be witnesses to the goodness of what it means to live as creatures, not as self-defining gods and goddesses."

The chief end of man is to glorify God and enjoy him forever—not to glorify self and enjoy self forever.

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

Check out our new Website—www.brccnews.com
And find us on Facebook

Weekly Prayer For The Nation
By Helen Wilson
Burke County

"A very important gathering takes place every Thursday at noon on the old Burke County Courthouse square. People from different churches in Morganton and the surrounding area meet to pray for our nation, state, county and town and for those in authority and those serving in various capacities. Each Thursday a different church is responsible for leading the prayer time. This prayer time began last August 4 and has been held each Thursday since then and will continue each Thursday until May 4, 2017. The group size has ranged from 5 to a high of 40 with a usual group of 10-15. The person leading the prayer time usually begins with scripture and then leads in a time of prayer with emphasis on the needs of the nation, state and community. The prayer time is very informal and usually lasts about 15 minutes."

"This time of prayer was born in the minds of some of the ladies who serve on the Burke County National Day of Prayer Committee and who organized and planned the National Day of Prayer event for Burke County each year. The group felt that organized prayer for the nation should not be limited to 1 day each year and that there were enough churches in the area to lead the prayer time weekly, with a particular church being responsible only once or twice in a year. At the last National Day of Prayer May 5, 2016, the idea was presented and many of those present indicated an anesthetized willingness to participate. So with a little encouragement, contacts were made and a schedule prepared for the weekly prayer time. Pastors, leaders and members from many different churches and denominations have participated and have made this a very special event.

There is hope and anticipation that this prayer emphasis will continue beyond the next National Day of Prayer, May 4 this year. Hopefully other churches will become involved and the attendance will grow as well. As Christians, we have a duty to pray for our nation and those in authority. To accomplish this, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; for kings, and for all that are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior—1 Timothy 2:1-3, KJV. A good reason for doing this is a public place is the witness to our belief in prayer. All churches are asked to share information about this ongoing prayer emphasis and encourage all who are able to be a part of meeting with other Christians united in prayer for this great nation. For further information, questions, or to participate the contact information is listed below.

Helen is a retired RN and a graduate of the USC school of Nursing in Chapel Hill. She is a member of Mount Gilead Baptist Church and enjoys serving the Lord there in several areas as well as volunteer community work.

www.brccnews.com
March 2017 - Blue Ridge Christian News page 19
The Rotary of Spruce Pine

MHS Seniors
By Doug Sudsith
Mitchell County

The Rotary Club of Spruce Pine recognized MHS Seniors at its Feb. 16 meeting.
Maggie Austin, Brinkly Burleson and Davis Summey were presented certificates by Rotarian Glen DeVois recognizing the Mitchell High School students.

Austin told the club she loves art and that was saved at Northwest after her mother was diagnosed with breast cancer. She brought several of her paintings to display at the meeting.

“My best is yet to come,” she said of her artwork. “All of my work is a work in progress.”

Austin works currently with children in an after-school program at the Spruce Pine Montessori School. She is undecided about college, but does plan to take her core classes at AYU, from where she has earned an early childhood education associate degree.

If she does decide to go on to four-year institution she said she would likely become an art teacher.

Burleson told the club she has always been interested in business and entrepreneurship. She was one of 23 students selected to attend a three-week summer program through Appalachian State University in Boone. She plans to attend AYU and major in hospitality and tourism management and minor in entrepreneurship.

She said the choice her major because she wants to travel.

“I want to see as many places as I can,” she said. “I would like to travel the world before I settle down and have a family.”

When she does settle down, Burleson said it would likely be in Mitchell County and she admires the “downsize” with hiking and exploring mountains.

Burleson has interned at Young, Miller & Cogbill as well as the county’s Central Office in Bakersville.

Summey said he is passionate about sports, particularly soccer and basketball and considers sports one of the top-three things in his life. He plans to attend Mars Hill and has not picked a major. He said he may study education and teach American history, crediting Mitchell High School history teacher Matt Hard with making him want to be a teacher.

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

Blue Ridge Partnership for Children

Child Fest
By Ruthie Styles

Spring is rapidly approaching and with spring comes the 17th annual Child Fest event sponsored by the Blue Ridge Partnership for Children and Child Care Resources and Referral. This year’s event promises to be a great day with activities like rodeo on the Linda Rice Chaie, a Teddy Bear Clinic, make & take crafts, inflatables and Mr. Mystery will once again bring his mysterious magic show to Child Fest. Door prizes will be given away throughout the day and while the kiddos are enjoying all the activities, their parents and caregivers will have access to information about quality child care, early literacy, health and nutrition and services that are available in the area.

When asked about Child Fest, Jessica Stone Wayton’s mom, said she enjoys Child Fest so much because it “offers an opportunity for every young child in the area to experience something fun and positive that is free.”

This year’s Child Fest kicks off April, the month of the young child, on Saturday, April 1, 2017 at Mitchell High School from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Please join us for this fun, family event that celebrates children and the joy they are. If you have any questions or would like more information, please contact the Blue Ridge Partnership for Children at 828.681.0717 or 828.733.2699.

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

Get a $1,000 Lowe’s gift card* with the purchase of any new Energy Smart Home.

Shut the Front Door! Sale

www.claytonhomes.com

March 2017 - Blue Ridge Christian News
PruittHealth Home Health would like to thank you and your family for the opportunity to serve you! We strive to provide the best quality services for your home health needs.

Our services include:

- skilled nursing
- physical, occupational and speech therapies
- medical social work
- home health aides

We serve Avery, Mitchell, Yancey and surrounding counties.

Avery County: (828) 733-1550
Mitchell County: (828) 688-3421
Yancey County: (828) 682-7825

PruittHealth.com
The Inspiring Word

The Sermon on the Mount

Pastor Terry Cheek Th.D.
McDowell County

Thanks for returning to read another publication of “The Blue Ridge Christian News” and our article “The Inspiring Word”.

This month open your Bible to Matthew 7:7-11 and read as we continue with our look into “The Sermon on the Mount.”

Comparing our February article with March it seems only natural that Jesus would move from discussing relationship with our fellow man to relationship with our heavenly Father. Consider this, our Christian duty of discrimination (not judging others, not casting pearls before pigs, and being helpful without being hypocritical) is impossible for us to achieve without divine grace. Grace is the key to our Christianity that is a very broad statement but one with biblical support. Let’s consider a few things about relationship and how our relationship with others is directly influenced through our relationship with God. Not just from the perspective of having a relationship or not, but how deep is that relationship with God and how much of an influence do we allow it to have in our personal lives?

Jesus makes three promises in verses 7 & 8. Very simply put they are: ask, seek and knock. Let’s take a condensed look at them. Do you notice they are in ascending order based upon urgency? For example, if a child’s mother is near and visible the child will ask their mother, if the child’s mother is not visible the child will seek her and if the child locates her mother but she is isolated (for instance in another room) the child will knock to gain the attention of their mother. Notice how the urgency is in the order of importance. These three words are ask, seek, and knock all illustrate the persistence we should exhibit when making our requests known to God.

Now notice with me the promises are in universal statements. The pronouns everyone, he and him indicate who the Lord is directing His instruction too. Let me be clear. The Sermon on the Mount is directed to the Lord’s disciples. Yes, the Pharisees and Gentiles are present but the Sermon is directed to those who believe in Him and follow Him. That may better explain the context of the pronouns.

Third, in our study is the home spun parable Jesus uses to expound His promises. From verse 9-11 we find a very interesting illustration. Jesus sets before them a situation all of us and even you and I today can relate too. The parent child relationship.

Specifically, a child coming to their Father with a request. Jesus illustrates the application through two very interesting items, a stone and a snail. If a child were to ask for bread, would the child be given something which looks like bread but is in fact very different, e.g. a stone instead of a loaf, or a snail instead of a fish? Said another way, if the child asks for something wholesome to eat (bread or fish), would the child receive instead something unwholesome, either inedible (a stone) or even harmful (a poisonous snail)? Parents who truly love their children would never intentionally do anything like this. Notice the depth of Jesus’ teaching here. Parents, even though they are impured with the sin nature, i.e. selfish by nature, still love their children and give them only good gifts. Jesus here asserts the inherent sinfulness of human nature. At the same time, he does not deny that sinfulness is capable of doing good. What Jesus is saying is that even when parents are doing good, following the good instincts of parenthood and caring for their children, they do not escape the depravity of a sin nature, because that is what we are.

So, we come down to the purpose of the passage. How do these three promises retool our relationship with God the Father through Jesus the Son? First, we see the Lord asking, not if God is ready to give, but are we ready to receive? Are we asking the right thing for the right reason at the right time and is our heart ready to receive the righteous truth God has in store for us? Second, we see the necessity of seeking God the Father. We see Jesus identifying the disciple with God not only as creator but as Abba His Father, our Father. With that relationship and the application previously given we must not ignore the necessity in our life to seek God in a growing Father/child relationship. Having confidence that God will provide only what is wholesome and safe for our well-being. Third, when we ask for the right reason and seek the proper relationship, our approach (knock) will be productive (the door will open).

The promises given by Jesus are not unconditional. It requires something from you and me. We must be born again as a child of God through Jesus Christ. Next, we must realize prayer is not a list of wishes to be granted by a genie. We should have a desire for God in our lives and when we do we will ask, seek and knock in a manner that pleases God and He will answer according to His word and His will.

We have run out of space for this article. Until we meet again, may God keep you firmly in His grip!

Terry Cheek is Pastor of Calvary Baptist Church in Marion.

www.brcnews.com

March 2017 - Blue Ridge Christian News page 22
Keep Plowing! Don’t Look Back!

By Pastor Steve Williams
Mitchell County

I remember when I was a little boy I used to always want to help my paw-paw plant the garden. I loved helping him drive the tractor and the smell of the fresh plowed dirt. I loved helping him put out the fertilizer, dropping the seeds or planting the tomato; he had grown in his makeshift green house. But there was one thing my paw-paw would not let me do, and that was to lay off the rows to plant our garden. Reason being, he had tried to show me how, but I just wouldn’t listen to him. He said, “Look straight ahead and don’t take your eyes off the other end of the garden when laying off the rows.” But every time he gave me a chance I would go a little way and then I would look back, and when I would get to the end of the row and look back it would look like a dog’s hind leg. And then he would say to me, “Boy I told you not to look back, but to keep your eyes fixed at the end of the row, and you will have a straight row.” The Bible says in Luke 9:63, “And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.”

The reason being is, you can’t live in the Past and the Present at the same time. Looking back hinders our forward progress in life and Looking Back keeps us from moving forward in the ways God wants us to do and to accomplish in our walk with Him. Proverbs 14:15 tells us that “…the prudent man looketh well to his going.” This is saying a man should be focusing on where he is now and where he is heading in his life.

Looking back hinders our Plowing and Laying off the rows God intends us to plant. In our walk with God we can’t afford to look back, but many Christians fail to do this. Christians have a hard time not looking back at their past. I believe we all have this problem sometimes.

I want to encourage you—Don’t Look Back at Sins That Have Been Forgiven. When God Forgives us of our sins He places our sins in the sea of forgiveness never to bring them up any more. They are under the blood of Christ; they have been taken care of so, we must move forward.

I want to encourage you—Don’t Look Back at Fears That Get You Down. Understand this, that your past failures can only hold you back if you let them. Learn from your failures and reach to the future with your eyes set on God.

I want to encourage you—Don’t Look Back at Past Victories That May Get You Bitter. As Christians, we must remember we have been forgiven and so we too must forgive and move on. You say, “You don’t know what happened to me.” You are right, but God does. And I can assure you, none of us have ever been treated like Jesus Christ. Remember what He said on the Cross to those that crucified Him. “Father forgive them for they know not what they do.”

Lastly, I want to encourage you—Don’t Look Back at Past Conflicts That Make You Bitter. As Christians, we must remember we have been forgiven and so we too must forgive and move on. You say, “You don’t know what happened to me.” You are right, but God does. And I can assure you, none of us have ever been treated like Jesus Christ. Remember what He said on the Cross to those that crucified Him. “Father forgive them for they know not what they do.”

Words of Wisdom
• “The present is never as good as it used to be” Vance Havner
• “If you try to be everything to everybody you will end up being nothing to anybody.” Vance Havner
• “He cannot keep us from temptation, but He can keep us in temptation.” Vance Havner
• “The vision must be followed by the venture. It is not enough to start up the steps—we must step up the stairs.” Vance Havner

Just a Thought:
If you keep looking back in your life what are you going to bump into?

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

Bakersville Community Health Center
And
Celco Health Center
Announce
A Partnership

On February 1, 2017, two long-established community health centers will join together to improve access to quality healthcare and increase services in Yancey and Mitchell Counties.

Retaining their names and locations, the partnership of Celco Health Center and Bakersville Community Health Center will ensure stable, consistent care for years to come while increasing the availability of care for patients across the two counties, regardless of insurance status or ability to pay.

As community-owned health centers they are proud of their 113 years of combined service to generations of families in the area and look forward to continuing the tradition of care for years to come.

Call today for more information or to establish care with one of our providers.
BCHC: 675-4116
Celco Health Center: 688-2104

Abe’s Family Restaurant
Voted Best Breakfast & Salad Bar
in Morganton
I-40 at Exit 105
Come See Us at Our New Location
Across the Street!
Morganton, NC
828-433-5400

www.bcnne.com
March 2017 - Blue Ridge Christian News page 23
Assurance for the Doubter
By Shaws Thomas
Burke County

"Little children, let us not love with word or with tongue, but in deed and truth. We will know this by that we do the truth, and will assure our heart before Him in whatever our heart condemns us, for God is greater than our heart and knows all things." (1 John 3:18-20)

People often say things like “trust your heart,” or “follow your heart.” But although that may sound good, it is not the best policy. The truth is, our own hearts often mislead us.

The Lord commands us here in 1 John 3:18 not to love others with word or tongue only, but in deed and truth. Then He says in 19: If that we do this, then "We will know by this (these deeds of genuine love) that we are of the truth and will assure our hearts before Him (v. 20) in whatever our heart condemns us; FOR GOD IS GREATER THAN OUR HEART and knows all things."

So, there is an objective truth with God that is “greater than our heart.” There may be times when “our heart” doesn’t “feel” like we are God’s — so a Christian may have doubts about his salvation, even when he really does belong to the Lord. God’s prescription for that person is to do the deeds of the Christian life, including demonstrating practical love for his brothers & sisters. He says this heart should comfort you and give you assurance that you really are His. So, we find several important lessons in this passage.

Genuinely Christian people may have doubts about their standing with God. It is NOT true that if you have any doubts at all, that you are not saved. John specifically says here that there are times when the real Christian’s heart will condemn him — but God knows better!

We also see here that WORKS have an important role in giving the Christian the assurance of salvation. Scripture makes it clear that we are not SAVED by our works (Eph. 2:8-9), but it is also evident from these verses that we may be ASSURED of our salvation by works (“you will know them by their fruits”, Matt. 7:20).

And finally, we see that the way we “feel” is not a sure indicator of our salvation. Our hearts may “feel” one thing (“our heart condemns us”) but “God is greater than our heart” and knows our true standing with Him. Thankfully our feelings are not the ultimate measure of our salvation — god’s love and grace in Jesus Christ are!

Shaws Thomas is Senior Pastor at Pleasant Ridge Baptist Church in Morganton. His messages and devotionals are available at www.shawstthomas.com

Spruce Pine Rotary

Updates
By Doug Sudduth

On Thursday, January 16, at the weekly meeting of the Rotary Club of Spruce Pine, Andrew Young, a representative from the Blue Ridge Parkway, spoke with the group about invasive pests that are damaging our trees. Andrew explained about new restrictions on bringing firewood to the park — an effort to try to stop the spread of these damaging insects that are killing our trees. Andrew was introduced by Rotarian Thaigh White.

The Rotary Club of Spruce Pine at its regular meeting Feb. 9, issued from Pam Snyder about Project Lifesaver:

The primary mission of Project Lifesaver is providing timely response to save lives and reduce potential injury for adults and children who wander due to Alzheimer’s, autism and other related conditions or disorders.

Snyder said the Community Foundation of Western North Carolina in January gave the project a grant of $5,000 to purchase equipment and train 11 people in the ongoing effort to implement the program in Mitchell County.

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

Easter Egg Hunt

CATAWBA RIVER SOCCER COMPLEX

NEW LOCATION!

Easter Egg Hunt and Activities
Co-Sponsored by the City of Morganton Parks and Recreation Department and Summit Community Church.

www.brcnews.com

Easter Egg Hunt at 10am, Egg Hunt at 11am

Egg Spoon Relay, Corn Hole Toss, Egg Hop Relay, Storytelling, Fresh Popcorn/Concessions. Candy and plastic eggs will be scattered in four respective age groups. Three grand prize eggs will be hidden in each age division!
The First 30 Days of 2017
By Beth Davis
Mitchell County

I'd bet some of you wonder what a typical month looks like at Mitchell County SafePlace. Do those ladies just sit there, day after day, staring at that 828-765-4044 Crisis Hotline, waiting for it to ring, spinning into action...kinds like Batman and Robin hanging out in the Bat Cave, waiting to see the Bat Signal? I can't help but laugh as I envision Connie Sedberry and Tracy Black grabbing their capes and sliding down the Bat Pole, dashing off in a Bat Mobile driven by Wonder Woman, Kellie Biggs! Well, I'lll, that's not quite how SafePlace works...mainly because we can't get funding for the Bat Pole.

Each month, Associate Director Tracy Black compiles a summary of actions and tasks for our Board of Directors. Below is a sampling of how Mitchell County SafePlace spent the first month of the year.

- We saw emergency shelter to a mother and her 2 children. We also provided services to 65 women, men, and children. These services include peer counseling about domestic violence and sexual assault victimization, emergency crisis calls, in-kind and emergency financial assistance, etc. We helped 3 clients file for and obtain Domestic Violence Protective Orders, and provided court advocacy and accompanies. We also provided transportation 3 times for vital services.
- Kellie began teaching her 6-week, evidence-based Love=Respect Program to 8th-grade boys and girls at Harris Middle School; 4 days a week. The first two weeks they talked about what makes a healthy relationship and the red flags of harmful behaviors. This was followed by dressing up and acting out scenarios, everyone's favorite activity. After completing the program at Harris, Kellie will move on to Bowman Middle School, and then will return to Mitchell High. By the end of the school year, she will have presented Love=Respect to 280 students!
- Tracy returned to Life Skills class at Mountain View Prison, where she presented an introduction to Domestic Violence Prevention Basics. All 15 men were very engaged in the topic. They asked many, many questions, and several related stories about experiencing domestic violence is their childhood. It was a very moving experience for both Tracy and the inmates.
- Connie was the guest speaker at the Spruce Pine Kiwanis Club January meeting. She explained the different aspects of the work that SafePlace does, and offered ways in which their members might become involved.

- Beth attended a “Coffee Talk” sponsored by WNC Nonprofit Pathways about using Mail Citing and Constant Contact to engage and inform our community about the work of SafePlace.
- January was a deluge of submitting grant applications and reports. The work was frenzied, as we submitted applications for VOCA Basic Services, SASP Women for Women, and the ERS grants.
- The SafePlace thrift store started an interesting new sale. All shoppers would be given a 20% discount at the Touch of Class Boutique if they presented a receipt from their purchase at the SafePlace Thrift. Thirty-two people took advantage of this sale. The stores continue to serve as an outreach to the community for SafePlace. In addition to providing clothing, furniture and household goods, we also partnered with:
  - Mitchell County Sheriff’s Office to provide clothing for 2 prisoners going to court.
  - Mitchell County DSS requested emergency clothing for 2 children who had to be removed from their homes.
  - SafePlace Thrift also gave in-kind assistance to a family devastated by a house fire at the request of Mitchell County DSS.
  - Manager Cheech Stewart is currently reviewing both of the stores.
- In total, we provided in-kind assistance valued at $1,500 for 16 families for the month of January.
- Connie continued our Community Close Up radio programs on WTGE-WKYK.

HUGE News!! Beginning Monday, April 3, SafePlace’s wildly popular Fresh Start Program will (for lack of a better phrase) start fresh! Led by Shelter Manager Lisa Cassaro, Fresh Start is free to anyone who wishes to improve their employment or employability through ongoing Life Skills, Job Skills, and Computer Skills courses. We also provide support groups for anyone who has been a victim of domestic or sexual violence, as well as their family and friends. Fresh Start will meet at the Trinity Episcopal Parish Hall each Monday, 5:00-6:30. For more information about this exciting program in coming weeks, or call Lisa Cassaro at 828-765-4015.

Beth Davis is the Resource Development Coordinator for Mitchell County SafePlace. She can be reached at 828-765-4011 or bethdavis60@gmail.com.

A Higher Standard of Care

For over 33 years, we have provided a “Higher Standard of Care” for our patients in their homes and all area facilities; care built on the principles of comfort, dignity, choice and control. As a stand-alone not-for-profit, we offer this award winning care for chronically- and terminally ill patients and their families.

828.682.9675
hospiceofyancey.org
856 Georges Fork Rd. Burnsville, NC

Your Choice. Your Hospice. Ask for Yancey Hospice.
Health Notifications

Are You Hard Of Hearing?

Miracle-Ear is field testing a remarkable new digital hearing instrument in the area. The hearing test to determine if you qualify is free of charge.

These revolutionary 100% Digital instruments use the latest technology to comfortably and almost invisibly help you hear more clearly. This technology solves the “stopped up ears” and “head in a barrel” sensation some people experience.

If you wish to participate, you will be required to have your hearing tested in our office FREE OF CHARGE to determine candidacy and review your results with the hearing instruments with our Hearing Aid Specialist.

You may field test this new technology for 30-days (security deposit required¹). During the test you will keep a weekly journal of your experience. At the conclusion of the 30-day period, you may purchase your instruments at tremendous savings for participating in this field test. This test is an excellent opportunity to determine if hearing help is available for your hearing loss at a very affordable price.

Included in this field test:

FREE Ear Canal Inspections
A miniature camera “tours” your ear canal. You may not have a hearing loss, it may be nothing more than earwax.

FREE Hearing Test
A complete hearing test that reveals where you need hearing help. Recommended annually.

Field Test Offer Ends March 31, 2017

Miracle-Ear® Call Today!

Marian Schneider
Hearing Instrument Specialist
BURNSVILLE
390 West US HWY 196
828-548-3569

Chad Parker
Hearing Instrument Specialist
LENOIR
210 Mulberry St. SW, Suite 3
828-668-5003

Wendy Watson
Hearing Instrument Specialist
MORGANTON
347 Sanford Dr
828-528-4042

MARION
70 N. Main St., Suite 1
828-237-1973

¹Security deposit equal to purchase price required at time of fitting.

Insurance Accepted
My Mother, Once a Country Music Singer

By Dr. Mark Creech

During the late 1950s and early ’70s my mother was a country music singer. She had one top ten hit on the Billboard charts – a country version of “The Night They Drove Old Dixie Down” that went to number 9. Not that you can’t be a celebrity and be a faithful Christian too, but my mother says she wasn’t fully surrendered to the Lord during that period. Her complete surrender would ultimately lead her to leave the music business and devote herself to motherhood. I can never be grateful enough for that commitment and sacrifice. She would have been a big star, no doubt. She is incredibly talented.

Mom was also a high school dropout. Yet in her 50s, after my sister and I were grown and moved out of the house and were making lives of our own, Mom went back to school, got her GED, then pursued nursing and received her degree and certification at the age of 58. Today she is still a practicing nurse at the age of 77. You’ll forgive me for my bias and boasting, but that’s pretty impressive, isn’t it? You ask me!

To the right is a picture of my mother, backstage after an appearance on the Grand Ole Opry. She was an exceptionally beautiful woman in those days, and no less beautiful to me today.

I once wrote a piece for the Christian Post that contained more information about my mother’s music career. You can read the article below:

He Bought Up the Records

Not many people are aware of it, and others may have forgotten about it, but my mother had a distinguished country music singing career back in the late 1960s and the early 1970s. Two of her records did very well; her country rendition of “The Night They Drove Old Dixie Down” went to #9 on the Billboard charts; and “We’ll Sing in the Sunshine,” which was originally a folk tune, reached #24. Alice Creech was the opening act for some of the most revered country artists today: Ernest Tubb, Dolly Parton, Hank Williams, Jr., Charlie Pride, Merle Haggard, String Bean, Grandpa Jones, Bill Anderson, Tammy Wynette, Loretta Lynn and many more. In addition to being rated #21 of the top female vocalists of 1972 with a single by Billboard magazine, she was also the recipient of two ASCAP (American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers) awards that same year. She even made a guest appearance on the Grand Ole Opry, when it was previously located in the famous Ryman Auditorium.

About the time my mother was just becoming a major country and western celebrity, she decided to surrender her life to Christ and leave the business so she could be a better mom to my younger sister and me. I earnestly pray I would always live worthy of the godly influence and instructions she gave during the years that followed.

Recently, while attending an Ethics Leaders Conference at the offices of the Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention in Nashville, Tennessee, I retraced some of my mother’s steps during her days as an aspiring artist in Music City. I visited the historic Ernest Tubb Record Shop and saw the stage where my mother often performed on WSM’s “Ernest Tubb Midnight Jamboree.”

But the greatest thrill came when visiting the Lawrence Record Store downtown, where they have a tremendous selection of vintage vinyl records. You can imagine my delight when they had all of my mother’s recordings – original labels, jackets and everything. There they were – all of them – ready to play on the nearest phonograph. Naturally, I bought them up to safely put them away.

That experience made me think of a profound truth often forgotten in our day: God has every recording of our lives and He’s planning to play them at the Judgment. He has them all – the originals – everything we ever did, the things others either never knew or had forgotten about. It’s all there and none of it is omitted. Moreover, there’s no spin to it. It’s all just the bare and unvarnished truth about who we really are and what we’ve done.

LIFE magazine once interviewed dozens of people to learn how Americans feel about prayer. One person interviewed was a young prostitute from White Pine County, Nevada.

“I don’t think about my feelings a lot,” she said. “Instead I lie in my bed and think about Him. I meditate because sometimes my words don’t come out right. But He can find me. He can and what’s inside of me just by listening to my thoughts. I ask Him to help me and keep me going. A lot of people think that working girls don’t have any morals, any religion. But I do. I don’t steal. I don’t lie. The way I look at it, I’m not sinning. He’s not going to judge me. I don’t think God judges anybody.”

Very few modern nations are more popular than the one that God judges so one. The problem is, however, that comforting perception is patently false. Judgment is as certain as God is holy. The Psalmist says in Psalm 37:11, “God is angry with the wicked every day.” In other words, as Dr. George Sweeting of Moody Bible Institute puts it, “God never makes a mistake about sin.” The apostle Paul explicitly warned: “Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to the flesh shall reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall reap life continued on page 17.”
Avery County

Avery County Chamber - "Quarterly Breakfast"-March 14- 8:30 am - The River Dog Cafe-3616 Mitchell Ave., Linville
Guest Speaker- Troy Cook, Chief Deputy, Avery County Sheriff’s Office - Troy will share how High Country Crime Stoppers is helping our community.
Tuesday, March 14, 8:30AM - A $50.00 donation is appreciated for the breakfast.

First Baptist Church of Newland - Friday, March 10th- Kids’ Lock-In - 4pm Friday night, through 5am, Saturday morning
Sunday, March 12th- Children’s Ministry Team Meeting - 5pm-6pm
Tuesday, March 23rd- BackPack Ministry - 6:30pm-7pm
Tuesday, March 24th- Harlem Globetrotters in Boone - 7pm (Tickets - $15)

Burke County

Catawba River Baptist Association
March
- 2-Cuba Mission Trip Information Meeting @ CRBA @ 6:30 p.m.
- 4-RA Racer Day @ Oak Ridge Baptist from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.
- 6-Vision Trip to Chicago
- 13-Ministers Golf Tournament Registration Deadline
- 19-Association Bible Trill at Fakunle Baptist at 3 PM
- 25- CRBA Spring Meeting @ El Bethel 5:36 PM-Supper-Business, Worship-6:30 PM; Nursery Provided.
- 28-Minister’s Wife’s "Get-Together" @ 6:30 p.m. at CRBA
- 30-Ministers Golf Tournament @ 9 a.m. ($25 per person)
April (month of food collection for the Children’s Homes of NC)
- 1-State Racer Day
- 6-Senior Adult Outing
- 16- Easter
May
- 2-Church Security Seminar @ 6:30 p.m. @ Walkie Read Baptist
- 21-Association Missions Offering
- 23-Why They Stay Seminar with Dr. Steve Parr @ 6:30 p.m. @ Malice Grove Baptist

Mission Trip - Catawba River Baptist Association will be leading a mission trip to Cuba September 16-22. This will be an exciting trip where we will do construction, prayer walking, personal evangelism and preaching. The cost for the trip which includes transportation, food, lodging and supplies is $2,600 per person. This trip is open to both men and women. If interested you will need to begin the process of getting a passport and you will want to attend the Cuba information meeting March 2nd at our CRBA office by 6:30 p.m.

Christain 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 Businesses. Please join us for lunch at one of our weekly bible study meetings: Tuesday, 12:00 noon at the Community House, Morganton. Contact: Wayne Giese, 828-413-5819.

Morganton Seventh-day Adventist Burke County - LifeStart Seminars: Lose Naturally and Learn Comprehensive Ways to End the Struggle and Permanently Achieve the Level of Fitness You Desire! Beginning Thursday, March 16th, at 6:00 p.m., at Lambertburg Cafe, 120 N Sterling Street, Morganton, NC 28655.

Aglow International Ecclorcy Lighthouse Ecclorcy Lighthouse meetings are the second Saturday of each month.

McDowell County

Clinchfield Baptist Church (Marion) – We are accepting resumes for Ministers of Music, Current 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 1120 East Court Street, Marion, NC 28752 Attn: Personnel Committee.

First Baptist Church of Marion - Belize Medical Mission Registration is now complete for the 2017 Belize Medical Mission Trip. 14 are onboard and preparing to provide free clinics to underserved villages in the northern Guatemalan District of the country. The team is currently raising funds for medical supplies and medicines. Contributions are greatly appreciated. Please make your donations to FBC for the Belize Medical Fund. For more info, please contact: Scott Hagaman. Phone: 1-800-235-4455. March 28, 2017-Where Marion Train Depo-45 Depot Street, Marion, NC 28752

Historic Marion Tailgate Market is hosting a community potluck to kick-off the 2017 market season. Learn about the exciting plans for the 2017 Historic Marion Tailgate Market! Bring a friend & your favorite covered dish. The EMTM will provide the meat and desserts. Vendor applications will be provided. In 2016, the EMTM celebrated 10 years of providing local foods and crafts by our local farmers and artisans. Let’s continue the tradition. Please RSVP by March 21, 602-2213 or Lori Gadd.

Historic Marion Tailgate Market is open on Tuesday from 3 to 6 pm and Saturday from 9 am to 12 pm in downtown Marion under the Tegdale Market shelter. Opening day; Tuesday, May 2.

Hospice of Rutherford and Carolina foothills - Hope Grief Support for those who have lost loved ones. Offered at First Presbyterian church, 79 Academy St, Marion. March 7, 14, 21, 28 at 6PM.

New HOPE of McDowell (Marian) - New HOPE of McDowell is seeking a full-time Associate Director - Shelter Manager. 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 as assisting with carrying out the strategic goals and objectives of the organization, providing direct supervision to all Client Services Advocates, and operating under the direction and expectations of the Executive Director/Court Advocate and Board of Directors.

Mitchell County

Bac’h's Lunch at Trinity Church 15 Emnecloc Ave Spruce Pine NC A series of free noon hour 30 minute concerts beginning at 12:05 Wednesdays during March followed by a complimentary lunch Contact Tristyn at 828-570-1151 for more info.

Bear Creek Baptist Church-Ledger - Women’s Prayer Breakfast at Helen's Restaurant on Monday March 10, 2017 at Helen 8:00am. Ordering from menu. All women are invited. Primitive Quartet will be at Bear Creek on Sunday, March 19th at 6:00PM. Everyone is invited and a love offering will be taken. Celebrate Recovery This is a Christ and Biblical Based Program, giving help and hope for men, women and families suffering from addiction. Any question contact Josh Wise @ 385-0061. There will be a meeting every Thursday night with someone there to talk to men, women, and their families.

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 Sams Dr. (near down—off Balsam Creek Rd). We are studying the Gospel of John currently. Call John Jackson 760-793-3799 for information and directions. And bring your Bible.

SUPPORT GROUP FOR CAREGIVERS OF THOSE WITH MEMORY LOSS TO HOLD MEETINGS THE FIRST FRIDAY OF EACH MONTH FROM 1-3PM Cara & Shane, a newly-formed support group for caregivers of loved ones who have memory loss, will hold monthly meetings at the offices of Hospice & Palliative Care of the Blue Ridge, 356 Hospital Dr. in Spruce Pine, from 1:00 PM to 3:00 PM. High Country Caregiver Foundation welcomes and encourages all caregivers to attend.

Families dealing with a loved one with memory loss can quickly become exhausted, overburdened, and isolated, and this new group intends to provide support, understanding, camaraderie, information and referrals for caregivers. Monthly meetings held on the first Friday of each month will offer refreshments and fellowship. There will be opportunities for caregivers to tell their stories, learn useful tips, trade information, and give and gain support to others in the same situation.

For further information about the group and the meeting please contact Suzanne Russell at (704) 814-5679 or Jazz Ouzts at jazzoutou@yahoo.com.

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 hours on Sundays and 4 hours on Tuesday 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 assist 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 Tappen Street, Spruce Pine, NC 28777. Phone # 828-765-9411 Ext. 301.

Mitchell Baptist Association-Spruce Pine - Associational Bible drills Saturday, March 25, 2017 Bear Creek Baptist Church starting at 9:30

The Mitchell County Historical Society announces its First Annual History Bee, scheduled for Thursday, April 6th, 2017, at 7:00 pm at the Historic Courthouse in Burnsville. The goal of the History Bee, and the mission of MCHS, is to help Mitchell County residents, especially young people, become more aware of our rich heritage. There will be two divisions of competition, one for Mitchell County students under 15, and one for students 15-18. First prize in each age division is $500, second prize $300, and third prize $200. Local businesses and organizations are providing the prizes. All questions in the History Bee will come from Elizabeth Hunter’s Voices of the Valley, which was published in 2011, the 150th anniversary of the formation of Mitchell County. This publication is already in public and school libraries, and many copies will be made available to libraries by MCHS. It is also available for
purchase from the Historical Society office in Beloitville or from other sources. Students are asked to sign up to participate in the MCHS History Bee by 3/31/2017, and registration is free. Ask your history teacher for a registration form or find it on mchshistory.org.

If you have questions about the History Bee, go to the MCHS website or call 828-385-0546 or 828-688-1477.

Spruce Pine Farmer’s Market Moves Indoors! - We will have baked goods, fresh produce, eggs, grass fed beef, and more. The market is inside the Pizza Shop and Dry County Brewing Company from 12-6pm. The indoor market will be open on the 3rd Saturday of the month from December through April. Come shop local with us.

Red Cross Blood Donation - The American Red Cross serving Mitchell and Swain Counties recently opened five new Blood Donor Ambassadors assisting in the areas of Reception and Hospitality at local blood drives in Spruce Pine and Burnsville. With the need for blood donations increased during the holidays, this is a critical role and meaningful way to serve an urgent need through the Red Cross. Drives are held at the First Baptist Church of Spruce Pine and the Higgins Memorial Methodist Church in Burnsville. Volunteers serving in this role help the Red Cross provide a great blood donation experience for donors - helping to save lives. For more information and to apply go to http://www.redcross.org/volunteer or contact Kimberly Brewer, Volunteer Services Specialist supporting the Mitchell and Yancey area blood drives at kbrewer@redcross.org or 828-333-9809.

Summer 2017 Workshops at Penland
Say hello to Penland’s Summer 2017 workshop catalog, now online in full as a PDF. We’re beyond excited to have 97 great workshops on offer this year. Take a look and come join us in the studios to build tiles or books or bowls or brooches or... All applications received by February 11 will be entered into the early registration lottery. Scholarships are available for all workshops; apply by February 17.

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, jelly, fruit, and coffee. Eat in or take-out, all funds support the Tipton Hill Community Foundation. Women’s Prayer Breakfast: If you would like to join a group of women who are dedicated to praying, learning about God’s will, and fellowship, come join us at the Presbyterian Church of Burnsville on the 1st Wednesday of each month at 10:00am. We will be ending by 10:00am. Open to all! For more information call Barbara Haskell at 828-487-1644 or email at barbasm@bcrenn.com.

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 7:30pm at 794 Main St. (Estate area—off Ernest Craven Rd.). We are studying the Gospel of John currently. Call John Jackson at 828-793-7799 for information and directions. And bring your Bible.

Higgins Memorial United Methodist Church - Bible Study Fellowship (BSF) - Men’s Conference in Burnsville announces that its new study year will begin Sunday, September 10th at 6:55 pm and the class is being led 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 on Tuesday evenings through May – just show up any Tuesday evening beginning September 12th to join the group and study.

For more local information, call Mike Lawrence - 904-254-6103 (janeinsmichaelawrence@gmail.com) or Harvey Scheaeg - 828-284-0707 (chavyscheag@gmail.com) or go to www.bsfnational.org for comprehensive information about BSF.

Laurel Branch Baptist Church (Burnsville) – Seeking bi-vocational pastor, please email resume to lorenormann@frontier.com.

TRAC ANNOUNCEMENTS/2016/17 GRANT RECIPIENTS

The Toe River Arts Council, Ashevillie Area Arts Council, and the Madison County Arts Council pleased to announce the 2016/2017 Regional Arts Project Grant recipients. The Regional Artist Project Grant (RANG) is an annual grant program that provides financial support to developing professionals by funding a project pivotal to the advancement of their careers as artists. The selection criteria include artistic merit, the potential of the project to contribute to the artist’s professional growth, and the ability at Edel’s Restaurant in Burnsville on 1st Wednesday of each month.

This year’s grant cycle received 50 applications, with over $54,000 in requests from all art disciplines. A total of $11,300 was awarded. The Regional Artist Program Grant is sponsored by the Toe River Arts Council (Mitchell and Yancey Counties), Madison Arts Council, Asheville Area Arts Council (Buncombe

County) with support from Avery County, and the North Carolina Arts Council, a division of the NC Department of Natural and Cultural Resources, a state agency.

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.

Madison County

Hannah Furguson [500]: To create a documentary film that tells how a music festival saved Buff Mountain in Hot Springs from being clear cut in 1965.

From Mitchell County: Christina Shingel [500]: To acquire studio equipment needed for the fabrication of my work in steel for sculpture and installation.

Michael Kline [500]: To complete the next phase of construction on my studio to create a workspace for an apprentice and an organized, dry glass storage area.

From Yancey County: Jan Klein [500]: To purchase a Nest tech top wood lathe to help create large sculptural work.

Mayland Community College

SMALL BUSINESS CENTER

The Mayland Small Business Center (SBC) offers high quality training and continuing education for entrepreneurs and small businesses. Whether you are considering launching a new business or managing an existing one, the small business center provides resources tailored to your needs. If you would like to schedule a free confidential business counseling session or sign up for free small business seminars, contact Mayland SEC Director Allen Cook at 828/461-1295 or email him at acook@mayland.edu. Check our Mayland classes.

Niche Markets: Specialty Crop - Specialty crops are high value crops. They do not have to be produced on large acreages in order to make a profit. Learn site selection and crop selection. Marketing options for a variety of vegetables, herbs, flowers, and ornamentals 3/26, 6:00-8:00pm Mayland Campus.

Market Your Arts/Arts Online - Back by popular demand! Dynamic speaker and marketing expert, Zen Wiltz will discuss ways to market your art, your business, and your story online. This seminar will be packed full of the latest tactics to market efficiently and sell your art online. -3/15, W, 5:30-7:30 pm – TRAC Resource Center Spruce Pine.

Financing Your Small Business - Are you in need of a loan to start or expand your business? The Carolina Small Business Development Fund can help you navigate the process. Tommy Dunnison, Business Development Officer, will be discussing what the CSBDF looks for in order to render an approval on a loan. Topics covered will be the 5 C’s of Credit, types of loans available, what you will need to apply, and a typical loan timeline. -3/22, W, 5:30-7:00pm Mayland Campus.

Business Building Tips from a Master Artist - World renowned basket maker and marketing expert, Matt Younsey, started out building baskets for fun from Kiddie. Merging his love for art with his knowledge of marketing. Matt went full time into the business of making baskets. He made his passion his job and now owns a lucrative studio in the River Arts District of Asheville, NC. Hear Matt’s story about how he launched his business and made it profitable. Learn tips from the pro! -3/29, W, 4:00-6:00 pm – TRAC Resource Center Spruce Pine 828-756-1295.

Facebook for Business - Learn how to create a business Facebook page! This seminar will cover the basics of creating and managing a Facebook page for your small business. Learn how to create posts and interact with your customers! 3/20, TH, 5:00-6:00 pm Mayland Campus.

Curvy for Marketing - Curvy is a free online design service you’re going to want to use for your small business. At this quick course learn how to use Curvy to create professional looking publications that will have you marketing like a pro. -3/30, TH, 6:00-7:00pm Mayland Campus.
Implementing Strategic Marketing Plan
By Laura Vela

(Mitchell County, NC - February 21, 2017) The Mitchell County Economic Development Commission (EDC) recently announced a three-year strategic plan to recruit new business, encourage residential growth, and bolster the tourism industry. The Mitchell County EDC began the project with North Star Destination Strategies (North Star) in April 2016 to create a branding and marketing plan for the county. The announcement and presentation of the plan elements took place on February 3, 2017. The local committee will now begin work to implement the plan.

The EDC reviewed proposals from several marketing firms with the decision to hire North Star based on its experience and success branding hundreds of communities across the country. North Star is known as the leader in community branding, research, and planning throughout the United States. Another positive factor was that the firm had already spent nearly a year working with Toe River Arts Council. While the final presentation to community leaders largely consisted of concepts for the implementation of the brand, the project as a whole also consisted of an abundant amount of research and strategies for future use.

North Star conducted research to identify what differentiates Mitchell County from its competitors for the purposes of resident recruitment and retention, tourism development, and business attraction and support. It set out to learn the perceptions and beliefs of local stakeholders, residents, consumers, businesses, and influencers, as well as understand the competitive situation with the surrounding counties and Western North Carolina.

North Star combined research with its expertise and skill to present ideas to the local committee throughout the project. One of the elements included in the plan was a logo, but the investment in this plan was for much more than that. The final strategic plan is a nearly 400 page document that will guide tourism and economic development for the next three years.

As part of its community research, North Star conducted in-person research and planning that involved reviewing existing community materials and vast efforts to gain input from local citizens. During North Star’s visit to Mitchell County, the team traveled from the Blue Ridge Parkway to Roan Mountain, stopping at dozens of assets throughout the county. The team held in-person individual interviews, creative workshops, and community focus groups, in addition to phone interviews. North Star also carried out consumer awareness and perception studies through interviews about Mitchell County with external influencers and surveyed visitors and non-visitors to Mitchell County from within North Carolina to gain insight about external perceptions. North Star also analyzed competitive positioning.

Research data was analyzed for trending insite that bone in on the Mitchell County story. These insights were funneled into a strategic brand platform, which reads as follows: “For those who seek treasure in its purest form, Mitchell County, nestled amongst the oldest and greatest mountains of Western North Carolina, is the source for both ancient inspiration and modern interpretation, providing clarity and perspective in a noisy world.”

The brand narrative expands on the platform. An excerpt reads: “Along the winding Blue Ridge Parkway, you’ll find the happiest path, Mitchell County is a treasure trove where you’ll uncover life’s most sought after gems in all forms. Here, you’ll find nature’s welcoming sense of place that renews your connection to the things that matter most. And whether you discover gems you can hold in your hand or in your heart, all are worth the journey.”

“Mitchell County... Seek + Find” was chosen as the slogan. Among many reasons, it was chosen because it creates a vibrant sense of adventure, has a layered meaning (one can find whatever you are seeking: peace and quiet, gems, adventure, culture, history, business opportunities, etc.), works for residential, tourism and economic development messaging, is short and memorable, and links to the hidden treasures in the area. Some of the advertising will utilize phrases around this tagline to highlight Mitchell County in a refreshing way, for example, Seek: Mountain Views, Find: New Perspective, or another example, Seek: an Escape, Find: an Oasis.

Mitchell County has a wonderful spirit of creativity and entrepreneurship, and the EDC will use the research to facilitate ways to enhance support and expansion efforts surrounding this unique and significant asset. An external influence stated, “The creative environment is a critical element in industry recruitment, because companies need to recruit, and that talent desires an inspiring and interesting place to live. And, Mitchell County has it.”

Keith Hofmann, Chair of the EDC Board of Directors and Mitchell County Commissioner, emphasized the importance of the plan. “Over the past few years, every individual who has been on the ballot for County Commissioner has indicated a strong desire for enhancing economic development. This is much easier said than done and requires a strategic plan that is doable and incorporates other facets into a marketing plan. After much work and local input, the Mitchell Works strategic plan was presented and endorsed by the County Commissioners, Municipalities, Economic Development, and Chamber of Commerce boards and is now being implemented. One part of the implementation was completion of a marketing plan that has now been finalized. We are now positioned to move forward with solid plans that will contribute to enhancing the economy of the county. As Winston Churchill said ‘those who fail to plan, plan to fail’ and we certainly don’t want to make that mistake.”

The plan will assist the EDC in its work to strengthen and support existing businesses, encourage entrepreneurship, attract new businesses to the area, as well as people to visit, and maybe even relocate. Laura Vela recently began the role of Director of the EDC. She stated she is “excited to have this strategic marketing plan for the county, and look forward to using it as a valuable tool. Work on the implementation of the plan will begin immediately. The EDC will utilize North Star’s extensive research and strategy to improve Mitchell County’s business opportunities and work to develop a vibrant potential.”

Laura Vela is the Director of the Mitchell County EDC.
God Doesn’t Give Up
By Wendy Cannon
Mitchell County

My husband, Bruce Cannon, and I love Mitchell County. I do not believe we are here by accident. I do not believe any of us are here by accident. I believe we have been placed here by God to reach the people around us for Him. We are so glad that God has placed us here to serve Him and to serve others.

Mark 5:19 “Go...to the friends, and tell them how great things the Lord has done for me, and that hath had compassion on me.”

Because of some very hurtful words said by a Circuit Riding minister when my parents were very young and had lost a child to death, my parents stayed away from church for over 40 years. I had very few social opportunities, but they did not cease from church. There was no Bible sitting on the table, no prayers said, nothing. My parents did eventually come back to church and I am sure that they are now with the Lord. I am so thankful that I will see them again.

My Grandmother was the one who began taking me to church, but it was not an easy task for her to do. She met resistance. I can remember my grandmother asking my mom on many different occasions to allow me to take my sittings to church. My mom always had a reason why we could not go; it was Easter and everyone would be going just because it was Easter; it was Christmas and she didn’t want to go just because it was Christmas and the reason was no reason. But, my grandmother was persistent and one day when I was nine years old, my mom allowed my grandmother to take us to church.

I was the kid who went to church and heard the stories in Sunday School about Noah, Jesus, and more. I wanted to be just like those stories. I did not realize they were real people. I also remember being embarrassed because all the other kids seemed to know the stories. They knew how to pray and they knew who Jesus was but I didn’t.

My grandmother influenced me. When I was in 3rd grade, my Dad got hurt and had to go to the hospital in another state and my Mom had to go back to work. So, my grandmother came to live with us. I heard her pray at night and I can also remember my grandmother talking about Jesus being in this field and one was taken, but the other was left.” She also said that “two were in the bed and would be taken but the other one would be left.” It scared me. Now at this time, my sister and I shared a room and a bed. Being 9 years old, I must confess, I hoped if we were in the bed and one was taken, it would be me.

Even though I was a little kid, the influence of my grandmother, sitting in the Word in “big church,” and going to Sunday School changed me. I understood that I was a sinner and that Jesus had died to save me. So, my little girl heart was changed when I was ten and I accepted the Lord as my personal Lord and Savior. When I was 12 years old, I was given my very first Bible! My other grandmother, who had 18 children, gave each grandchild a Family Bible when they had their 15th birthday. So, my first Bible was a big white Family Bible which I kept out on my desk in my bedroom.

My birthday is in March and sometime later that year I stopped going to church. I was part of the Youth Group at that time. Some of the kids in the Youth Group were doing a faster and faster, and I didn’t want to. I didn’t want to go back to church. I don’t remember what happened, but to a 12-year-old it was important. Anyway, I stopped going. I stayed out of church for 2 years. During that time, no one from the church contacted me and asked me to come back. No adult came by the house. No child from my youth group asked me to go back. No one at church seemed to care about this 12-year-old girl no longer attended.

We need to tell people, even children, that we miss them when they are not in church. Ask God to make you aware when people are not there and to give you the burden for them. I am not to let someone fall through the cracks. You may be the instrument that is used to get someone back into church.

I dropped out of church and no one invited me back. I know God had not forgotten me. It makes me teary every time I think about this truth. During this time, when “no one with skin on” seemed to care, God would send me to ride my bicycle on the empty dirt roads around our house and have the thought, “you need to get back into church.” In the evening, I would go upstairs to my bedroom and I would turn on my lamp and go out and read my Bible. Remember, my Bible was a very large family Bible that I kept on my desk. I would get that big Bible and sit on my bed and read it.

How do you read a book? You begin reading a book at the beginning. I had no clue that the Bible was different. I would start at the beginning: Genesis 1:1 “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.” I would do OK until I got to “the begats.” Oh, I would read some of the begats, but I did not understand all the strange names or why they were listed and there seemed to be so many of them. So, I would get hung up and frustrated. I would stop reading until a few days later when the Lord would gently call me back to His Word and I would begin again to read. I would read right up again to Genesis 1:1.

I can’t tell you how many times I read “the begats.”

Even though “the begats” seemed boring and hard to understand, God placed them in Scripture so we could learn something. I did not get it immediately, but as I got older, I did. Reading “the begats” taught me that God can use anyone, including me and including you, to be a part of His plan; His ministry. See, in those names, is the lineage of Christ. God used Rahab, the harlot, and other unlikely people in His lineage. God uses unlikely people today to do amazing things.

Over the next two years I continued to feel the draw to go back to church. When I was 14 I finally asked my Mom if I could go back to church. After some persuading, she said I could go. Occasionally, my Dad would drive me to church and drop me off. Many times, I had to walk about one quarter mile on a dirt road to catch a ride with my Uncle. When I walked back into church I felt the Lord’s tender embrace and knew beyond a shadow of a doubt that I was where I should be. It was an added benefit that Bruce Cannon was there. He seemed to be interested in me and I was interested in him. He has now been my husband for almost 35 years.

More importantly, my Jesus was there as well. I began to grow in the Lord and I wanted to grow in Christ. The Lord has never left me in all the years that have followed. He continues to tenderly embrace me and woo me to Himself. I can never thank Him enough for His wonderful love and mercy.

Wendy Cannon serves with her husband, Rev. Bruce Cannon, at Bear Creek Baptist Church. She states, “I love writing North Carolina and am so happy the Lord is letting us serve Him here in this very beautiful part of the State.”

Lift Chairs
by Med-lift & La-Z-Boy
Featuring:
• Lifetime Frame and Mechanism Warranties
• Superior Construction
• Hardwood Frames
• All Steel Mechanisms

NOW ON SALE!

March 2017 - Blue Ridge Christian News page 31

www.brcnews.com
Many of us remember that just a few short years ago, North Carolina was burdened with the highest taxes in the Southeast and one of the worst tax climates in the nation. But over the past six years, Republican state leaders have implemented major and nationally recognized tax cuts and tax reform. Now, North Carolina businesses and citizens pay billions of dollars less in taxes. Our state boasts the best tax climate in the region and the 11th best nationally.

I was pleased to co-sponsor legislation that would empower voters to keep income taxes low by amending the North Carolina Constitution. If the bill becomes law, voters will consider a constitutional amendment on the November, 2018 ballot to lower the maximum personal income tax rate in North Carolina from 10 percent to 5.5 percent. The amendment does not limit the growth of state government spending based on changes in population and inflation – a provision erroneously described by critics as “TABOR.”

Since Republican tax cuts have helped create hundreds of thousands of North Carolina jobs and a half-billion dollar budget surplus, and since Gov. Roy Cooper has said he does not want to raise taxes, we hope he will enthusiastically support this constitutional amendment.

I am a primary sponsor of Senate Bill – 73 Modernize Nursing Practice Act. A major challenge facing health care consumers today is access to quality care, particularly in rural areas of our state where long commutes for medical treatment are often necessary. This legislation will address that concern by expanding the role of advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs) by allowing them to diagnose and prescribe treatment without the supervision of a licensed physician. If passed, this legislation would improve access to quality health care in our state while containing costs for taxpayers, employers, and patients.

Another bill, which I co-sponsored, is Senate Bill 24 – Allow Restaurants to Use Outdoor Grills. This bill would allow restaurants to use outdoor grills to prepare food while also protecting the safety of the consumer. Specific safety criteria must be met by the restaurant in order to lawfully use an outdoor grill for food preparation: the grill must be made of stainless steel, have a semi-permanent cover, and be cleaned daily. All food must be processed within a sanitary kitchen or indoor preparation facility. This bill will expand the capabilities of small business while also protecting the health of the customer.

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

In Proverbs 21:20, the Bible says “In the house of the wise are stores of choice food and oil, but a foolish man devours all he has.” I am inclined to view that this is wisdom North Carolina’s state government would be smart to heed. After a period of poorly controlled state spending with little regard for future economic downturns or emergencies, voters chose a new legislative majority that began in 2011 to make great strides to get the state’s finances in order. As a result of both tax cuts and other sound financial moves, by the end of the fiscal year on June 30, 2017 we anticipate having an additional $552.5 million in collected revenues beyond what was expected. The state’s recently delivered Consensus Forecast anticipates revenues will increase over the next two years by substantially more than a billion dollars. That same forecast predicts gains in North Carolina’s employment wage increases, and, therefore, household income. If the General Fund Consensus Forecast is correct, we could perhaps see 100,000 new jobs in 2017.

We can, I believe, credit these improvements in our state’s economy to the wise decisions made and implemented since 2011. The significant additions made to our state’s “nest egg” or “rainy day fund” has not harmed funding critical needs in areas such as education, transportation and paying off a sizeable $2.5 billion debt run up to the federal government prior to 2011 for borrowed unemployment benefits that our state’s employers had to pay off. We are not resting on our laurels. Despite criticism of our savings from Gov. Cooper, say fellow legislators and I will continue to take a judicious approach to spending. We will reduce waste wherever we can. We will maintain our commitments to North Carolina’s students and teachers. We will continue our policies to grow our economy with regulatory reforms and favorable tax and spending policies.

GOD BLESS AMERICA
On January 27th, 2017, I had the honor to march with hundreds of thousands of Americans from all different backgrounds on the anniversary of Roe v. Wade for the 44th annual March for Life. Vice President Mike Pence became the first White House representative to speak at the March for Life, speaking boldly and clearly about the right to life. In his remarks, he reiterated President Donald Trump’s commitment to the pro-life President and appoint a pro-life Supreme Court Justice. What a privilege to take part and stand for protecting the unborn.

It is an historic time in America, I believe we are witnessing a realignment of sorts where a culture of life in America is being brought to the forefront, hearts and minds are changing on the subject of abortion. For too long we have seen the torchbearer for abortion all over the world, but now is the time that we become the torchbearer for life for all nations, that we would be the City on a hill that all would see. America is at a crossroads. We have a new Administration in the White House that celebrates life and is committed to defending it. Last week, I was proud to support H. R. 7 the No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion Act, which I’m hopeful will soon go to President Trump’s desk to be signed into law. In the coming weeks, Congress will also have the opportunity to take another important step in the fight to defend life: defunding abortion giant Planned Parenthood.

I am encouraging my Republican colleagues to the commitment we made to the American people and include language to strip federal funding from Planned Parenthood—the largest abortion provider in the country— and demonstrate a clear, firm commitment to the idea of the sanctity of life.

Thank you to so many who continue to speak out for the unborn. May we never forget that life is precious.

A consensus forecast between the General Assembly’s Fiscal Research Division and the Office of State Budget and Management predicts North Carolina’s 2016-17 tax collections will be $55.2 million more than forecast.

North Carolina is one of only four states running such a large budget surplus. Many states across the nation are struggling due to fiscal mismanagement and unaffordable economies with entrenched special interests. Meanwhile, we’re expected to outpace budget projections and run a surplus once again.

The predicted surplus is the result of stronger-than-expected wage growth, increasing both Personal Income Tax and Sales tax collections,” according to the revenue report. Our state continues to solidify itself as one of the fastest growing, most vibrant and most agile economies in the nation.

The speed and agility by which our state’s economy continues to grow is only possible because of the tax cuts and regulatory reform put in place in the past few years. We’re allowing businesses to grow the economy by removing the shackles placed on markets over decades of useless regulatory overreach.

By focusing on what matters and cutting spending in places where state government never should have been in the first place, surplus in the past few years have allowed us to fund priorities that matter. For example:

- Teachers are making more than they ever have in North Carolina— even when accounting for inflation— by a wide margin.
- Overall education spending is greater than it has ever been in North Carolina— again, even when accounting for inflation.
- State employees have received raises, not state retirees.
- Our state has well in excess of $1 billion in savings, which allowed us to easily cover damage from Hurricane Matthew and wildfires around my district last year.

North Carolina is thriving. People are coming to our state from across the country — they’re building families, homes and prosperous lives for themselves.

I’m sure we hear nothing but doom and gloom from the media, the handful of protesters they’ll cover extensively a select few others who refuse to examine the facts. It’s hard to argue with numbers, though, and data show our state is performing among the best in the United States.

I try to find common ground on every issue that I can. That is my style and that is the way I like to work. However, there are some things that are sacrosanct and will not compromise. A few of those issues are: 2 Amendment rights, Pro-Life, Marriage. Another issue that I don’t work on at the state level but that is just as important, is our country’s support for Israel.

That is why I cosponsored House Bill 161, short title for the bill is: AN ACT REQUIRING STATE INVESTMENT FROM, AND PROHIBITING STATE AGENCIES FROM CONTRACTING WITH, COMPANIES THAT BOYCOTT ISRAEL. The bill basically requires the North Carolina State Treasurer and other state agency’s to divest of any investments from company’s or entities that are engaged in a boycott of the State of Israel.

I am strongly in favor of this bill. Israel has been a staunch ally of the United States and a beacon for freedom in the Middle East for over 66 years. That relationship is essential to the security and peace of the United States.

HB 161 goes on to say: Whereas, it is the public policy of the United States, as enshrined in several federal acts, to oppose boycotts against Israel, and Congress has concluded as a matter of national trade policy that cooperation with Israel materially benefits United States companies and improves American competitiveness; and Whereas, it is particular known for its dynamic and innovative approach in many business sectors; and, therefore, a company’s decision to discriminate against Israel, Israeli entities, or entities that do business with or in Israel is an unsound business practice making such a company an unhealthy risky contacting partner or vehicle for investment; and

Whereas, North Carolina seeks to act in support of Congress’s announced policy of “exercising a company’s promotion or compliance with sanctioned boycotts, divestment from, or sanctions against Israel as part of its consideration in awarding grants and contracts and supports the divestment of State assets from companies that support or promote actions to boycott, divest from, or sanction Israel”

It is critical for the United States and for North Carolina to stand strong with Israel and do whatever it takes to make sure this relationship endures for generations to come.
Love the Bus
By David Burleson
Avery County

Avery County is one of the most beautiful places on earth and has some of the most spectacular views a person will find anywhere. With the beauty of our area comes some of the most dangerous roads in our state. The 2,300 miles our buses travel each day create a challenge for any driver in any type vehicle, especially a school bus. Thankfully we have some of the most competent bus drivers in the country.

To honor bus drivers, the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) has designated the month of February as “Love the Bus” month to express our sincere appreciation to our drivers. According to the American School Bus Council (ASBC) national school buses carry approximately 26 million children safely to and from schools each day. Avery County Schools travels 2,303 miles daily, and transports 1,120 students served by 30 buses and 30 drivers. Transporting students involves teamwork and effort as we strive for efficiency and safety.

In North Carolina, over 700,000 public school students ride in 14,000 yellow buses each day. NCDPI School Support Division Director Ben Matthews said the benefits of school bus transportation are not limited to safety. As more students take the school bus to school, the environmental impacts are significant. "Traffic congestion and pollution can be reduced around schools, not to mention the fuel savings for family cars. In this economy, lots of families are looking for ways to trim their fuel budgets," Matthews said. Here are some more facts about school buses and some safety tips:

Fact Sheet: School Bus Safety

- The National Academy of Sciences, the U.S. Department of Transportation and other organizations agree that school buses are the safest form of transportation for getting children to and from school.
- Some 480,000 school buses carry 26 million children — more than half of America’s schoolchildren.
- Students are about 50 times more likely to arrive at school alive if they take the bus than if they drive themselves or ride with friends. Students are much safer riding the bus than being driven by a parent, and are about 20 times more likely to arrive at school alive if they take the bus than if a parent drives.
- School buses decrease our dependence on foreign oil through an annual savings of 2.3 billion gallons of fuel.
- A 20-mile round-trip school commute saves an approximate $420 annually for each student who rides the bus and an approximate $10.9 billion nationwide.
- Large school buses are heavier and distribute crash forces differently than do passenger cars and light trucks. Because of these differences, the crash forces experienced by occupants of buses are much less than that experienced by occupants of passenger cars, light trucks or vans.
- Safety features including the color and size of school buses, height, reinforced sides, flashing red lights, cross view mirrors, and crossing and stop sign arms ensure children are protected and secure on and off the bus.
- School bus drivers are highly trained professionals in student behavior management, loading and unloading, security and emergency medical procedures.
- Drivers participate in pre-employment and random drug/alcohol testing, as well as frequent driving record checks, and submit to background checks and periodic medical exams to keep their Commercial Driver’s License (CDL) with a School Bus Endorsement.
- The school bus industry operates under a set of safety, security, health and driver qualification guidelines that ensure, and in some cases exceed, federal and state laws, and ensure that school buses are the safest mode of transportation for our nation’s schoolchildren.

Safety tips for students:
- Be alert to traffic. Check traffic both ways before entering the bus.
- Make eye contact with the bus driver, wait for his/her signal before crossing the street.
- Walk in front of the bus, never walk behind the bus to cross the street.
- While waiting for the bus, stay in a safe place away from the street.
- Before leaving the sidewalk, look for fast moving traffic.
- Never go near or under the bus to retrieve something you’ve dropped.

Safety tips for parents:
- Review the safety tips with your child regularly.
- Get to know the parents of other riders as well as student riders with your child.
- Team up with other parents to get involved and monitor bus stops and bus routes.

Voice concerns immediately to your school district.
- Attend “back to school” nights and tour your child’s school bus.
- Get to know your school’s transportation coordinator and your child’s bus driver.
- Keep phone numbers handy in case the bus is delayed or in the event of an emergency.

Please join me in the campaign to thank our drivers and transportation department for their dedication and diligent work. On behalf of Avery County Schools, “Thank you, Bus Drivers, Brian King-Director of ACS Transportation, Little King-Transportation Information Management Specialist and our Transportation Mechanics for ensuring that our students are safe and cared for as they travel on our buses. We truly appreciate you!”

David Burleson is Superintendent of the Avery County Schools
Spring Quarter Begins
By Tom Walker
McDowell County

The Spring Quarter will begin on March 13th at Foothills Baptist Bible College. This is the 4th year of operation; the first graduating class was held last summer.

FBBC is a place where men and women can learn more about the truths of the Word of God. It is the belief of the school and its administration that the Bible is the inspired, inerrant and infallible Word of God. The school rejects the idea that the Bible only contains or that it becomes the Word of the Lord. It is God’s truth for every generation.

Both men and women alike are welcome to study at Foothills Baptist Bible College. The school is not only for preachers, teachers and missionaries, it is also a place where people can go and learn more about what God has to say to this generation.

The faculty has the proper educational qualifications and a heart for the students and their welfare and concerns. Every instructor has reached the Doctoral level in the educational process.

One can earn an Associate Degree, A Bachelor Degree, A Masters Degree, or a Doctoral degree in theology or Christian Education.

FBBC holds night classes. This is good for those who must work a daytime job. It gives them an opportunity to keep working their jobs and yet have a night to come to further their education.

The courses which will be taught in the Spring quarter are as follows:
Period 1: The Book of Genesis- Dr. Gary Limer- 6:30-7:00 P.M.
Period 2: The Book of Revelation II- Dr. Tom Walker- 7:10-7:45 P.M.
Period 3: The Book of Isaiah- Dr. Eric Grindstaff- 7:55-8:30 PM.
Period 4: The Book of Acts- Dr. Tom Walker- 8:35-9:10 PM.

These courses can be taken for credit or they can be audited. A high school diploma or a GED is required to take courses for credit. They can be audited without having a high school diploma. Auditing means you can come to class, listen to the lectures and receive a syllabus, but do not have to do all the outside work that students studying for credit have to complete.

The first class begins on March 14th at 6:30 P.M. You can register for classes by calling 828-442-0111 or pre-register. If you can sign up early before the first day of classes, it would be helpful in pre-ordering materials. Prospective students can call for an appointment.

Visit the school website at www.FoothillsBBC.org.

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

---

Hospice & Palliative Care of the Blue Ridge

Thrift Store

Located on Hwy. 226 beside the P&R Valero
(828)-688-6400

Store Hours are:
Tuesday thru Friday- 8:30-5:00
Saturday- 9:00-12:30
Sunday & Monday-Closed

We have a huge variety of items including:
Furniture, clothing, accessories, shoes, jewelry, tools, books, small appliances, bed linens, pictures, building materials

Great Selection ~ Great Prices ~ Great Cause

---

Be a Light in the Life of a Hospice Patient

Become a Hospice Volunteer

Patients coping with end-of-life often feel isolated and alone even when they are surrounded by love. Care-givers often experience similar feelings. The responsibilities of care-giving can make it difficult to find time to take a nap or to simply go grocery shopping and run errands.

Sometimes it helps to have a new friend. Someone who offers the gift of time. Someone who offers a listening ear. Someone who can shine their light when darkness pushes in. Hospice volunteers do just that and more. They offer hope and joy during the most difficult of times.

Consider becoming a Hospice volunteer. Your presence will be a blessing and you will be blessed. For more information contact Kathy Honeycutt at (828)-765-5677

---

Hospice & Palliative Care of the Blue Ridge

March 2017 - Blue Ridge Christian News page 35
Plow Sow Reap
By Allan Buchanan

Webster’s definition of inquiry is “a gross injustice, wickedness, a wicked act or thing, sin.” Therefore, I take this to say that a person who “plows wickedness or sows wickedness will reap wickedness. The same could also be said about a good person with good intentions. One who plows good and then sows good will reap good.

It’s no secret our days are getting longer and warmer. Spring is around the corner. Many of you will be making plans for garden. Your plans must include turning over the soil to prepare a seedbed. You must plow the land. Once that’s done you will take the seeds of your favorite vegetables and sow them. God provides the sun and rain that’s needed for the seeds to burst forth underground and push up through the top soil. You will work to keep weeds from choking the growth. You may need to guard the plants from animals which would feed off them. At the end of the season, when the plants have reached their full development, it will be time for you to reap the benefits of your work.

I believe God places his children where their life and their testimony can plow, sow and reap souls for His kingdom. It’s my desire that everyone believe on Jesus at an early age so they will have a lifetime to work for Him.

Bible Drill represents an excellent way to plow, sow and reap. It helps children and youth increase their knowledge, memorization and application of Scripture. When thinking about Children’s Bible Drill (Grades 3-6), I immediately think of Martha Burleson. For nearly 50 years, she has worked with many young lives helping them hide God’s Word in their heart. They can recall these Scriptures at any time throughout their lives to fight off Satan.

Twenty-five years ago, Sherril Buchanan joined Martha at Bear Creek working with the children. Sherril’s heart’s desire is to reach people for Christ and Bible Drill is her favorite way to do so. After she worked alongside Martha for one year, Martha went to Ledge Baptists Church and began a Children’s Bible Drill Ministry there. After a few years there, she returned to Bear Creek and started the Wee Driller (Ages 4 years to Grade 2). Bible Drill is a family affair for Martha as well. Her oldest son, Ronnie, and his wife, Rhonda worked with the Youth Bible Drill (Grades 7-0) for twenty years. They also worked with High School Drill and Speaker’s Tournament (Grades 10-12). Martha’s daughter, Marsha Letterman, has assisted Sherril for 7 years as well. Brinney Carver and her mother, Shelia Speight, because leaders after Ronnie and Rhonda passed the Youth Bible Drill on in 2015. One drillers, Jessica Finman (Biddix), also helped Sherril after finishing the high school drills. Martha told me that long before she got involved, the late Vessey Wilis and Reba Wilis started the legacy of Children’s Bible Drill at Bear Creek Baptist Church. Shane Duncan remembers Virginia (St) Ferguson working with him as a boy in Bible Drill.

Each driller needs to know 25 verses, 10 key passages and all the books of the Bible. Today, Sherril is getting the children ready for competition drills that begin in March. 3rd graders only compete at Church Drill, 4th-6th graders compete at Association Drills and these winners go on to compete at Regional (State) Drills in April. Each driller is allowed 12 mistakes at Church Drills, 8 at Association Drills and 4 at Regional Drills. All Children Driller that compete for 3 years are recognized by the Association. Then, if they continue on in Youth Drill for 3 more years, they are once again recognized for 6 outstanding years by the Association and are given a gift.

I don’t remember having these drills when I was a boy. Watching these children through the years makes me very proud of each one. They would not be nearly as successful in Bible Drill without the support of parents and grandparents. Just think, God’s Word is stored away in their memories for ever. Nothing and no one can take it from them. “ Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.” Psalm 119:11 KJV

With Jesus return heavy on our minds, it would be good for all of us to encourage more children to participate in Bible Drills. No electronic gadget or sport should take the place of time spent learning God’s Word.

Alien Buchanan is a freelance Christian writer. Alien attends Bear Creek Baptist Church.
BRIAN CENTER
In A Highly Regulated Industry
Achieved A Rating
of
ZERO
Deficiencies

Covers all Aspects
of Operations

• Medical
• Nursing
• Rehabilitation

• Dietary
• Food Preparation
• Financial

Brian Center
Health & Rehabilitation / Spruce Pine

218 Laurel Creek Court, Spruce Pine, NC
Located off 19E, Next to Brad Reagan Park
Phone: (828) 765-7312
Fax: (828) 765-7295
ACROSS
1 we found out that the island was
called ___ (Acts 28:1)
6 your heart will ___ and swell with
joy (Isa 60:5)
10 The Lord has done this, and it is
marvelous in ___ eyes (Matt 21:42)
13 on your way in safety, and your
___ will not stumble (Prov 3:23)
14 No one knows about that day or
that hour (Matt 24:36)
15 in the earth in those days; and ___
will be (Gen 6:4)
16 Eat not of it ___ nor sodden at all
with water (Exodus 12:9)
17 “Some of the teachers of the law
___,” “Well said, teacher!” (Luke
26:39)
19 Rachel, lift (Hab 11:19)
21 Sharper ___ any double-edged
sword (Eze 4:12)
22 low tech form of Old Testament
transportation
23 Both ___ and high, rich and poor,
together (Ps 45:2)
24 ___ and Dannah, and Eshban
(Joshua 15:52)
27 they did not think it worthwhile
to ___ the knowledge of God (Rom
1:28)
29 a net by the wayside; they have set
___ for me (Ps 146:5)
31 “I don’t know,” he replied. ___
brother’s keeper?” (2,1) (Gen
49)
33 much less man, who is but a ___
(2 Chr 5:6)
35 there before me ___ with two horns
(1,3) (Dan 3:8)
36 by him we cry, ___ (Rom
8:15)
39 One who is ___ in his work is brotherto one who destroys (Prov
18:9)
41 ___ the shady trees, in the covert of
the reed, and ___ (Job 40:21)
(KJV)
42 Surely there is ___ for the silver
(Job 38:1)
43 They neither worship the LORD
nor ___ to the decrees (2 Kings
17:14)
44 No ___ sows a patch of unshorn
cloth on an old (Matt 13:16)
46 a quarter of the ___ for five
shekels (2 Kings 6:25)
48 ___ of the teachers of the law
(Luke 20:26)
52 small is the gate and narrow the
___ that leads to life (Matt 7:14)
54 and a quarter of ___ for five
shekels (2 K 6:25)
55 or goat hair, ram skins dyed ___
(Exod 39:25)
57 By the sweat of your ___ you will
eat your food (Gen 3:19)
59 guards his own house, his possess-
ions ___ (3,4) (Luke 1:21)
60 the Babylonians, that ruthless and
___ (Hab 1:6)
61 on wings like eagles; they will not
and grow weary (Isa 40:31)
64 Some people are like ___ along the
path (Mark 4:15)
65 and drunk with him after he ___
from the dead (Acts 10:41)
66 and wore a ___ of scale armor (1
Sam 17:5)
68 picnic pest (Prov 6:6)
69 Now shall the ___ tremble in the
day of thy fall (Ezek 26:18)
KJV
70 But ___ have risen, I will go
ahead of you into Galilee (Matt
26:32)
DOWN
2 ___ witness who pours out
lies (1,5) (Prov 6:19)
3 But when you are invited, take
the ___ place (Luke 14:10)
4 when you give ___ the needy, do
don’t announce it with trumpets
(Matt 6:2)
8 the ___ they sailed back to
Aaricia (Acts 14:26)
9 each one ___ down his staff and it
became a staff (Ex 7:12)
17 for all the hills once cultivated
by the ___ (Isa 7:25)
26 where moth and destroy, and
where thieves break (Matt
6:19)
9 Do not take advantage of a
widow or an ___ (Ex 22:22)
10 no one pours new wine into
___ wineskins (Mark 2:22)
11 with their tongues they have
desert (Romans 1:13)
12 A fool’s talk brings a ___ to his
back (Prov 14:3)
15 a prophetess, ___ , the daughter
of Phumah (Luke 2:36)
16 they were being attacked at
both front and ___ (2 Chr 13:14)
20 ___ to the Garden (Gen 2:15)
24 ___ of the teachers of the law
(Luke 20:26)
26 the axles, ___ and hubs were all of
cast metal (1 Kings 7:33)
28 ___ were the place of God unto
Eli (1,3) (1 Sam 2:27)
29 ___ and hands were ___ (Gen
2:15)
31 I will be ___ and rejoice in you
(Ps 9:2)
33 the cloud was over the taber-
nacle only ___ days (1,3)
(Num 9:20)
36 And Israel ___ (Gen 35:18)
38 King David himself walked
behind the ___ (2 Sam 3:31-32)
40 I was among the exiles by the ___
River (Ezra 1:1)
44 wife of Elah (Ruth 9:10) KJV
46 the tongue is a ___ for the
body (James 3:5)
47 golden vials full of ___ which are
the prayers of saints (Rev 5:8)
KJV
49 The ark came to rest on the
mountains of ___ (Gen 8:5)
50 ___ every tongue that accuses you
(Isa 54:17)
51 a river went out of Eden to
water the garden (Gen 2:10)
52 A ___ begat Jesse, and Jesse
begat David (Ruth 4:22)
53 and to decide all ___ of dispute
and assault (Deut 25:1)
54 To our God and Father be glory
for ever and ever. (Phil 4:20)
55 His head and hair were white
like ___ as white as snow (Rev
1:14)
56 For the Lord your ___
49___ consuming fire (2,1) (Deut
4:24)
57 Can you make a ___ of him like a
bird (Job 41:5)
58 Of what ___ is money in the hand
of a fool (Proverbs 17:16)
59 ___ in God ___ he created him
(1 Cor 1:28)

Solution on page 14
Launch of New Book
The Market on Oak

Spruce Pine, N.C. Western North Carolina author Janie DeVos will launch her newest release “The Art of Breathing” on March 11, 2017 from 11 am-1 pm at The Market on Oak store in downtown Spruce Pine. Mrs. DeVos will discuss her new release and sign books for those in attendance.

From author Janie DeVos comes a poignant and richly detailed novel set in the 1950s in North Carolina, where one young woman struggles to save her own life—and finds the strength to truly live it. “NetGalley

When Kathryn Cavanaugh steps over the threshold of the Felham Sanatorium in 1914, she has no idea what, or if, she will ever leave it again. Despite the rise of promising new treatments, tuberculosis is still feared and often fatal. But twenty-four-year-old Kate has proven her resilience before, leaving her Blue Ridge Mountain home for a very different life in the city with her ambitious attorney husband, Geoffrey. For the sake of her family, especially her young son, she’s determined to get healthy again.

The sanatorium is a strange battlefield, with every patient fighting for survival amid a grueling routine of tests, treatment, and enforced rest. Kate quickly finds camaraderie among the women on her ward—and a growing kinship with fellow patient Philip McAllister. As weeks pass, the hospital’s confines come to offer more independence than Geoffrey’s proscription with status ever allowed.

And with this surprising discovery comes the courage to contemplate the choices she has made—and, perhaps, the chance to breathe freely at last...


Both books grabbed the attention of a New York publisher, East End Publishing, and in 2007, Ms. DeVos’ third book, Barbarito’s Wing, made its debut. Scholastic Books was interested in including Barbarito’s Wing in their North American school book fair, and asked that it be produced in soft-cover. It was, and to date it has sold over 90,000 copies.

In the spring of 2012, DeVos once again teamed up with seasoned publisher Pat Avery to release her latest children’s book, The Shopkeeper’s Bear. It was released in November of that year, and has become a fan favorite.

In 2013, DeVos’ first adult novel found a home with prestigious Kensington Publishing. Beneath A Thousand Apple Trees was released in the fall of 2013, and is due to be released in February, 2017. Recently, Kensington signed DeVos to a three-book series about old Florida, beginning in the 1870’s. The first book in the Glory Land series is set to be released in December, 2017, with the second and third books planned for publication in 2018.

The Market on Oak is located at 262 Oak Avenue, Spruce Pine, NC. For more information, call 828-653-0571.

About The Market on Oak:
The Market on Oak is a vibrant lifestyle destination where North Carolina craft people, farmers, musicians and authors from Western North Carolina sell and share their work. The shop speaks to the unique cultural values and way of life in the western North Carolina Mountains.

Our non-profit mission is to provide the gifted, vibrant people of our region—a way to supplement their income doing what they love and what they know best. We want to be a place where you can come in the store, shop, smile and laugh and learn about our culture. Then we want you to take a piece of “our way of life” home with you.

Patti Jensen is Intern Director of the Mitchell County Chamber of Commerce.

Check out our new Website
www.brcnews.com
And find us on Facebook

Prom 2017 is on its way - Grassy Creek Clothing
Is Your Tuxedo Headquaters
Come Book Your Tux Now
For the Entire Family

Grassy Creek Clothing
12451 Hwy 226 S., Spruce Pine (828) 766-7502
Monday, Tuesday, Thursday Friday 8:30-5:30 pm
Wednesday Saturday 8:30, 5:30 pm
Closed Sunday
-Go to Church

“SHOP LOCAL” www.grassycreekclothing.com

Jackson Hewitt® TAX SERVICE
911 W Union St 828-433-4455
Inside Wal-Mart 828-448-2243

INSTANTLY GET
$25 OFF Your Tax Prep Fees of $100 or more
When we file your taxes.
Minimum tax prep fee required.

www.brcnews.com
March 2017 - Blue Ridge Christian News page 39
Pause...and Consider

By Ken and Jan Merop
Avery County

Another hot summer day was amazing. My husband, Ken had gone out to mow the lawn in the early morning ‘cooler’! Sometime later, I realized the mower wasn’t disrupting the morning quiet anymore. I stopped out in the backyard and watched as he patiently persevered unwinding a clinging vine that had wrapped itself around our split leaf philodendron.

These plants have broad leaves and I’ve never seen vines enroaching them. It finally gave way with his careful, persistent unwinding, slipping and pulling. At last, the philodendron was released from the grasp of the vine.

And, that was a good thing as the vine would have eventually taken over and choked out the life of the plant.

Have you ever experienced being that philodendron? Another person seems to think you are their source and they drain the very energy from you, depleting you whenever you’re in their presence. It’s an unhealthy situation needing to be remedied by gentle, but persistent unwinding that leads to release.

However, there is a clinging that should take place spiritually which is actually welcomed and encouraged.

Anyone who has ever been in God’s waiting room knows how difficult it is to wait. And yet we are encouraged in passages in the Bible to do just that. For example, one of my favorite passages is Psalm 27: 14 NKJV where it says, “Wait on the Lord; be of good courage, and He shall strengthen your heart; wait, I say, on the Lord.”

This is not inactive waiting. We don’t sit back in our lazy chair and do nothing. We get to work with whatever it is God has placed in our hands to do... right where we are... as we wait for him to move. And in our ‘good courage’ God strengthens us, preparing us for his answer.

I recently heard a delightful and meaningful expression of the word ‘wait’ as we see it in the Bible. It means that we are to cling, to actually wrap ourselves around the Lord. Being a clinging vine with the Lord shows our willing dependence on his sovereignty, wisdom and his heart of love for us. We can never clench too tightly to the One who cherishes our devotion and trust.

In fact our close embrace achieved through prayer, Bible reading, teaching, praise and thanksgiving helps God’s character to rub off on us. It’s like the clinging grape vines firmly wrapped around the support holding them up as they produce beautiful, nutritious fruit.

Let’s be the right kind of clinging vine. Selah

Sowing Seeds of Righteousness

In the darkness of the earth,
warm soil cradles newly sown, unimpressible seeds.
Sun and rain call forth life as the seeds become roots, vines, and plants.
Suddenly, yellow, red, and purple energy in the form of fruitfulness.
We are created in sin’s darkness until... the Master calls for new life in us.
We become the colorful, fruitful bearers of His name sowing seeds of righteousness.

Now may He who supplies seed to the sower... multiply the seed you have sown and increase the fruit of your righteousness. 2 Corinthians 9:10

Snow Hill Baptist Church

No Regrets Family—
Bearing Precious Seed

By Pastor Dean Honeycutt
Mitchell County

“How that he goeth forth and worketh, bearing precious seed shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.” Psalm 126:6

Psalm 126 is a song of degrees or ascents. The Hebrew word means to go up or ascend. Fifteen Psalms bear this subtitle. (Psalms 120-134) They may have been psalms sung by those going up to Jerusalem to worship. Psalm 126 may have been sung by captives returning to Jerusalem. They were very happy to be going home. Our Christian Kynan Bringman in the Sheaves is based on this Psalm.

I see a person whose only hope is in the bag of seed they are carrying. Seed is a lifeline for these people; if they had no seed, then they had no crops. If they had no crops, then they had no food. The time honored translation is “precious seed.” The person who goes forth, he has to go. He cannot stay where he is. In other words it is imperative that he go. If he does not go the seed will not be planted, and there will be no food for next year. The seed is preserved from last year, or it has been purchased, but some times the least is a bag of precious seed, and in this seed does he hope for a harvest.

I want you to think about this seed for just a moment. John 12:24 says unless a seed falls into the ground and die, but if it die, it brings forth a lot of fruit. A seed in itself is not viable, in other words it is not capable of living, but when it is placed in the right conditions in the ground a miracle takes place. That seed will produce life when it is placed in the right soil, with the right temperature and nutrients, with proper amount of water. That seed matures and brings forth life. And from that one seed a lot of food is produced. Jesus Christ is the seed of life. From that one life yet being dead placed in the right conditions in a tomb, and life from the quickening Spirit of God, brought forth life in the resurrected body of Jesus Christ. And from the resurrected Savior many people have life. For when the seed of the Gospel is planted in the right conditions in the heart a miracle takes place and a heart that was given over to death brings forth life.

That is what this verse is all about. This person has to carry the seed, he feels the weight of the seed bag as he carries it. He has the burden of carrying the seed and sowing in the ground. We must remember he has to lose the seed before he can gain. He has to trust the Lord for the harvest. His burden is not that he has to carry the bag of seed or labor to put it in the ground. He is not weeping over the work he has to do, but he is weeping over the hope in what the seed will produce. This requires faith and a trust in God. I see a beautiful picture here of a man or a woman planting this seed and crying out to God “O God bless us once again, bless us with a harvest.” As he weeps in his tears want the seed. What does God notice? God notices the heart, he hears the weeping over what is hoped, that will come forth from the seed. This is not about a farmer that has a good harvest, this is about the people of God rejoicing over sinners being saved.

Because he has put his trust and trust is the Lord he comes home with shouts of joy bringing his harvest with him. God has rewarded his faithfulness.

May I add here the “American Dream” is a bunch of boloney. May I explain that the Christian has been deceived to pursue something that is foreign to a disciple of Christ and scripture. Our number one pursuit as a child of God is to “sow in tears, weeping for the lost and praying for their salvation. Would you consider that one cannot “grow until they go”, cannot “gain until you lose”, and expect where you have sown bountifully to reap bountifully. (2 Cor.5:6)

May the Word of God rest in your heart and let us stand before Him one day with “No Regrets.”

Pastor Dean Honeycutt shepherds Snow Hill Baptist Church in Bakersville, NC. He may be reached at 828-383-8533, snowhillbaptist@gmail.com, or visit their website at www.snowhillbaptist.com.

Rumours Beauty Salon

Women • Men • Children

By Appointment

Hair • Perm • Cuts • Highlighting

www.bremnews.com

March 2017 - Blue Ridge Christian News page 40
Going Home
Cindy Mercer
Burke County

Some time ago I read an interesting analogy. A human being steps off a mountain and goes down. The Son of God steps off a mountain and goes up. We are then reminded that the Creator is not bound by the laws of His creation. He is going home. Soon He is out of sight of earth and in sight of heaven. As He ascends still higher, He is met by tens of thousands of angelic beings. The Bible actually records the chorus of the heavenly choir singing as they greeted their returning Lord. David pictures the scene in Psalm 21: 10. The angels divide into two groups. One group sings the melody, asking a question, and the other sings a harmonious response. The combined voices of countless angels reverberate throughout all heaven. "Lift up your heads. O ye gates! And be lifted up, ye everlasting doors! And the King of glory shall come in" (verses 7-9). Listen is one group of angels asks in song, "Who is this King of glory?" And another group responds, "The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle" (verse 8). They do not ask, "Who is this King of glory?" because they don't know. They want to sing praises to His name. The joyful song echoes and reechoes through the chambers of heaven.

The gates of heaven swing open. Surrounded by the rapturous singing of tens of thousands of adoring angels, Jesus Christ enters into the glorious splendor of heaven. His Father stands before Him with arms wide open. In that magnificent moment, Father and Son are reunited. As they approach one another, in the ecstasy of eternity, a great noise fills the air. Seraphim and cherubim are silent. The angels prepare to lift their voices again in a rapturous song of praise. But Jesus raises His hands and waves them back. He stands silent before His Father for a moment.

Jesus stands and lifts His nail-scarred hands and says, "Father, I am about to enter into that which I have given Me to do. I am about to enter into the Father's representatives. My Father has given Me the heavens, and I am about to enter into the Father's representatives. My Father has given Me the heavens, and I am about to enter into them. The Father says, "Son, the sacrifice is accepted." The angels sing anew: "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain" (Rev. 5:12).

If Jesus would not accept His Father's embrace until He knew that I could be there, if He loves me as much as He loves the Father, I want to be there! I don't want to miss the glorious reunion Jesus is longing for.

Is this the burning desire of your heart too? Do we really long to be there? As you are out in the harvest fields plowing and sowing seeds, it may seem that the ground is hard and difficult to penetrate. But if we have a faithful work to do...we must keep our hands on the gospel plow and lift high the blood-stained banner! Jesus is coming again and the reign of God will begin. Now is not the time to grow weary and throw in the towel. We must labor in the Vineyard as never before. Precious souls are waiting for us.

The angels are ready to join their voices in a Hallelujah chorus as we make final preparations for going home. "While they watched, the He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight." Acts 1:10

Lana’s Lines
Sustaining Bread
By Lana Ellis
Tennessee

While preparing to write this month's theme "Plow, Sow and Reap", I came upon this quote by Thomas Jefferson that was too good to pass up. He said, "Were we directed from Washington when to sow, and when to reap, we should soon want bread." Imagine the process that would be required if it depended on the government for our bread. First a congressional committee is formed to discuss and debate the issue. Meanwhile the sitting president appoints a Bread Czar. However, after only a few days the government has to resign because it has been revealed that he owns stock in Panera Bread. Due to the lack of bread available to the consumer there are violent protests throughout the country. In an attempt to quiet the chaos the president signs an executive order stating that all bread will be imported from France, atop French bread. The ink has not dried on the order before a judge declares it discriminates against bakers from other countries and nationalities. Meanwhile there is no bread to be had. Thank God for farmers across the country who do know when to sow and when to reap. If they didn't the right thing they get up before daybreak to plow the fields and sow the seeds that will produce wheat that will be ground into flour that will be made into bread that will be consumed by the likes of you and me.

Throughout the world bread is considered a sustainer of life and God provides our daily bread by way of the farmer. The human soul is also in need of sustaining bread and God provided bread for the soul by way of Jesus. The bread of God is that which comes down out of heaven and gives life to the world. (John 6:33) Those of us who have parables of that bread were once described by Isaiah as sheep who have gone astray and turned to the way. There are many more "go astray sheep" among us. They are our neighbors, our friends, our colleagues. Jesus says to us, "I am the Bread of Life. If you love me you will feed the sustaining bread to my sheep."

Check out our new Website—www.brcnews.com

WE ARE COMMITTED TO DOING OUR BEST FOR YOU!

"INSURANCE is the most IMPORTANT thing a person has because it protects him against the loss of everything he has in the world."

H.O. Hirt, ERIE Founder

Rick Mercer is the pastor of the Morganton Seventh-day Adventist Church at 2187 Jamestown Road, Morganton. They can be reached at 828-420-3549 or cjmercer@at&t.net. Check out www.morgantonsda.org. Their passion is to share the love of Christ with all who will listen.
C & G Nursery is a family owned Nursery operation. Doug and Jane Clark began the business in 1961 growing Christmas trees and native ornamentals. Today, C & G Nursery is a wholesale grower of over 100 different varieties of trees and shrubs as well as retail growing the Fraser fir trees and other native ornamental plants. Our C & G Nursery Mission is to provide our customers with quality plants/trees at a fair and reasonable price and strive to maintain repeat business instead of a “one time” sale.

Owners Doug and Jane Clark have worked side by side to build the Nursery and establish a trust and quality in the Nursery and its products. Incorporate in 1982, the over 2,000 acre farm still family owned and operated.

Doug Clark, Mason Clark Isaac, and Reed Clark, children of Doug and Jane, have followed in the family business. The Clark’s have 3 grandchildren (Jared, Carson, John, Alex, Ben, Chris, Jeremih, and Riley) and all help to work in the Nursery in some capacity.

C & G Nursery employees between 20 to 40 workers throughout the seasons and have Nursery Crops in Avery, Burke, and Caldwell Counties in NC as well as Carter and Johnson Counties in Tennessee. Christmas Corner in Pineola, NC is operated by C & G Nursery during the months of October - December for retail sales of Fraser Fir trees, wreaths, and other seasonal holiday items.

Congratulations to C & G Nursery, Inc. and to Doug and Jane Clark.

For more information about the Nursery check the website at www.cmgdnursery.com

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 NCA&T State University (MA). She is a National Board Certified Teacher and has been teaching for 39 years. She and her husband, Dee Clark, have been married for 56 years and attend Creasytown Baptist Church.
“Too Much Thought for a Simple Mind…”

By Timothy W. Iron

As I watched a portion of the documentary film about the annual TED conference yesterday http://www.ted.com/ (albeit old news now that it was filmed in 2007), I got the feeling that as much as we try, we often are like runners, sprinting as fast as we can go, but our legs are submerged in water, impeding our progress, slowing our real abilities. It was intriguing to see various speakers who ranged from Rick Warren to Larry Brilliant, all with ideas and visions that exceed what they could do locally, taking those thoughts to a global scale, the God-scale. They were all interviewed either before or after they spoke and described having the similar feeling, as if they couldn’t do enough on their own to achieve their goals or visions which was the reason why they were there at the TED conference.

TED stands for Technology, Entertainment and Design was created as a platform to bring together diverse thought and ideas from around the globe in order to concentrate the human capacity for each of the three aspects in hopes to achieve a higher degree of psyche as a global community.

I began to think about the scope of what we do daily in our own lives and how little of this affects the outcome of what goes on in the world. Is that the falsity of why we face. Yes, we put our time in for charitable purposes, telling ourselves, “Every little bit helps.” Then we turn around and second guess ourselves, thinking inwardly, “How can this really matter when there are thousands more children who will go hungry, people without adequate housing, or enough clean water for entire towns?” However, in reality, it does take thousands, even millions of any inputs to make dreams come true.

Answer: We cannot do it alone.

Each TED prize winner was asked before they left the stage if they would tell the world what they could have done answered, what would they do. Each of the speakers or audience members, many were entrepreneurs of significant natures or inventions that have transformed our world, were interviewed in the documentary and realize either before, during or after the conference that those dreams were only possible because of the financial, intellectual and inspirational collective whole in attendance or connected to the conference in some manner.

In other words, it took the world to make changes on a global scale. Granted, there might be the occasional oddity that might take off on its own and become something with little or no input. But the real game-changers, the ideas that could make an impact either for example, preventing a global pandemic to creating sustainable housing anywhere in the world, were only going to be possible with the creative minds of the world working in union.

A global consciousness is what began to emerge as a theme for the movie; a consciousness that seemed to be taking something for granted. This is where it began to bother me, the fact that many of the most brilliant minds were from themselves, egotistical if you will. Only when they were placed on a global scale did they feel small and insignificant; thus, they had for a second stepped into God’s shoes. It was here, they realized they were incapable of the daunting task that would be required to achieve their dream. It was here they realized they needed help.

Now, few of them, if any, gave pause to reflect on the spirituality of what we were creating as a whole. Again, I have to stress here that it is and was exciting to hear and see all of these brilliant minds present their thoughts and visions. While I may not agree with some of them or adhere to their tenants, it was more than inspiring to listen all they had to tell. When I stopped watching, my mind was on fire. I was ready to jump up and do something, anything, yet here I was getting ready to go to work, another night shift, another proverbial shift in the salt mine.

It was here that the feeling of, “So much to do, but so little time to get it down,” came back. Yes, we might feel as if we are running in place, or submerged in water feeling as if we can’t do enough to make something happen, but what we have to realize is that we cannot do it alone. And if we really think about it, we cannot do it without God. Leaving faith out of the equation is a mistake mankind should understand, when it comes to fixing God’s credit for what we are capable of achieving. When we don’t give credit where credit is due, we soon find that we will falter and become misled is what we seek to achieve. We have seen it time and time again in the Old Testament, when the Children of Israel forget who they were and what they were there for. They sought to build grand temples, only to have them destroyed, again and again, when they would become misguided and wander down the wrong path.

Let us go forward, seeking to make the world a better place, but be cognizant of the fact that we are not alone, neither in our effort nor in our abilities, which were given to us by the creator, God the Father. Let’s not get so far ahead of ourselves and think we know more than he who hath made all things great and small.

Let us do great things on a global scale for noble causes, but keep it all in perspective and trust God bless us all.

---

Sudoku

```
8 4 1 | 2 3 9 |
9 2 4 | 1 6 3 |
6 1 8 | 5 7 2 |
---+---+---
4 6 5 | 7 2 8 |
1 3 2 | 9 5 6 |
9 5 7 | 8 1 4 |
```

Solution on page 14

---

March 2017 - Blue Ridge Christian News page 43
**Good Soil—Good Harvest**

By Rev. John McCoy

Roan Mountain, Tennessee

James says something which every Christian Church and every Christian group should have written on its heart. This is a highly-compressed sentence. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace. James 3:18

Remember the saying “sow the seed of the Word.” Like a story I read, it was in war times while people were feeling, pun-

ming and belligerent, a farmer was seen in his fields, busy sowing seed. How can you keep on working with war raging all around you?” he was asked. He replied: “I plow and I sow. I don’t reap the harvest another will. Maybe I may burn, but grain in the soil will be safe and grow.” If we sow the incorruptible seed of God’s Word, we may be sure that his promise will be fulfilled: ‘My Word shall not return unto me void but shall accomplish that which I please and prosper in that place to which I sent it.’ (Isa. 55:11)
The fruit or harvest of righteousness is sown in peace. The seed in which spiritual work will come to full fruition is one of true fellowship among Christians where there is no discord or disharmony. Peace is the atmosphere in which we may expect the good seed to ripen. Let us remember that discord always damages God’s work. Work that is full of promise can be blighted by quarrelsomeness and self-promotion. It suggests a bountiful harvest, not just a few stalks here and there, a few ears of corn hanging from them, but a field of grain bent low with the weight of the corn. How few churches experience this kind of harvest, and yet this is what we are meant to have. One of our modern scholars commenting on this text says, “The seed which brings the rich harvest can never flourish in any other atmosphere than one of right relationships between Lord and servant. The right relationships are the soil in which the reward of righteousness alone can grow.”

The man who disturbs personal relationships and is responsible for strife and bitterness will cut himself off from the reward which God gives to those who live the Christian life in harmony and fellowship with other believers. Let us remember that peace means right relationships between God and then with man and man. So then, what James is saying is this: “We are all trying to reap a harvest which is a good life brings. But the seeds which bring the rich harvest cannot flourish in any atmosphere other than one of right relationships with our Lord and Savior. And the only people who can sow these seeds and reap the reward are those whose life work has been to produce such right relationships. Nothing good can ever grow in an atmosphere where ne are discorded with one another.

A group where there is bitterness and strife is a barren soil in which the seeds of righteousness can never grow and out of which no reward can ever come. The man who disturbs personal relationships and is responsible for strife and bitterness will cut himself off from the reward which God gives to those who live the Christian life. What are my motives (13-19)? Is there bitterness in your heart or envy? Are you speaking from God’s wisdom or the wisdom of the world? Are you a peacemaker or a troublemaker? If your heart is right before God (Jeb. 4:12), He will use your words to produce these great results. Each one of us by our thoughts, words, and actions is community planting for a future reaping. Time may pass before the crop ripens, but the harvest never fails. The true nature of the seed we have scattered will surely be revealed. Witnessing is the evangelistic harvest that is always urgent. The destiny of man and woman is always in the balance. Love is a generation’s strategic.

We are not responsible for the past generation, and we cannot bear the full responsibility for the next one; but we do have our generation. God will hold us responsible as to how well we fulfill our responsibilities in this age self-seeking, and self-promotion of man. Harvest time is associated with many things. 1. Blessing from the Lord. “Thou crownest the year with Thy goodness” (Psa. 65:11, Psa. 65:13). See the ‘thou’ of Psalms 65. God’s coronation time is the harvest time. 2. Faithfulness of the Lord. ‘While the earth remaineth seedtime and harvest shall not fail you’ (Gen. 2:22). He binds Himself in love to bless us in grace. 3. Communion with the Lord. “One soweth, and another reapeth” (Joh. 4:37). When we look upon the fields of man’s need with the eyes and heart of Christ, we must have fellowship with each other. We must have a fellowship with each other. We must have a fellowship with each other. We must have a fellowship with each other. We must have a fellowship with each other. We must have a fellowship with each other. We must have a fellowship with each other. We must have a fellowship with each other. We must have a fellowship with each other. We must have a fellowship with each other. We must have a fellowship with each other. We must have a fellowship with each other. We must have a fellowship with each other. We must have a fellowship with each other. We must have a fellowship with each other. We must have a fellowship with each other. We must have a fellowship with each other. We must have a fellowship with each other. We must have a fellowship with each other. We must have a fellowship with each other. We must have a fellowship with each other. We must have a fellowship with each other. We must have a fellowship with each other. We must have a fellowship with each other. We must have a fellowship with each other. We must have a fellowship with each other. We must have a fellowship with each other. We must have a fellowship with each other.

John McCoy is pastor of Evergreen church in Roan Mountain, Tennessee and also chaplain at Roan Highlands Nursing Center.
Accentuate the Positive

By Cheryl Shuffler
Burke County

School public relations professionals across the state were honored Friday, Jan. 27 for their products of their craft during the North Carolina School Public Relations Association’s (NCSNRA) annual Blue Ribbon Awards for Effective Communications celebration at the O. Henry Hotel in Greensboro. Thirty-seven school districts were recognized for outstanding work and received a total of 237 awards in eight categories.

Included in the list of winners is Cheryl M. Shuffler, public relations officer for Burke County Public Schools. Burke County Public Schools received 10 Blue Ribbon awards in six categories.

In addition to Shuffler, Board of Education members K.L. Icard, Buddy Armour and Seth P. Hunt Jr., Superintendent Dr. Larry Putnam and Human Resources Director Sharon Colow accepted the awards on behalf of the school system.

The Elementary Teacher Selected for Excellence Program won a Gold Award in the Excellence in Writing category and the stories written by “STEM Reck” and “East Burke Senior Credited with Saving Life” won Silver Awards in the Excellence in Writing category.

In the Digital Media Engagement category, the district’s hashtag #IgniteLearningBCPS won a Silver Award and the Facebook photo album “You Wanna Build a Snowman?” won a Bronze Award.

In the Electronic Media category, a 30-second promo video “Ignite Learning” that aired at Magogton’s Marques Cinemas over the summer won a Bronze Award.

In the Marketing category, a year-long focus on employee morale won a Silver Award.

Two photographs, “Makerspace Tinker” and “Class of 2016 Returns to Elementary School” both won Silver Awards.

In all, the Publications Categories Burke County School System was honored in five categories, Burke County School & Family Magazine won a Bronze Award.

Dr. Putnam said, “Cheryl Shuffler has emerged as a school public relations professional since joining BCPS in June of 2013. She enjoys writing and reporting all of the great things that take place daily in our schools. Many of her publications can be found at local restaurants and the Burke County Chamber of Commerce. By focusing and promoting positive attributes in our community, we hope this will help attract newcomers to our great county and school system.”

NCSNRA President Charlie Glazner, executive director of community relations, also congratulated Asheville City Schools, said entries of the award winners edged the best work of public relations practitioners in any field. “Blue Ribbon Awards are the highest honor in our organization and they validate the superior work done by our colleagues this year,” Glazner said. “This roster of excellence is tangible evidence that NCSNRA’s Public Relations professionals are among the nation’s finest and that they are producing cutting edge communications and products that support our schools and school systems.”

Georgia School Public Relations Association Board of Directors judged the entries. Prior to the awards ceremony attended heard a presentation from Keith Poitier, president and executive director of the Public School Foundation of North Carolina entitled “Top 10 Education Issues in 2017.” W. Jeffrey Bookter, Gaston County Schools superintendent and NCSNRA superintendent liaison, also offered congratulatory remarks during the ceremony on behalf of the state’s school superintendents.

NCSNRA’s mission is to build support for public education through well-planned and responsible public relations. For more information visit the NCSNRA Facebook page or www.ncsnra.org.

Buffamoyer Named East Burke’s New Football Coach

East Burke High School Principal Shane Mace announces Mark Buffamoyer is slated to be the Cavaliers’ new head football coach. “Coach Buff,” as the players call him, has been an assistant football coach at East Burke for the past eight years. Originally from Greenville, S.C., he has 31 years of education and coaching experience.

Mace said, “Coach Buffamoyer has been committed and dedicated to East Burke High School for the past eight years. He is a humble man and a model teacher that has been a strong disciplinarian in the classrooms and that an education comes before anything else. He is committed to our kids, our kids love him and our parents love him.”

“T am thankful to Mr. Mace and East Burke High School and Burke County Public Schools for the opportunity to work here and to coach here,” Buffamoyer said. “This is a first-class system. I want to make sure I live up to the standards of East Burke High School and that the kids get an education first. I am excited about this opportunity I have been given and can’t wait to get to work with the team on accomplishing the goals that we set as a team.”

Supper is Served

Mountain Crest Elementary School’s cafeteria is now serving three square meals a day. Chartwells and Burke County Public Schools recently added a supper program at the school, which previously served only breakfast and lunch to students. The supper program is open to anyone in the community and is free to all children ages 3 to 18. The supper price is $3 for adults. The hot meal is served between 4 and 5 p.m. Monday through Friday and includes an enrichment activity for children. Menu items include barbecue chicken, baked spaghetti and a pancake breakfast for supper, just to name a few. The program is funded through the USDA, and, since it started on Jan. 24, an average of 80 supper has been served each day at Mountain Crest. Burke County Public Schools Superintendent Dr. Larry Putnam said, “We are excited about this opportunity through the USDA to provide another hot meal to students and their families. Mountain Crest is the perfect location for this program as it is within walking distance for many of our families. Parents don’t have to worry about cooking, and they can feed their children a good, healthy, hot meal for free. It really is a relief on their pocketbooks and time. We are grateful for our partnership with Chartwells and for the fantastic job they have done the last few weeks in helping make this new supper program a success.”

With the program in its infancy, Putnam has asked the Chartwells team to extend the dinner hours until 7 p.m. to better serve parents who work later. The request has been approved by the USDA for this year and for the fantastic job they have done the last few weeks in helping make this new supper program a success.

With the program in its infancy, Putnam has asked the Chartwells team to extend the dinner hours until 7 p.m. to better serve parents who work later. The request has been approved by the USDA for this year and for the fantastic job they have done the last few weeks in helping make this new supper program a success. Visit www.burke.k12.nc.us to view the monthly supper menu.

www.brcnews.com

March 2017 - Blue Ridge Christian News page 45
In the Nation, we’re more forgiving.

At Nationwide®, we believe drivers like you deserve a break. That's why we offer Accident Forgiveness, which means your rates won't go up because of an accident. We put members first, because we don't have shareholders.

Join the Nation® of second chances.

BURNSVILLE
5 Town Square
(828)682-2325

SPRUCE PINE
12300 Hwy 226 South
(828)765-2790

NEWLAND
320 Linville Street
(828)733-9500

MCDOVELL, MADISON,
BURKE Counties (TOLL FREE #)
(866)346-4202

TrentTeam.com Email: info@TrentTeam.com
IT’S TIME TO Answer THE CALL

With the dramatic rise in the number of children in foster care in North Carolina, it’s time for all of us to answer the call to solve this problem. Crossnore School & Children’s Home offers training and licensure to families who want to foster and/or adopt. For more information, contact Kelly Riley, Licensing Specialist, at (336) 721-7600 or kriley@crossnore.org.

You can make our mission part of your personal journey.

Follow us on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

Crossnore Campus: 100 DAR Drive | PO Box 249 | Crossnore, NC 28616-0249 | (828) 733-4305
Winston-Salem Campus: 1001 Reynolda Road | Winston-Salem, NC 27104 | (336) 721-7600
info@crossnore.org | www.crossnore.org
LOCATED ON THE CAMPUS OF MARS HILL UNIVERSITY
You’ll enjoy stimulating lectures, cultural activities, sporting events, and educational opportunities.

PROVIDING SIX LEVELS OF CARE
- Private Bath & Kitchenette
- Phone/Cable Included
- Physician Scheduling with Transportation
- No Entrance Fees

170 South Main Street, Mars Hill, NC 28754

Mars Hill
RETIREMENT COMMUNITY

www.marshallretire.com

Call today to schedule a visit!
(828) 380-4108