

August  
2017

FREE

# BLUE RIDGE CHRISTIAN NEWS



*Therefore said he unto them, The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest. Luke 10:2 (KJV)*



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## BLUE RIDGE CHRISTIAN NEWS

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

Isaiah 52:7 KJV



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# Church Directory

## Altapass Baptist Church

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

**Dr. Marcus R. Benfield**

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

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Bible Believing Church"

## Spruce Pine United Methodist Church

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

**Pastor Rev. Jeremy Troxler**

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

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

## Pine Branch Baptist Church

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

**Reverend Bobby Joe Greene**

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

A Bible-believing Fellowship  
Loving God and Loving People

## The Bridge Church of WNC

207 Pinebridge Avenue  
Spruce Pine, NC 28777  
TBCWNC.org

**Pastors - Tom & Tammy Anglin**

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

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

## Berry Chapel Baptist Church

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

**Pastor - Steve Williams**

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

Where Everybody is Somebody  
And Jesus Christ is Lord!

## Pleasant Grove Church of the Brethren

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

**Pastor: John Smith**

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

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

## Morganton Seventh-day Adventist Church

2187 Jamestown Road  
Morganton, NC  
828-684-8212

**Pastor Rick Mercer**

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

## First Advent Christian Church

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

**Pastor Patrick Bradshaw  
Associate Pastor Javier  
Guzman**

pbradshawfccmorganton@gmail.com

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

Preaching Christ Crucified, Risen  
and Coming Again!

## Banner Elk United Methodist Church

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

**Reverend Dan Brubaker**

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

## Bakersville United Methodist Church

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

**Pastors -**

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

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

"Come grow with us"

## Horizon Church

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

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

Sunday Worship 10:30 AM  
Wednesday 6:30PM

www.myhorizonchurch.org  
Transforming Lives Through  
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## Grassy Creek Baptist Church

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

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

## West Burnsville Baptist Church SB

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

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

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

## Burkemont Baptist Church

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

For more information,  
please visit  
www.burkemontbaptist.org

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

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

## Plumtree Presbyterian Church

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

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

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

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

## Bear Creek Baptist Church

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

**Reverend Bruce Cannon**

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

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

## St. Lucien's Catholic Church

695 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-  
4:00pm

## First Baptist Church of Spruce Pine

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

**Dr. Rocky Branch  
Senior Pastor**

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

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

## Great Hope Seventh-day Adventist Church

2907d US Hwy 70 E  
Morganton, NC  
828-475-2040

**Pastor Barry MaHorney**

Sabbath (Saturday)  
Bible Study-10:00am  
Sabbath Worship - 11:30am  
Vegetarian Buffet after church  
Wednesday - Praise, Prayer &  
Proclaim - 7:00pm  
www.greatopesda.com

## Faith Fellowship Church

Champ Ray Rd.  
Mccville, NC 28755  
(828)-675-8284  
www.fccn.org  
www.fccradio.org

**Pastor: David Gillespie**

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

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Souls in Crisis

Rebecca Gwyn  
Burke County



As we began to make plans for a trip to Haiti during the month of June, I was preparing myself for the worse. I knew that the area we were going to was going to be a place of poverty and devastation. I had been to Jamaica before, so I had an idea of what we were going to face once we reached the remote mountains in Haiti. Homes, not any bigger than my small kitchen, that several people would be living in. No running water, let alone clean water. No bathrooms or showers. Barely enough food to survive. So much need, so few resources.

When people decide to go on a mission trip it is usually with hopes that they will be able to minister to the people in some way. Encourage them by giving them hope of much needed relief. Share the love of Jesus with them in order to help them know they can have a better life through Him in Heaven. But, this is not what happened when I went Haiti. I was the one that received.

The faith of the Haitian people in the mountains of Haiti far exceeds any faith I have seen in America. They trusted Him for their daily, even hourly, needs. They worshiped as though they had need of nothing. They prayed, fully expecting. They gathered to their places of worship as if they were meeting in the grandest of cathedrals. They loved God because they saw the love and provision of God on a daily bases and did not count themselves worthy.

Upon seeing this I came to realize that we Christians in America could learn a few things from the Haitian people. I came to realize that it is the people in America that are in crisis. With all our wealth and every need met, along with most of our wants provided, we are in a much worse place spiritually than the Haitians are. We are the people in crisis. We are the people who are in need. We are the people who must learn to trust and love God simply because He is God. Nothing more.

While we were at the base camp in Haiti, the Haitian people would gather to the church building, which had no electricity, no air conditioning, no padded pews, before the sun ever came up. We could hear their voices ringing out in praise songs and prayer to the awesome God they served. It was the most beautiful sound I had ever heard that first morning. I thought for sure it was the angels singing. But, it was the people of the remote village who had gathered before they began searching and working for their daily needs. When it was service time at the small broken churches of the villages, men, women, children, people of all ages began to gather hours before time to begin the service. When it was time to begin, their voices would raise in one accord singing praises as they worshiped and rejoiced. There were no long faces as though to say I'm here because it is expected of me. There was no slumping in the seats as if they were there to take a rest. Most of the churches had no roof or sides so there was no protection from the elements; wind, rain, hot sun. They were in their place of worship and were happy to be there.

Going into Haiti I was looking to find those that we served to be in a state of soul crisis. But, instead, I come back to America finding that it is us, here in America, that are in a soul crisis. Sitting on church pews dissatisfied with our lives and the God we say we love and serve because we don't have a new car sitting out in the parking lot or didn't have a new suit of clothes to wear. How spoiled we are. How endangered we are because we do not see the state that our souls are in. Wake up church. We are in a crisis and don't even realize it. May God have mercy on us.

Wake up church. We are in a crisis and don't even realize it. May God have mercy on us.

Wake up church. We are in a crisis and don't even realize it. May God have mercy on us.

Rebecca is the Director of REACH for Women Ministries.



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## HOMECOMING

By Joyce(Joy) Harwood Baldwin

*It's homecoming at the church today  
Some folks will come from far away  
Grandmas and Grandpas will soon be here  
There's a sweet spirit now filling the air.*

*As soon as I enter they welcome me home  
Showing their love with a gentle arm  
Savory aroma round a table that's spread  
The people are bowing the blessing is said.*

*Bright candles are lit and we've done our best  
His sheep are all precious the pastor is blessed  
Warm sounds of laughter children playing with glee  
We're all thankful to God for our unity.*

*Young voices singing is a joy to us all  
With beautiful flowers and decorations of fall  
Tho as we are parting some shed a tear  
They won't see each other for another whole year.*

*So we have to remember the day soon will come  
We'll all be together with Jesus God's Son  
There'll be no more parting as angels are singing  
We'll enter gates of glory to the grandest homecoming.*



Joy is a resident of Madison County, where she now lives with her husband, Danny Joe Baldwin. She is currently a member of Mt Zion Baptist church in Marshall, NC. As a previous member, she calls Forks of Ivy Missionary Baptist Church in Weaverville, "home away from home". She is currently singing with the Gospel Group "Jonah's Voice" out of Mars Hill, NC. Her latest song "Homecoming" will soon be heard by many.



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# Bridge42 Church

## Why Don't We do Family Discipleship Anymore (And How We Can Start)

By Jason Koon  
Burke County

A recent study showed that less than 6% of people aged 15-30 can articulate the basics of the Gospel. I've read the studies about the mass-migration of Millennials away from the Church over the past decade, and I know that unlike previous Exodus, they're probably not coming back. I'm even aware that millions of once-faithful Boomers are following them, but there is one reason that I still find it astonishing that only 6% of this generation has even a basic understanding of the Gospel. Many of them grew up in Church. If it's true that 25-30% of Millennials grew up going to Church on a somewhat regular basis, it makes me wonder what we've been teaching over the past 20 years, because it doesn't seem to have been biblical Christianity. And if that's the case, I can understand why they're leaving; they're not leaving the faith, they're leaving some watered-down, cheap imitation that we thought would be more palatable to them. They're spitting-up the rotten milk we tried to pass off as the gospel, the problem is that many have confused the imitation for the real thing.

It's more important than ever that Christians take responsibility for raising their children to become, not just nominal American Christians, but true disciples of Jesus. It's not easy; many adults continue to struggle with the demands of genuine Discipleship and many feel ill-equipped even to live our own lives, much less to be responsible for a whole other person. But if you have made the jump into parenthood, you have made the jump into becoming Disciple-maker, whether you realized it or not. You and I have all been called upon to make Disciples and it must start with the people closest to us, our families, our children, and our grandchildren. So why do we struggle with Family Discipleship. I think there are three reasons that cause most of us to second guess our roles as Disciple-makers in our families, and over the next three months we will look at these:

1. I take them to Church, isn't that enough?  
In a word, NO! 30% of parents in the last generation took their kids to Church and about three-quarters of those Church going kids literally don't know the difference between the Gospel and a hole in the ground. It's not their fault, it's our fault. We need to stop blaming Millennials for living in darkness and begin to repent of raising them in it. This doesn't fall on the Church or the Youth Pastor, it's the responsibility of parents. Deuteronomy 6:4-9 puts the responsibility for the Discipleship of Children squarely on the shoulders of the parents.

As Paul lays out the qualifications for Elders in Titus, he writes that an Elder's children should be believers or faithful. Which means that I would need to seriously reconsider my standing as an elder in my Church if one of my children ends up leaving the faith. Now, the Greek word for believing could mean faithful, stable, or even well-taught, so it seems there is some room in this passage for an elder whose children apostatized in spite of having been taught well, but the implications for all of us in this passage are stark. The Spiritual Condition of the Children is directly the responsibility of the parents. Period. If your children are not trained up in the faith, don't blame the Church or the Youth Pastor, it is our responsibility as parents, not just to take them to Church, but to lead them to the foot of the Cross.

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



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## Celebrate Recovery

### Unity of Purpose

By Barbara Harrell



Part of our Mission Statement here at Blue Ridge Christian News is to further the Unity of the Body of Christ. In thinking about what is happening in the world of drugs, drug prevention, and help for drug addicts, I have had my eyes opened to some of the major things we are dealing with in society today.

Unity in these areas could go a long way to improving the success rate in both prevention and recovery. Too often the faith-based community is totally left out in this equation. What could happen if all our churches, law enforcement, court system, and governmental agencies were working together to conquer these issues.

Doug and I have been working with two young people who are trying to navigate these waters. Many issues have arisen from having classes on a Sunday morning, making Church attendance impossible as well as using profanity to let these students know that this is not at all important anyway, to delaying and not answering calls for having meetings on court mandated community service so it becomes a hardship to getting this done.

What could happen if all these agencies worked together to coordinate and provide appropriate services for what is needed even allowing some of the faith-based programs to be used. We did run into one man in a government agency who told one of these young people that attending church when the doors were open and going to a church sponsored drug program was sufficient when otherwise she would have to drive to an adjoining county.

What would happen if our churches would warmly embrace these people and let them know that they would there for them—praying or whatever they could do to help.

What would happen if people were united in concern for individuals, churches and organizations.

We might be celebrating more recoveries.

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

### Morganton Seventh Day Adventist Church

#### Growing in Jesus!

By Cindy Mercer  
Burke County



I don't know about you...but it seems like many people are stuck in a rut these days. It is so easy to discover that day-in and day-out, we repeat the same cycle of life. We wake up, shower, eat, off to work or school, shop, eat again and go to bed. And often, if we aren't careful we can miss divine appointments during our day that will shape and mold us to be more like Jesus.

I recently came across a story that inspired me to look for ways to grow in Jesus. The following story is sobering to say the least. Most people are familiar with the main character, Dwight L. Moody.

Dwight L. Moody, one of modern times' most prolific evangelists, always had an intense desire to daily grow in Christ.

During one long preaching tour Moody traveled by train with a singer named Towner. A drunk with a badly bruised eye recognized Moody and started bawling out hymns. The evangelist didn't want to deal with the man and said, "Let's get out of here." But Towner told him that all the other cars were full.

A conductor came down the aisle. Still irritated, Moody stopped him and pointed out the drunk. The conductor went over and gently quieted the man. He bathed and bandaged his eye, then led him back to his seat, where he fell asleep. After reflecting on this for a while, Moody told his companion, "This has been a terrible rebuke to me." The conductor had acted like the good Samaritan, Moody said, while he had responded like an indifferent Pharisee. Moody shared the humbling story each day for the rest of his preaching tour.

Although Moody was a powerful preacher, he regularly sat at the feet of guest speakers, his Bible open, taking notes. Moody is an outstanding example of being teachable, of one who was willing to learn, to grow, to discover more and more of God's truth.

God may be trying to reveal something to you today.

The circumstances we face each day reveal whom we really are, as well as shape who we become. If there is no anger inside of us, no circumstance can bring it out of us. If there is no bitterness inside, no amount of injustice can stir it. If there is not lust inside, no amount of flirtation can arouse it. If there is no dishonesty inside, even the opportunity to cheat will not prompt it.

Every day life's circumstances show us what is really in our hearts. God wants our issues out in the open so we can deal with them honestly. Sometimes He allows us to see painful revelations of who we really are so we can bring everything inside of us to Him. He is fully capable of handling it. Allow His Spirit to reveal what's really inside today, and determine to keep growing in Jesus!

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

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### What We Sow We Also Reap

By Doug Harrell

James 1:14-15 *But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.*

The word "lust" can be changed to "evil desires" and might be more inclusive and relevant in the context that I want to write about today. Lust, evil desires can mean anything from sexual situations to speeding down the road. The important thing for each of us is to think about the consequences of the actions that we are tempted to do. Taking that first drink, popping that first pill, watching that movie, reading that book. We are all just one decision away from messing up big time. These decisions are taking place daily, hourly and sometimes it seems by the minute. When you plant a seed, it is pretty much a sure bet that you will have something sprout from that seed if it is planted in fertile soil or a fertile mind. If we take time to look at the fruit this seed came from we will know what the tree will look like if we are really honest with ourselves. Sin can look so glamorous, so attractive, that it is easy to be deceived if we are not really careful. As Proverbs speaks so often of raising the children correctly, the main focus is to teach them wisdom. Hopefully as we age we gain wisdom in many areas of our lives and take the time to think before we act. Job 12:12 *With the ancient is wisdom; and in length of days understanding.* As parents and grandparents, we need to constantly be teaching our families to have wisdom and use discernment in all the things that they do. To do this we must first do the right things ourselves. Not long ago I talked about the DRT's in life, Doing the Right Things. Our family structure is under so much pressure today that we are letting vital teachings go undone. We cannot expect our schools, churches or friends to guide and direct the lives of our families, we must take responsibility for this ourselves and set the correct role model for them. If we leave these lessons for others to teach, it



will be like the passage in Deuteronomy, Deuteronomy 7:4 *For they will turn away the son from following us, that they may serve other gods: so, will the anger of the Lord be kindled against you, and destroy thee suddenly.* This passage speaks to whom the anger of God will be kindled toward.

We are dealing with a crisis of monumental proportion in our society today with the drug addiction problem that is so prolific in our entire nation. I read just yesterday where female addiction was up over 400% in just the past few years. As I was growing up it was the male population that was usually out there on the edge, not so much anymore. The news is full of stories of females in prominent roles that are being arrested for having sex with minors and things like this. I am not picking on the female gender because the male gender is even worse, but you just never heard about this kind of behavior from the female side in the past. We must be in prayer for our family structure today as never before. There needs to be a complete revival of moral structure in the family and this begins with a renewal of relationship with our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. The numbers of pastors leaving the field today is horrifying with so many church doors being closed. Keep praying for revival from the top leaders in the nation on down to the parents in the trenches training the children. Isaiah 6:8 *Also I heard the voice of the the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here I am; send me.*

Are you ready to be sent, am I ready to go serve? We can no longer wait for someone else to do the job, it is up to you and me to lead, and lead first by example. Remember that our greatest sermon is our daily walk. Psalm 49:3 *My mouth shall speak of wisdom; and the mediation of my heart shall be of understanding.*

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.



A Bible is never a bad present, but keep these other gifts in mind too



Q: I gave my grandson a nice Bible for his high school graduation, but his parents got upset and told me in his presence to quit shoving religion down his throat. I knew they didn't go to church or anything, but why would they react so strongly? Was I wrong to do this? — Mrs. V.K.

A: No, it wasn't wrong for you to give your grandson a Bible — not at all. What was wrong was for them to embarrass you by openly criticizing you for giving; common courtesy would have rejected such behavior. Even if he sides with his parents right now and ignores the Bible you've given him, who knows what might happen in the future? Someday, for example, he may face a crisis in his life, and God will remind him of your gift and use it to turn his heart and life toward Christ. God's Word is not bound, and it is able to break through even the strongest barriers. The Bible says, *"For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates ... the thoughts and attitudes of the heart"* (Hebrews 4:12).

In addition to the Bible you've already given, let me suggest that you give him two other gifts — not just now, but for years to come. First, give him the gift of your prayers. From what you say, he probably has very little knowledge about God; he may not even think about God very much. Pray that God will open his heart and mind, and draw him to Christ.

Second, give him the gift of your example — the example of a life filled with Christ's love and grace. The Bible says, *"Set an example ... in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity"* (1 Timothy 4:12).



No place for pessimism once you submit your life to Christ

Q: Do you consider yourself an optimist or a pessimist? I admit I'm a pessimist, because I don't see much hope of the world ever getting any better. Do you? — F.R.

A: If I only looked at what is happening in the world today (or for that matter, what's happened throughout history) then I too would be a pessimist. The writer of Ecclesiastes in the Bible put it this way: *"What has been done will be done again; there is nothing new under the sun"* (Ecclesiastes 1:9).

But I am not a pessimist — and the reason is because I've read the last chapters of the Bible! The future is in God's hands, and some day He will intervene and all the evil and heartache we presently experience will come to an end. Jesus Christ will return to establish His kingdom, and He will rule the world in perfect justice and peace. We can hardly imagine this — but it's true! The Bible says, *"Nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war anymore"* (Isaiah 2:4).

Why does the world never seem to get any better? Why do wars and conflicts still threaten us? I'm thankful for every effort that's made to bring about peace, and sometimes they are successful — at least for a time. Jesus said, *"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God"* (Matthew 5:9).

But why don't our efforts at peace last? Why can't we seem to get along with each other — even in our own families? The problem is within us — within our own hearts and minds. And this why we need Jesus Christ, for only He can transform our hearts and replace our selfishness and hate with His love and compassion. Is this happening with you? Submit your life to Him today.





**Haiti**  
By Rev. George Patton, Jr  
*Burke County and the World*

Have you ever had one of those times in your life where it seems like everything was coming at you at one time? It didn't seem like there was any let up. We have all had them, haven't we? In this Mission Moment I want to tell you about a recent trip to Haiti where God stayed a river. We had gotten up early on the last morning of our trip and had planned to go to the village of Ti Plain. I told the team to make sure to bring their towels with them because sometimes you have to cross a river, it just depends on if the river is running or not. Some of our team members were a little frightened as they could not swim, but I assured them that the water is always shallow. We set off for the 3 hour hike. I could see as we were coming over one of the mountains that it looked like the river was dried up. I thought that very odd as it had been raining but praise the Lord for His faithfulness. We finally arrived at the river edge and sure enough it was dry. We went on across and began doing our evangelism hut to hut. We saw so many come to Christ. We told the people that at 3 pm we would be having a service in the church. We continued on sharing the Gospel through the village. We came across one group of teenage boys that we thought might be a little tough to reach, but the Holy Spirit of God came down and seasoned our conversation, softened their hearts and brought them



to Christ. We arrived at the church and by 2pm there was no room left. Even though the church had been destroyed, people were standing around the outside of the walls. We had a wonderful service. We bid our farewells and headed back to our base camp. As soon as we began approaching the river you could hear the water. It had been raining in the mountains and the river was rushing through. It was carrying limbs along the way and all sorts of debris. There was no way to cross. Rather than panicking, the Haitians began leading us down the river. I thought maybe they knew of a bridge that I had not seen. Maybe there was a rope along the way. We walked farther and farther. The river would disappear out of sight into the jungle and then it would appear again still running just as fast as ever. Finally we came to a place where the bank went down and God had stayed the river. The river had stopped. I yelled for the team to come quickly and we all got across. But, not before one of our team members got a picture of the stopped river. As soon as we got across here it came. God got us across on dry land. Why? One reason I believe is because we did not lose our focus. How easy it would have been to have gotten to the river and panicked. But, because we had Haitians that led us down the path, we found a place where God had made a way. Dear friend, sometimes when life seems to be coming at you so fast, and everything seems to be out of control and there doesn't seem anyway to get across. That is when you have to depend on the Holy Spirit to guide you. He knows the way. He knows the place that God has made for you to cross. Just like we had to trust our guides, He is looking for you to trust His leading, and not what you are seeing, for we walk by faith and not by sight. This is your Mission Moment. God Bless.



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

*And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. Mark 16:15*

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# Mitchell County SafePlace

## A Journey to Freedom

By Beth Davis  
Mitchell County

A couple of months ago, I shared with you a very moving testimonial from a dear friend and supporter of Mitchell County SafePlace. With our 3rd Annual Walk A Mile In Her Shoes event just around the corner, I'm sharing another incredible story from another incredible woman who has transformed herself from traumatized victim to thriving survivor. I'm sure that after reading about her journey (grab a hankie!), you'll come to love her almost as much as we do!

"According to North Carolina Council for Women statistics, 48,601 women reported incidents of domestic violence in 2016 in North Carolina alone. There have been 24,557 reported incidences so far in 2017. I am one of those statistics, and I am here to tell you my story.

I did not realize that I was a victim. Coming from a middle class background, and the daughter of a preacher, I just thought that it would never happen to me. But before I knew it, I found myself very depressed, hopeless, isolated, financially deprived, mentally exhausted, stressed, and verbally abused. Then came the little pushes here; the nudges there; pinning my hands down, pulling my thumbs back; pinching my skin, hiding my car keys so I couldn't leave, putting \$3 worth of gas in my car here and there so I couldn't ride too far, hiding my phone so I couldn't make calls while he was at work.

Then on Christmas Day of 2013 while driving back home we began arguing. He became very violent in his tone and proceeded to put his hand in my face. I told him not to touch me or he would spend Christmas in jail. He slowed the car down, pointed to a wooded area and told me that he would kill me, dismember my body, and spread my remains out before the police had a chance to rescue me. That day I left him. My newborn son and I came to SafePlace and began the healing process. But like so many victims, it is hard to leave familiar places and embark on the unknown quest to freedom, I left SafePlace and moved in with a family friend, and eventually reunited with my abuser several months later after he apologized, promised counseling, ensured me that he was reformed, and that we had to fight to stay together - for the sake of our son. Well, as the days turned to weeks, and the weeks turned to months, cues of abuse began to resurface and again, I was faced with abuse.

By 2016, I was a student in the Practical Nursing program at Community College nearly 3 hours away in Durham. I was the class secretary and had maintained a 3.5 GPA. My plan was to stay with the abuser until I graduated in July because I needed a career to provide housing, food, clothing, and daycare for my family. However, the abuse intensified as I became more confident, and the abuser began to see the independence and dignity that he buried in me for so many years had resurfaced. Finally, in January 2017, I found my children and me in a very hostile situation. Our lives were at risk, and I was faced with a difficult decision. Should I leave for our safety, or stay in harm's way so I can stay in school? I looked into the eyes of my daughter and cried. I did not want abuse to become a generational curse for her, and my duty as a mother is to first protect my children. I wanted to be an example. I needed to be the example. So this time, unlike before, I looked abuse in the eyes and said no more. Enough is enough. I am strong. I am beautiful. I am worth so much more than this. And without hesitation, I not only walked away, but I purposed in my heart to create a new life for my children and myself.

This is where Mitchell County SafePlace came in. First, they were so gracious to reopen their doors and hearts to me. They never judged me; they baptized me with restorative love, and supported me in my journey to emotional restoration. Within 6 weeks, I was in transitional housing. My children were in a quality preschool program. We became established with an awesome community health clinic. Meanwhile, I was so determined to graduate on time, that I continued attending the Nursing School in Durham. That's right. Three days a week, I would drive 7 hours round-trip to Durham, attend lecture and lab, come back, spend time with my children, put them to bed, study, and then do it all again the next day. SafePlace provided babysitting services until the kids were able to go to daycare. How awesome is that!? But soon, the commute and its toll on my car began to get to me and I became discouraged - but I still pressed on. SafePlace reached out to Mayland Community College, who had just begun a new practical nursing program. Ultimately, Mayland had mercy on me, and allowed me to transfer into their program in the middle of the semester.

It has now been 9 months since I came back to SafePlace, and even though I am no longer in the shelter they still provide me with support. They have assisted me with tuition, books, academic fees, diapers and wipes for my children, a washer and dryer, and so much more. I cannot begin to tell you how much they mean to me and my children. They are my angels, support system, and cheerleaders. They are girlfriends, mothers, aunts, counselors, advocates, fierce protectors, nourishers, and friends. I love them so much and every night I thank God for placing them in my life. With them, along with support of loved ones old and new, I stand before you now - not as a victim but as a survivor and living testament that, one: For women, education is the way out of poverty and into a life of freedom; and



two: social advocacy still works and is vital to community health. In December 2017, I will graduate and sit for the state boards to be a licensed nurse. My children and I will break free from the cycle of poverty, and I will once again be a productive member of society. But most importantly, after being educated on abuse and its signs, I will not fall prey to it again. Thank you for listening to my story and please support Mitchell County SafePlace." Her story still chokes me up, but it also makes my heart swell! We would love to know what you think of JoAnn's story! Please email us at [bethbdavis60@gmail.com](mailto:bethbdavis60@gmail.com) or give us a call at 828-765-4015 with your thoughts and feelings. And if you'd like to make a financial donation so that we can continue to assist folks like JoAnn, our mailing address is: PO Box 544, Spruce Pine, NC 28777.

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

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## "Knowing": The Firm Foundation

By Shawn Thomas  
Burke County

"Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come forth from God and was going back to God ..." (John 13:3)

The word "knowing" here is a crucial one: "Jesus, KNOWING ...". The scripture indicates here that what Jesus "knew" was the foundation of His life, strengthened Him in His time of trouble, and enabled Him to serve others. What was it that it says He "knew", that gave Him such confidence and power?



— "knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands": Jesus knew what He had been given by God.

— "and that He had come forth from God": Jesus was absolutely confident of where He came from, and in His eternal

relationship with His Heavenly Father.

— "and was going back to God": Despite the tremendous trial He was now facing, He was also certain of His ultimate destination.

The certain knowledge of these things was the foundation which gave Jesus such amazing strength to face an unprecedented gauntlet of tribulations — and even to serve others in the midst of it, as we see Him do in the next verse.

Knowing these things will do the same thing for US too:

- when we KNOW that our ultimate destination is heaven
- when we KNOW we have a relationship with God
- when we KNOW scripturally all that He has blessed us with ...

... it gives us an anchor in life which stabilizes us in the fiercest storms, and even allows us to serve others out of that strength. It makes a huge difference in life, when you know where you came from; when you know what you have; and when you know where you are going.

The question of your life is: DO you have that firm foundation that comes from "KNOWING"?

"These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may KNOW that you have eternal life." 1 John 5:13

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

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## Trees

By Allen Buchanan  
Mitchell County



Years ago, when I wanted something to do, I usually went into the woods. Where I grew up, only a yard and small creek separated me from the woods which I could see from every room in the house.

Like most kids, I was very curious and would try anything if I thought I could do it. Even if I was warned not to, I would sneak off to the woods anyway. The challenge made it more desirable. I never had any particular reason to go there. Sometimes I went just to go walking or to be alone and talk to myself. Once in a while, I would take a friend to talk with. The woods had so much to offer if only I had been aware of it.



There were many different kinds of trees to be found and I should have been able to tell them apart. But to me, a tree was just a tree. A tree was just an object growing tall from the ground for little boys to play on. Eventually, I came to know the difference between a pine tree and the others because it stayed green forever unless it was dead. Pine trees also had a sound all to themselves when the wind blew. Kind of a lonesome sound it made. As other trees shed their leaves, the pine tree's "needles" would drop to the ground. If I wasn't careful when walking on them, I would slip and fall. Their slipperiness also was to my advantage. For instance, if I found a really steep hill covered with pine needles, I was in for a treat.

All I needed was a cardboard box. Then I would get into it at the top of the hill and down I would go. It was like sleigh riding in July without snow and the cold.

With help from my grandfather, I made all kinds of things from the trees in the woods. Things such as a bow and arrow, made from a hickory tree. Laurel or ivy was good for making a slingshot. My favorite thing he made me was a swing from a strong limb of a mimosa tree. Once I got started swinging, it seemed like I could swing forever.

Since I live in the mountains of Western North Carolina, I'm surrounded by trillions of trees and its second nature to like trees. I don't remember when the mimosa tree was cut down nor the reason for it. Not far from where it stood, a maple tree grew tall and I loved that tree. I laid on the ground many times in the Summer and cooled in its shade. When Fall arrived, the maple displayed a beautiful array of orange, red and yellow colors. Lots of stories were shared with family and friends beneath its branches. While birds sang their songs, they cheerfully built their nests there to start a new family. Squirrels playfully jumped from limb to limb. After I got my driving licenses, I'd park my car in the yard below that maple to keep it cool. The tree offered a good place to wax or vacuum out my car.

My grandmother had some neighbors living next door who shared the tree. One of their daughters often climbed to the top barefooted. She would sit on the limbs for hours and read while the tree swayed back and forth. Her family moved away and my grandmother took residence in heaven. Years passed and my parents moved next door. As they were remodeling dad's home place and doing some landscaping, issues came up that required the maple to be cut down. I recall begging my parents not to do it. On the day, the bulldozer pushed it over and its roots let go, I literally sat next door in my yard and cried. I watched an old friend's life come to an end.

Today I am faced with a similar situation. The tallest tree in my front yard has got to go. Standing tall at over 50' high, much of it is rotting away. With all the crazy weather, our country has seen in the past months, safety is a major issue. Our house is paid for and our vehicles sit within 15' of the tree trunk. Once again, a favorite tree has got to go.

Though these trees have had sentimental value, they don't have a soul. I get over their loss in a week or two. But if it was you, a dear friend of mine or a stranger I just met and you were facing death, I would be majorly concerned. Why? Because you have a soul. You are not simply going to rot away never to be heard of again. You and I have a choice. I believe I will be held accountable for whether or not I share Jesus Christ with you. Then you are responsible for what you choose to do with that information. Choose wisely!

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





# Billy Graham Evangelistic Association

## Religious Freedom

By Franklin Graham

Franklin Graham and Cissie Graham Lynch meet with President Trump in the Oval Office after the signing of the executive order protecting religious liberty.

I recently had the privilege of attending remarkable events in our nation's capital that dealt with the most pressing issue facing our nation and our world—our religious freedom.

On May 4, I was in Washington, D.C., for the annual National Day of Prayer, where my sister Anne Graham Lotz was one of the featured speakers. It was a wonderful time to spend with fellow Christians from across the country interceding for our troubled nation and seeking God's direction and wisdom for our leadership.

Not only did we join with tens of thousands of Christians from coast to coast in asking God to heal our land and restore our hearts, but we were able to visit with President Donald Trump and Vice President Mike Pence and witness the Rose Garden ceremony with the president's signing of an executive order to help protect our religious liberties.

"We will not allow people of faith to be targeted, bullied or silenced anymore," the president declared.

The executive order counters the chilling effect on the speech of churches and charities. The president wants to protect the freedom of pastors and church leaders to address political issues and candidates. The order is also designed to help protect religious organizations from being forced to include abortion-inducing drugs in their health plans. "We are giving our churches their voice back," the president said.

The past decade has seen a precipitous moral decline on a scale that I did not believe possible.

Our religious freedoms have been under relentless assault by the liberal-progressive agenda. The past administration not only refused to support such freedoms but actively worked to restrict and suppress them.

Who would have ever thought that the former president of the United States would staunchly support same-sex marriage and Planned Parenthood, even going so far as to light up the White House in the rainbow colors of the gay/lesbian coalition? Who would have ever dreamed, just a few years ago, that Christian businesses would be prosecuted simply because they followed their Biblically informed consciences on the sanctity of marriage?

By signing the religious liberty executive order, President Trump has made a solid first step to reverse the hostile and dangerous environment fostered by his predecessor.

However, there is still more to do to protect Christian businesses from being targeted by the gay and lesbian lobby and their liberal-progressive allies. Same-sex marriage advocates have gained much ground over the past decade, and those who hold Biblical convictions on the sanctity of marriage must be protected from undue harassment and prosecution.

With this executive order, along with the appointment of conservative justice Neil Gorsuch to the U.S. Supreme Court, the president has fulfilled two of his prominent campaign pledges that I hope and pray will serve to restore and defend our religious liberties.

Just one week after the National Day of Prayer, the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association held a historic gathering in Washington, D.C., to highlight the plight of persecuted Christians worldwide.

"I believe that the Lord has given us a brief window of opportunity in this nation to turn our hearts back to Him."

While believers in this country experience growing discrimination and intimidation from our culture and our authorities, it certainly hasn't been on the scale of persecution abroad. Worldwide, it is estimated that 90,000 men and women who confess the Name of Jesus Christ were persecuted in the past year simply because of their Christian faith. There is no other group of people in the world today who live under such physical, social and emotional distress and are mistreated so brutally.

More than 600 believers from 130 nations attended our World Summit in Defense of Persecuted Christians. Many of them had been forced to hastily flee their native countries because they were followers of the Lord Jesus Christ. A number have been beaten, bloodied and imprisoned for their faith. Many more have experienced severe economic and social oppression from hostile governments and neighbors.

They have harmed no one. They have mistreated no one. They have broken no laws except those imposed by totalitarian governments or by Islamic Sharia law, where Christians are branded as "infidels" and face dismemberment and death if they refuse to bow to Allah.

When I walked through the charred remains of a church near Mosul not long ago, I saw the ugly reminder of the hate that Islamic radicals have toward Christians. Written on the wall in graffiti meant to desecrate the already shattered ruins was, "You love life, we love death. We have come to drink your blood."

This was in a village that had been predominantly Christian for millennia and now was empty of any Christian presence. It's a story that has been repeated in hundreds of communities across the Middle East, some of which have seen more than two-thirds of Christians flee in the past decade due to persecution.

We were honored that Vice President Pence came and addressed this extraordinary summit meeting of God's choice servants. The vice president is a committed Christian who prays for those who suffer for the sake of the Gospel, and I know he will be a staunch advocate for persecuted believers around the world.



I believe that the Lord has given us a brief window of opportunity in this nation to turn our hearts back to Him. Throughout our history, we have seen seasons of great revival in the church that have tremendously influenced our communities, schools and government. If we repent of our sins and call on His Name, that can happen once again.

The Bible tells us that "all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted" (2 Timothy 3:12).

For those who live under the dark shadow of repressive regimes and militant religions that despise the Name of Jesus, their reward in Heaven is great. They endure relentless suffering, even to the point of death, but they boldly confess Jesus as Lord. They are not only heroes of the faith, but my heroes as well.

We have not reached that point—not yet—in this great country, but we must remain vigilant and prayerful, not being conformed to this world, but being transformed by the power of God (Romans 12:2).

"Be watchful, stand firm in the faith, act like men, be strong" (1 Corinthians 16:13). ©2017 BGEA

Scripture quotations are taken from The Holy Bible, English Standard Version.

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

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*Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world. 1 John 4:4*





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## Sudoku Solution

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

## A Very Private Moment: Has It Happened To You?

By Rev. Mark H. Creech



I've been reading the book of Genesis lately and the story of Joseph is a fascinating one.

Unjustly despised by his brothers and secretly sold to a band of merchantmen, Joseph was taken into Egypt and made a slave. Later he would be wrongly accused by his master's wife of sexual assault, and though he was innocent, imprisoned. Eventually, he was vindicated and released and in the providence of God raised to the position of vice-regent in Egypt.

When a famine swept the land, his treacherous brothers were forced to go into Egypt to buy food and were confronted unawares by Joseph. They had not seen him for several years and didn't recognize him. Moreover, Joseph purposely hid his identity from them until he would choose the right time to reveal himself.

I think it's interesting that the time of Joseph's disclosure to his brothers was a private one. The Scriptures say, "Then Joseph could not refrain himself before all them that stood by him; and he cried, Cause every man to go out from me. And there stood no man with him, while Joseph made himself known to his brethren" (Gen. 54:1).

Joseph then manifested his true identity, reached out in a spirit of reconciliation, and forgave his brothers their grievous trespasses against him. As one commentator has described it, Joseph demonstrated a "love stooping, a love conquering." The Bible says that Joseph kissed them and they all fell upon his neck and wept in true remorse for what they had done to Joseph.

Joseph is a type of Christ and the revelation of Christ to the soul is perhaps the most private of experiences.

Christianity is not simply the truth, an institution, a philosophy, or a code of ethics; although in one sense, it is all of these things. It is, however, more importantly, and fundamentally, a Divine, living, and loving Person.

At the heart of a genuine Christian faith is that very private moment when we are confronted in our spiritually treacherous ways by the Savior, Jesus Christ. When Joseph revealed himself to his brothers, it was very personal and rather than being reproached by him, they experienced his splendid magnanimity and consequentially reproached themselves. It is the same when Christ reveals himself to us. We discover him that is full of grace and mercy. We see that He loves us. We see that he wants to embrace us. He wants to forgive us and be reconciled, despite the severity of our sins against him.

Have you ever experienced such a private moment with God in the person of his Son, Jesus Christ?

Of course, if you have, then you know that although a personal experience with the Savior is a private one, our newfound relationship with him can never be a secret. Joseph saved his brothers when he could have justly destroyed them. They owed him everything. It is for us to go far and near with this same message that our Lord is willing to reveal himself and receive all that come unto him by Christ.



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



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# Clint's Chronicles on the Funny Farm

The Rest of The Story  
By: Farmer Doug

I cannot help but belly laugh when I read these episodes of Clint on the farm and remember back to the day it took place. That watering tank is still working and still has to be cleaned out quite often but the electric fence has been replaced by a 4-strand barbed wire fence that has a gate where Clint decided to become an electrified wire clutcher. I remember my disbelief when I looked back and he was standing there shaking like a leaf holding the wire with this weird look on his face. I knew that it would not kill him but thought he had lost his ever-loving mind! His story tells it all and is totally funny. Enjoy the read and don't hold on to electric fences!

Clint's Chronicles on the Funny Farm  
By Clint Pollard

Many of you have written, emailed or called about this column. It seems that you find delight in my many foibles, misadventures and near-misses with danger. Also, some have questioned my veracity – that would be TRUTH telling – regarding these tales. A couple things you should know: The Lord undoubtedly protects me from myself and the myriad monsters and events that seek to snuff me out; and these stories are absolutely true (not to say I don't exaggerate a teeny tiny bit ☺) Now get a load of this:

### Pride Comes Before Electrocution!

It was another warm and DRY day at Harrell Hill Farms. I understand, now, why farmers are obsessed with the weather. I was asking God to open the heavens and pour moisture on our parched farmland. Hay ain't growin', 'maters are wiltin', 'tater patch looks like a forest fire aftermath...the soil is groaning for water. Babbling creeks and free flowing streams which had cascaded only weeks before now have slowed to a mere trickle.

This day my friend Doug Harrell has drug me all over the mountainous terrain, spraying some kind of dastardly weed killer on the fence line. He's learned not to trust me on the tractor in the presence of other human beings so he drives, dragging me and 10,000 feet of yellow hose in his wake. I am trudging through the valley, pulling 5 miles of hose pipe, spraying this modern day nuclear waste on a gazillion miles of pig weed. (By the way, one day I will ask the Lord how come He made pig weed...it's ugly; it chokes edible plants, and has thorns the size of horseshoe nails...that just ain't right!) Anyway, I'm cautiously running behind the tractor trying to avoid falling into a groundhog cavern. For I know there is an underground monster wanting to drag me to the center of the earth's core and devour my flesh!

Having dumped our load of herbicide it's time to repair the watering holes for the cows. I guess they are called watering holes, although they are more like watering tanks. They really aren't tanks either, they are really cement donuts which rise out of the earth and fill with water from who knows where. I mean there is no water on the gardens, no water in the creeks, and here I am looking at a round concrete hicky-doo full of life saving water...go figure. Man, so much to learn on this farm!

Anyway, A.D. Harrell – "Daddy D" to his family – has told Doug we need to unstop these fountains, geysers, watering holes...whatever in the heck they are. Seems mud and debris are interfering with the flow. So off we go to do whatever a farmer does to unstop the cow spring!

Well, there's an electric fence around the pastures to keep the bovine in and others out. Weeks ago, I was shown where to connect and disconnect the power making entry safe. If you care, the power comes out of a little out-building, sort of an ancient haunted shed type structure beside Daddy D's home. My first foray to the shed I fully expected a two-headed snake, a gigantic spider or at least a swarm of bees to assault my personage. Although I do recall the spider webs appearing like a Johns-Manville fiberglass factory. Thankfully not a single behemoth approached me, and Doug told me always to remember to disconnect the power before touching the wire. Duh! What kind of moron does he think I am?

As we neared the cow watering spigot I thought I saw Doug take the wire in his hands to steady his vault over the fence. You need to know that Doug and Daddy D are my heroes, in many regards, but I especially long to be a farmer like them. And, Doug and I have long had a competitive "thing" between us, whether playing golf, picking beans or eating cake. One always hopes to outperform the other. Back to the fence...

Following in Doug's footsteps, I grabbed hold of the barbed wire, with both hands, preparing to carefully lift my right leg over. BAM...BANG...%\$#@!...lightening raced through my fingertips, tingled through my wrists – continued up my arms, neck and head, spilling down into my back and belly, exiting through my feet. Heck I don't know – it's not a constant shock, it's a SLOW electrocution technique. I felt like an electric eel, did the hokey pokey, wriggling and dancing to the rhythm of pulsing electricity. Nearby Doug had "that look", as if he was suspended in time and space, unsure he was seeing what he was seeing.

Meanwhile, I'm clinging to this fence for dear life – smoke emanating from inside my wet gloves (Okay, not exactly pouring out but so it seemed). Yet I thought, "If Doug Harrell can hold this wire I CAN TOO. I will not give up." And I did...and I did...and I did. My hair standing on end...each appendage covered in goose bumps as body hair rose to the heavens...smoke coming from my ears... I was convulsing to the passage of intermittent electricity. I wore a hunted look, a sickly grin as I was not about to fail what I thought was another test of my farmer mettle.



Doug finally approached and said, "Uh, what are you doing?" At that moment, I lost my will to continue this insanity...I don't care if Doug had held this fence for longer than I...time to surrender. Periodic bursts of electricity passing through Farmer Clint's body cannot add to life expectancy...I would simply lose this challenge!

Pouncing over with both legs, I released the wicked barbed wire at last. I gazed at Doug with newfound admiration and inquired, "How did you do that? I mean, didn't it hurt you?" Confused he asked, "How did I do what?" Perplexed and annoyed I continued, "Hold onto that wire so long...it's HOT!"

As I've come to expect, Doug just smiled at me – that kind of smile that implies, "Oh goodness where did I find this guy?" – and said, "Clint, the fence is hot. I went under the wire, not over it."

I burst into laughter, the kind that shakes your belly and innards...still smoldering from the prehistoric torture fence. Now I was upset so I asked Doug, "Why did you let me do that – I could have been killed?" With a twinkle of mischief in his eyes and wonder in his mind he replied, "Well, I don't know about that. It's not likely you would be killed. But I've learned that when you mess up it's with gusto...and by the time I catch what you're doing it's too late to save you." I grunted and we moved on to help Daddy D unplug the cow fountain.

Tapping on Doug's shoulder, I pronounced with utmost confidence, "Bet you can't hold a hot fence as long as me." "Yeah, you win that one, Clint," he said, as he walked away chuckling and shaking his head.

I thought about my misplaced pride and how trying to outdo another, much less a friend, is not what God wants from me. Improper display of pride is shocking – get it, shocking! (That's funny I don't care who ya are!)

Regardless of my incompetence as Farmer Clint, I know that the Lord stood there with me – although He likely kept His distance while I held the hot wire. Yet, once again, miraculously I had cheated death on the funny farm.

Humbled in the hills,  
Farmer Clint



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## Snow Hill Baptist Church

### The Church is Small

Pastor Dean Honeycutt  
Mitchell County



For several years now we have been reading how religion and church attendance is declining in America. Ed Stetzer of Wheaton College and the executive director of the Billy Graham center there reports on data from the General Social Survey, sorted by what is called the RelTrad, "shows that Protestants are in the midst of a decade's long decline. And if patterns do not change Protestants have an expiration date of 2039." One reason cited is that mainline Protestants have abandoned central doctrines "that were deemed offensive to the surrounding culture." (The Washington Post by Ed Stetzer, April 28, 2017.) The Annual Church profile of the Southern Baptist Convention 2016 showed an increase of 479 churches participating but a decrease of baptisms, church attendance, and membership. Thom Rainer, CEO of Lifeway "Southern Baptists have seen a decline in the number of baptisms for several years, and it is clear evangelism and discipleship are waning. I do not believe it is due to the lack of opportunities, but a lack of engagement." (Carol Pipes Lifeway Newsroom June 8, 2017.)

Do I mention these statistics because I think the church as we know is going to disappear-- absolutely not? Well, in the rapture, we will disappear from earth, so let us be doctrinally correct that the church (bride of Christ) will no longer exist on earth after we are caught up to meet the Lord in the air. A false church will exist. However, before that time (1 Thessalonians 4:17) is there any danger of the demise of the New Testament Church? No, absolutely not.

Jesus said, "I will build my church and the gates of hell will not prevail against it." Matthew 16:18. Also the Bible says Jesus will present the church to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle and it will be holy and without blemish. (Ephesians 5:27) So the church will continue until Christ takes us away from earth.

So why is the church getting smaller in America? Church attendance is down and many churches have altogether cancelled Wednesday night and Sunday night services. It is apparent that people are no longer interested in going to church, even among those who would profess Christ.

I would like to suggest a couple of things. First, it should really bother us that baptisms are down. We need to share our faith regularly and have a tremendous burden for those who are in darkness. And, Pray the Lord of the harvest will send laborers into His Harvest. (Matthew 9:38) As a disciple of Christ, it is necessary I am telling others about Jesus. This idea that I witness by the way I live falls short of Jesus command to go make disciples of all nations. To fully obey, I must open my mouth and speak the Gospel that is the power of God unto salvation. (Romans 1:16)

Second, I would like to suggest that a decline in church attendance should not alarm us. Let me explain, it could actually be a good thing and is not foreign to the Bible. Scripture teaches us the love of many will grow cold. (Matthew 24:12) When Jesus called people to be serious about discipleship, many went back and walked no more with Him. (John 6:66) Narrow is the way that leads to eternal life and broad is the path that leads to hell. First John teaches us that people left the church because they were, no doubt, not part of the church. (1 John 2:19) Could it be in these last days God is separating true believers and followers of Christ? Because the Church is actually small, does not in any way release me from my responsibility to witness or do mission work.

In conclusion I do not want you to think I am glad church attendance is down. I am not. Attendance is, however, a reflection on lack of faithfulness and could well be an indication that some of these people do not have a relationship with Jesus. People who love Jesus will attend the Church that Jesus died for. I simply want to suggest a Biblical reason for small church-- sheep will go to church, goats will not.

Live life with "No Regrets"

Pastor Dean Honeycutt shepherds Snow Hill Baptist Church in Bakersville, NC. He may be reached at 828-385-0213, snowhillbaptist@gmail.com, or visit their website at www.snowhillbaptist.com.



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Bear Creek Baptist Church

Seek His Face!

By Rev. Bruce Cannon  
Mitchell County

*"Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them;"* (Ecclesiastes 12:1)

These times, they are a changing!  
Dr. David Jeremiah, in his book *Is This The End*, states, "Morality in the United States is no longer in free fall; it has hit bottom. In today's America, anything goes. Christianity is no longer merely pushed aside; American Christians are now experiencing overt repression and even persecution. Civility in politics and tolerance of opposing ideas has disappeared. Corruption and dishonesty in government is rampant and open. Race relations are deteriorating, earnings are declining, civil disorder is accelerating, and the national debt is beyond control." He then lists in his book so many other characteristics of today's America which show a desperate need for a return to the Lord.

In his book in the Old Testament, the prophet Jeremiah asks in 8:19,20, "Is not the LORD in Zion? is not her king in her? Why have they provoked me to anger with their graven images, and with strange vanities? The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved." During his day, Judah was in deep trouble and it broke Jeremiah's heart!

How my heart breaks to see the things taking place in America today! Pornography is protected under the bill of rights while the name of Jesus is censored. Other gods can be freely served seemingly, while Christianity, and the practice of it openly, is being silenced. Examples of this includes the following ongoing lawsuits filed by the Freedom From Religion Foundation (FFRF); most of which have been filed in the last 24 months:

- FFRF sues Texas judge to end courtroom prayer practice (chaplain led prayer)
- FFRF, parent, sue to end 75 years of bible classes in W.Va. school system
- FFRF and members file suit against Latin cross on county seal to remove it from the seal and flags
- FFRF sues Congress for invocation discrimination (so an atheist could be permitted to "pray")
- FFRF and AHA file suit to remove cross, which had stood for fifty years, in Pensacola public park
- Gaynor v. Lew challenges IRS clergy housing privileges
- FFRF vs. Abbott challenges display of a manger scene on state capitol
- FFRF sues Morris County, N.J., over grants to churches with historic buildings
- FFRF, ACLU bring suit challenging public school's live nativity scene
- FFRF, AU, ACLU sue Brevard County (FL) over discrimination of atheists wanting to "pray" at public meetings
- FFRF sues over school board prayer in Chino Valley, Calif.

These, literally, are only a handful of the efforts currently underway to remove the Bible, our God, Jesus, the Ten Commandments, The Cross and other Christian symbols from public settings.

I agree with Dr. Jeremiah, I Never Thought I'd See The Day! Time to practice Second Chronicles 7:14 fervently! It's time to genuinely pray. It's time to seek His face. It's time to turn from sins. How we desperately need Him to hear our prayer, forgive our sin and heal our land....if not for us, do it for our children and grandchildren.

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.



Grace Community Church

Living on Empty

By Jerry Lewis  
McDowell County



I enjoy sushi. Recently a friend called asking where to eat the best sushi. Without hesitation, I described the Godzilla roll at Sake in Black Mountain and the seaweed salad at the sushi and atmosphere at Wasabi in Asheville. Why? IT'S GOOD! We are all, by nature, glory declarers. We declare the glory of great ball players, great musicians, great restaurants and great experiences. We can't help ourselves.

Again, and again Scripture instructs us to declare the glory of God. Why? If we are not declaring God's glory we are declaring the glory of our functional saviors. Jerry Bridges defines these as "any object of dependence we embrace that isn't God. They become the sources of our identity, security, and significance because we hold an idolatrous affection for them in our hearts."

So how can we know if we're bowing at the altar of our functional saviors? He suggests honestly filling in these blanks:

- I am preoccupied with \_\_\_\_\_
- If only \_\_\_\_\_, then I would be happy.
- I get my sense of significance from \_\_\_\_\_
- I would protect and preserve \_\_\_\_\_ at any cost.
- I fear losing \_\_\_\_\_
- The thing that gives me the greatest pleasure is \_\_\_\_\_
- When I lose \_\_\_\_\_ I get angry, resentful, frustrated, anxious, or depressed.
- For me, life depends on \_\_\_\_\_
- The thing I value more than anything in the world is \_\_\_\_\_
- When I daydream, my mind goes to \_\_\_\_\_
- The best thing I can think of is \_\_\_\_\_
- That thing that makes me want to get out of the bed in the morning is \_\_\_\_\_

Evaluate yourself. Ask an important person in your life for their opinion. (Don't get mad when they're real with you!) According to Jeremiah the stakes are high!

*"My people have changed their glory for that which does not profit. Be appalled, O heavens, at this; be shocked, be utterly desolate, declares the Lord, for my people have committed two evils: they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed out cisterns for themselves, broken cisterns that can hold no water."* (Jeremiah 2:11-13)

Functional saviors won't hold water. Quit living on empty!

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



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## Morganton Baptist Church

### Paralysis of Analysis

By Pastor Dan Qurollo  
Burke County



A very fine line exists between faith and reason. God designed us with brains, and I believe He expects us to use them to make sound decisions that are in agreement with the Word of God. At times, He will stretch us beyond what we can reason in order that He might grow our faith. If we are not careful, we may find that we are too busy analyzing things that we are no longer doing.

I am not advocating a reckless abandonment of analysis.

David analyzed Goliath before he went out to battle. The spies analyzed the Promised Land before they began to conquer it. Jesus asked, "For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it?... Or what king, going to make war against another king, sitteth not down first, and consulteth whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand?" (Luke 14:28, 31).

Analysis is a needed thing.

But analysis must never supersede faith and obedience. Noah could have analyzed the need to build an ark, but instead he simply obeyed what God clearly commanded. David realized a greater cause demanded that he fight Goliath. Only two spies analyzed the Promised Land and came to the proper conclusion.

It is a challenge for us as a ministry as well as individuals to not fall into the trap of analyzing things to the degree that we are not busy doing the Lord's will. To be sure, analysis is a needed thing. But we cannot allow ourselves to become paralyzed by looking at all of the what-ifs. We need to press on in obedience and commit our way to God. He will direct; we simply must be willing to follow His direction. We cannot become prey to the paralysis of analysis.



Pastor Dan Qurollo is pastor Morganton Baptist Church. Check us out on our website [www.morgantonbaptist.net](http://www.morgantonbaptist.net) or find us on Facebook and YouTube.

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The Tabernacle Message

By Dr. Terry Cheek  
McDowell County

Doug Harrell and I recently had lunch and during the conversation we talked about many things, among them, my use of the Old Testament Tabernacle as a study tool for discipleship and evangelism through the local church. After the discussion, Doug wanted to let the BRCN readers know more about it and ask if I would put something together for the BRCN.

Work began about a decade ago while in seminary. To graduate a thesis was required and that meant serious writing about a serious subject. Early in my ministry I was introduced to the Tabernacle as a teaching tool by another pastor and it made a lasting impression. It made such an impression I chose to do my thesis on Christ in the Tabernacle. To aid my study and research I wanted to build a scaled model. As I researched and wrote I also built. Two years later both my thesis and my model was completed.



model, the time had come for us to join those on that road and begin teaching the Tabernacle message through the local church. My convictions lead me to teach the themes of Salvation, Sanctification and Service. From these three themes, we can see the great systematic theology and doctrine of God's word and how they teach discipleship to the church and lead the church in evangelism through priestly service.

God gives two chapters of the Bible to creation, while giving over 40 to the Tabernacle. Also, the book of Leviticus focuses on worship, atonement and ceremony conducted from within the Tabernacle. Exodus 25:8 records for us these words "And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them." Notice within this verse we find God initiating fellowship with His people. This may have started with the Hebrew nation He redeemed from Egypt but it certainly didn't end there. We find a true picture of worship in the Tabernacle, an example the church can gain insight from today. God chose to have fellowship with us. God provided a tool for guidance to salvation of the lost, sanctification of the saved and service through discipleship and worship.

If you have never taken a serious look at the Old Testament Tabernacle I suggest you do so very soon. If you're interested in knowing more about having the Tabernacle brought to your church contact me through email or phone from our website [www.theinspiringword.org](http://www.theinspiringword.org).

Terry Cheek is Pastor of Calvary Baptist Church in Marion.



What's Missing?

By Marlene Houk  
Burke County

Yapping as if his life depends upon it, Torro greets me, establishing his right as miniature king of the castle. I step into my friend's home and out of the muggy South Carolina summer. As we hug, her animal friend immediately paws at her dress as she bends slowly to assure him of equal love.

As a pugwawa or chug (a cross between a Pug and a Chihuahua dog), Torro displays his God-given gifts as he punctuates each day with his presence. He can now retrieve up to 10 doggie toys on command and loves the treats he receives. Torro even illustrated a spiritual truth recently during one of my pilgrimages to my friend and Sarah mother (1 Peter 3:6).



We had just finished a discussion of the one word that Eve left out of her conversation with the devil. This passage begins in the second half of the first verse of Genesis in chapter three. Years before, I had discovered this pivotal omission as I carefully read the brief passage in Genesis 3:1b-6.

Eve omitted a critical aspect of decision-making when she encountered Satan through the guise of the serpent in the garden of Eden. She refused to acknowledge her relationship with the LORD, and, in so doing, plunged the human race into the depths of sin which cast them out of God's presence. Much like a two-year old who refuses to make or maintain eye contact when asked to obey that which he would rather not, Eve omitted the one word that would have guided her to the right decision. Her answer to the serpent's question would have been different had she recognized her Authority and the One who had her best interests at heart as well as a breath-taking plan for her life. She left a legacy of the sadness that results from arriving at a decision without focusing on the Lord Jesus Christ as our Guide and Protector.

Torro illustrated this refusal to acknowledge authority as he lay under his mistress's kitchen barstool on the soft white rug. He was chewing on something and as we passed by, Barb said, "Torro, what are you chewing?" Torro edged ever so slightly further under the chair and after looking sideways, turned his head away with the object still in his mouth. Suddenly, I understood how easily the choice can be made to reject the LORD in our daily decisions. We manifest this rejection as we place our agendas above the God who gave us life. Thank you Torro for reminding me of that Bible truth and for making it clear!

P.S. By the way, do you know what word Eve left out of her conversation with the serpent in the garden of Eden? It's a critical omission because it reveals the inner thoughts that were racing through her mind as she contemplated disobedience. When you realize the crucial word that she deleted, you will understand what she was thinking and the danger of her legacy to us. For more tips and hints about finding this all-important word, email me at [marlenehouk@bellsouth.net](mailto:marlenehouk@bellsouth.net)

Marlene Houk is a regular contributor to Blue Ridge Christian News. Her passion is to delve deeply into the truths of Bible women and to discuss those in Bible Studies called Backstage Pass to Bible Women. She and her husband discover joy, nurture, and challenge in their church. Her contact is [marlenehouk@bellsouth.net](mailto:marlenehouk@bellsouth.net)



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This publication was created by the High Country Area Agency on Aging through a grant from MIPPA (Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act).



A Meditation

"Now Faith"

By Timothy Eller  
McDowell County

Hebrews 11:1 *Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.*

Faith is our firm assurance, belief and persuasion about God. Many times we ask for something and we do not understand how we must approach God. We must come to God believing that he is a rewarder of those who diligently seek him. Faith paves the way, it is the substructure of the things that we hope for. It is the real manifestation of what we desire. The definition of "substance" is something that is real and exists. From understanding that faith is the actual existence of what we are asking God for. Faith makes a way for what we ask for in prayer to come into existence. To "hope" simply means to expect. And evidence simply is the proof of something. Faith is the steadfast assurance that is a real manifestation and the substructure of what we are expecting with firm steadfast assurance. From this verse we can see we pave the way to answered prayer through faith. Faith is the way.

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



Mitchell County 4-H Members

Attend 2017 Citizenship North Carolina Focus

By Kim Slotnick  
Mitchell County

Two Mitchell County 4-H members attended 4-H Citizenship North Carolina Focus, which was held in Raleigh, North Carolina. These two 4-H'ers spent three days with more than 120 youth and adults representing 48 4-H programs across the state gathered to exchange ideas, gain knowledge and learn through hands on experiences about the importance of being an active and engaged citizen.

Jessy-Kate Glenn, 15, of Spruce Pine, daughter of Darrin and Susan Glenn represented Mitchell County at the June 12-14 conference. Jessy-Kate is the incoming President of the 4-H West District. Daniel Silver, 18, of Spruce Pine, son of Jonathan and Amanda Silver attended as the current 4-H State Council Reporter.

Through various conference sessions and facilitated discussions, delegates learned and shared information related to local, state and national government as well as learned how they could make an impact in the area of citizenship. The event culminated with delegates traveling to the Legislative Building in Raleigh to meet with their elected officials and their staff.

4-H Citizenship North Carolina Focus is sponsored by North Carolina's Electric Cooperatives. North Carolina 4-H is Cooperative Extension's youth development program.

For more information on this event or other 4-H programs, please contact Mitchell County 4-H at 828 688-4811.

Jessy-Kate goes to Washington.

Jessy-Kate Glenn, 15, of Spruce Pine, daughter of Darrin and Susan Glenn was able to be a part of the North Carolina A&T State University's delegation at Citizenship Washington Focus, June 25-July 2. 4-H participants from across the country attended workshops, visited with legislators, and got to see many historical sites during their time in Washington.

Jessy-Kate tells her story:

This past June, I had the opportunity to attend 4-H

Citizenship Washington Focus (CWF) in Washington, D.C. CWF is a week-long event held in D.C. every year, and hundreds of 4-Hers from across the United States gather together to learn about citizenship. We visited many memorials and monuments, including the Lincoln memorial, Vietnam Veteran's memorial, World War II memorial, The Mount Vernon estate, and the Washington National Cathedral.

Throughout the week, delegates engaged in Bill Writing workshops, where we learned how to write a bill, and the process the bill goes through to become a law. The representing states split into four groups, and we each studied a bill that is currently being proposed in Congress. Some examples include Congress Term Limits and Young Farmer incentives. At the end of the week, we held a Congressional session to determine if our bills would pass or fail. Participating in a mock Congressional session was very educational!

My favorite memorial of all was the Marine Corps War Memorial. This bronze statue depicts the iconic photograph taken during World War II, of six brave Marines raising an American flag on the island of Iwo Jima in Japan. Our CWF Programming Assistants told us the story of the young men on the statue; the story of six Marines, not much older than we were, who willingly gave their lives to protect our freedom.



Jessy-Kate Glenn



Daniel Silver



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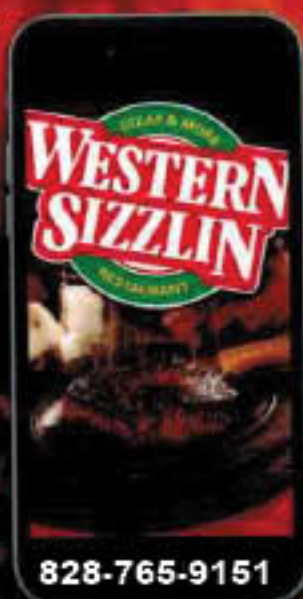
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## The Inspiring Word

### The Sermon on the Mount

Pastor Terry Cheek Th.D.

McDowell County



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

August 2017 will conclude our study of the Lord's Sermon on the Mount. Our scripture this month will come from Matthew 7:24-29. Let's set our heart towards understanding the foundations we build upon! That means our article will be refreshed with a different article each month or maybe another series. We'll pray about it and I ask that you join us as we seek God's direction as we serve Him.

The Lord gives us a contrasting comparison from Matthew 7:24-29. A wise builder and a foolish builder. The difference isn't found in the people or in the material. The difference between the two builders is found in the foundations they laid. The narrative applies to character building. We're all doing that, building our character, and our character reflects the foundation we used to create it.

The wise man or woman will read and prayerfully seek the Lord's guidance to understand the face value of the Sermon on the Mount, and build their character upon those values. Those values began with the Beatitudes and progress through the daily behavior, worship, prayer, discipleship and even evangelism of those who follow the Lord Jesus Christ. It will be these values which determine our character in our daily lives. The man or woman who takes seriously the Sermon on the Mount will find their desire to be salvation, sanctification and service. Likewise, the very same people will hunger for God's word, desiring not just an understanding but heavenly revelation as they study.

In contrast, the foolish man or woman will be exposed to the Lord's words yet they will choose to discount them. He or she will convince themselves the Lord's words on the Mount are for the other folks. They may choose to evade the sermon altogether. Possibly saying the teaching is for the Jewish people and not the church or it is too strict and impractical, some may even feel it is for Christ's future kingdom.

There is much to be concerned about with the foolish folks who discount or diminish the Lord's words. Sadly, some find it distasteful or confrontational, there is no opportunity for retaliation, rivalry or redress of those we feel have wronged us. We are even counseled against using civil action to our advantage. This teaching of Jesus strikes at the root of our pride!

Do you realize we have just studied the largest body of Christ's teaching that is recorded consecutively in Scripture? The Holy Spirit has preserved for us the Lord's words so we may learn them, apply them and obey them. Have you realized the essence of the Lord's message is repeated over again in the epistles? For example, we find in James 5:12 the prohibition of oaths. In 1 Corinthians 6:7 the teaching of nonresistance. In Romans 12:20 we find love toward enemies. In 2 Corinthians 6:5 we read of fasting. In James 2:13 we are reminded of an unforgiving spirit, while in James 5:1 we are reminded to renounce wealth. Last, but not least, we find in 1 Thessalonians 2:12 we are to seek the Kingdom of God! The words of Christ are the rock on which we are to build our character, when testing comes, not if, our foundation will be everything.

May I mention this briefly. A foundation of sand is nothing more than the philosophy of man trying to sell their goods to unsuspecting folks looking for the easy way out. There isn't an easy way. Our sin nature eliminated that for us. While we embrace Darwinism, humanism, Marxism, Socialism, secular Psychology and the mystic religions and dogmas which have arisen over the past 2000 years we drive ourselves farther away from the God of our creation and salvation. If you find yourselves



embracing these, repent, right now. Seek the Lord while He may be found.

In verses 28-29 we see the astonishment of the multitudes who heard this great sermon. Never before had they heard anything like this. The Rabbis were famous for giving wearisome, false and frivolous expositions of God's law, they constantly referred to what other teachers had said, in other words the tradition of previous generations had gained authority over God's word.

Jesus came and delivered His Sermon on the Mount and blew away the tradition of man. Jesus spoke with the authority of the living God, and those listening had to face the contrast of His teaching with that of the current religious teaching.

What foundation are your building upon? Our time and space has gone this month. We will begin something fresh and new in September. I trust you have been blessed by this series. Until next time may God keep you firmly in His grip!

Terry Cheek is Pastor of Calvary Baptist Church in Marion.

Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Matthew 28:19-20



Accentuate the Positive

By Cheryl Shuffler  
Burke County

BCPS summer internship program grows

An internship is a valuable way to gain work experience, learn new skills and pad a resume. This summer, 35 Burke County Public Schools students are getting course credit for working an internship and eight of those are getting experience directly at Burke County Public Schools. The bus garage, custodial department and public relations department have hired high school students to work paying jobs over a 10-week period.

Burke County Public Schools Superintendent Dr. Larry Putnam said, "This internship program is beneficial to the students, the employers and the workforce in general. It's a great opportunity for our young people to gain valuable work experience and receive a class credit. We are grateful to the businesses and industries in Burke County who have taken a chance on our students as interns and hope others will in the future."

Putnam said the internship program has not been without its roadblocks. He said, "The barriers we have faced in trying to get an internship program started include the students' ages, as most places want you to be 18 years old to work there. Others do not want to pay interns. It's hard to get anybody to work for free. Another barrier is places want workers who already have experience, and they aren't willing to take the time to train young people. We talk about how young people are not coming back to Burke County, but we need to be willing to invest in them and give them an incentive to come back here."

Putnam said Burke County Public Schools decided to lead the way in the internship movement and hire students who are under 18 and pay them \$1 over minimum wage.

"Running a school system is like running a large industry. We are making an investment in the future of our workforce, and we hope other county and city governmental agencies and businesses and industries will do the same. We recognize the need for plumbers and electricians and HVAC professionals, and one way to ensure that we have workers interested in these jobs in the future is to offer them an opportunity to learn these trades. I have the utmost confidence that if you take a chance on our students, you will be surprised at what they can do. Our students tend to rise to the expectations that people have for them."

Putnam hopes to see the Burke County Public Schools internship program grow even more and see the summer internships turn into afterschool jobs this fall for some of these students.

The student interns working with the custodial staff are doing jobs such as waxing floors and changing light bulbs; at the bus garage they are washing buses inside and out, and in public relations the one student is working on marketing material, social media, producing videos and writing stories.

The interns' hours range from 6 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday through Thursday with a target of 25 hours per week; the pay is \$8.25 per hour. The student interns said teachers at their schools were instrumental in informing them of the internship opportunity.

Alex Cook, a rising 11th grader at Hallyburton Academy, said of the internship, "I thought it was a great idea to get a job and meet new people."

Alex, Charles Pendley, a rising 12th grader at Freedom High School, and Dorrien Coleman, a rising 12th grader at Patton High School, are all interning at the bus garage. Charles would like to be a mechanic some day and hopes to get experience working on buses and not just washing them this summer. In the meantime he takes pride in being able to do something in the community by providing clean buses for students to ride come August. The boys work the early shift - 6 a.m. to noon.

They said they would be up anyway doing chores, and like being out early before the summer sun beats up the day. There's also that paycheck. They are all looking forward to the first one, with plans to spend it on gas and pets and maybe even stick some back in savings.

Their supervisor, John Cansler, Burke County Public Schools director of transportation, said, "I appreciate the opportunity to have these interns. These guys are outstanding and hard workers. This is a hot job, but they are doing a great job cleaning the buses."

The custodial interns include Grant Reynolds, a rising 11th grader at Patton High School, and Matthew Kiser, a rising 11th grader at Draughn High School. Grant has been assigned to W.A. Young Elementary School and Matthew to his own school, Draughn. Grant's supervisor, Lisa Conley, said she wishes she had a whole team of Grants. "He is cleaning out sinks and putting in light bulbs - anything I ask him to do he does it, and he doesn't complain."

Grant said the paid internship coupled with the class credit both made him interested in working for Burke County Public Schools this summer. "I'm working with great people. They are awesome," Grant said.

Betty Bradley supervises Matthew at Draughn High School and said, "He's punctual, has a good attitude and works well. I am tickled to have him."

Matthew said he is taking pride in his job, too, and making the school building look good for fellow students when they return in August. He had one warning for them - that they better keep the school clean after all of his hard work.

Anna Burkhalter is the intern for the public relations department and Cheryl Shuffler is her supervisor.

Anna said, "I've enjoy getting out of the office and going out to take pictures and shoot videos. I expected it to be more of an office job, but it's nice to get out and see how the school system works in the summer."

Shuffler said, "Anna brings a student's perspective to our public relations efforts and is aiding us in adapting our messages for a younger audience. She shows up early, works hard, is very



creative and is self-motivated. She has aspirations of going to Mars one day, and with her drive I have no doubt that when she gets there I'll be able to say, 'I knew her when.'"

Career Development Coordinator Jamie Norton, from Draughn, is in her third year overseeing the internship program. She said it has grown from 15 students the first year to 35 this year. "It has taken off," Norton said. "It is enticing to families that students can gain the experience and receive the honors credit, if they choose. While the internships aren't all paid, they do offer job skills and something for students to put on a resume. An internship on a resume is how you get a job these days and that makes a big difference."

In addition to Burke County Public Schools, the students have internships in the food and retail industry, at the City of Morganton, the J. Iverson Riddle Developmental Center, an insurance agency and furniture company.

Norton said those seeking honors credit for their internship - about 50 percent of the students - are required to complete a portfolio, keep a diary of reflections about their experiences and what they learned, and create a resume.

**Burke Works connects teachers with workforce**

Burke County Public Schools hosted its first summer internship program for teachers the week of June 12. Called Burke Works, the program targeted Career and Technical Education (CTE) teachers and included tours of local manufacturing companies and discussions with local employers about today's workforce needs.

For three days, 15 teachers, as well as the career development coordinators from each of the four high schools, loaded a bus in the morning and spent the day seeing for themselves what is manufactured in Burke County. They toured Manufactured Solutions, Continental, Opportunity Threads and Ekomes. They also toured and experienced a hands-on project at Western Piedmont Community College and toured Carolinas HealthCare System Blue Ridge. The program concluded with a round-table discussion with area managers and human resource directors from Kellex and Valdese Weavers as well as a representative from NC Works.

Burke County Public Schools Superintendent Dr. Larry Putnam said, "There are high-paying jobs with great benefits and clean, healthy working environments right here in Burke County, and I am so excited that through Burke Works our teachers got to see that first hand. It is important that our teachers know what is made in Burke County and hear from workers and employers about what skills are needed to fill local jobs. While we are educating future doctors, lawyers and engineers, as a former employee of the furniture industry myself, we need to remember that we also are educating future plant managers, assembly line mechanics and sewing specialists who will work in Burke County and contribute to our local economy."

The idea for Burke Works developed from Burke Partners in Education meetings, which are held once a month during the school year and involve Burke County Public Schools, the Chamber of Commerce, Burke Development Inc., Western Piedmont Community College, NC Works, Carolinas HealthCare System Blue Ridge and WIOA.

Rexanna Lowman, director of Secondary Education and Career and Technical Education for Burke County Public Schools, said, "Many of our students and principals have had similar opportunities to visit businesses and industries in our community, and we felt it was important that our teachers be exposed to the same experience. I want to thank the Burke Partners in Education committee and especially Burke Development Inc., for making a generous financial donation to Burke Works to help make this idea a reality."

Burke Development Inc., contributed \$1,500 to the program. BDI president and CEO Alan Wood said, "This was a great opportunity for Burke County teachers to learn about our existing industry. The more our teachers can get out into these companies to see and explore them in person, the better prepared they are to share information with students about local job opportunities."

Here is what some of the teachers said about Burke Works:

Stephanie Eggers, business teacher, Draughn High School, said, "The CTE Internship Program was packed full of wonderful tours, industry leaders and invaluable time spent with our colleagues. I learned innovative ways industry is using to manufacture their products, the computer technology they require and the type of employee skills they require for employment."

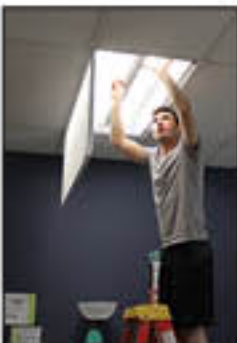
Kelley Lytle, health science teacher, Draughn High School, said, "I had no idea that several of those businesses even existed in Burke County. Some of the technology we were introduced to was mind boggling. We often hear that there are no jobs in Burke County and that simply isn't the case. However, the main message I took away from our tours was that while the skills we teach our students are extremely important it is just as important that we attempt to teach them to be productive, responsible, and positive members of a team. That's what the employers are looking for."

Ed Hallyburton, business education teacher, East Burke High School, said, "I really enjoyed learning about SolidWorks and the hands-on project at Western Piedmont. I believe students will really enjoy and benefit from the technology used in the engineering department. The career opportunities available to students and the many exciting technological advancements being made in the area of textile and material development were very interesting. Capping off the week with an HR roundtable conversation discussing the role we as educators play in developing a skilled workforce was very beneficial. I have already begun utilizing the connections that were made."

Rosa Padgett, CTE teacher, East Burke High School, said, "It was exciting and amazing to see things going on in our community with technology, business, manufacturing and employment. We live in a great area and thank you to everyone that helped put together such a worthwhile adventure for teachers to explore things that help teachers connect education to the workforce."

Donna Simmons, CTE teacher, Draughn High Schools, said, "I truly enjoyed the entire week. To see all the different businesses and the help for small businesses and entrepreneurs was nice to see and to know about."

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







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College of Distinction

By Nina Mastandrea  
Avery County

BANNER ELK, N.C. — Defined for its “upward trajectory,” Lees-McRae College was named a College of Distinction within the prestigious North Carolina cohort.

An online resource for students researching both private and public institutions across the U.S., Colleges of Distinction are defined as those best places to learn, grow and succeed, according to the website.

“These days, the best colleges recognize that the undergraduate student experience is about more than choosing a major and taking classes,” according to the College of Distinction website. “An increasing number of universities and colleges provide hands-on experiences to undergraduates—seminars, engaging programs, and community structures that go beyond or expand upon academic majors.”

Lees-McRae College joins 12 fellow North Carolina institutions including Appalachian State University, High Point University, Wake Forest University and Western Carolina University.

“We are blessed and we are grateful to be joining this impressive list of North Carolina’s top colleges and universities,” Lees-McRae President, Dr. Barry M. Buxton, said.

Read more about Lees-McRae College on the Colleges of Distinction website here: <http://collegesofdistinction.com/school/lees-mcrae-college/>

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Nina Mastandrea is the content manager of Lees-McRae College



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## Walnut Grove Church

### Empty Vessels

By Pastor Kurt Bomar  
Avery County



2 Kings 4:6 *When all the jars were full, she said to her son, "Bring me another one." But he replied, "There is not a jar left." Then the oil stopped flowing.*

To save a widow from bankruptcy, Elisha told her to gather empty vessels and that she would have an unending supply of oil to fill them. This touching story has a lesson that applies to us today.

There are three main characters: a destitute widow, a little oil, and some empty vessels. All three mean something.

The widow represents us. Even if you are not facing tough times today, I assure you, you will sometime in the future. That's just the way life works. Bankruptcy in her day would allow for her two young sons to be sold into slavery. That means that the very fate of her family depended on her—and she had no answers. So, she wisely went to the man of God, Elisha for help. The man of God we go to today is Jesus. Even when we don't see a solution, He has one for us.

The oil represents the Holy Spirit (this is seen all through the Bible). And the empty vessels represent those around us who are also in need of refreshment by the Holy Spirit.

So, what happens? As long as she keeps using the oil to fill the empty vessels, it keeps flowing. I suggest to you that as long as we are using our unlimited "filling" of the Holy Spirit to refresh others, the oil will keep flowing.

So, what do we need to do? We need to gather as many empty vessels around us as possible. If you feel dry today, could it be because you are focusing on yourself and your own problems and ignoring the empty vessels that are all around you?

When you become burdened for the lost souls of family members, friends and those you otherwise come in contact with, I believe you will feel the "glug glug glug" of the Holy Spirit filling you. When you look to help those, who are less fortunate than you by giving financially, don't be surprised to hear the "ka-ching" of financial blessings. When you turn off the TV and use that time to minister to those who are hurting (unwed mothers, those in prison, those who are disabled or aged, those struggling with drug addiction and at-risk children) expect a new level of energy that replaces your current exhaustion of the day.

I believe that was the feeling Jesus felt after he ministered to the woman at the well when he told his disciples (who had just returned with a take-out meal) "I have food that you don't know about." He had been refreshed and filled with the Holy Spirit.

Use the pattern set forth by Jesus and this poor widow and the Holy Spirit will fill you and flow from you perpetually!

Selah (think about it)

Kurt Bomar is pastor of Walnut Grove Church.

*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. Acts 1:8*



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*and home to become a foster family and contact **McDowell DSS 828-652-3355** to start your foster family journey. Foster/Adopt. Zak and Shantel Wyatt*



Oh, Say Can You See? (Continued)

By Lana Ellis  
Tennessee



In last month's article we looked at the question, "Oh, say can you see?" that Francis Scott Key asked at the beginning of "The Star Spangled Banner." Mr. Key was referring to the fact that he could see America's flag still flying over war torn Fort McHenry. He saw the flag through his "physical" eyes. Being able to see through our physical eyes is truly a blessing. There are some born without sight and others lose their sight due to various circumstances. I certainly admire those who live productive lives in spite of that. However, there are many "sighted" who live as if their eyes are blinded. Judges 17:6 is a good example of that. "In those days there was no king in Israel: every man did what was right in his own eyes." We don't have to look far to find many living like that



in today's world. Another example of blind "sighted" eyes found in Matthew 7:3-5 is how we judge others. "Why do you look at the speck that is in your brother's eye but do not notice the log that is in your own eye?" Matthew wrote, "The eye is the lamp of the body so then if your eye is clear your whole body will be full of light. But if your eye is bad your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light that is in you is darkness, how great is the darkness!"

The last part of that verse also refers to "spiritual eye sight", that which comes from the heart. Paul wrote in Ephesians 1:18, "I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you will know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints."

Song writer, Paul Baloche, wrote "Open the eyes of my heart, Lord... I want to see You... To see you high and lifted up, shining in the light of Your glory." Psalm 119:8 "The precepts of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; The commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes." Psalm 119:18 "Open my eyes that I may behold wondrous things out of your law." Most likely back in the 1800's Clara H. Scott based the words of her song on those verses. "Open my eyes that I may see glimpses of truth Thou hast for me; Place in my hands the wonderful key that shall unclasp and set me free. Silently now I wait for Thee, ready my God Thy will to see. Open my eyes, illumine me, Spirit divine!" The "light" coming from God's Word brings healing to "spiritual blindness" and gives guidance by day and by night. Psalm 119:105 - "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and light unto my path."

The original lines of "Oh, Say Can You See" were well written By Francis Scott Key. By no means am I as poetic as he; however, the following lines were written by me!

Oh say can you see what God has done  
How far He has brought you by His precious Son?  
Oh say can you see thru the eyes of your heart  
The promise you've been given from the very start?  
Oh say can you see thru your heart's eyes  
Where sin abounds wrapped in Satan's disguise.  
Oh say can you see those you can show  
The love of a Savior, the One whom you know?

It would be a good thing if all of the above Scripture verses and song lyrics were planted and rooted in our minds and hearts along with the words from the old Irish hymn. "Be Thou my Vision, O Lord of my heart. Naught be all else to me, save that Thou art. Thou my best thought, by day or by night, waking or sleeping, Thy presence my light."

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

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## Avery County

**Avery County Chamber** - Aug 5—Crafts on the Green, Fred's Mercantile, Beach Mountain. Aug 11-13—Fine Art & Master Crafts Festival, Historic BE School, Banner Elk. Aug 19-20—Grandfather Mountain Amateur & Professional Camera Clinic

## Burke County

**Bridge42 Church—Morganton** - Bridge42 Church and Iglesia Río De Agua Viva (River of Life Church) both in Morganton have been sharing their facility for the past six years. On August 13th at 10:30am we will be coming together for a joint bilingual Worship Gathering. Thanks.

**Burke County Chamber** - Adopt A Backpack—Help us prepare the children of our community for school! Adopt a backpack full of school supplies between now and August 18th for only \$5.00 and give a local child in need 20 items plus a Drawstring Backpack for back to school.

This year's Leadership Burke Class filled even more quickly than usual as interest in the program continues to grow. Chamber President Jerry Davis said that applications exceeded the program's capacity to ensure a quality experience for everyone who wanted to attend. "So, we are looking at repeating the program early in the new year for individuals, companies and organizations we could not accommodate this time around. If your company receives free or discounted Leadership Burke tuition, we'll make sure you receive that membership benefit as part of your current membership."

"Details of our itinerary will be sent to participants in the weeks ahead, but with support from our participating employers, this year's program promises to be truly outstanding," he added. "To the extent possible, we hope to duplicate this year's program in early 2018."

Deadline Extended to August 18 to Apply for 7th Annual Edison Project

If you or someone you know has a great idea for a new business, product or services and could use not only some professional advice but also to \$10,000 in capital -- then now is the opportunity to enter the 7th Annual Edison Project. The deadline to enter has just been extended to August 18.

For the first time, the Chambers of Commerce in Burke, Catawba and Caldwell counties have come together to sponsor and promote it.

Entrants will compete with other start-up entrepreneurs for economic incentives: \$10,000 1st place; \$5,000 2nd place and \$3,000 3rd place, plus other pro-bono benefits for the best new entrepreneurial business ideas in our Metro area for 2017.

The application period began in May. This competition is for potential new start-up companies and for those current businesses that have cumulative revenues of less than \$100,000, excluding grants. You can reapply if you were not one of the top 3 winners from the previous years. This competition is not applicable for non-profit organizations.

Entrants will be judged on a point system based on the elements of their written and oral business plan presentation. The business plan will account for 50% of total points and the financial pitch will amount to 40% of total points. The final 5-minute presentation on November 13 will be judged by the audience and will amount to 10% of your remaining total points. The judges will combine all three scores and award the top three winners during an awards ceremony. to be held in Hickory

For answers to questions about the Edison competition, please call (828) 328-6111.

**Catawba River Baptist Association** - 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 \$2,000 per person. This trip is open to both men and women.

The Region 8 Regional Missions Rally for North Carolina Baptist Men is Monday, August 14th at Mt. Ruhama Baptist Church, 3273 Mt. Ruhama Church Rd., Maiden, NC.

Be sure to join us for a wonderful night of mission inspiration as we experience what God is doing through NC Baptists around the world. There will be worship, testimonies, videos, and information on mission opportunities. Supper is at 6 and the program will go from 6:50-8:30. As always, this is open to men, women and youth. While there is no fee for this event, reservations must be made by August 7th. To register, contact the NCBM office at 1-800-395-5102 (ext. 5596) or go to <http://baptistsonmission.org/events/region-rallies>. If you would like to travel with a group from our Association please call our office at 828-437-0137.

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

**Morganton Seventh-day Adventist-Burke County** - God's Closet - Morganton (a non-profit organization) will be offering FREE clothing to parents and guardians of children ages 0 to 18 years of age. Friday, August 4th., from 9:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m., at the Morganton Seventh-day Adventist Church, 2187 Jamestown Road, Morganton, N.C. 28655. There will be a \$1.00 entrance fee and then all of

the clothing is FREE! For more information, please call 828-244-3876 or E-Mail - [morganton@godscloset.com](mailto:morganton@godscloset.com)

Check out God's Closet - Morganton on the web at [www.godscloset.com](http://www.godscloset.com) and on Facebook "God's Closet - Morganton" @GodsClosetMorganton

Health Social - Sunday, August 13th., at 5:30 p.m. Please bring a plant-based (non-dairy / non-meat) dish along with copies of your recipe to share, if you would like! Come prepared to enjoy some great food and fun fellowship! For directions, please contact Cindy at 870-510-8048.

**Historic Valdese** - The outdoor drama "From This Day Forward" written by Fred Cranford is the flagship show of Old Colony Players. The summer of 2017 will mark the 50th consecutive season of production. This drama tells the story of the Waldenses, a people from the area known as the Cottian Alps in Northern Italy near the French border, and the founders of the Town of Valdese.

The 50th season is proudly directed by Kenneth Kay & Kim Cozort Kay  
Rated PG13 for Battle Scenes

Purchase Tickets by calling 828-879-2129, order online, or get them the night of the show with cash or check.

Show runs Friday & Saturday starting July 14 and ending August 12 at 7:45pm.  
Waldensian Festival, Kickoff is August 11 and the Festival is Aug 12.

New Entertainment rides for All Ages! Over 170 Food/Art/Craft Vendors with extended hours for Attractions and Tours. Come out and help us Celebrate.

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

## McDowell County

**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 in 5 underserved villages in the northern Corozal 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.

**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 Tailgate Market shelter.

**New HOPE of McDowell (Marion)** - 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 assisting with carrying out the strategic goals and objectives of the organization, providing direct leadership and supervision to all Client Services Advocates, and operating under the direction and expectations of the Executive Director/Court Advocate and Board of Directors.

**Old Fort Presbyterian** at 144 Main Street, has a free community dinner and musical entertainment every fourth Saturday from January through October. Meal is from 5:30-6:30 And music is 6:30-7:30.

Please put this in Bits and Pieces for us. Thank you.

## Mitchell County

**All Saints of America Orthodox** - On Saturdays beginning in June, All Saints of America Orthodox Mission will be having Divine Liturgy at the meeting hall located at Trinity Episcopal Church, 15 Hemlock Ave, Spruce Pine, NC 28777. The Liturgy will be served weekly on Saturdays at 11:00 AM. Fr. Steven Webb, the priest appointed to serve the new mission, will be officiating. While All Saints of America Orthodox Mission is a part of the Russian Orthodox Church, all services are performed in the English language. Afterwards, all are invited to a picnic at 1064 Deer Park Lake Rd. Spruce Pine, NC.

**Bear Creek Baptist Church-Ledger** - Trip to Baptist Children's Home on Saturday, August 5th. Leaving the church at 9:00am. Plans are to arrive by 11:00, check out the campus, meet the kids & enjoy a pizza lunch with one of the cottages. We will return by 4:00pm.

**Celebrate Recovery** - This is a Christ and Biblical Based Program, giving help and help 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 Sean Dr. (Estatoe area—off Brushy Creek Rd). 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

Care & Share, 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, 236 Hospital Dr. in Spruce Pine, from 1:00 P.M. to 3:00 P.M. High Country Caregiver Foundation welcomes and encourages all



caregivers to attend.

Families dealing with a loved one with memory loss can quickly become exhausted, traumatized, and isolated, and this new group intends to provide support, friendship, education, 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 (714) 614-5867 or Janet Ouzts at [juntouzts@yahoo.com](mailto:juntouzts@yahoo.com).

**Grassy Creek Baptist Church** - Grassy Creek Baptist Church will celebrate its 199th homecoming on Sunday, August 6th. Worship service will begin at 10:30am. Special music will be provided by the baritone singer for the Kingdom Heirs, Loren Harris. Everyone is invited to join us for this special service and decoration of the cemeteries. For more information call the church office at 765-4620.

**Mitchell County Chamber** - Calling All Volunteers! The NC Mineral and Gem Festival will be held August 3-6 and we are calling on all of our great volunteers for your help. Give us a couple of hours and we will give you a great Festival t-shirt! Call us at 765-9033 or email [pjensen@mitcheill-county.com](mailto:pjensen@mitcheill-county.com) for the days you can volunteer.

Promote your business in the Gem Festival Dealer Goody Bags!

Each year we welcome our NC Mineral and Gem Festival Dealers with a community welcome bag filled with items from local businesses. Do you have pens, notepads, coupons, or other giveaways that you would like to include in the bags this year for our dealers? If so, give us a call at 765-9033 and we will come by and pick them up from you next week!

**Blue Ridge Craft Trails Project Plans Listening Sessions** - People committed to Western North Carolina's rich craft heritage can help create a new craft trail across our mountains. The Blue Ridge National Heritage Area seeks ideas and suggestions to develop the Blue Ridge Craft Trails over the next few years. The Blue Ridge National Heritage Area's latest trail initiative will encourage cultural tourism and strengthen rural economies by promoting the region's many craft artists, craft schools, local arts businesses and venues. The online project promises to link traditional and contemporary artisans with more visitors to studios and galleries.

Seven listening sessions have been scheduled across the region. Craft artists, gallery owners, arts groups, businesses and anyone interested are invited to attend and offer their comments. Meetings will be held 2-4 p.m. on the following dates and locations:

- August 1 - Tryon Arts & Crafts, Tryon
- August 3 - Yadkin Valley Cultural Arts Center, Yadkinville
- August 8 - John C. Campbell Folk School, Brasstown
- August 24 - Penland School of Crafts, Penland
- August 31 - Southern Highland Craft Guild, Folk Art Center, Asheville

"We envision the Blue Ridge Craft Trails of Western North Carolina as an on-line roadmap to guide visitors through our rich craft heritage and connect personally with artisans in our mountain communities," said Angie Chandler, executive director of the Blue Ridge National Heritage Area.

"We're building on the pioneering work of HandMade in America in the 1990s, which started the original Craft Heritage Trails of WNC. We want to update that guide for the Internet age and provide new opportunities for the next generation of crafters, collectors and visitors," Chandler said.

The professional craft industry generates more than \$206 million in annual business across 25 Western North Carolina counties, according to a 2008 economic study.

The Blue Ridge Craft Trails project is funded with a \$90,000 grant from the Appalachian Regional Commission and contributions from the North Carolina Arts Council and WNC Community Foundation.

To register for specific meetings, go to the Blue Ridge National Heritage Area website at [www.blueridgeheritage.com](http://www.blueridgeheritage.com) and click on the link on the homepage or call Amy Hollifield at 298-5330, ext. 303.

Authorized by Congress in 2003, the Blue Ridge National Heritage Area covers 25 Western North Carolina counties, and remains the only regional organization dedicated to the stewardship of five Appalachian cultural legacies - craft, music, natural beauty, agriculture and Cherokee heritage.

National Heritage Areas are locally-governed institutions that encourage residents, non-profit groups, government agencies, and private partners to work together in planning and implementing programs that preserve and celebrate America's defining landscapes. The views and conclusions contained in this news release are those of the authors and should not be interpreted as representing the opinions or policies of the U.S. Government. Mention of trade names or commercial products does not constitute their endorsement by the U.S. Government.

**Mitchell County Historical Society** - Music of the Toe River Valley—7pm At the Historic Courthouse in Bakersville. Our wonderful Rhonda Gouge will present a musical program of the music of the Toe River Valley.

**Mitchell-Yancey Substance Abuse Task Force** - The Substance Use and Mental Health Resource Guide which we release every two years is available. This one is from 2016 with the new one to be released spring 2018, so this may have some outdated information (Celebrate Recovery is not listed in this but will be in the 2018 version), but I hoped this would give you an idea of what few resources are located in Yancey and Mitchell Counties, as well as those resources in Western

NC out of county. These can be accessed on the web site.

3rd annual Western Region Recovery Rally will take place on Saturday, September 9th at Lake Junaluska where it was last year. Once I get more information about this event, I will send out an email to the Task Force as we have been invited to have a table here. A wonderful event - but again, a bit of a drive for those in our community.

**Red Cross Blood Donation** - The American Red Cross serving Mitchell and Yancey County has volunteer positions open as 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 Brewster, Volunteer Services Specialist supporting the Mitchell and Yancey area blood drives at [kimberly.brewster@redcross.org](mailto:kimberly.brewster@redcross.org) or 828-333-9809.

**Penland School of Crafts**—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 bikes or books or bowls or brooches or ...?

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

**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 fellowshiping, come join us for breakfast at Helen's Restaurant in Bakersville. We will be ending by 10:00am. Open to all-for more information call Barbara Harrell at 828-467-3644 or email at [barbarah@brcnews.com](mailto:barbarah@brcnews.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 7:00pm at 79 Sean Dr. (Estatoe area—off Brushy Creek Rd). We are studying the Gospel of John currently. Call John Jackson 760-793-3799 for information and directions. And bring your Bible.

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

**Parkway Playhouse** - Footloose is set to open at Parkway Playhouse on August 5th. The highly energetic cast is directed by Parkway Playhouse's Managing Director, Kristen Livengood, with Choreography by Julie Becton Gillum and Musical Direction by Ginger Haselden. Footloose stars Jake Deyton as Ren and Ashley Huber as Ariel with Amy Weinmeister, Mike Yow, Roberta Whiteside, Hunter Taylor, Myra McCoury, Olivia Morgan, Kimberly Grez, Robby Taylor, Dakota Whitehead, Logan Bryant, Bruce Chuvala, Rachel Haimowitz, Randall Garland, Jon Goldman, Carol Forbes, Rose Ray, Jack Weinmeister, Zachariah Malas, Bryce Palmyra, Levi Bradford, Lizzie Bingham, Ashley Grant, Jessica Grant, Rebecca Heidenfelder, Liza Patrick, and Samarie Wilson. Performances are on Fridays and Saturdays at 7:30pm and Sundays at 3pm through August 19th.

Following the performance on opening night, August 5th, a complementary Opening Night Reception for the cast and audience will be held. And on Sundays, August 6th and 13th, the cast will sit for post show discussions. Audience members can ask questions about everything from costumes to scenic design, acting and their individual roles in the production.

Tickets range from \$12 for children to \$22 for adults. All performances are at the historic Parkway Playhouse theatre, located at 202 Green Mountain Drive in Burnsville, NC. Tickets can be purchased by visiting the Parkway Playhouse Box Office (open 1-5pm Thursdays through Saturdays), calling 828-682-4285, or by visiting [www.parkwayplayhouse.com](http://www.parkwayplayhouse.com).

For more information about Parkway Playhouse, performances, volunteer opportunities, classes, auditions, and more please visit [www.parkwayplayhouse.com](http://www.parkwayplayhouse.com), or call 828-682-4285.

**Shoal Creek Baptist Church** - Sunday August 6, 2017 @ Toe River Camp-ground Pavilion--Baptism Celebration and Family Day; Festivities will begin at 4:00 PM. Sunday August 20, 2017--Homecoming Celebration with the Hill Family @ 9:45 AM, followed by the Preaching Service at 11:00 AM, guest speaker Rev. G E Freeman, covered dish lunch to follow.

**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.

**August 2017 FREE Classes from the Mayland Small Business Center:** Build Your Own Business Website Series (9 Hours) NEW!

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*continued on page 30*



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Matthew 14:16-21

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your own business website using a free online program called WordPress. This three-class series will teach do-it-yourself website building using the Mayland computers. Class one will introduce the website building process and notify students of items needed to build a marketable business webpage. In classes two and three, students will learn about search engine optimization as they work on their website under the guidance of the instructor. The goal of this series is for attendees to build a functional business website. This class series will fill up fast so sign up today! 8/1-10, TTTh, 5:30-8:30 p.m. Fee Waived Wall Mitchell 828.766.1295

**Best Social Media Outlet for my Business? (2 Hours) NEW!**

Learning the customer profile for each social media outlet will allow a business to strategically target their online marketing. This two-hour seminar will look at the popular social media sites and outline the typical users. Does your customer Tweet, Facebook, Snapchat, Link, or Instagram? This seminar will help you figure it out! 8/3, Th, 5:30-7:30 p.m. Fee Waived Morris Mitchell 828.766.1295

**The "Who" and "What" of Your Business (2 Hours) NEW!**

Learn how to emphasize your competitive advantage by describing who you are and what you do. Gain communication strategies that will impress potential prospects and close deals! 8/8, T, 5:30-7:30 p.m. Fee Waived Collins Yancey 828.766.1295

**Crafting Your Brand: Simple Strategies for Cultivating a Creative Career (2 Hours)** Matt Tommey, world renowned basket maker, will share strategies that enabled him to pursue his passion of making sculptural art baskets as a full time lucrative business. Sponsored by TRAC and SBC. Class will be held at the Yancey Learning Center in Burnsville. 8/16, W, 4:30-6:30 p.m. Fee Waived Tommey Yancey 828.766.1295

**Finding NEW Customers: Generation Y and Millennial Preferences (3 Hours)**

Generation Y and Millennials are your future customers. If you understand what they will need and want, you can position your business for future success or create a new business. This seminar will look at demographic trends and forecasts to predict what these two generations will need and when they will need it so you can effectively plan your future business. 8/22, T, 5:30-8:30 p.m. Fee Waived Branch Newland 828.766.1295

**Build a Better Business: Goal Setting (2 Hours)** In this class, you will learn what goals are important to set for your individual business. Students will then be lead through a new strategy that will greatly increase the odds of goal attainment. Let us help you achieve your business goals! 8/29, T, 5:30-7:30 p.m. Fee Waived Collins Yancey 828.766.1295

**7 Steps to Successfully Marketing Your Arts/Crafts Online (2 Hours)**

Sometimes marketing your art online can be overwhelming! This seminar will focus on seven steps geared specifically towards artists that will help them navigate the world of online sales. Sponsored by Toe River Arts Council and the Mayland Small Business Center! 8/30, W, 5:30-7:30 p.m. Fee Waived

LaBelle TRAC Art Resource Center, Spruce Pine 828.766.1295

**Employee Handbook Essentials for Small Businesses (3 Hours)**

Lower your risk of legal issues and potential unemployment taxes while opening up valuable communication with your employees by implementing an employee policy handbook. Any business that has employees will benefit from designing an employee handbook that properly addresses company expectations, policies, and penalties. This class will provide advice, tools, and resources that will help you design a handbook to cover your risks. 8/31, TH, 5:30-8:30 p.m. Fee Waived Silvers Yancey 828.766.1295

To learn more or register for a class, contact Allen Cook at the Mayland Small Business Center today. Call (828) 766-1295 or email [acook@mayland.edu](mailto:acook@mayland.edu). Get your business going and growing!



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# YOUR GOVERNMENT PAGES

## US House of Representatives NC District 11



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

### Freedom Caucus Pushes Clean Repeal of Obamacare

The major news of this week was that the House Freedom Caucus filed a discharge petition to bring the 2015 "clean repeal" of Obamacare bill directly to the house floor for a vote. A discharge petition is a system that allows a bill to bypass committees and go directly to the floor for a vote if it gets 218 signatures from members of Congress. We are working on getting signatures now.

Remember, this is the same bill that both chambers of Congress voted in favor of less than 2 years ago. As we've said before: there is no reason why we should put something less on President Trump's desk than we put on President Obama's desk in 2015.

The American people are tired of waiting for their premiums to come down. They are tired of waiting for more money in their paychecks. They are tired of waiting for relief from the broken system of Obamacare.

No more waiting, no more stalling. It's time for members of Congress to keep their promise and cleanly repeal this broken system. Op-ed with Rep. Jim Jordan: *The Truth Behind the CBO*

I wrote an op-ed with my Freedom Caucus colleague, Jim Jordan, titled "The Truth Behind the CBO." The op-ed outlines the Congressional Budget Office's history of miscalculated projections and the fundamental flaws behind their model of predicting outcomes on healthcare reform.

One example from the piece: the CBO miscalculated the 2002 Farm Bill cost by \$137 billion. They miscalculated the 2008 Farm Bill by a whopping \$309 billion.

On healthcare, the situation is no better—in 2010 the CBO estimated 21 million people would enroll in Obamacare exchanges by 2016, when the actual number was closer to 10 million. That's a miscalculation of over 100%—a disastrous outcome for consumers. Quite frankly, the American people deserve better than to have their healthcare costs, their taxes, and their policy agendas hinge on the predictions of an agency that is so consistently wrong. It's time to thoroughly examine the CBO and assess its viability as a model for predicting the impact of legislation.

### Freedom Caucus Is Increasing Pressure to Cancel August Recess

If you missed it, there are several updates on the House Freedom Caucus' push to cancel the August Recess. We're arguing for this so that Congress can stay in DC to work on keeping our promises to the voters.

First, the Senate announced that they are canceling the first two weeks of their recess—giving more time to work on healthcare reform, nominations, and other important legislative issues. I applaud this decision by leader McConnell and remain calling on House leadership to do the same—The House Freedom Caucus also held a press conference last week calling on the House to follow suit and cancel our August recess. The list of Congress' unfinished business is far too long to go on a break, and it's critical that any additional weeks in session are coupled with decisive action to deliver on our promises to the American people.



## NC Senate District 47



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

Taxpayer dollars aimed at helping children's intellectual development get no greater bang for the buck than those invested in early childhood education. At no other time in a child's life will his or her brain experience faster growth than the first 1,000 days between conception and the second birthday, so the importance of engaging stimulation for children of this age group is clear. That is why I was the primary sponsor of legislation which eventually made it into our state budget. The Smart Start Reading Initiative provides funding to increase access to Dolly Parton's Imagination Library, an early literacy program that mails age-appropriate books to registered children on a monthly basis. Once fully implemented in fiscal year 2018-19, access to the program will be statewide.

Life is precious, and that includes the lives of unborn children. In a move to reduce abortions in North Carolina, our budget includes funding for two non-profit pregnancy care initiatives, Carolina Pregnancy Care Fellowship (CPCF) and the Human Coalition. CPCF provides pregnancy resource centers, adoption agencies, and maternity homes, and received an appropriation of \$1,300,000 in non-recurring funds for the 2017-2018 fiscal year, and an equal nonrecurring amount for the 2018-2019 fiscal year. Of this appropriation, \$300,000 in nonrecurring funds for each fiscal year of the 2017-2019 fiscal biennium will be transferred to the Human Coalition to develop and implement a two-year continuum of care pilot program to support and assist women experiencing crisis pregnancies in continuing their pregnancies to full term. Care coordinators will assess the immediate challenges causing a pregnant mother to seek abortion and eliminate these challenges by assisting her in connecting to appropriate resources and guiding her toward positive lifestyle changes.

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



Every president should have the opportunity to fill his or her administration with the people they choose. From positions in agencies across the federal government to vital national security posts, presidents have the right to pick their teams.

At the current rate of obstruction, it would take 11 years and 4 months to fill out President Trump's administration. That would be towards the end of a third term, which isn't even possible.

That's why I am pleased to have held confirmation hearings for three vital national security and intelligence posts this week in the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence. As Chairman, I presided over the vetting of Mr. Robert Storch to be the Inspector General of the National Security Agency, Ms. Isabel Patellunas to be the Assistant Secretary of Treasury for Intelligence and Analysis, and Ms. Susan Gordon to be the Principal Deputy Director of National Intelligence.

These individuals will serve important roles in protecting our nation's security, and most of their work will go unnoticed and without thanks. You can read more about the hearing in USA Today. I applaud their commitment to their country and thank them for their willingness to serve.

Now we only have a few hundred more nominees to go...





# Habitat for Humanity

## Habitat Heroes

By Robin Warden  
Mitchell and Yancey County

Mitchell-Yancey Habitat for humanity is a locally run affiliate of Habitat for Humanity International, an ecumenical Christian housing organization. M-Y Habitat works in partnership with families in need of decent affordable, and energy-efficient housing. Houses are sold to families who are able to pay a no-interest monthly mortgage and are willing to partner with habitat and provide 200+ hours of "sweat equity" helping to build their homes or the homes of others. Habitat serves people in need of decent housing regardless of race or religion. Volunteers, pictured here are some of the many Habitat Heroes providing most of the labor, while individuals, organizations, businesses, and churches provide money and materials to build Habitat houses. We welcome volunteers and supporters to join us in "building homes and changing lives". Become a Habitat Hero.

Contact: Steve Bruton, Volunteer Coordinator  
407-864-0699  
myhfhvolc@yaho.com



Wake Forest Hope Lutheran @ Ledger: Volunteers from Hope Lutheran Church in Wake Forest, NC travel twice a year to work on M-Y Habitat Homes. Tom Thompson, Don Yakopcic, Murice Samuels, Guy Spencer, Rob Petersilg, and Maureen Latz worked in June to clear a new building site for the next Habitat home in Ledger, NC.



Cherrie Patrick, working with other volunteers to finish the painting in her new M-Y Habitat home located on Walnut Avenue in Spruce Pine.

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



Since the early 1990's a volunteer group called the "Wednesday Crew" has worked every Wednesday to help build over 24 Habitat homes. Pictured here are Alyse Sferlazz, Charlie Foust (Construction Supervisor), Stinson McCluskey, Jim Erlandson (Habitat Board Member), Frank Miller, and Don Bouret in front of the Walnut Ave home projected for completion in late July. Other Wednesday Crew members not pictured include Gary Ray (Habitat Board President), Rick Harkins, and Duke Rose.



# Avery Mitchell Correctional Institution

## One Day with God

Chaplain Jody Griffin  
Mitchell County



*He hath shewed thee O man what is good. And what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy and to walk humbly with thy God. (Micah 6:8, KJV)*

Do you remember the popular item from several years back when there would be pictures hanging in boutiques in the mall, and if you stared at the pictures from a certain distance and let your eyes focus, you could see an image within the image? The image in the background was in 3-D and literally would pop out before your very eyes! But you had to take time, and look patiently for the 'hidden' image to appear...

I remember walking through a mall with our young children who had an uncanny ability to see beneath the surface and identify what was supposedly hidden. "I see a dinosaur!" "I see a sailboat!" "I see a rainbow and a pot of gold!", they declared. I saw nothing... just squiggly lines or fuzzy blur.

Until one day, with time and patience, I finally achieved clarity in those images! I relaxed my eyes, took a deep breath, stood very still and stared at an image. I thought my eyes were crossing, then lo and behold, there it was! A huge heart and beneath it the 'words' of Micah 6:8, justice, mercy, humility.



It occurred to me that the work of raising awareness and encouraging donations for the One Day with God Camp is so like the "hidden" image pictures. God has revealed the expectations for humanity. We are to demonstrate good, through specific behaviors of being just, merciful and humble.

Our days are filled with opportunities to live this goodness! I am currently watching that goodness flow from the hearts of donors and volunteers who are stepping up and making a difference for children with incarcerated fathers. Some have made financial gifts (to: Forgiven Ministry, 200 Macedonia Church Road, Taylorsville, NC 28681 Memo: AMCI) while others have

called to sign up as volunteers for the day!

It's all becoming clear to me... you are a people desiring to do what is good, and you are proving that by ministering to children cut off from their fathers through no fault of their own (That's DOING JUSTLY!). You are offering your money, your time, your very selves as ministers to those who are judged guilty by the world (That's LOVING MERCY!) and you are doing so without need for parades or accolades (That's walking HUMBLY WITH THY GOD!)

I can't thank you enough for displaying these gifts to the children and their fathers! I can tell you beyond a shadow of a doubt, that God will honor your contribution and that lives will be forever changed because of it!

Maybe you can't see it yet. That's ok. But I encourage you to look harder, into your own heart and ask the Lord, "What do you require of me?" in response to this plea?

Trust me, it will soon become abundantly clear. @

Thank you and God Bless You for helping us conduct this year's Camp!

If you'd like to know more of how you can be involved, please feel free to contact me at:

Chaplain Jody Griffin  
Avery Mitchell Correctional Institution  
600 Amity Park Road  
Spruce Pine, NC 28777  
Joseph.Griffin@ncdps.gov  
Camp date: August 19, 2017

For more information go to: [www.brcnews.com](http://www.brcnews.com)

Jody Griffin is pastor of Central Baptist Church in Spruce Pine and Community Funded Chaplain at Avery-Mitchell Correctional Institution.

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# Toe River Valley Exhibit In Mitchell And Yancey Counties

By Kate Groff  
Mitchell and Yancey County

It's about place. It's about destination. It's about the art we find when we arrive. And it arrives on August 19 in Burnsville and August 26 in Spruce Pine, North Carolina, when the Toe River Arts Council hosts two community wide exhibitions. "Toe River Valley" that will run through September 23, at both galleries, is a unique look at the Toe River and its surrounding countryside from the viewpoint of painters, photographers, and 3-dimensional artists. Even children will have their hand at painting what they see on their rides home from school each afternoon. A reception recognizing the beginning of the exhibit in Spruce Pine will be held at the TRAC Gallery (269 Oak Avenue) on Friday, August 25, from 5 to 7 PM. And the end of the exhibit will be honored by a reception at the Burnsville TRAC Gallery (102 W. Main Street) on Friday, September 22, from 5 to 7 PM.

Roan Mountain range marks the northern point of the region with its wind-swept, forested paths crossing over the Appalachian Trail to the ridge. Mt. Mitchell marks the south, the highest point this side of the Mississippi River with centuries of awe-inspiring views. And meandering between and predating these 400 million plus-year old peaks is the Toe River, one of the oldest rivers in the world. Along that river, along its many tributaries, live the artists who chose to make this place their homes, to value the land on which they create, to protect the waterways that flow beside. The Toe River is what makes our community so precious, so necessary to preserve. This exhibition will highlight the river, the creeks and valleys, a tangible appreciation for and the guardianship of our watershed by highlighting the art of its artists.

These concordant shows will showcase interpretive photography by Doug Sudduth and paintings from Blue Ridge Fine Arts Guild artists. Their work will document life along the river in pencil, paint and digital imagery—a watershed of arctic blues and greens, rusts, clouds of snow along the banks—seemingly endless, ever moving, meandering, cutting through the land like a warm knife through butter. And for that one early fall month, Mitchell and Yancey will applaud the work of the Toe River Valley Watershed, an organization dedicated to creating solutions that



will help the local economy grow without compromising one of our most important assets—natural resources. Noted geologist Alex Glover will speak at both galleries. Kids will paint rocks as they learn about the fragility of our ecosystem. They will dip their "Toes in the Toe," and create murals that will be displayed in both counties. Even Hellbender Rocky will slither out of the mud to watch a drones-eye-view of the Valley.



Galene Petcu, "River's Edge"

With over 400 artists living and working in the two-county area, Mitchell and Yancey have become a destination for the intrepid traveler, seeker of art and the journey. Experience the beauty of the Toe River through the eyes of its artists in these two collaborative exhibitions in both Burnsville and Spruce Pine. The event in Burnsville begins August 19; Spruce Pine's exhibit starts on August 26, and both continue through September 23. Hours of the galleries are 10:30 AM to 5 PM, Tuesday-Saturday.

Toe River Arts is a non-profit organization established in 1976 to connect the arts and the community. It is supported by other organizations, individuals, and businesses that understand the benefit of arts to a thriving region.

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



Jennifer Bueno, "Lake Erie Algae Bloom"



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### Miracle

By Preacher Chris Rathbone  
Mitchell County



Throughout my life I've heard stories from people about God doing miracles. And all my life I have always believed that God does miracles. There are things that happen that can only be explained by the supernatural intervention of God. Books have been written of things that happen that no one can explain. Some will simply ignore and even just refuse to believe such events. In my 45 years of life I've witnessed a few. I remember listening to folks from the older generation (some already passed away) of how people prayed and others were healed. Uncle Dallas (Rev. Dallas Renfro) tells of how my Mammie (Lucy Atkins) and others came to his house and prayed for him when he was a young boy. He was on crutches and pretty well would have been all his life. People from churches in the community came and prayed over him. In a couple of weeks, he threw the crutches on top of an old building and has been "wide open" his whole life.

There are probably some reading this who are already asking that age old question, "If God can heal, how come He didn't heal \_\_\_\_\_?" Well, that's a question I've pondered myself on many occasions. Even though I can't answer, it still doesn't change my faith in God. Faith isn't always thinking, "If I just believe enough, God will answer!" Faith is choosing to trust God even if He doesn't give me that answer I wanted. There are a lot of things in this old world that I will never understand, but I trust those things to God. This past Saturday God gave me an experience however, to remind me that there are times when we can see the hand of God very clearly.

Saturday was about like any other Saturday at our house. Michelle was working the breakfast shift at the steakhouse and had an appointment to get her hair done. Reuben had invited his friend Conner over to spend the night on Friday night. They had requested to go fishing Saturday morning. After letting them sleep in a little, I woke them up and fixed breakfast and we were off to the fishing hole by 9 a.m. After fishing a couple hours, we returned home around 12. That's when things got interesting at the Rathbone's!

Before I fixed lunch for the boys, Reuben requested to ride the Polaris UTV with his friend. Being a little hesitant, I almost said no. But you know how that look is that boys give you when they really want to do something. So, I told them to buckle up and be careful. Barely 10-15 minutes had gone by when my phone rang. It was Reuben.

My first thought was the UTV had broken down. When I answered the phone all I could hear was him screaming and saying something about a broken leg. My heart dropped! He finally calmed enough to tell me where they were located and I ran as fast as I could. There was the UTV on its side. Reuben was still buckled in but his foot was trapped underneath the vehicle. Reaching down I grabbed hold of the roll cage and tried to lift but could only lift it a couple inches. The words flowed from my lips before I realized what I was saying. "Lord Jesus, I need your help!" With his buddy Conner beside me doing all he could, with all I had in me, I lifted the machine back up on its wheels with my son still buckled in the seat. Let me tell you first thing, that it wasn't me that lifted that machine! With all my heart, I believe that the Lord helped me and Conner. My son's injuries were not necessarily life threatening, but had he been trapped like that long they certainly could have been serious for sure. By His grace, God helped us. He gave us strength we did not have.

The Polaris Ranger is sitting in the basement now. I've walked up to it several times since we got home from the hospital and tried to just even push it over. I can't. Now you can say and believe what you like, that's ok. You can say it was adrenaline or whatever. But I know in my heart and soul that my Heavenly Father heard my prayer and performed a miracle.

P.S. Just want to say, "Thank You!" to everyone who has prayed for and shown concern for my son. Though he has a broken foot, he should recover in time. Praise God from whom all blessings flow!

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

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



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The Husband That Wins

By Dr. Tom Walker  
McDowell County



Our consideration in this study is the husband. The word "husbands" is used nineteen times in the Bible. The singular term "husband" is used one-hundred-twenty times in the Word of God. Too many husbands fail in their duties toward their wife and their children. Some do not know what their duties actually are, while there are others who simply do not care. The Christian husband is to be in contrast to the husband who is lost and who does not know Christ as Savior. He is one who has a relationship established with God by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

For our horizontal relationships to be right (with others), our vertical relationship with God must be right. When our fellowship is right with God, it will be right in regard to those who are around us, whether they be lost or saved. The key to all other relationships is whether or not we are walking with God in our daily lives. The word for "husband" in the Bible is used in reference to a man. Never in the Scriptures is a female referred to as a husband. The husband biblically is always of the male gender.

Think with me as we glance at the various responsibilities of the man of the house toward his wife and their children. Let consider what his duties are:

He Is the Protecting One- Defend his Family from Harm

Physically the husband is stronger normally than the wife. In 1 Peter 3:7 the Apostle Peter wrote, "Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered." The husband is to treat the wife as a weaker partner (physically) by not being a tyrant, faithless, unloving, or impatient.

A man who respects his wife will protect, honor, and help her. He will stay with her. He will respect her opinions, listen to her advice, be considerate of her needs, and relate to her both privately and publicly with love, courtesy, insight, and tact.

The man who loves his wife will risk his own life to save her. He will put himself into a dangerous situation to deliver his wife from danger. Her mate becomes fearless.

He Is the Providing One- Taking Care of the Needs of His Family

I am sure some husbands would desire to be better providers for their families. The Bible makes is clear on the matter of caring for one's wife and family. 1 Tim 5:8 states: "But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel." The context of that verse is caring for widows, but I have no doubt it refers to matters beyond that particular one. If a man is lazy, and indifferent in providing for his own, the Bible tells us that he is worse than an infidel.

What is an infidel? The Greek N.T. word simply means one who does not have or possess Christian faith. He is one who disbelieves the inspiration of the Word of God.

If a wife has a hard-working husband who does all he can to adequately supply the physical and material needs of life, she is a blessed person.

When a man will not seek to live up to his responsibility to his family, when he is indifferent toward them, he is worse than one who has no faith or does not believe in the inspiration of the Scriptures. That is a serious indictment.

I am sure there are husbands who wish they had a larger income to provide more adequately for their family. The main thing is that a man do all he can to meet the physical and material needs of his family. That is all that can be expected of any husband and dad.

He Is the Primary Leader- Showing His Family the Right Way

So many men will not fulfill their responsibility as being the primary spiritual leader in the home. It is the man who is to lead the way spiritually in the home. He is not only to insist the children go to church; he is to lead the way by taking them there and going with them.

God set a precedence in the Old Testament when the sin in the Garden of Eden occurred. God spoke to Adam in Eden when he sinned and said, "Where art thou" (Gen. 3:9). Adam was called upon by the Lord to be the spokesman and the head of the home. He was to answer to the Lord concerning what had happened when they sinned against the Lord and sought to hide.

Thank God for women who will lead when men won't. However, that should not be necessary when the man does what he ought to and fulfills his God given responsibility to be the head of the home.

He Is to Be the Passionate One- Husbands Love Your Wives

Ephesians 5:25 says, "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it." What can a husband do toward his wife to show his love?

1. Communicate with her with kind words and use the words frequently, "I love you."
2. Provide for the satisfaction for her every need.
3. Help her by physically protecting her.
4. Assist her with chores and responsibilities. Some husbands will do nothing in the home. When the baby cries, some men expect her to take care of that all the time.
5. By sacrificing for her. Go with her at times when you want to do something else.
6. Don't put her down by comparing her with another man's wife.

7. Demonstrate that she is very important in your life.
  8. Show her tenderness, respect and courtesy.
  9. Express appreciation for all the many things that she does.
- The main way love is expressed is giving. The Bible says, "God so loved the world that He gave his only begotten son..." (John 3:16).
- He Is to Be the Particular One- Be Careful About Your Attitude**
- Ephesians 4:32- "And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted..." It is easier to have co-operating wife if one is kind and tenderhearted.
- The word "kind" means acting charitably and benevolently toward others, as God has done toward us. Kindness takes the initiative in responding generously to others' needs.
- The word "tenderhearted" is also translated "compassionate." Compassion is genuine sensitivity and heartfelt sympathy for the needs of others. Compassion characterizes the Lord and should be a vital part of the way we deal with others.
- I would encourage all husbands to live up to your role in the home and by the knowledge and grace of God, to live up to that heavenly expectation.

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



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# Crossword

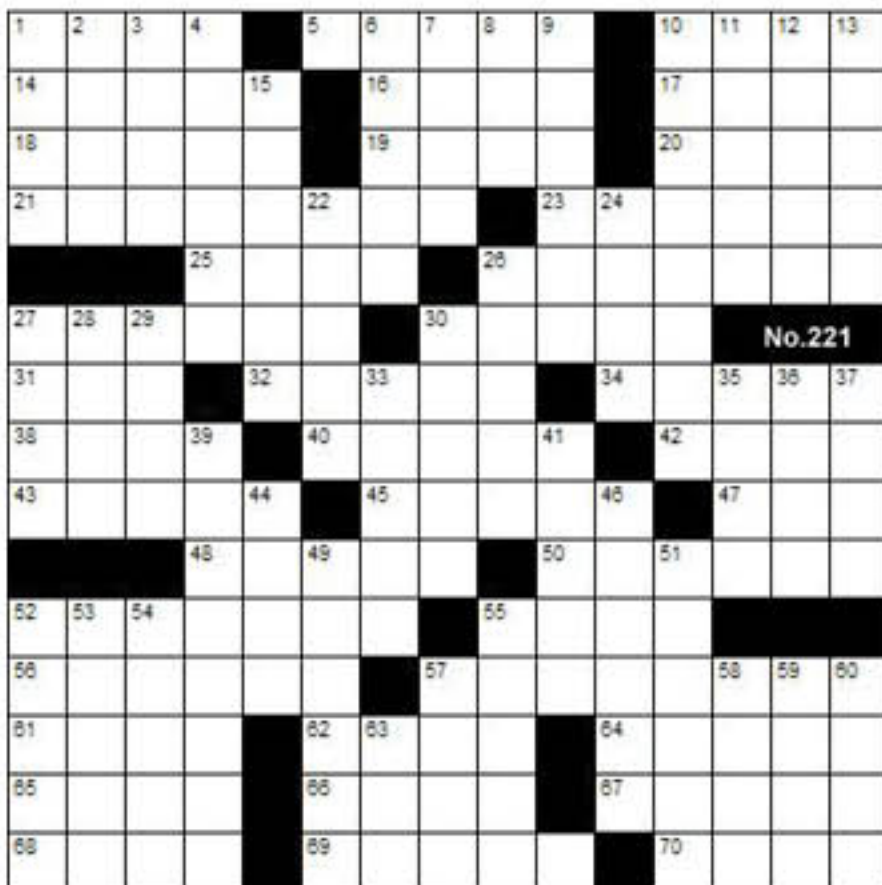
## ACROSS

1 So Moses brought their \_\_\_\_\_ before the LORD (Num 27:5)  
 5 Fasten \_\_\_\_\_ cord to it (1,4) (Ex 28:37)  
 10 fifth book of the New Testament  
 14 Like men condemned to die in the \_\_\_\_\_ (1 Cor 4:9)  
 16 Speak now in the \_\_\_\_\_ of the people (Exodus 11:2)  
 17 In that day the mountains will \_\_\_\_\_ new wine (Joel 3:18)  
 18 seems right to a man, but in the end it \_\_\_\_\_ to death (Prov 16:25)  
 19 Then they \_\_\_\_\_ in his face and struck him with their fists (Matt 26:67)  
 20 Son of man, record this \_\_\_\_\_ (Ezek 24:2)  
 21 because the midwives feared God, he gave them \_\_\_\_\_ of their own (Ex 1:21)  
 23 Elijah's successor (2 Kings 2:9)  
 25 Like a bird that strays from its \_\_\_\_\_ is a man who strays (Prov 27:8)  
 26 A student is not above his \_\_\_\_\_, nor a servant above his master (Matt 10:24)  
 27 and remove all its vile \_\_\_\_\_ and detestable idols (Ezek 11:18)  
 30 they always heap up their sins to the \_\_\_\_\_ (1 Thes 2:16)  
 31 clump of earth and grass  
 32 Her Nazarites were \_\_\_\_\_ than snow, they were whiter than (Lam 4:7) KJV  
 34 Jesus replied, "Foxes have holes and birds of the air have \_\_\_\_\_ (Matt 8:20)  
 38 The Angel which redeemed me from all evil, bless the \_\_\_\_\_ (Gen 48:16) KJV  
 40 from foundation to \_\_\_\_\_, were made of blocks of high-grade (1 Kings 7:9)  
 42 throwing stones at him and showering him with \_\_\_\_\_ (2 Sam 16:13)  
 43 let him seek peace, and \_\_\_\_\_ it (1 Pet 3:11) (KJV)  
 45 Like a \_\_\_\_\_ of Lebanon he will send down his roots (Hosea 14:5)  
 47 till he should pay all that was \_\_\_\_\_ unto him (Matt 18:34)  
 48 The tower of \_\_\_\_\_ (Gen 11:9)  
 50 To \_\_\_\_\_ them that were under the law (Gal 4:5)  
 52 I \_\_\_\_\_ silver and gold for myself, and the treasure (Eccl 2:8)  
 55 he that wavereth is like a \_\_\_\_\_ of the sea. (James 1:6)  
 56 What he trusts in is fragile; what he \_\_\_\_\_ on is a spider's web. (Job 8:14)  
 57 whosoever of you will be the \_\_\_\_\_, shall be servant of all

(Mark 10:44) KJV  
 61 There is \_\_\_\_\_ here, which hath five barley loaves (1,3) (John 6:9)  
 62 if his hands are \_\_\_\_\_, the house leaks (Eccl 10:18)  
 64 sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great \_\_\_\_\_ Euphrates (Rev 16:12)  
 65 away, absent (Rev 18:14)  
 66 which is gone down in the sun \_\_\_\_\_ of Ahaz (Isa 38:8) KJV  
 67 She gave herself as a prostitute to all the \_\_\_\_\_ of the Assyrians (Ezek 23:7)  
 68 thou shouldest be for salvation unto the \_\_\_\_\_ of the earth (Acts 13:47) KJV  
 69 said through the prophet: "Out of \_\_\_\_\_ I called my son (Matt 2:15)  
 70 Salvation is found in no one \_\_\_\_\_, for there is no other name (Acts 4:12)

## DOWN

1 the woman had a fat \_\_\_\_\_ in the house (1 Sam 28:24) KJV  
 2 a Levite who lived in a remote \_\_\_\_\_ in the hill country (Judg 19:1)  
 3 the ephod, close to the \_\_\_\_\_ just above the waistband (Ex 39:20)  
 4 beginning with the oldest and \_\_\_\_\_ with the youngest (Gen 44:12)  
 6 Fear and trembling have \_\_\_\_\_ me; horror has overwhelmed me (Ps 55:5)  
 7 I will measure into their \_\_\_\_\_ the full payment for (Isa 65:7)  
 8 See, the LORD has chosen Bezalel son of \_\_\_\_\_ (Ex 35:30)  
 9 let each \_\_\_\_\_ other better than themselves (Phil 2:3)  
 10 not to be slanderers or \_\_\_\_\_ to much wine (Titus 2:3)  
 11 beat against that house, and it fell with a great \_\_\_\_\_ (Matt 7:27)  
 12 Thou shalt truly \_\_\_\_\_ all the increase of thy seed (Deut 14:22)  
 13 His \_\_\_\_\_ shaft was like a weaver's rod (1 Sam 17:7)  
 15 Lazarus has fallen \_\_\_\_\_; but I am going there to wake him (John 11:11)  
 22 married a wife, deceased, and, having no \_\_\_\_\_ (Matt 22:25)  
 24 Saul and Abner son of Ner had \_\_\_\_\_ down (1 Sam 26:5)  
 26 The people have become hungry and \_\_\_\_\_ and thirsty (2 Sam 17:29)  
 27 was in the \_\_\_\_\_ that is called Patmos (Rev 1:9)  
 28 We all growl like bears; we \_\_\_\_\_ mournfully like doves (Isa 59:11)  
 29 If anyone \_\_\_\_\_ anything to



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them, God will add to him (Rev 22:18)  
 30 My feet stand on \_\_\_\_\_ ground (Ps 26:12)  
 33 you have \_\_\_\_\_ with men on foot and they have worn you out (Jer 12:5)  
 35 I will give him rest from all his enemies on every \_\_\_\_\_ (1 Chr 22:9)  
 36 the darkness is passing and the \_\_\_\_\_ light is already shining (1 Jn 2:8)  
 37 there shall come forth a rod out of the \_\_\_\_\_ of Jesse (Isa 11:1) KJV  
 39 Stay with him for a while until your brother's fury \_\_\_\_\_ (Gen 27:44)  
 41 no longer to call her \_\_\_\_\_; her name will be Sarah. (Gen 17:15)  
 44 listens to me will live in safety and be at \_\_\_\_\_ (Prov 1:33)  
 46 the LORD; let all the people of the world \_\_\_\_\_ him

(Ps 33:8)  
 49 Jesus was walking \_\_\_\_\_ the Sea of Galilee (Matt 4:18)  
 51 Do not \_\_\_\_\_ yourselves by any of these creatures (Lev 11:43)  
 52 The king got up in \_\_\_\_\_ left his wine (1,4) (Est 7:7)  
 53 Like a scarecrow in a \_\_\_\_\_ patch, their idols cannot speak (Jer 10:5)  
 54 \_\_\_\_\_ flowing with milk and honey (1,4) (Deut 26:10)  
 55 Dan is a lion's \_\_\_\_\_; he shall leap from Bashan (Deut 33:22) KJV  
 57 what Adam was made from (Job 33:6)  
 58 Do not those who plot \_\_\_\_\_ go astray? (Prov 14:22)  
 59 silver in two bags, with two \_\_\_\_\_ of clothing (2 Kings 5:23)  
 60 every man under his vine and under his fig \_\_\_\_\_ (1 King 4:25)  
 63 I'll \_\_\_\_\_ around it and fertilize it. (Luke 13:8)

Solution on page 14





# Burke United Christian Ministries

## Donations for Saved for You Clothing Stores

By David Burleson  
Burke County

Now in existence for over 40 years, Burke United Christian Ministries (BUCM) continues to strive to maintain its programs and offerings to an ever-expanding community in need. Established in 1975, BUCM is a place for local Burke County residents who find themselves in need of food, clothing and crisis assistance. Entering the doors at BUCM, our clients bring with them their personal crisis which seems like a catastrophic storm. At their most vulnerable state, our clients come in hoping we will be able to help them with the most basic needs of life that so many of us take for granted. Some of the crisis stories we hear include: a medical diagnosis has stripped the family of funds that were used for food, power bills, or rent; the loss of an elderly spouse has left them with only a small fixed income; being underemployed has left their funds short of making ends meet for their family; a single parent has children to support on meager wages; a veteran now finds him or herself homeless. Whatever the story, these people need a helping hand. All items received or donations made remain local to serve OUR Burke County neighbors.

BUCM strives to stay true to our mission statement: Burke United Christian Ministries (BUCM) serves Burke County through offering people nutritious meals at our Soup Kitchen, counseling neighbors in times of crisis, and providing families with food, clothing and financial assistance. Our purpose as an organization is to accomplish our purpose with Christ at the forefront of all we do. Through displaying Christian love, support and positive fellowship, we bring our community together in realizing the Gospel daily.

Through the support of local churches, businesses and individuals, BUCM has been able to support individuals in our community through the soup kitchen, food pantry, mobile food pantry, the Saved for You Clothing Store, crisis counseling and educational opportunities. Our soup kitchen provides lunch 365 days a year and dinner on Tuesdays and Thursdays each week. Last year we served 67,698 meals. Our food pantry provides food to one family at a time by allowing them the dignity of selecting what they want from what we have available. Last year 791,322 pounds of food was distributed to 6,528 households. Our mobile food pantry served 1,846 households with over 91,220 pounds of food being distributed. The BUCM Saved for You clothing store assisted 780 clients last year with clothing valued at \$28,140. BUCM also provide over \$94,500 in crisis assistance and meet the needs of over 2,800 households in Burke County.

A special thank you to those who donated over 15,000 lbs. of non-perishable food during the postal food drive on May 13. Your support continues to make a difference for others.

BUCM provides an opportunity for everyone in our community to partner with our ministry to support others. Volunteers are the lifeblood of the ministry at BUCM. Volunteering in our soup kitchen, food pantry, clothing store or in our educational programs is vital to meeting the needs of our clients. Another way to support BUCM is to donate slightly used clothes and shoes to distribute to our clients or to sell in our Saved for You clothing store to support our overall ministry.

BUCM has worked to make donating clothing items as simple as possible for residents of Burke County. Donations are accepted at the store Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. until 4 p.m. and Saturdays from 9 a.m. until 12:30 p.m. Thanks to Jeff Toner at James Tool, blue, BUCM, bins are now located throughout Burke County. Bins are currently located at the following locations with 24-hour access:

- BUCM Saved for Your Clothing Store
- Jack B Quick – Icard
- Jack B Quick – Valdese
- Cloer's Neighborhood Store – Oak Hill
- United Methodist Church – Glen Alpine



A special thanks to Jerry Baker at Burke Oil, Debra Cloer, and Pastor Barbara Mayo for allowing these bins to be placed. If you have a desire to support placing a bin please feel free to let me know.

Please be aware that the blue BUCM bins have no association with the yellow Planet Earth bins. One might think that donating clothing into those yellow bins would support a charity that was doing good for poor people in the world, but an Internet investigation of the Planet Aid organization reveals something quite the opposite.

This organization allegedly sprang up in Europe 40 years ago and was founded by a Danish man named Amdi Pederson. According to a Fox News Investigation in 2011, "all charities listed in Planet Aid's tax returns are controlled by the same parent organization called International Humana People to People Movement." The monies raised from selling these clothes is directed to a post office box in Johannesburg, South Africa, which then allegedly, redirects the monies to the hands of a small group owners including Pederson. European investigators say, "the money raised for charities has paid for multi-million-dollar homes, a yacht and off shore bank accounts all controlled by Pederson."

According to Fox News, the Danish government had tried to shut Pederson's operations down but he eluded the law for years and has a well-developed organization that has managed to continue the widespread deployment of these yellow Planet Aid boxes. In the past year, more than a dozen of these collection boxes have been placed across Burke County. And the sad part of it is it is siphoning much-needed clothing away from Burke County citizens and their families, and helping the underemployed and unemployed in this county is our primary concern.

These yellow boxes do absolutely nothing for Burke County and our neighbors. We encourage you to redirect your charitable clothes giving to the BUCM clothing ministry and use the blue bins. We live in a county where the number of unemployed and the number of underemployed people who are living on part-time wages and no benefits is almost 30 percent of the population of Burke County. Each year, hundreds of clients and families are clothed by making very low-cost purchases at the used clothing store at BUCM.

I want to personally thank you for your support of Burke United Christian Ministries and for your efforts to help those in our community who need a hand up. Please consider how you can support those in need through the ministry at BUCM. Feel free to call me at (828) 433-8075 or email me at [bucmdirector@hotmail.com](mailto:bucmdirector@hotmail.com) if you any questions or suggestions.

David Burleson is Director of Burke United Christian Ministries



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## Follow the Leader

By Ken and Jan Merop  
Avery County



As kids, we used to love to play the game, Follow the Leader. Sometimes it was more fun to copy the antics of the person in front than it was to lead.

As followers, we didn't have to worry about coming up with something different for everyone else to do. We just had to pay attention to the one at the front of the line and copy his actions.

Sometimes it might lead to climbing over rocks or running around trees. Maybe we would suddenly stop and drop to the ground or spin around. Always there was laughter and fun.

When my turn came to lead, I'd wonder if I was creative enough to invent different things to do. I wasn't athletic, but usually things turned out O.K.

However, if the leader was the fastest runner in the class and decided that we would all run, I didn't get very far. I'd quickly get gripped by a pain in my side and drop out unable to continue. To this day, I'm simply not a runner.

But running in the game of life is a different story.

The Bible tells us in Hebrews 12: 1, NKJV... *"Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God."*

When we keep our eyes on the goal...that is to please God...and on the leader who set the example of how to run...that is Jesus Christ...then we won't drop out of the race. We will endure and persevere to the end.

In Philippians 3: 13 and 14 we learn not to let the past trip us up by continually looking over our shoulder. Rather we reach forward to the goal ahead.

Effectual leadership is more concerned with bringing up the rear than with one's personal achievement in leading. It will not leave anyone behind...like I was left when the fastest runner didn't take me into consideration. It will set a pace and help formulate a goal that is reachable so that those who are following don't lose heart.

As someone once said, "A few steps ahead – you lead; too many steps ahead – you leave them behind."

Follow the perfect leader, Jesus Christ. Selah

## FOLLOW THE LEADER

*These ducks are at home in the cool, rippling waters...sipping as they travel. A fellow 'sailor' trustingly follows those who have been this way before. And so we follow the One who goes before, Who is our rear guard and whose everlasting arms forever surround us.*

*"Lead me in the way everlasting."  
Psalm 139: 24b*



Ken and Jan reside in Land Harbour in Avery County, where they have moved in retirement because they love our mountains. They have written for us in years past.

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# Celo Health Center

## Celo Health Center and Dr. Philip Mitchell Receive Awards

By Amber Dillinger  
Mitchell and Yancey County

In April 2017, Celo Health Center received the Transformation Leaders Award from Mission Health Partners (MHP) ACO. The "Transformation Leaders" award is given to practices who truly go above and beyond in terms of using clinical data to improve quality and outcomes for their patients. "The team at Celo Health Center has made great strides throughout the past year in the ways that they are measuring and tracking their data, developing work flows and processes that ensure the highest quality care for their patients. We at MHP are very proud of all that Celo Health Center has accomplished, and look forward to seeing their continued growth," said Kelly Terry, Provider Relations Representative.

On June 9, 2017, Philip Mitchell, MD., Medical Director of Celo Health Center received the Medical Provider Award from the NC Office of Rural Health. The Medical Provider Award is presented to a provider who exhibits exemplary leadership, extraordinary service, and dedication to their patients and the community. Dr. Mitchell has been a provider at Celo Health Center for 20 years. In addition to being a very fine physician, Philip advocates for the care of the whole community. As Medical Director of Celo Health Center, Philip has worked tirelessly to make sure that patients get the care they need regardless of their ability to pay. In his nomination letter Tim Evans, Practice Manager had this to say; "If Philip knew I was writing this letter, he wouldn't want me to list his accomplishments. He would tell me to tell you that he loves his patients. He loves his staff. He loves doing the real work of being a rural family practice doctor. He loves holding the newborn baby that he has just delivered in his arms. He is deeply honored to sit in the living room of the family who has just watched an elder pass. Philip is dedicated to his community."

In February 2017, Celo Health Center joined Bakersville Community Health Center and Spruce Pine Health Center to form the Mountain Community Health Partnership.

For more information or to learn more about our health center please contact: Amber Dillinger, Outreach and Enrollment 828-688-2104 [adillinger@mchp.care](mailto:adillinger@mchp.care) or Tim Evans, Practice Manager 828-675-4116 [tevans@mchp.care](mailto:tevans@mchp.care). Visit our website at: <http://www.celohealthcenter.com/medical/>



Celo Health Facility

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



Phillips Award

# Sweet T.E.A. For Jesus

## Shine On

By Jessica Williams  
McDowell County



Welcome to the Official Page of the 1st Annual Shine On event to be held at Tom Johnsons Camping World on August 26th from 3-10pm Hosted by Sweet T.E.A. For Jesus

Sponsored by Farm Bureau, Pizza Hut, Party by Paint, Blue Ridge Christian News, McDaniel Insurance, McDowell Family Pharmacy, First Choice Titles of NC, Paul and Amy Johnson, Greenlee Baptist, Inside Out Renovations, Appalachian Trading Post, J & T's, First Choice Title of North Carolina and Jim Cook Chevrolet.

Please join us in time to get to know some of the area churches, community resources, and local crafters and small business men and women.

We will end the evening with some Amazing praise and worship from local music groups such as Purpose, His Fold, EMBC Praise Team, Cornerstone, SEEK, Emily Latimore, Greg Conely, Mackenzie and will begin at 6 pm

This is a family friendly event and food from Countryside BBQ and Handys Kettle Corn and activities will be available!! (Register your life group, youth group, Sunday School class, business, etc for the Relay race!!!)

We will have great vendors there from 3-7 to help you get started with your holiday shopping @. Vendors such as LuLaRoe, Pampered Chef, Tupperware, Avon, custom Vinyls, Embroider Up, Plunder Jewelry, ItWorks, oh Snap, MWB Creations, McDowell Rocks, Party by Paint, and many more!!

We will have a Red Cross Community Blood Drive beginning at 3!! Blood donors needed!!

Local resources such as PG Fire Dept., Heavy Rescue, McDowell Missions, Baptist Men, K-9 Unit, and more will be there too!!!!

Register your church today to come out with information about you church schedule, missions, and invite them to visit if they are not attending a church in the county!!!! (No charge)

BRING YOUR OWN CHAIR!!!!:-)

We look forward to seeing everyone and enjoying some great fellowship!!!

This entire event is to glorify our Lord Jesus!

Jessica Williams Sweet T.E.A. For Jesus in Marion and member of First Baptist Church Spruce Pine.

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## Blue Ridge Partnership for Children

### AMY Wee Trade Fall/Winter Consignment Sale

By Ruthie Styles  
Tri-Counties



Summer is winding down - it's almost Labor Day! After the Labor Day holiday it is time for the AMY Wee Trade Fall/Winter consignment sale, benefitting the Imagination Library. This year the sale is Thursday, September 7th through Saturday, September 9th and will be at the Cross Street Commerce Center, located at 31 Cross Street in Spruce Pine. Thursday is the preview day and admission to shop early is \$5.00. There is no admission charge on Friday and Saturday and many items will be marked half off on Saturday. Doors open at 8:00 am all three days and we are open until 6:00 pm on Thursday and Friday and until 12:00 pm on Saturday. This sale features the very best in "gently used" and new children's fall and winter clothing, toys, furniture, bedding equipment, maternity clothing and much, much more. If you need things for kids the AMY Wee Trade consignment sale is the place to shop.

If you have items your child no longer uses and you would like more information about how to consign at the AMY Wee Trade sale please contact us at my-trade@gmail.com or call 828.682.0047 or 828.733.2899. Consignors receive 70% of their sales and the remaining 30% benefits the Imagination Library in Avery, Mitchell and Yancey counties.

Almost 1500 children in the tri-county area currently receive a FREE book each month from Imagination Library. Here are some things parents are saying about their Imagination Library experience. "One of my favorite times of the entire day is right before bed time when I read to my child. I have done it using your Imagination Library books since she was 1 month old, she is now 14 months. Thank

you!" Another parent tells us "I truly watch my child bloom during reading sessions. He is now more engaged than ever. He smiles and picks out the ones he wants to read. He points to the pictures and says the words of some of the things he sees. He even knows several of the signs from the "Baby Signs" book you provided. He gets excited about the books and really loves them."



Joseph playing and learning in Burnsville.

Another upcoming event the Blue Ridge Partnership for Children is really excited about is our Taste of the Blue Ridge. The Red, White and Denim Taste of the Blue Ridge will be held Monday, September 11 at the Burnsville Town Center from 5:30 pm until 9:30 pm. This fund raising event will feature a live auction, silent auction, a dessert dash and a variety of games along with food and drink samples from local restaurants, caterers, food specialists and local wineries and breweries. Tickets are \$25.00 in advance or \$30.00 the night of the event. This year we are highlighting Imagination Library, Play and Learn and the Yancey Alliance for Young Children (YAY Children) programs. All of the money raised here stays here and benefits the Blue Ridge Partnership for Children. If you would like more information about this exciting and fun event please contact us at 828.682.0047 or 828.733.2899.

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

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Artist Offerings

Love Makes a Home

By Kiesa Kay  
Yancey County



Rebecca Boone, born into a family of deep Christian faith, had no idea what turmoils and challenges her marriage to Daniel Boone would bring. She was tested, sorely tested, throughout her life. Sometimes, quite frankly, she had occasion to sin. She gave birth to ten children and raised six borne to other mothers. She moved more than twenty times, and spent years alone as her husband wandered in the wilderness and eventually made a name for himself in battle and politics.

My play, Love Makes a Home: The Life of Rebecca Boone, does not sugar-coat the challenges of her rugged existence. A dear friend recently asked me why the play contained so much mention of God. The question brought a smile to my heart.

I believe that when we struggle, wander, and live alone, we feel our need for God most fiercely. When we face the big, scary parts of life – the death of a loved one, or feelings of abandonment, or flat-out loneliness – nothing comforts as much as that deep to the bone feeling that someone, somewhere, cares. For settlers riding through the Cumberland Gap into a completely unknown, undiscovered land, believing that God rode alongside could be a comfort unparalleled by any other presence.

When we feel most alone, it helps so much to believe deeply in God. Rebecca Boone faced more hardship than many women, and she kept working, kept going, always resilient. I believe her faith in God helped her stay alive and keep strong at heart when others might have fallen to the wayside. Music helped her, too; she danced and sang, and the fiddle tunes chosen for this play by old time fiddler Bruce Greene ring true to the times.

Love Makes a Home: The Life of Rebecca Boone will happen at 6 p.m. on Thursday, Sept. 21, at the Orchard at Altapass, with Patti Louise Smith in the role of Rebecca Boone. The Orchard, a bright and cheery place, preserves heritage on the Blue Ridge Parkway. The play also will happen at 7:30 p.m. on Friday, Oct. 27, and Saturday, Oct. 28, at White Horse Black Mountain, with Barb McEwen in the role of Rebecca Boone.

I have been asked why I chose a tavern as one of the sites for this play about a woman so strong in her Christian faith that she actually cut a curse word out of a letter written to her by her husband. She burned that single word in the fire, because she did not want the Lord's name taken in vain in her home. A tavern might seem an unlikely venue, but Rebecca Boone's message of strength belongs wherever people gather.

No one lives without sin all their lives, and all of us find need of the hope, resilience, and unwavering faith that shone so brightly in Rebecca Boone. She never claimed to be perfect, unblemished, or free from sin. When she fell from grace, she got back up. She knew she had to keep trying and keep believing. She did what she could.

I admire her strength, her resilience, and her unwavering belief in God, in times of happiness and hardship. She walked bravely into the wilderness, and she and her daughter Susannah became the first Christian women to stand at the Kentucky River. She loved her husband and supported his dreams, and when he wandered, she did all she could to keep both home and faith alive.

Kiesa Kay, a playwright who lives in Western North Carolina, can be reached at kiesakay.com. For tickets to her play about Rebecca Boone, contact the Orchard at www.altapassorchard.com, 828 765 9531, or White Horse Black Mountain, at www.whitehorseblackmountain.com, 828 669 0816.

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Sudoku

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

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Solution on page 14

Mitchell County 4-H Members

continued from page 21

I also got the chance to tour the Arlington National Cemetery and watch the Changing of The Guard ceremony at the Tomb of The Unknown Soldier, and visit the Myer Henderson Hall Army base. We toured Capitol Hill and met with Representative Mark Meadows to discuss 4-H across the United States.

Citizenship Washington Focus was definitely the most memorable trip in my 4-H career. I feel blessed to have been chosen as a North Carolina delegate for CWF, and I want to thank everybody who made this event so wonderful!



Kim Slotnick is 4-H Program Assistant for the NC Cooperative Extension-Mitchell County Center, you may contact her at [kim\\_slotnick@ncsu.edu](mailto:kim_slotnick@ncsu.edu).



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# Berry Chapel Baptist Church

## Don't Discard Your Trials

By Pastor Steve Williams  
Mitchell County

Trials are inevitable. We have no power to determine their size. They often come upon us with no warning. But we can choose what we will do with our trials. There are 2 kinds of people when trials come their way. 1st there are those who, when they are blindsided by hardships, complain, resist and push away from God. They seek temporary relief. 2nd there are those who will cling to God. Christians need to realize when they are facing a trial that we are never anywhere by Divine Accident. There is a reason why we wind up where we are. These trials that you and I face give us a chance to bear witness of Christ and of His ability to help us in this walk of life.

Jesus never told us that we wouldn't have trials, or life would be trouble free. What we have to do is learn to separate Real Trials from life everyday Aggravations, because they are two different things. It's like walking in the house and seeing a puddle of water on the floor where the hot water heater is leaking-- that's an Aggravation, that's not really a Trial. When we're talking about Trials we're not just talking about something that upsets our mind or jars our thoughts and life. We're talking about something that is Eating Deep Down in Our Soul.

There are 3 truths you need to know about Trials. 1st Trials Distress us. Trials comes in many different ways. To some of us, Trials have come in the form of a Lost Job, Cut Hours. Fanatical Distress. Others find Trials in Relationships,



Separations, Divorce. Other trials are Physical Health, Cancer, taking Radiation, Chemo, or some illness that there is no cure for. Another is Grief, because he or she is not sitting with you anymore, because they have gone on to be with the Lord. And no parent should have to bury their kid, but you have and it's about to rip your heart out.

2nd Trials Deceives You. Many times, when you and I are facing troubles, old Satan comes along side you and loads your wagon down by telling you a bunch of lies. He tells you, "you're having all these trials because you have sin in your life." And that might be true because, if you're living out of the will of God, sin does have consequences that must be taken care of. But I think about John the Baptist-- he had trials, he had his head cut off, but it wasn't because he was out of the will of God, it was because he was in the will of God. And just because you are having trials, that doesn't disqualify you from doing the work of the God. I think about Paul-- he had trials-- he had a thorn in the flesh. What did Paul learn and share with us from that thorn in the flesh, He Prayed for it to be removed but God did not see fit to remove it. God told Paul that His Grace was sufficient, and when Paul realized that when he was weak he was really stronger in God when facing trials. See, God can take our weakness, sickness or anything else and turn them into a testimony, like He did with my good friend Clint Pollard. Clint took his cancer and used it as a platform to reach Family and Friends, Doctors and many others before his death. Even though it didn't seem fair or make any sense to Clint or to any of us watching him go through this terrible disease, He didn't complain about it, but he held onto God and gave God the opportunity to reach others through his sickness. Guess what? It worked and many people were affected by it.

3rd Trials Distract Us. The problem with so many people today is they are not willing to go through the trials. They would rather God lead them around their trials, over their trials, beside their trials, but heaven forbid to have to face and go through their trials. Folks, when we're going through trials we feel like a hypocrite when we're trying To Praise God. It doesn't make sense to people around us when we praise God at the same time we are going through a trial. But think about it-- in Acts, Chapter 16, Where were Paul and Silas when they praised God? While they were in Jail, beaten up, banged up, and most likely rats running around them-- a very bad spot in their life, and yet, they were singing praises unto God. Please don't get me wrong, with what I'm about to say, because I love Praise and Worship as much and anybody does. But some people have wrong ideas about what True Praise and Worshiping God is all about. Paul and Silas didn't have somebody with a key board getting them in to the mood to praise and worship God. To get in the mood for praise and worship is great and it feels great, I even enjoy it myself. But understand the mood is not always going to



be there. Moods can come and go and your moods will change, but true worship does not. So please understand me, Mood has nothing to do with True Praise and Worship, but Faith Does, Trust Does, and Who God Is Does. It has everything to do with true worship. I doubt Paul and Silas was in the mood to praise and worship God, being in prison, but I guarantee you these three great truths were in their hearts, while they were praising and worshipping God, or they would not have been able to praise and worship God. Even though Paul and Silas were in jail and their Freedom taken away, they could not take away their Faith in God, Their Salvation, Their Hope, Their Relationship with God. Even though these people, who had them in jail, could kill their bodies, but they could not kill their Souls. So, Paul and Silas Lifted up their hearts with Praise and Worshiped God. So, let me encourage you, don't discard your trials. Don't allow Trials to overwhelm you and keep you from praising and worshipping a True and Living God. Cling to God, Call out to God, and remember, that your Faith and Trust is in A True and Living God.

### Words of Wisdom:

- It's not so much about what happens to you but how you think about what happens to you. N/A
- The Happiest people don't have the best of everything but they make the best of everything with God's Help. N/A
- Music and preaching go together, Music opens the heart and Preaching fills the heart. N/A
- Remember the tea kettle: even though it's up to its neck in hot water, it keeps singing. N/A
- We can be so busy listening to our troubles that we forget to count our blessings. N/A

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

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# McDowell Pregnancy Care Center

## Walk for Life

By Marion Stephan  
McDowell County

Walkers to "Imprint" Lives of Local Parents  
"Those who walk with God always reach their destination."

- Henry Ford, quoted by Denise McCormick, director of the McDowell Pregnancy Care Center, when she spoke July 16 at His Place Worship Center in Marion.

For the sixth year in a row, McDowell County residents will "step around" the YMCA outdoor walking trail Saturday, September 23 to raise funds for the McDowell County Pregnancy Care Center (MCPCC). This year, walkers' footsteps will be matched by "Celebrate Life Footprint" signs arrayed on both sides of the trail.

For a \$5 donation, McDowell Pregnancy Care Center supporters may purchase a sign in honor of or in memory of someone special. The person's name will be displayed beside a pair of colorful footprints on the sign.

The "footprint" signs reflect this year's theme for the walk, "You don't have to walk alone," says Amy Dowdle, event organizer. The walk itself reinforces this theme, indicates Denise McCormick, the Center's director. "When you have 400 people walking the track, women facing unplanned pregnancies should feel supported and loved."

After a 9:00 am registration, McDowell residents will begin walking in support of these families at 9:30. Runners will start first, then walkers, then families with young children and mothers with strollers, according to Dowdle.

Walkers may traverse the trail as many or as few times as they desire. When not walking, they can listen to local Christian music groups, view exhibits on the Center's work, munch on free refreshments, and enjoy "great fellowship for an even greater cause," says Dowdle. Balloons, face painting, and other activities are planned for the kids.

Award distribution and prize drawings at 11 am will culminate the event. The top three fundraising teams will be awarded plaques. A "School Spirit" certificate will be given to the top school team.

Each of the top five individual fundraisers will receive their choice of one of the door prizes donated by local businesses. Remaining door prizes will be awarded by random drawing.

Prizes will include theme park tickets, gift certificates from local shops and restaurants, and wreaths and other crafts made by local artists. Dowdle says she has sent requests for door prize donations to over 30 businesses and is "already receiving responses."

Businesses or individuals wishing to donate door prizes may contact Denise McCormick at the Center, (828) 652-7676, or Amy Dowdle at (828) 460-6486. A registration fee of at least \$15 per walker, and donations collected by the walkers, will provide funding for diapers, infant supplies and other operating expenses. Walkers are asked to collect pledges in advance and bring the money with them on the day of the walk.

Local businesses, churches, and organizations may donate \$1,000, \$500, \$300, or \$200 to place their logo on the back of official "Walk for Life" t-shirt. This year's shirt will be heather red, and "will be real soft," says McCormick.

Potential walkers may print or download pre-registration forms and pledge sheets for the walk from the Center's website at [www.mpcnc.org](http://www.mpcnc.org). "Celebrate Life Footprint" signs may be purchased via pre-registration forms, and also at the event. T-shirt sponsorship forms may also be downloaded from this website.

Registration materials may also be picked up at the organization's office at 40 South Main Street in Marion.

Walkers must pre-register by September 14th to receive a t-shirt. September 14th is also the deadline for organizations desiring a spot on the t-shirt.

In the above-mentioned speech at His Place Worship Center, Denise McCormick described the McDowell Pregnancy Care Center's origins 14 years ago. The Center began as a vision of a committee that included local pastors. Committee members felt that "We need to help these moms; they have no place to turn," McCormick said.

The ministry was launched in a "tiny building" on North Main Street in 2003, according to McCormick. Now the Center has five office suites and an ultrasound clinic in the Suttles Building in downtown Marion. A full-time director, two part-time employees, and "nine very active volunteers" handle an average of 82 client visits a month.

Services include pregnancy tests, limited ultrasounds, parenting classes, Bible studies, peer counseling, and distribution of diapers and baby supplies. At the



### CELEBRATE LIFE!



McDOWELL PREGNANCY CARE CENTER WALK FOR LIFE

Center's "Blossoms Boutique," mothers may shop for maternity clothes, baby clothes, and "back to work" clothes for the mother to wear after the baby's birth. Mothers, fathers, and mothers-to-be earn points toward baby supplies and "Blossoms Boutique" items through the Center's "Earn While You Learn" program. Points are earned by attending various classes offered at the Center, and by participating in counseling and other programs.

McCormick says that the MPCC staff offered 765 "Earn While You Learn" classes in 2016.

"We're not a hand-out center. We teach them how to be good parents," says McCormick.

An ultrasound clinic was added to the Center's services in 2016, in cooperation with Mountain Area Pregnancy Services (MAPS) of Asheville. The ultrasound, McCormick shares, provides a mother or father the chance to "see that baby and hear the heartbeat."

And, she adds, MAPS statistics demonstrate that 95 percent of mothers who see their unborn baby on an ultrasound choose to carry to term.

McCormick notes that years ago, mothers would bring their pregnant daughters into the Center to obtain abortion information. Now, an increasing number of these mothers are requesting: "Teach them to be good mothers."

The Walk for Life raised over \$32,000 in 2016 toward the Center's work. Dowdle says she hopes to exceed that amount in the upcoming walk. The ultrasound clinic, larger building, and increased services have also led to additional expenses, she notes.

Director McCormick urges: "Please help us show the mothers in our community that they don't have to walk alone."

Marion Stephan is a Christian freelance writer and attends New Covenant Community Church in Marion.



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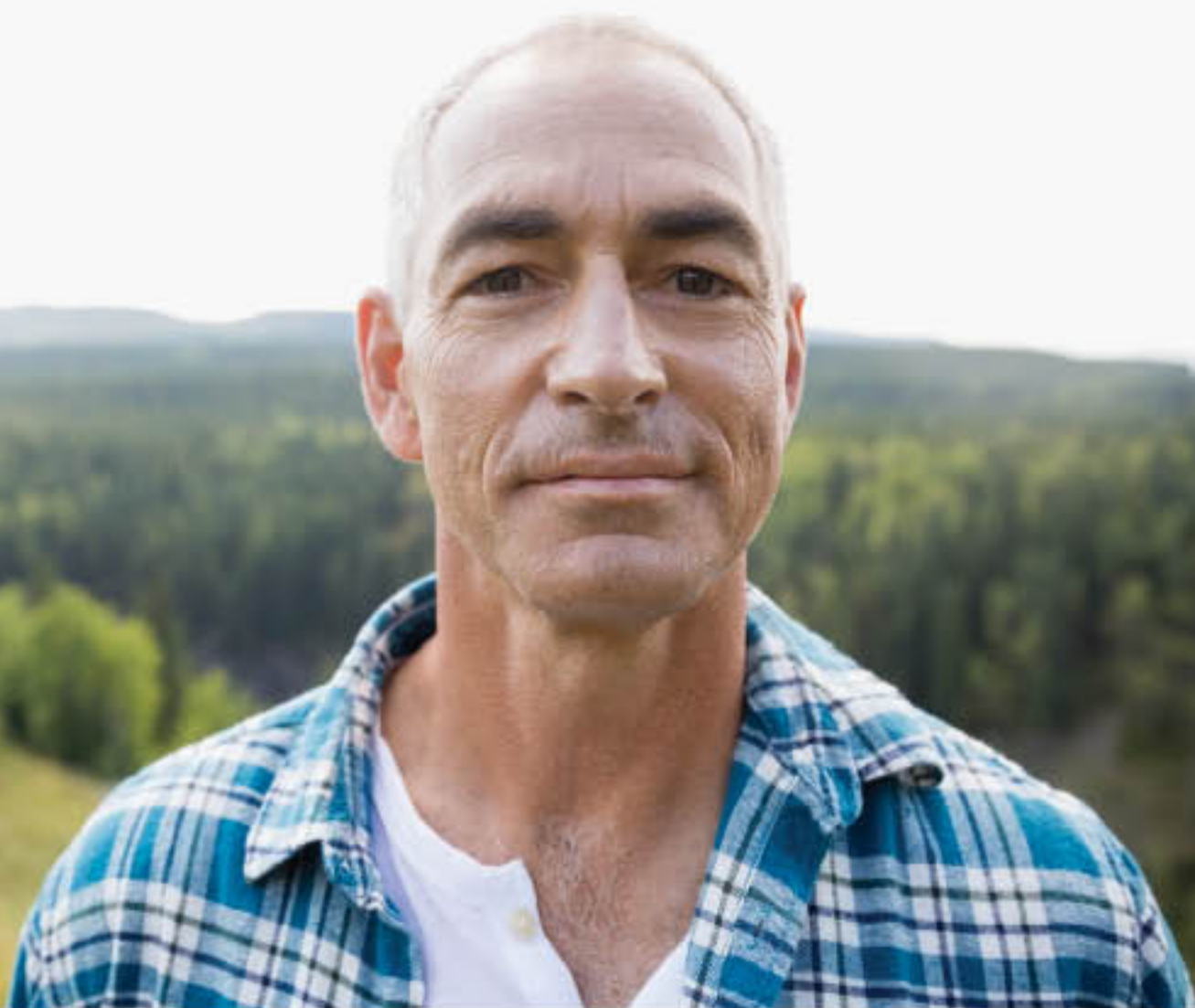
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