

BLUE RIDGE CHRISTIAN NEWS

What Happened to Our Society



2016 Mitchell High School, meet you at the pole.

By Doug Harrell

In 1962 the Supreme Court ruled that prayer needed to be taken out of our school system and guess what has happened since that time. When we remove God from our society we are asking for trouble. Following are some results from an article entitled "America: To Pray or Not to Pray" that really make us stop and think!



A. Young People

1. For 15 years before 1963 pregnancies in girls ages 15 through 19 years had been no more than 15 per thousand. After 1963 pregnancies increased 187% in the next 15 years.
2. For younger girls, ages 10 to 14 years, pregnancies since 1963 are up 553%.
3. Before 1963 sexually transmitted diseases among students were 400 per 100,000. Since 1963, they were up 226% in the next 12 years.

B. The Family

1. Before 1963 divorce rates had been declining for 15 years. After 1963 divorces increased 300% each year for the next 15 years.
2. Since 1963 unmarried people living together is up 353%.
3. Since 1963 single parent families are up 140%.
4. Since 1963 single parent families with children are up 160%.

C. Education

1. The educational standard of measure has been the SAT scores. SAT scores had been steady for many years before 1963. From 1963 they rapidly declined for 18 consecutive years, even though the same test has been used since 1941.
 2. In 1974-75 the rate of decline of the SAT scores decreased, even though they continued to decline. That was when there was an explosion of private religious schools. There were only 1000 Christian schools in 1965. Between 1974 to 1984 they increased to 32,000.
- a. That could have an impact if the private schools had higher SAT scores. In

checking with the SAT Board, it was found that indeed the SAT scores for private schools were nearly 100 points higher than public schools.

b. In fact the scores were at the point where the public schools had been before their decline started in 1963 when prayer and Bible reading/ instruction was removed from the schools.

c. The scores in the public schools were still declining.

3. Of the nation's top academic scholars, three times as many come from private religious schools, which operate on one-third the funds as do the public schools.

D. The Nation

1. Since 1963 violent crime has increased 544%.
3. Illegal drugs have become an enormous & uncontrollable problem.
2. The nation has been deprived of an estimated 30 million citizens through legal abortions just since 1973.

I wonder if it is time for **REVIVAL?** What do you think?

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.

REVIVAL


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THY PEOPLE MAY REJOICE IN THEE?

PSALMS 85:6




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Contents

In Every Issue

Clint's Chronicles on the Funny Farm - p. 15

Life Lessons - p. 9

Your Government - pp. 32-33

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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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Phil's Tire (20)

Spruce Pine Tire (16)

AUTOMOBILES - Service

John's Automotive (36)

BEAUTY SALON

Rumors Salon (30)

BUILDING SUPPLIES

Summit Building Supplies (40)

CHURCHES

Altapass Baptist (4)

Bakersville United Methodist (5)

Banner Elk United Methodist (4)

Bear Creek Baptist (4)

Berry Chapel Baptist (4)

Burkemont Baptist (5)

Burnsville 7th day Adventist (4)

Faith Fellowship (4)

First Advent Christian (4)

First Baptist Spruce Pine (5)

Grassy Creek Baptist (4)

Great Hope 7th day Adventist (5)

Horizon (4)

Morganton Seventh day Adventist (5)

Pine Branch Baptist (5)

Pleasant Grove Church of
Brethren (4)

Plumtree Presbyterian (4)

Roan Mt. Missionary (5)

Spruce Pine United Methodist (4)

St. Lucian Catholic (5)

The Bridge (4)

West Burnsville Baptist (5)

CHIROPRACTIC

Cruz Chiropractic (40)

CONCRETE SUPPLY

Boone's Concrete (12)

CPA

Jamie Miller (43)

DENTIST

Scott Murphy (46)

EVENTS

Freedom Life (16)

McDowell DSS (26)

Marion Downtown (23)

Substance Abuse (27)

Yancey Chamber (24)

FARM SUPPLIES

Griffith's General Store (19)

FURNITURE

Buck Stove (18)

L&B Furniture (15)

Peoples Furniture (33)

Southwest Trading (44)

GUTTERS

Energy Savers (8)

HABITAT

Yancey/Mitchell Habitat (10)

HEALTH CARE

Bakersville Community Clinic (6)

Carolina Home Care (31)

Mission Health (1, 2)

Pruit Health Care (21)

HOSPICE

Hospice of McDowell (41)

Hospice of Mitchell (8, 33, 35)

Hospice of Rutherfordton (12)

Hospice of Yancey (25)

HOUSING

Clayton (20)

INSURANCE

Fortner Insurance (18)

Miller Insurance Group (41)

Mitchell Co. Farm Bureau (44)

Nation Wide / Trent (47)

Premier Insurance (34)

LANDSCAPING

Harding Landscaping (39)

MULCH

McClure Construction (17)

PAWN SHOP

Mountaineer Pawn Shop (23)

PHARMACY

The Prescription Pad (13)

PLUMBING/HEATING

Burleson Plumbing Heating (11)

POOL SERVICE

Backyard Creations (17)

REALTORS

Whitson Realty (42)

REHABILITATION/NURSING

Brian Center (6)

RESTAURANTS

Abeles Restaurant (22)

Bantam Chef (30)

Bubba's Good Eats (14)

D T's (16)

Western Sizzlin (36)

RETAIL

Grassy Creek Clothing (36)

RETIREMENT

Mars Hill Retirement (48)

TRANSPORTATION

Mitchell Co. Transit (5)

Yancey Co. Transit (38)

TREE SERVICE

Ray's Tree Service (43)

Church Directory

Altapass Baptist Church

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

Dr. Marcus R. Benfield

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

"A Christ-Centered,
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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
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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.plumtreepresbyterian.org

Pastor Ryan Bridgeo
pastor@plumtreepresbyterian.org

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.splfbc.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.
Mica, 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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Tim's Treasures

An Unforgettable Sunrise

By Timothy W. Tron
Burke County

"...whereas you do not know what will happen tomorrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away." — James 4:14



We can no more know what will be in 20 years than we can know what tomorrow will bring; it is like being able to see what is not visible. We ourselves are like the mist, as scriptures tell us, *"Whereas you do not know what will happen tomorrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away."* Will my body be capable of traversing what my mind's eye can see? Will there be the breath of life left within my soul? All of these things and more cannot be answered, nor should they. Our faith should sustain us through all that is, and all that will be to come.

One may project themselves mentally into that point beyond their horizon, that which tells of a distant time and place which none can know. From that place, they may reflect back upon all that might have transpired. From such an appointed place we may see with more clarity what we should find of value; of meaning; of purpose. We can take away from our reflection in that distant horizon such that, when our life's journey has come to fruition, we all would like to say with assurance, *"We have run the race well."*

To run that race well, there are a few moments which I hope to find, which many may find as their own: to see my children grow into adulthood, to see them become parents with successful careers; to hold that first grandchild in my arms; to see the end of a successful career of teaching; to see my wife and I gracefully grow old together; to see with mine own eyes, the bridge at Salbertrand; to see the sunrise from the top of the Chisone Valley as did those brave men on their march through the Glorious Return; and lastly, but not least of all, to lead others to Christ through the blessings God has bestowed upon me. These are but a few of all that I hope to find on that day, so far from now.

Yet, in the blink of an eye, it will be here.

Time is a precious commodity none of us can take for granted.

The bridge between now and the end of our time here on earth grows shorter with each passing day. We are aliens upon this earth, put here by our creator, and when we pass, we move on to the place He hath created for us; a home eternal. What we do with the time we have left is as much our choosing as is our choice of deciding if we want to live beyond this life, through the salvation Christ has given to all, should they choose.

When we stand on that future mountain top and look back, one should hope to see how they have lifted up others in their wake, being as Christ-like as possible. To become the light is all we should seek.

To get there from here, we must take one step at a time. Each new footprint, insignificant as each one may seem, leads us to the eventual destination if we can remain focused. In our hearts, we know the words, *"Yea though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me, thy rod and thy staff comfort me..."* All around us, the dark peaks of struggle are pitched against us. The fog of doubt and uncertainty shroud our way. Yet, we push onward, one step at a time. We must not look back when the sorrows pull us down. We cannot relive what has gone on before us. We cannot return the dead to the living; we must push onward.

Closing my eyes, I drift off to that future time and place.

From that distant vantage point, my breath is labored. The height at which we have achieved to gain this point is substantial in altitude. The air is thin up here. In my mind, I'm standing upon the highland overlooking the Chisone Valley; the year is 1689. Darkness is before me, it is night. Behind me, I can hear men struggling up the side trying to reach the summit. We are nearest to Him on this imagined peak. What we left behind to obtain our position is a haunting reminder of how our lives have been shaped by perseverance. Like Arnaud, his men having fought past the bridge at Salbertrand, seeing the miracle of 600 men routing over 2,500, they are now the survivors of the ten days of forced march. They have avoided the main roads, taking the goat paths and cliff faces in their march. They have fought through one village after another. After this late day battle, they are now struggling through the night to reach the summit. Exhausted, they will fall asleep almost before their heads hit the ground. Arnaud stays awake well past what his body will allow making sure the few sentries he has posted remain awake. He doesn't know I'm here, but together we watch as the coming dawn begins to lighten the eastern sky.

With trepidation, we await, as the sound of men scattered about us sleep in fitful slumber. The wounded moan as they turn to find comfort upon the hard ground; there is little to relieve their pain. The campfire is nearly gone, its embers glowing red, like the horizon that begins to hint of the coming day.

As the dawn broke before them on that glorious morning, the sunlight filtered into their homeland, those ancient valleys of granite and raging torrents. Their faith was at a zenith, they knew this was not the end. Before them lay the unknown. God had surely delivered them to this point for a reason. Yes, they had made it. Yet, the battle to reclaim their valleys had only begun. The dead that they had left behind, now almost half their number, cannot be forgotten; yet, they must not allow the darkness to consume their fate. Before them, the mountain falls away, revealing the Chisone. Some are eager to get down below; family homesteads occupied by the enemy burn in their minds. Liberation of their own farms begins to overwhelm them, but their leader, Pastor Arnaud, recognizes this inner strife and calms them once more with prayer.

"Men, let us bow our heads, ...God, your hand has been upon us each and every step of the way. We thank you for all that you have given us to this day, but Lord, you know better than we, that if it is your will, this place which you hath pre-



pared for us in the beginning, will once more be returned to us again. We ask for the forgiveness of our sins, for taking another man's life is something we do not dismiss easily from our hearts, but at the same time, we ask that you forgive those that seek to destroy us. For all we do, we do in servitude in your Holy name. For we thank you, God the Father, and ask that you continue to watch over us as we go forth, so that we may be allowed to restore the faith, truth, and the light back to the valleys from whence we hath come. Thank you for your son Jesus Christ, who died, was buried, and rose on the third day. His blood was shed for our sins, so that we may have life eternal. In all these things, we thank you, in God's Holy Name, ...Amen."

Painfully, Arnaud and his men arose and began the ascent into the dark valley of the Chisone below to reclaim their homeland. There, hiding in their own homes, churches, and villages, the enemy awaited.

Painfully, in that distant time, we will continue on in our ascent into that dark valley below where the enemy awaits; Satan. There, hiding in our own homes, churches, and villages, he awaits our every move.

We must do all that we can to bring them back to the faith of our ancestors, to bring them the salvation for which they were once freely given.

Each faces an uncertain future.

Each knows from whence they came.

Each knows that the going forward will not be easy. Time is against us all, no matter when we face it, but with our faith, we can find our way. We are not alone. *"We can do all things through Christ who strengthens us,"* and in that, we can face tomorrow.

We know not what tomorrow may bring, but with faith, we can face tomorrow. In all that we do, let us serve Him, and to never forget, Thanks be to God.

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

If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.
2 Chronicles 7:14



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He Will Convict

By Shawn Thomas
Burke County

"And He, when He comes, will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment" (John 16:8)

The word "He" in this verse is important for a couple of reasons:

First, it emphasizes the Personhood of the Holy Spirit. He is not an "it", some impersonal "force" as Gandhi taught. Rather "He" is a Person, the 3rd Person of the Triune Godhead. Thus, He relates personally to God the Father and God the Son as we see evidenced in this chapter; He can be "grieved", as Paul asserts in Ephesians 4, etc. "He" is a Person.

And the "He" here is also significant because it reminds us that the conviction of sin in a person's life is HIS job, not ours. "HE ... will convict the world of sin ...". We can preach; we can teach; we can admonish — but our role is limited. Only "HE" can actually "convict ... concerning sin." And that conviction makes all the difference.



When Hudson Taylor was on mission in China in the late 1800's, he wrote of the following experience:

"An old man found us, I know not how, and followed me to our boat. I asked him in and inquired his name.

"My name in Dzing," he replied. "But the question which distresses me, and to which I can find no answer, is — What am I to do with my sins? Our scholars tell us that there is no future state, but I find it hard to believe them ... Oh, sire, I lie on my bed and think. I sit alone in the daytime and think. I think and think and think again, but I cannot tell what is to be done

about my sins. I am seventy-two years of age. I cannot expect to finish another decade. "Today knows not tomorrow's lot," as the saying is. Can you tell me what to do with my sins?" (Hudson Taylor's Spiritual Secret, p. 198)

This kind of conviction of sin can only be the work of the Holy Spirit, and there is no substitute for it. John 16:8 is a good reminder to us: we can't convict people of sin. Only "He" can. So, do your part — and pray — and leave the conviction to Him. "He, when He comes, will convict the world concerning sin ...".

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

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My Neighbors

By Lana Ellis
Tennessee

I really like the neighborhood in which I live. There are neighbors all around and their homes and yards are well cared for. They're all very nice and throughout the day are often seen playing outside with children, pushing strollers and walking their dogs. But this summer I had two new "neighbors" nearby – one family in the back yard and the other in the front yard. I spent a lot of time keeping a close eye on both of them. Nosey neighbor? Well maybe but you could call it "neighborhood watch". You've heard of neighborhoods going to the "dogs". Well mine went to the "Birds"!

The family in the back yard lived in a house safely enclosed and protected from the elements. They carefully furnished their home making it very comfortable for the expectant mother and her soon to be born children. As mother awaited the arrival of her children the father worked to find food for her and delivered it directly to her mouth. Aah! How sweet. The babies arrived weeks later and both father and mother began the daily chore of providing food to the impatient little darlings. This seemed to go on far longer than maybe it should have but finally the once hand – rather "beak" fed siblings had to be coached out of the house and sent into the real world. The back yard bird family are Tree Swallows who boldly took over the blue bird box. They are rather pushy, often swooping down as if to attack while making quite a fuss over head.

Much the opposite were the neighbors in my front yard. No plush feather beds for those young'uns. Their mother came up tough so will they. Her nesting spot was not enclosed nor covered. It was on a bed of pea gravel beneath a very small tree exposed to rain and wind. On occasion she would leave the nest and search for her own food before returning for duty both day and night. It was early one morning when the "nosey neighbor" crept by while mother bird was dining at the bird diner and there they were – four tiny seemingly balls of feathers. Within a just a few hours they were on foot and mother was carefully keeping them covered if at all possible. The next day they took on the appearance of their mother. Though much smaller it was evidenced that their long skinny legs were made for walking and walking fast. They are from the Plover family and go by the name of Killdeer. They are much quieter and less assuming than the Swallow family. However they too have a form of self-defense by leaving the nest area and flapping around to draw attention away from the little ones.

As I observed these two families it wasn't hard to come up with an analogy – Birds and People. Hopefully all of us were born and raised in a suitable dwelling with parents who cared for us. However, like the Swallow family some can easily become spoiled and require more than enough care and attention. The Killdeer family doesn't require a lot and quickly learns to fend for themselves. I know some people, as I'm sure you do, who were born to low income parents in impoverished areas who have become very productive and useful adults. The same cannot be said about others who feel the system owes them and continue on the lookout for free handouts.

Somewhere in all this bird talk surely there is a moral to the story. I'll leave that up to you. Meanwhile whatever your living conditions try your best to make it "Home Tweet Home."

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



Enjoy Each Season Of Your Life!

By Rev John McCoury
Roan Mountain, Tennessee



We read in Psalm 1:3 "And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water; that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper." Your life is lived in seasons, and to be fruitful you must recognize the season you're in and maximize it. "How can I tell when a season is ending?" you ask. Because the grace that accompanied that season will lift, and what was once rewarding will start to feel unrewarding. The Bible says a successful man or woman is like a tree planted by streams of water "which yields its fruit in season." You can only be fruitful in your season! That's where blessing and success occur. You can't just do it whenever you want to; it has to be in your appointed time. When the right season comes, it's effortless for a tree to produce what's stored within. And there's fruit within you that will be produced when you understand what season you're in. But there are rules for each season; let's look at them. I am glad God changes the times and the seasons, aren't you? Just think how dull things would become if He didn't paint nature's scenes in different colors several times a year. With infinite creativity and remarkable regularity, He splashes white over brown and orange over green, giving such attention to detail that we are often stunned with amazement. Each of the four seasons offers fresh and vital insights for those who take the time to look and to think. Hidden beneath the surface are colorful yet silent truths that touch most every area across the landscape of our lives. As each three-month segment of every year holds its own mysteries and plays its own melodies, offering sights and smells, feelings and fantasies altogether distinct, so it is in the seasons of life. The Master is neither mute nor careless as He alters our times and changes our seasons. How wrong to trudge blindly and routinely through a lifetime of changing seasons without discovering answers to the new mysteries and learning to sing the new melodies! Seasons are designed to deepen us, to instruct us in the wisdom and ways of our God. To help us grow strong ... like a tree planted by the rivers of water. We need to walk together through each scene, pondering; the subtle shading as well as the obvious broad-brush strokes from the Artist's hand.

Let's take our time and leave room for our feelings to emerge. Let's sing in harmony with the Composer's music. Let's drink in the beauty of His handiwork. It will take time, so let's not hurry. Our journey begins in the winter, a season of quiet reverence. When we realize we are nothing without Christ and accept him as our Saviour. This is followed by spring, a season of refreshing and encouraging renewal. Summer is for maturing what spring started. The seeds you sowed and nurtured then will grow and multiply now. Then comes summer, a season of enjoyable and much needed rest is for training and discipline. That's when you begin to see God's purpose for your life and prepare for it. The seeds you sowed and nurtured then will grow and multiply now. Finally, we'll stroll through autumn, a season of nostalgic reflection. When you assess your accomplishments, enjoy your rewards, pass on your counsel, and take your bows. You have fought the good fight, kept the faith, and finished the course 2 Tim 4:7. Autumn is when you no longer have the passion of youth but the steady calm of the seasoned veteran. If you do it right, each season can be the best season of your life! Our hope is to grow stronger and taller as our roots dig deeper in the soft soil along the banks of the river of life. And let's not fear the winds of adversity! The bent old twisted trees, beaten and buffeted by wind and weather along the ocean shores, tell their own stories of consistent courage. May God make us strong as the winds whip against us, my friend? Let our roots grow deep.



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

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High Country Prison Ministry

Tour of Heaven

By Jody Griffin
Mitchell-Avery County

And after this, I looked, and behold a door was opened in heaven: and the first voice that I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me, which said, Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter. (Revelation 4:1)

John's "visionary experience" included many things that are proclaimed from pulpits within and without the church walls. But one of the most amazing things about his vision is John's guided tour through Heaven's gates. The theme of this particular portion of John's description of his vision is that of the throne of God. (Much more is said about thrones in the Biblical saga, but trust me this is NO Game!)

It seems that this 'tour' of Heaven that John experienced has some interesting parallels to where I spend many hours each week. Thus I am compelled to offer for your consideration a few insights gained in this opportunity and privilege.

First, the gates of Heaven that contain the eternal, glorified Presence of the Mighty God and the Savior Lord are meant for the everlasting security of those who dwell within them. There are not many weeks that pass without me offering an alternative outlook to the men who are contained within the walls and gates of this institution. I suggest to them that perhaps they find themselves contained within the correctional facility for their own protection.

There is a God Who has intervened in their circumstances to place them in a setting such as this to secure their future! Interestingly enough, a good number of those I have shared this thought with have wholeheartedly agreed!

Second, once one has come to the realization that a Divine God has redeemed their life from destruction and offered them security like they have never known before, some are NOW ready to see what lies ahead with fresh eyes and an enlightened perspective. It is as if the "door" to understanding has been opened and they now see how things can and will be different for them in the days and years to come.

The suggestion that they seize the opportunity given them by this temporary "time out" from the outside world to think about how



they might react differently in the settings and situations that they find themselves in is a fascinating insight from the aforementioned verse! Imagine the power of John's future altering experience as a gift. God's gift is a vision of what is coming and the benefits of a life of faith. For John having seen it, and for us having read about and believed in it, means that we are also beneficiaries of this gift!

As minister to the residents and staff here, I am constantly reminded that no matter one's past, there can be a bright future secured to those who by faith dwell within the Gates of God!

I am humbled and honored beyond measure to be called Chaplain, and to spend many hours each month serving God by serving others!

High Country Prison Ministry provides volunteers and resources necessary to make this ministry possible. Please pray for this ministry and for all parties involved and touched by it.

By supporting us, you are in fact, giving men a glimpse of the Glory and the Love of God as they spend time behind the walls and within the gates.

P.S. One Day with God Camp was held at Avery Mitchell Correctional Institution on Saturday, August 19th. An amazing day of Fathers connecting with their children, thanks to the generous contributions of individuals, churches, staff and volunteers! SO many blessings! Thanks Be to God!

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



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The WCC credential is a multidisciplinary wound care certification available to licensed wound care professionals across the healthcare continuum. This professional certification provides the recognition that Kimberly Grindstaff RN, WCC possess the qualifications to deliver the highest standard of care to all of our wound care patients.

We are very proud of Kimberly. She is a wonderful nurse. Her level of compassion and professional expertise make her an invaluable asset to our Hospice team.

Seasons of Our Lives

By Doug Harrell

Ecclesiastes 3:1 *To everything there is a season and a time to every purpose under the heaven.*

As I am writing this morning I have really been thinking about the different seasons of our lives and the changes that take place in each one and how one leads into another. We start our lives as seeds planted in the womb and sprout as a young baby being nurtured in our mother's arms. As we grow and begin to learn, we are pruned, sometimes with a switch and sometimes with the tongue, and shaped into the person we are to become. This time of growing and pruning will have an everlasting impact upon our lives and how we are to move through the other seasons we transition into. We are always growing, changing and moving onward. Time never stops for anyone or anything. We go from being the one nurtured in the spring of our lives to being the ones that plant the seeds for the next generation and the cycle continues onward. How we make the transition from one step into the next is of everlasting importance in the lives of those that follow us in the evolution of life here on earth.

We go into the next season of summer and we watch our children grow and learn in their spring as we did. Guiding, correcting, nudging and hopefully helping them get ready for their time. The season of watching the growth in them is likened to the farm when we watch the crops come out of the ground and begin to grow into the plant it is supposed to be. Their spring is now our summer and we transition into the joy of holding them in our arms, scratching their backs, bandaging their cuts and bruises as they go through this stage of their lives. We are getting ready for our autumn as they are getting ready for their summer.

As we head into autumn, the season I am now well into, we watch the cycle again move forward with our grandchildren coming of age. We are currently at a wedding venue for another grandchild getting married today and watch little great grandchildren running around along with grandchildren that are pregnant with more great grandchildren that will be born in a few short months. Oh, how the time does fly, and how important it is that the time trusted truths of our faith in Jesus be continued to be handed down to the generations. Even in the autumn of our lives we are still making and having an impact upon the spring of the future generations that are moving forward to take our place in the progression of life. John 5:35 *He was a burning and shining light: and ye were willing for a season to rejoice in his light.* Hopefully each of us can rejoice in the light of our Savior and be a light and beacon for the coming generation that does not fade with time but that remains strong and true to the principles we were taught and have been teaching. During our autumn years we also enter another phase of our lives in that we are now in a position and situation that we need to look after our parents, those that nurtured us in our spring of life. Exodus 20:12 *Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.* I know it is not always possible but one of the greatest blessings Barbara and I have had is being able to care for mother in her last years. She has been with us now for five years and even though it does change your life style it has been an honor.

Three weeks ago, I spent time in the hospital with chest pains and ended up joining the Stent Club with the installation of three stents in my heart. I realize that, but for the grace of God and modern medicine, my allotted days here on this earth would have been over. As I head into the winter season of life, I am ever reminded how unimportant some things in life are, and how important others are. The lives that we touch, the babies that we hold, caress and kiss, the things that we teach to others through our life actions, these are the things of everlasting importance. Are we teaching about our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, are we enabling the future generations to be prepared to carry on these values and traditions? This is the question, are we still shining for Christ? Matthew 28:19 *Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.*

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.



Haiti

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

We have not been back from Haiti but for a few weeks and the images that I saw while I was there still haunt me. I lived in this very remote area for 3 years. It is really the poorest of the poor, even before the Hurricane last October. The nearest electricity is about 30 miles and the nearest hospital is the same. The hospital did not have much when I was there and now even less after the Hurricane. Our team of 7 arrived in the capital of Port au Prince and stayed the night. We really did not see that much in the way of any damage in the capital. It is as Haiti has always been. The next day we took the 6-hour bus ride to Les Cayes and the 4 ½ hour motorcycle ride up into the mountains. The motorcycles carried us across rivers and through gorges. Finally, we arrived at our base camp in the location of Joligibut. As we got deeper and deeper in the jungle I was horrified at the lack of vegetation that I found. In some places, I could not even recognize the area. The Hurricane from last October has devastated the entire zone. Houses were gone. Some houses had fallen in. It was the saddest thing I believe I have ever seen. Having traveled to over 80 countries, that is saying a lot. Upon arriving at our base camp we were warmly greeted by our pastor. He began to tell me what had happened. Thousands had died in this area. They had no way to prepare and no way to escape. Most of their houses are built from mud, rock and straw. They have dirt floors. No indoor plumbing. The building that we had been using as our base had been turned into an orphanage. Many of these children's parents had been killed in the hurricane. There are 35 children there. The pastor has no income for them. Only trusting the Lord day by day to supply their needs. We spent the entire week going village to village. One village after the next was destroyed. Only 2 churches in an area of about 3000 people are left standing. These 2 were American built. I have never been more heart broken at the loss of many of my friends. They told me how the wind had started getting stronger and stronger that night. They shared with me how their houses were ripped apart, some of their family members were carried off as well as their chickens, even some of their cattle, goats and sheep. It looked like a war zone. However, in the midst of all this despair the people's faith still stands. Every morning at 6am just as the sun was coming up many of the people in the village we were in, would come and gather at one of the only churches left standing and start praying and singing praise to God. This was every morning. Every day we would back pack to another village, some of them taking 2 1/2 up to 5 hours to get to. We would usually arrive between 11 and 12. We would tell the people that at 3pm we are going to have a service at your church. Dear friend by 3pm the church that used to be, was so full of people that there was standing room only. Even though there was no walls. Even though there was no roof. Even though there was no air condition or padded pews, they would come to hear the Word of God. For many of these villages the church served as the school as well as the church. Now many of them are left without. Without church or school, and so many more without homes. And yet they still take time out to come to the church, without any publicity, other than word of mouth, to pray and sing praises to God. I am sure you might be asking, "What do they have to sing praises to God about?" LIFE. They are praising God that they are alive and that someday they are going to heaven because they have put their trust in Jesus Christ. We have many trips this year going back to Haiti to help rebuild and to encourage the saints there. If you are interested in going on one of these trips please send me a message at rev.gpattonjr@gmail.com, we would love to have your assistance. God Bless you folks. Thank you for all the prayers and support.



House destroyed



Church Bernard destroyed



Church Martin destroyed

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

Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; Matthew 9:37

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Revival Needed Now!

By Billy Graham

If we ever needed guidance, if we ever needed stability, if we ever needed strength, if we ever needed faith, if we ever needed integrity, if we ever needed righteousness, if we ever needed a Heaven-sent revival, it is at the present hour.

We need a revival of Christian faith, of Christian experience, of God-consciousness. God has said, "If My people ... seek My face" (2 Chronicles 7:14). If we will rediscover that He is holy, righteous, real, absolute and personal, and that He is a God of love and mercy, then this reality will be transferred to the world and revival can come.

The church holds the key. It is within our grasp. Will we rise to the challenge? Will we dare pay the price? The supply of Heaven is adequate for the demands of our spiritually starved world. Will we fail to offer that supply?

I once asked a university professor what he thought our greatest need was. He considered it carefully before answering. He said, "I could give you a variety of answers all the way from tax relief to disarmament. I may surprise you, because I'm not a religious man, but I believe that the greatest need that we have at this hour is a spiritual awakening that will restore individual and collective morals and integrity throughout the nation."

To bear the name "Christian" is not enough. If our conduct doesn't measure up to Christian standards, condemnation will be ours: "You have a name that you are alive, but you are dead" (Revelation 3:1).

SUBSCRIBE NOW! To attend church is not enough, either. If we fail to let Christ be Lord and Master of our lives, we must come under the judgment of God, who said, "These people draw near to Me with their mouth, and honor Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me" (Matthew 15:8).

A hostile world is seething with hatred, intrigue, lawlessness and godless aggression. The wicked prosper, and in many areas of the world the righteous suffer. People are confused, unstable and unhappy. Scarcely, if ever, has economic prosperity been accompanied by such widespread unhappiness, lawlessness and rebellion.

The heart of the world is aching for peace, for reality and for God. The Prophet Habakkuk once stood in the midst of a people who had been showered with every conceivable blessing but who had lost their spiritual sanity, and he cried, "O Lord, revive Your work in the midst of the years!" (Habakkuk 3:2). That is the heart cry of thousands of people everywhere. It is our greatest need.

Spiritual revival has been important in the life of the United States. God has not blessed us simply because a few pilgrims prayed at Plymouth Rock. We have been favored because periodically as a nation we have returned to God in repentance and corrected our manner of life before the hand of judgment fell.

Too little is said in secular history about the part that spiritual revival has played in the United States. Soon after the colonists arrived, people's minds turned to gold rather than God. The country bogged down with greed, the churches were poorly attended and the tide of atheism rushed in to fill up the vacuum left by the absence of religion.

"If Christianity is important at all, it is all-important. If it is anything at all, it is everything. It is either the most vital thing in your life, or it isn't worth bothering with."

But a group of people in New England began to pray for revival. In 1734 in Northampton, Mass., Jonathan Edwards preached his famous sermon on the judgment of God, and in a single service, hundreds repented of their sins and sought God. People everywhere returned to Christian decency and righteous living. In a short time, nearly one-sixth of the nation's population was won to Christ. The churches were filled with devout worshipers, and revival made its impact on the social life of early America.

In 1783, liquor manufacturing began in the United States. Saloons sprang up everywhere. The nation went on a colossal binge. Home life degenerated, morals plunged, gambling was widespread, infidelity thrived and corruption was prevalent in high places.

But in Richmond, Va., prayer meetings broke out. God's people became concerned about the evil forces that were thriving to the utter peril of the nation's spiritual life. Revival fires began to burn across the land. Sobriety was restored, homes were rebuilt, infidelity lost its grip and thousands of lives were transformed by the power of Christ.

American-based foreign missions had their birth in this awakening, and the nation was saved from a fate worse than death. In answer to the cry of His people, God revived His work "in the midst of the years."

Woodrow Wilson once said, "America was born a Christian nation for the purpose of exemplifying to the nations of the world the principles of righteousness found in the Word of God." John Adams, the second president of the United States, said, "The destiny of America is to carry the Gospel of Jesus Christ to all men everywhere." And Franklin Roosevelt once said, "I doubt if there is any problem, social, moral or political, that could not melt away before the fire of spiritual awakening."

"If we ever needed guidance, if we ever needed stability, if we ever needed strength, if we ever needed faith, if we ever needed integrity, if we ever needed righteousness, if we ever needed a Heaven-sent revival, it is at the present hour." These are prominent leaders who have had the faculty of weighing and evaluating our needs. They put God and spiritual revival at the center, where they belong. If we ever needed guidance, if we ever needed stability, if we ever needed strength, if we ever needed faith, if we ever needed integrity, if we ever needed righteousness, if we ever needed a Heaven-sent revival, it is at the present hour. "But how," you may ask, "do we achieve renewal and revival? What are the steps to spiritual awakening?"



First, there must be earnest prayer. The Bible says, "if My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land" (2 Chronicles 7:14). There must be a deep-seated heart-yearning for revival—not just a mere muttering of words, pious platitudes and religious mouthings, but earnest, fervent prayer. The Bible says, "The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much" (James 5:16).

Let your soul be anguished; let the tears flow; let your heart be burdened for the lost. Tears are appropriate, for God's Word says, "He who continually goes forth weeping, bearing seed for sowing, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him" (Psalm 126:6).

Second, we must forsake our sins. The Bible says, "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him return to the Lord" (Isaiah 55:7). Again, the Bible says, "If My people ... turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven" (2 Chronicles 7:14).

The bickering, the prejudices, the ill will, the envy, the jealousy, the bitterness and the criticism among Christian people today must end before revival can begin. The revival must begin in the hearts of Christians before evangelism can be brought effectively to the world.

When Christ's disciples settled their differences, gave up their selfishness, confessed their sins and allowed God's Spirit to fill them, revival came. We must forsake our evil ways. God's Spirit cannot operate in a climate of dissension and quarrels. We must forsake our pettiness, our peevishness, our littleness and our whims.

The enemy of souls has weakened the effectiveness of the Church because we have majored on controversy and dissension rather than on going forth weeping and bearing precious seed. May God forgive us and help us to forsake our wicked, contemptuous ways!

Third, God must be real to us. The Bible says, "If My people ... seek My face ... then I will hear from heaven" (2 Chronicles 7:14). In a world filled with crass materialism, we have tried to whittle God down to our size. We have created a god in our minds who is not the revealed God of the Bible.

Many say, "It's all right to go to church, and a person ought to be decent, but I don't believe in going overboard on religion." They think the Christian faith is a phobia, bordering on mental incompetence.

If Christianity is important at all, it is all-important. If it is anything at all, it is everything. It is either the most vital thing in your life, or it isn't worth bothering with.

You can know God. Millions of Christians are saying with assurance, "I know I have passed from death to life" (Cf. 1 John 3:14). "I know whom I have believed" (2 Timothy 1:12).

We need a revival of Christian faith, of Christian experience, of God-consciousness. God has said, "If My people ... seek My face" (2 Chronicles 7:14). If we will rediscover that He is holy, righteous, real, absolute and personal, and that He is a God of love and mercy, then this reality will be transferred to the world and revival can come.

Don't give lie to the Christian faith by professing Christ without possessing Him. Don't lock the church door with the key of inconsistency and keep the lost from coming to Christ. Don't hinder revival by your unbelief and prayerlessness. Don't cheat yourself out of spiritual victory by allowing sin to imprison you. Seek God's face and turn from your wicked ways. Then He will hear from Heaven.

The church holds the key to revival. It is within our grasp. Will we rise to the challenge? Will we dare pay the price? The supply of Heaven is adequate for the demands of our spiritually starved world. Will we fail to offer that supply?

Have you accepted Christ as your Savior? If not, you will admit that deep down inside you is an emptiness that needs to be filled. Your heart yearns for peace and joy and forgiveness. There is a void that the world cannot satisfy.

In the center of history, on a low hill in Palestine, a cross was erected—the cross of Christ, the Son of God. By some wonderful miracle known only to God, all who look to the Lamb slain on the cross have life—not just the good, the respectable and the decent, but the vile, the despicable and the outcast. A thief dying with Jesus looked believably upon Him and was assured of life everlasting.

The Bible says that Jesus "made peace through the blood of His cross," and that by Christ, God reconciled all things to Himself" (see Colossians 1:20).

Give your life to Christ today. And may the revival that the world needs begin in you. ©1964 BGEA

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Yancey Hospice and Palliative Care

"Choices"

By Jacob Willis
Yancey County

Have you ever attempted to make a difficult decision and people say well just pray about it? Sometimes we, at Yancey Hospice and Palliative Care, see people struggle with the most difficult of decisions such as: whether or not to continue aggressive treatment for illness, what physician to use, what to put in their will, or whether or not to sign a DNR.

When you get right down to it, life is one big sequence of choices. We can, however, become very enthralled with our choices ending us up at a perfect destination. I talk with bereavement clients who worry about end of life decisions that were made and question, "If only I would have chosen this treatment or that Doctor for my loved one they might not have died." Some struggle with decisions they make for a lifetime wondering what life might have been. Sometimes we are told, just listen to the Spirit and you will be in the perfect will of God, but I personally have found that to be a slippery slope that isn't sustainable for long periods of time. I think we need to focus more on God's will as a way of living--- That God's will means I am doing what God has called me to do. People say, "If I only knew what God's will was, then I could make the right decision." Romans 12: (1-2) describes God's will for everyone as Paul writes, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. 2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."

God's will doesn't have to do so much with a place, person, job, or circumstance as it does with being a Godly Person. God wants us to surrender our will to Him. He wants our whole heart and all of our time, talent, and treasure. God wants to conquer us in a sense. Paul expresses this in 2 Corinthians 2: "12 Now when I came into the Troas to spread there the Good News about the Christ, even though in the Lord's providence a door stood open before me, 13 yet, obtaining no relief for my spirit because I did not find our brother Titus, I bade them farewell and went on into Macedonia. 14 But to God be the thanks who in Christ ever heads our triumphal procession, and by our hands waves in every place that sweet incense, the knowledge of Him. 15 For we are a fragrance of Christ grateful to God in those whom He is saving and in those who are perishing; 16 to the last-named an odor of death predictive of death, and to the others an odor of life predictive of life."

The church at Corinth was composed of some of Paul's biggest critiques. They criticized him, accused him of stealing money, accused him of being weak, and in the context of this scripture, were accusing him of not going where God wanted him to go. Paul describes a great door of opportunity that opened to him. Why didn't he go? Was he not a man of his word? Did he not care about the people in that community? Paul says, "It didn't work out because I had no peace in my Spirit and I couldn't find Titus." He had some anxiety about being in this place and about his decision. He was worried about his friend so he went on to Macedonia. We might look at this and say, "Paul was totally out of the will of God for leaving!"

Paul then explains God's will by using an analogy. In verses 14-16 he describes the procession held in Rome for a conquering hero. Someone who had gone into battle and won a great victory, coming back into the city to a parade. In this parade would come the army in front, and in the back the conquering hero with a whole procession of conquered slaves chained to the chariot. They were lead through the city to the center. There many of them died and some lived on to serve their masters for life.

In other words Jesus is the Conquering Hero. He defeated death, hell, the grave, sin, and Satan by the blood of His cross and the resurrection. We (followers of Jesus) are the ones who are chained to the chariot. He conquered us and now leads us to the place of death and service. During the procession the incense would be symbolic of both death and life. Burned for those who would die and those who would live. We die to ourselves and live to Christ. Paul is saying wherever I go, wherever I stay, wherever I am, I am led by the one who conquered me. I am dead to myself, and alive to Christ Jesus. I can't go anywhere that he isn't already there, because he goes before me. God's will is for me to die to myself and live for Christ. Wherever I go from that point on, I am in the purposeful will of God.

Refuse to let past choices define you, refuse to be dominated by your circumstances, and refuse to allow others to be critical of your choices and make you question yourself. Does this mean choices do not matter? Certainly not. It does mean that when we make our choices as a sold out child of the living God, we can trust Him to go before us. No choice we make surprises God, "He leads His dear children along, some through the fire, some through the flood, but all through the blood, some through great sorrow, but God gives a song, in the night season and all the day long".

Sell out to Jesus, pray and ask for His wisdom, go where you feel there is peace, and make your choices. Make them with the confidence that God is leading you no matter what, and there is nowhere that He hasn't gone before you, already making the way.

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



And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in thy sickle, and reap: for the time is come for thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe. Revelation 14:15



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Mine Creek Baptist Church

Truth

By Preacher Chris Rathbone
Mitchell County



The society in which we live has become a society that is for the most part offended by truth. One group speaks one "truth" and immediately another group will begin shouting their "truth". Both claim to be right about whatever the subject may be, even though the "truth" each group proclaims completely conflicts what the other group is proclaiming.

Then, there is the group that proclaims that there are no absolute truths in this world. They believe that truth is relative. That just means that everybody's truth is right, no one is wrong, and nobody can claim that their truth is above someone else's truth. Each person can believe whatever truth they want even if it conflicts someone else's truth and all are equally valid. Even though 2 plus 2 equals 4, we cannot make that the final and absolute answer, because someone else may believe it to be something else! And we don't want to offend someone. Again, even if the "truth" each one believes is completely opposite to each other, no one is wrong and everybody's truth is right. Yea, that feeling of "What????", you're having right now is how I feel when I hear people say stuff like that. According to these folks there are no moral absolutes. What one person believes is wrong, another person may believe is right. Mankind apparently just drifts along and comes up with whatever truth he or she likes and everybody is supposed to hold hands and agree that everybody is right. Everyone does that which is right is their own eyes. We are commanded by society to get in line and cooperate with whatever truth someone comes up with, even if that truth is conflicting with ours. You "absolutely" have to believe this and go along with all people's belief or unbelief, whichever it may be. Wait.....are they saying that there is absolutely no absolute truth? Aren't they proclaiming an absolute truth? Uhhhh...confused yet? That's the whole purpose of it all: "confusion". Satan has done a pretty good job of confusing people.

What are we as Bible believing Christians to do in such a society? What about those who say they are Christians and yet proclaim and support so called "truths" that conflict with what the Bible teaches? Do we just keep silent? Do we hide behind the walls of our church buildings because we are afraid someone will accuse us of being "judgmental" if we state what the Bible teaches? Paul gives a young preacher named Timothy some advice when it comes to preaching and teaching the truth.

First: begin with the correct source of truth, the scriptures. II Timothy 3:16-17 *All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness. That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.* Timothy lived in a time not much different from our own when it comes to all the differing opinions of truth. False religions, idol worship, ungodly religious rituals and even those who believed in nothing. Same mess, just a different time. Paul was reminding Timothy that it was the scriptures that were the source of truth in a world that was proclaiming so many different opinions of truth. The phrase, "given by inspiration of God" means "God breathed". Not just some scripture, but "all scripture". We can't choose to believe and accept some and refuse and disregard other portions of scripture. People are always quick to accept the truth of "God is Love" but will often refuse to accept that God is also a God of justice and wrath against sin and wickedness. The standard by which we should always measure the "truth" so many claim in this world is God's word. If it doesn't meet the standard declared in God's Holy Bible, then it isn't truth.

Secondly: Tell the truth, even when the world doesn't want it! Paul charges Timothy in II Timothy 4:2 *Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine.* Paul was telling Timothy to preach the truth of God's word whether it is popular to the masses or not. Just proclaim the truth because it was what God had called Timothy to do. Paul warns in verses 3-4 *For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.* Paul warned Timothy that there would be those who would reject God's truth to make up their own. These would raise up their own teachers to proclaim not what God wanted them to hear but only what they wanted to hear. They turned away from God's eternal, unchanging truth and embraced the fables and lies of the world.

As Christians, it is our responsibility to proclaim the truth of God's word. Even though the world around us keeps screaming for us to keep silent, we must not. In John 8:31-32, Jesus spoke these words: *If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.* The Word of God has always been and will always be the truth that sets sinful mankind free. The Gospel of Jesus is the only message by which man can be saved. No one can enter the Kingdom of Heaven without being born again, receiving Jesus Christ as their Savior by faith, and repenting of sin. That's not my truth, but God's truth. Jesus Himself stated in John 14:6 *...I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.* That's not my truth, but Jesus' truth. Even though it's not popular in the world you and I live in, it is the truth of God that we must proclaim. It is the truth that sets man free!

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

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Habitat House

Mitchell County Family Will be New Homeowners of a Habitat House

By Robin Warden
Mitchell County

Congratulations to Tanya Hudgins and her four children who are the newest Mitchell-Yancey Habitat for Humanity partner family. Their new 4-bedroom, 1200 square foot home will be located in Mitchell County.

"I am grateful and ecstatic that I pursued the process and did the research on what it would take to be a Habitat Partner family. I have always been a single mom. I feel so much better about myself because I can provide a home for my children. I want them to know now and as they finish high school and college and move on with their lives that 'a place called home' will always be here for them," expressed Tanya.

On a sunny Saturday afternoon at Riverside Park in Spruce Pine, I sat with this wonderful family to talk about what lies ahead. Tanya was happy to see her children, Seth (16), Daymion (13), Ayden (12), and Kinda (8) so enthusiastic as they shared their thoughts about moving. They were excited about themselves, their interests and accomplishments, as well as, those of their siblings. Tanya is an avid reader and has definitely passed her passion along to her family, who can't wait to have bookshelves in every room of their new house. Everyone understands the shared responsibilities ahead to help build their first new home.

All Habitat families are required to provide 200 hours of "sweat equity" on their own homes and work alongside staff and volunteer crews. The boys are anxious to get to it. They already have considerable experience with constructing walls and putting up insulation from helping build their aunt's house. Daymion is most excited about using a nail gun. No one confesses much enthusiasm for painting; however, I assured them that Habitat crews are not usually keen on the kids doing that job.

The family currently lives in Burnsville in an old and very small two-bedroom, one-bath trailer. Their trailer belonged to Tanya's parents, Gary and Marlene Hudgins, who live only a few houses away. Each family member shared bittersweet sentiments about the new house and eventually leaving grandparents in the old neighborhood in Burnsville.

Kyndal, the youngest and often the spokesperson for the family declared, "The one-bathroom situation is a whole lot of trouble for me." Mom shares a room with her while the three boys bunk together in the other bedroom. Tanya has done her best to keep up their home; however, it has been difficult to manage with such limited space and with no closets. They all envision a new life with a big yard, their own bedrooms, and of course, in time, a big dog. They all are looking forward to the privacy and independence that comes with one's own room.

"My kids have a more positive outlook because of this opportunity. They can see that everything is possible if you keep trying and work for what you want. God will help you find it," says Tanya.

Tanya was raised in Tipton Hall near Bakersville and is living now in Burnsville. For the past ten years, she worked as a Head Start Teacher at Roan View Child Development Center in Bakersville. As a single mom, working full time and raising four children, she went back to school when one child was an infant and the others were eight years old and under. She received her diploma from Mayland Community College in Spruce Pine in 2006 with an Associate Degree in Early Childhood Education. Two years ago, Tanya became the Director of Roan View Development Center.

When the family moves to Mitchell County, no one will have to get up at 5:00 AM on school days any longer. They all attend schools in Mitchell County where Mom is employed. Currently, to make it all work, Tanya drives from Burnsville to Mitchell County every morning at 5:30. The family helps her open up the Child Care Center and they are off to school from there.

Gary and Marlene Hudgins talk about how proud they are of their daughter, Tanya. "She has always been very independent, persistent, and hard-working. We made sure all of our children went to school and graduated. She has followed this example and always helped her children through school and encouraged their interests. She has made sure every one of her children know they are loved."

Gary works as a long-distance truck driver for a company in Mars Hill. He and Marlene always look forward to taking the children on the road with them whenever possible. The family is close to their papaw and mamaw, who have helped Tanya tremendously over the years with the children. Living farther apart from their grandchildren in Mitchell County will be an adjustment for the family. Marlene assures, "We will always stay closely involved in each other's lives."

Seth Elsaesser (16) is the oldest son and a sophomore at Mitchell High School. He is on the wrestling team and now competes in the 132-pound category. He works part-time for his coach doing landscaping and yard work. Seth accompanies his papaw, Gary, on the road whenever he can. He has traveled to half dozen or more states in the South to date. He loves working on old tractors and 4-wheelers with his papaw and sees himself working as a mechanic after finishing school. He will have his own room in the new house and plans to fill his space with his media collection of football and basketball paraphernalia of the Golden State Warriors and the Carolina Panthers.

Daymion Heidel (13) is in 8th grade at Bowman Middle School and claims to



be the biggest bookworm in the family. He loves to read fantasy and gets a real debate going among his brothers and sister about who is the biggest Harry Potter fan. He also shares a love of music, specifically playing the drums, and has an interest in karate with his brother Ayden. They will be roommates in the new house and have some exciting ideas about creating Do-It-Yourself platform beds with storage and cubbyhole areas. However, they still are at odds about one's choice for a black, red, and bright yellow color scheme. Having recently turned thirteen, he was allowed to make his first long-distance truck drive with papaw to Florida this summer. Daymion thinks truck driving may be a career he would enjoy.

Ayden Farris (12) is enrolled in advanced math classes, his favorite subject, in 7th grade at Bowman Middle School. He sees himself as a chemist in the future, or possibly, a video game designer. He boasts of having the most dance trophies in the family for jazz, tap, ruby, and clogging, as well as in karate. Ayden is in the school band and plays the flute. Next school year, he looks forward to starting track. And of course, his 13th birthday is approaching and that means his first road trip with grandparents Gary and Marlene will be soon.

Kyndal Farris (8) is in the 3rd grade at Gouge Elementary School and the youngest and only girl in the family. She patiently waited her turn to talk about her love of dance that she shares with her brother Ayden. "I love to dance ballet in addition to jazz, tap, ruby, and clogging. But, I am most looking forward in 3rd grade to cheerleading. I have been wanting to be a cheerleader for almost half of my life," Kyndal dramatically states. However, having her own room is high on her list of dreams as well. She and Mom are working on a princess bed that she plans to surround with her posters of the Disney Princesses. She excitedly raced through the list of a few of those princesses before I got lost: Snow White, Cinderella, Aurora, Ariel, Belle, Jasmine . . . It was no surprise to hear that, so far, she has her sights set on moving to New York City and becoming a fashion designer.

The board and staff of Mitchell-Yancey Habitat for Humanity welcome this fine new partner family. The location of their home is still pending as the affiliate seeks a suitable lot in Mitchell County preferably in Ledger or Bakersville. They will work alongside Habitat volunteer crews and local contractors to build their home and receive a no-interest 25-year mortgage. Tanya will be required to pay a monthly mortgage, land taxes, and insurance. Their home will be the 23rd home built by Mitchell-Yancey Habitat for Humanity since 1992 providing safe and affordable housing for 27 deserving families since that time.

Soon Mitchell-Yancey Habitat for Humanity will be seeking volunteers to help us build Tanya's family home. Are you interested in sharing your time and talents to help Tanya and her children make the dream of owning their home a reality?

Contact: Steve Bruton, M-Y Habitat for Humanity Volunteer Coordinator
407-864-0699 email: stevehabitatvcl@yahoo.com

Robin Warden is the Board Vice-President and Development Chairperson of Mitchell-Yancey Habitat for Humanity.



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Sudoku Solution

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

Have You Become Accustomed to The Dark?

By Pastor Steven Williams
Mitchell County



Many Years Ago Beverly and I went to a restaurant where they must have loved darkness, rather than light. I stumbled into the dimly-lit dining area and finally found my chair to sit down, I told her that I was going to need a flashlight if I was going to be able to read the menu and order. Well, we finally ordered and after a while the food came. I admit I ate it by faith and not by sight. But gradually, I began to make out objects in the restaurant a little more clearly. As we sit there, I thought to myself, it's funny how you get use to the dark after sitting in it for a while.

We are living in the Dark Age's whether we want to admit it or not. We're living in a time where the power of darkness seems to have a foot hold on people like never before. We have more Artificial Light in this world than we do True Light today. Meaning more people claiming to be a Christian than really being a True Christian. We Christians have the technology (TV, Radio, Internet) to reach more people today than in the past. I believe that there are more people in darkness today, than ever before.

We are living in a day of Moral Decay: where nothing seems to really bother many people. It's sad to say, people today have lived in darkness so long that they have become use to it. There is a slow brainwashing process going on, and slowly but surely we are being desensitized to evil or darkness in our society. Little by little sin is made to appear less sinful, until the light that was in many Christians has become dark. Just look, at the magazines that are in our homes, and TV programs we now watch. People by the millions are hooked on Reality TV. We watch them fuss, cuss, fight, belittle one another and we now call that entertainment instead of disgusting. In The Day you are living you can have every type of ungodly trash pumped right into our home without others knowing what we watch from our TV's, phones or computers. We get used to it, we accept it, as a matter of fact we call it, literature, music, freedom of speech, and people have learned to live with it, without feeling any guilt at all. Think about Lot in the Bible. The Bible says, Lot was "a righteous man," but he moved into Sodom. Lot lived among sexual perversion and Lot became accustomed to the sinful deeds these people performed day by day. (Read Genesis chapters 13-19). Lot become accustomed to the dark and this in return allowed his family to become accustomed to the dark, in return they failed to see anything wrong with the society they were living in, and this is still happening in our homes today.

I hate to say it, but I have met many Lots in the past several years, who just like Lot, they have lost the respect of their families and friends because they have grown accustomed to the darkness of the world and the sins of the world. The Bible tells us ...as it was in the days of Lot.... So shall it be in the day when the Son of Man returns. We're there... To which Adrian Rogers would say "It is getting gloriously dark." Folks, God's return is very close, I believe. We are living in a day of Liberal Lots, who tell us that we should accept Sodom, get tight with Gomorrah and live together and learn to tolerate and accept one another as they are. To which I say "HOG WASH". Again it is sad but true, people have gotten so use to sin and darkness, that they are accepting the darkness rather than accepting the Truth from the Light of The World (Jesus Christ). Dear friend please understand, if you sit in a dark room long enough you will think that there is more light shining through the longer you sit there. Christians must stand strong today and look to the light instead of accepting the darkness of the world. I know many people will say I'm old fashioned and narrow minded, but that's OK. There are two reasons I say that. 1st is because Christian people today have become accustomed to the dark, 2nd is because lost people have never seen the light of Jesus Christ in their life. Understand, lost or saved, Jesus Christ never changes, no matter what we think.

The Early Christians did not dim their light to match the time. They stood strong on the Word of God. If you read your Bible and early church history you will see that the Romans would kill Christians and impale them (pierce them with a stake or pole) and line the streets of Rome with their dead bodies, using them as human torches to light the way. Even by their death for their belief in Christ, they give off light to the dark world. Christians, we are a city that is set on a hill, we are not to be hidden in a dungeon. It is not time for Christians to get use to the darkness but it's time to shine our lights. Christians we are not here to communion with darkness but to conquer it. Christians, we are not to compromise our faith but stand up for our belief and shine for Jesus Christ. Christians, let's get our candles out from under our bushels that hid them and take off our shades of compromise and Shine, Shine, Shine, for Jesus Christ while we can. Vance Havner said: We are creeping around in the dark when we need to be flooding the world with light.

Words of Wisdom

- Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. N/A
- Hope is being able to see that there is light despite all of the darkness. N/A
- In order for the light to shine so brightly, the darkness must be present. N/A

Good Advice:

- When we start kneeling down things start looking up.
- Your friends are like buttons on an elevator. They can take you either up or down.

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

And thou shalt observe the feast of weeks, of the firstfruits of wheat harvest, and the feast of ingathering at the year's end. Exodus 34:22

Clint's Chronicles on the Funny Farm

The Rest of The Story Doug Harrell

I have to laugh as I remember the evening Clint is talking about. One of the pleasures of working with Clint was his innocence and gullibility. I was as tired in the evenings as he was, well maybe not quite, but it was always fun to joke around with him. I enjoyed the Gaither hour as much as he and Barbara, but it was always good for a response when I would egg them on about getting more work done. Oh, to be able to sit back down with Clint in the living room and enjoy another hour of good gospel music and conversation!

Sunset at Harrell Hill

Dear Friends,

I receive letters, email, phone calls and personal visits from many, thanking me for recounting my close encounters and near-death experiences at Harrell Hill Farms. I confess that I often wonder how it is that Christian brothers and sisters can derive such perverse pleasure from Farmer Clint's near misses with eternity ☹. You may be surprised to learn that such occurrences are commonplace throughout my lifetime, even pre-farming days. For example, one day I will recount for you how I was run over by an outboard motor after falling into one of Alaska's most frigid and dangerous rivers. Or perhaps you'd like to hear about the night I was attacked by a moose? But not now, let's stay closer to home for the time being.

One summer's eve, Doug, Barbara and I were resting in the kitchen at their farmhouse at Harrell Hill. I was celebrating the fact that we actually had a short work day, by Doug standards anyway, a mere 12 hours. As we visited around the dinner table Doug surmised that he had "been thinking...", always a scary scenario. Usually this meant we would soon embark on a wild and crazy venture of some sort and I would go along kicking and screaming, my body and life hanging in the balance.

As Barbara and I digested her fine home cookin', Doug offered me a second piece of Hawaiian Sunset cake...a sure sign of impending doom for me! This dessert, a Barbara specialty, had become my overwhelming favorite. And I knew that if Doug offered me a second slice something terrible was about to happen to me. He began, "You know, there is so much to do around here and it seems there are too few hours in the day". (I was feeling more confident than usual as I knew Doug could do a lot of things but even he couldn't MAKE more time happen!) "So," I queried, "how do you propose that we get more done? Perhaps I could wear a miner's hat, with the lights on top, and work all night long. Just think, Doug, I can dig, plant, weed-eat, spread fertilizer, during the day; then crawl around on my hands and knees and dig potatoes, pull corn and other veggies at night. I could take a 5-minute nap at the end of each corn row...or maybe rest beside the green lake beans...or perhaps snooze, ever so briefly, in the sorghum patch. By sunrise I would already have chosen the over-ripened cabbage and tomatoes for the piggies' breakfast. That way you can work me around the clock. Would that make you happy?"

Shaking his head and closing his eyes, the way Doug does when he really would like to shoot me, my friend replied, "You know, Pollard, you just don't have vision. You're a great worker and willing to do just about anything, but you need to look beyond the walls." Uh oh, here it comes! "We're usually finished dinner by 7:30 or so, and then we watch The Gaither Homecoming shows on TV, or sometimes we eat watermelon on dad's front porch. I'm thinking we should make good use of that hour, after dinner, to do more chores. Just think, an hour a day six days a week, it would be like having another day."

Believe me, friends, I enjoy hard work. Although inexperienced, I had grown to love farm chores as each day is filled with exciting, back-breaking, dangerous projects. I even became accustomed to getting out of bed at 4:30 AM to Doug's bellowing from the foot of the stairs, "Pollard, pancakes are ready. We're burning daylight!" I would spring from my bed, don my Farmer Clint attire, and descend for buckwheat cakes and another harrowing adventure on the farm. And, always, I would note my friend's Bible, open to his daily devotions, resting on the end table. I accepted the notion of being mired in dirt by 5:30 AM because that's what farmers do. Prayer, pancakes and projects...can it get any better than this? But now, NOW this obsessed Farmer Doug, the Paul Bunyan of Harrell Hill, wants to take away the ONE HOUR I have each day to do nothing. I think not!

When you are a guest in one's home, as I was at Harrell Hill farmhouse, it is important to study and discern the "power structure", i.e., who is in charge. Well, having been Doug's indentured servant for several months I'd discovered that Barbara is the boss of him when we're inside that house. It only made sense, therefore, that whenever Doug proffered one of his cockamamie schemes I would take a step back, hide behind Barbara, and see how the early skirmish would end. (Notice that I did not say, "...see who would win the early skirmish!")

Now Barbara is a very loving, dutiful, hard-working partner to Douglas. But there are some things she will not compromise. I've witnessed her drop everything she's doing to help her husband at a mere call. But hear me now, YOU DO NOT MESS AROUND WITH GAITHER HOMECOMING! As I cowered in the



background, speechless and flabbergasted by Doug's "suggestion", I watched the lady of the house raise her head...look up at her husband (WAY up 'cause he's about 9' tall), and those tiny little eyes shot terrifying laser beams right into his skull. And the BIG man quivered, and his knees knocked and buckled...and he collapsed like an umbrella in a hurricane! And I knew, GAME OVER!

The three of us chuckled at this fiery exchange, and I wondered if Doug knew just how close he came to being annihilated (he of course did). I reminded Doug that God stopped the sun once, Joshua 10:12-14:

12 On the day the LORD gave the Amorites over to Israel, Joshua said to the LORD in the presence of Israel:

"Sun, stand still over Gibeon, and you, moon, over the Valley of Aijalon."

13 So the sun stood still, and the moon stopped, till the nation avenged itself on [a] its enemies, as it is written in the Book of Jashar.

The sun stopped in the middle of the sky and delayed going down about a full day. 14 There has never been a day like it before or since, a day when the LORD listened to a human being.

Happy to be chiding him, I said, "Note verse 14...I'm pretty sure the Lord won't stop the sun for you!"

Barbara departed to her bedroom to watch Gaither Homecoming. I looked at my friend, with that "gotcha" grin and said, "Think I'll go down to Daddy D's and have a little watermelon, wanna go? I love eating watermelon in the daylight." Doug shook his head, closed his eyes, "Pollard, one of these days..." Yeah, I know...but I'd won this battle on the Funny Farm (or at least got to enjoy the spoils)...no extra work day for me. And that doggone watermelon was so good. Praise the Lord!

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Moses

By Edward Couser
Yancey County



Greetings Friends,

Recently, I read an article about a mom's experience backing out of her driveway. Her three kids were sitting in the back seat, when suddenly her four-year-old cried out, "stop!" Mom stopped suddenly, and inquired, "What's wrong honey?" Her four-year-old said, "You almost ran over Boopsie!" Boopsie was her four-year old's invisible friend.

Several weeks ago, on my weekly radio program in Burnsville, I started a new preaching series on Hebrews. The other day, I was reading Hebrews 11: 23 - 27. In verse 27, it mentioned that he (Moses) endured as seeing Him who is invisible. How did Moses see the invisible? To me, Moses had his first lesson seeing the invisible at a very early age. Remember Pharaoh had issued a decree that all the male babies born to the Hebrews should be killed. His parents made the decision to hide him. Moses' mom modeled faith. (Read Hebrews 11: 23). She prayed and trusted God to take care of her son. What happened next? Pharaoh's daughter found baby Moses. His sister Miriam stayed close to her baby brother. Miriam said to Pharaoh's daughter, "Shall I go and call to thee a nurse for the child for you?" Jochebed's faith had been rewarded. As she cared for her son, she faithfully used this opportunity to educate Moses about God. She taught him to bow down and pray to the living God, who would hear and help him. She must have told, and retold the story about how God had preserved his life during Pharaoh's decree. When Moses left to become Pharaoh's daughter's son, he did not lose the impressions received during childhood.



Moses' life as Pharaoh's daughter's son had been crammed with the visible. He grew up with pomp and circumstance. All this changed when he had to flee to Midian. Suddenly his life changed, from the palace in Egypt to the wilderness of Midian. Yet, in the wilderness, through the school of self-denial and hardship, he learned patience, and learned to be trained to obey God. In some way, we may be walking through the wilderness today. It may seem that everything we value is falling apart. Yet in spite of our circumstances, the Rock of Ages stands. It may take the visible clutter in our lives to fall away before it becomes easier for us to see the invisible. Seeing the invisible - can be a challenge. But through our eyes of faith, (read Hebrews 11:1), we see Him confident as we learn to trust in Him. As believers, we have been called to walk by faith, not by sight. The Bible says, "the just shall live by faith." (Read Habakkuk 2:4; Romans 1:17; 2 Corinthians 4:18). We are to call upon Jesus by faith. (See Jeremiah 33:3). Jesus hears our prayers, and invites us to look to Him by faith, to answer our prayers according to His will. Our God is mighty and powerful! Who can ever forget Moses' ultimate experience seeing the invisible? In the wilderness, he saw a burning bush, but it was not consumed. When Moses came into the presence of God, God said to him, "Take off your shoes, for the place you are standing is holy ground!" Augustine once said, that we were created with a hole in our heart. Unfortunately, we often try to fill this hole with other things. We may choose to turn to substitutes, when it is really God we hunger to see and experience. Jesus is mighty, powerful, and holy. He is big enough for every moment in our lives, the good and not so good. What was the result for Moses? He endured! In the solemn mountains of Midian, he was reminded of the power and presence of God. In nature, Moses just seemed to be standing in His presence.

What is the result of seeing the invisible? Like Moses, God will give us the strength and grace to endure. I believe what I need to possess is unwavering loving obedience, unwavering loving dedication, and unwavering loving commitment. What about you?

Where do we find true hope, peace, encouragement, strength, purpose, and promise? How can we endure as we live now and wait for the second coming of Jesus? To me there is only one way - we can endure, "as seeing Him who is invisible."

God Bless You.

Ed Couser is the pastor for the Burnsville and Erwin Hills Seventh-day Adventist Churches. Previously he served churches in Ontario (Canada), New York, Kentucky and North Carolina. He also is a retired Chaplain, Lieutenant Colonel, having spent 28 years in the US Air Force. Pastor Couser, and his wife of 25 years, Carol have three daughters, Melissa (23), Kaylee (21), Megan (21), and a son Drew (19). He enjoys sharing the love of Jesus and encouraging others to prepare for His soon return.



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Hospice and Palliative Care of the Blue Ridge

It Looks Like a Weed to Me

By Brent Price, Outreach Programs Coordinator
Mitchell County

My wife and I were working in our flower garden getting ready to mulch and set out new plants. I stepped into a portion of one bed to thin some tiny flowers that had re-seeded from the previous year. Carefully I began to pull the tiniest plants from the ground leaving behind the largest and healthiest plants. From another portion of the garden, Tammy asked what I was doing. I explained that I was thinning flowers that had "volunteered" from last year. She watched as I painstakingly pulled one small plant after another leaving space between the largest ones. Finally, she exclaimed, "Well they all look like weeds to me!" I looked up at her standing with her hands on her hips and we began to laugh. I said, "Trust me. They're flowers; wait and see."

If my wife had started her work in that particular section of the garden I don't guess there would be a single flower left to bloom later this summer. All those "weeds" would have ended up on the compost pile.

Pulling weeds in general is not rocket science. Weeds are easily identified. If a plant of some sort or another doesn't belong in a particular place or you simply don't want it growing in a certain area, then you pull it. It's easy to see how one person's weed could easily be another's flower.

It occurs to me that our lives are not so different from working in the flowers. Moment to moment we're faced with decisions. Accept this, reject that. Go or to stay, embrace or pull away.

While we generally take time to think over the important decisions, most of our day-to-day choices are made with a minimal amount of reflection. The pace of life demands that we make decisions quickly and move on. We don't always have adequate information. It's easy to be careless. Have you ever gotten in a hurry or not been paying attention only to realize that you've pulled up a flower instead of a weed?

Even what appears to be an insignificant choice can possess the power to change our lives in profound ways. Sometimes it is the simplest choice that can make all the difference. Stop and listen to the stranger who needs someone to hear their story. Offer appreciation to someone who's working in a thankless job, but obviously cares about the quality of their work. Invite someone to dinner who is lonely. Push aside your fear and judgment and reach to someone who needs a second chance. Or— you can simply pull the weeds.

More times than not, I happen to see more flowers than weeds. God provides the seasons each of us requires to grow and become so I try to be careful. Flower or weed?

Reverend Brent Price is a chaplain at Hospice & Palliative Care of the Blue Ridge.



Grace Community Church

God Makes No Junk

By Jerry Lewis
McDowell County



The events of the past week cannot go unnoticed. Demonstrations. Protests. Hatred. Bigotry. Confusion. Murder. Statues toppled.

Beneath the fallen statues, the bantering of the media, and the seemingly endless analysis of political pundits lies an unalterable truth: life matters. The framers of the Declaration of Independence thought so:

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.

So does God:

For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother's womb. I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well. (Psalm 139:13-14, ESV)

One only has to travel back a few decades in world history to discover a regime that idolized blonde hair and blue eyes and killed six million Jews. Jews weren't the only ones who lost their lives:

- 7 million Soviets died.
- 3 million Soviet prisoners of war died.
- 1.8 million Polish Civilians died.
- 220,000 Gypsies, 1900 Jehovah's Witnesses, and 70,000 asocials died
- 250,000 disabled people were killed...for being disabled

Black people matter. White people matter. All people matter. I'm afraid we've lost sight of this. This week CBS ran the story about Iceland's eradication of babies with Down Syndrome.

Since prenatal screening tests were introduced in Iceland in the early 2000s, the vast majority of women — close to 100 percent — who received a positive test for Down syndrome terminated their pregnancy.

Other countries aren't lagging too far behind in Down syndrome termination rates. According to the most recent data available, the United States has an estimated termination rate for Down syndrome of 67 percent (1995-2011); in France it's 77 percent (2015); and Denmark, 98 percent (2015). The law in Iceland permits abortion after 16 weeks if the fetus has a deformity — and Down syndrome is included in this category.

The common ground between white supremacists and Iceland's law is eerie—life only matters if "I" think it matters.

In 2015, 908,000 babies were aborted.

Abortion advocates, white supremacists and Iceland's "deformity" law advocates find themselves on the same shaky ground: "we" should determine when life matters.

Yet Scripture is clear: life matters for blacks, whites, latinos, unborn babies, down syndrome babies, people with Alzheimer's and dementia, because God created them, and therefore loves them.

Though marred by sin, we are all created in his image.

Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." (Genesis 1:26, ESV)

God makes no junk.

And after he created them, when they had blown it, he sent his Son Jesus to die for them.

And Jesus didn't die for junk.

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

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Morganton Baptist Church

Where Are the Monuments?

By Pastor Dan Quorillo
Burke County



Recently, I heard a well-known speaker address the matter of journaling. Admittedly, I struggled with taking the time to hear what he had to say; yet I must say I was truly challenged after reflecting on what he had to say. As I listened, I began to ponder this question: where are our monuments?

Across this great nation of ours, various monuments and memorials have been established. In the Black Hills of South Dakota lies Mt. Rushmore, a sixty-foot high granite sculpture depicting the Presidential faces of George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Theodore Roosevelt, and Abraham Lincoln. All throughout Washington, D.C., a person can find various monuments and memorials. Many of the national buildings have Scripture permanently engraved on them, reminding us of the Biblical heritage that our country has. Various national leaders have recognized that our heritage could quickly be forgotten if we do not intentionally establish memorials as visible reminders.

A quick trip to the grocery store for just a few items will remind us all how quickly we are prone to forget! Tragically, we are equally prone to forgetting the things which God has done for us. Moses cautioned the Israelites when they were about to enter the prosperous land which God promised, "Then beware lest thou forget the LORD" (Deut. 6:9). Prosperity often results in our forgetting God. The Israelites were to annually observe the Passover as a memorial of God's deliverance (Ex. 12:14). They set up a memorial of twelve stones to commemorate the crossing of the Jordan (Josh. 4:7). The Lord's Supper is done in remembrance of Christ's work on the cross (1 Cor. 11:25).

How will you remember the answers to prayer you have experienced? What are the things we will point our family to that commemorate God's work? How are others directed to remember what God has done? We dare not rely upon our memory. Where are the visible monuments in your life?

Pastor Dan Quorillo is pastor Morganton Baptist Church. Check us out on our website www.morgantonbaptist.net or find us on Facebook and YouTube.



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The Bridge Church

The Apostle Paul of Vietnam

By Pastor Tom Anglin
Mitchell County

I am so thrilled to welcome you to special services Sunday September 3rd at 10:30a and 6:00p!
Paul Ai is often referred to as "The Apostle Paul of Vietnam" Former Buddhist monk and witch-doctor converted to a firebrand for Christ! He wishes to especially invite Vietnam Veterans to attend. He will honor them and give them gifts during the morning service! He will give explanation why he honors Vietnam Vets everywhere he goes! You don't want to miss a minute of these two life changing services! Please help us spread the invitation to everyone!



ABOUT DR. PAUL AI

-- From Buddha to the Bible --

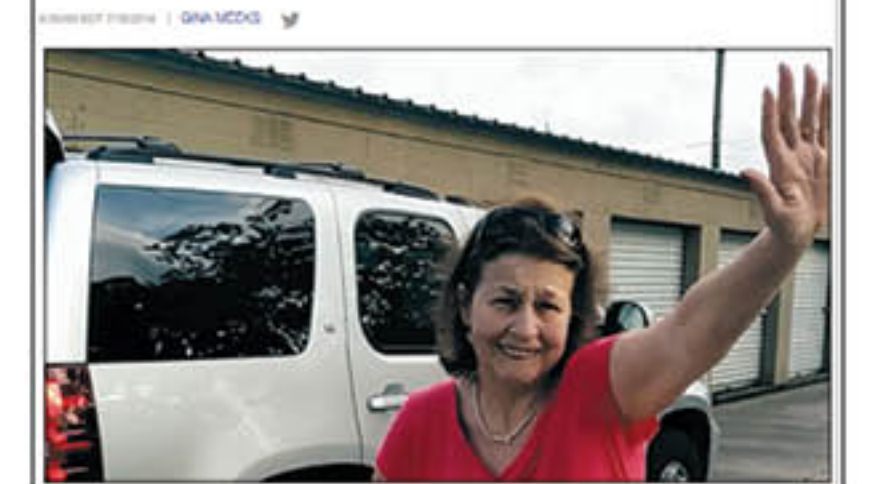
Rev. Dr. Paul Ai was born into a strong Buddhist family in central Vietnam. At a very young age, he was sent to pagoda (Buddhist school) to be a Buddhist monk. As he grew up, he realized there was no hope and no power in the doctrines of Buddhism, so he decided to study black magic and became a witch doctor. He served 3,366 gods, but became disappointed in the devil's power when a Christian festival came to his town in 1970. Paul was determined to stop the Christian meetings with the power of his gods, but they were no match for the God of the missionaries, and Paul gave his life to the Lord. When he made his decision to follow Jesus, he was disowned by his family, relatives, and friends. He persevered, however, and went to Bible college to learn the Word of God. Just before the fall of Saigon in 1975, Paul became the first General Superintendent of the Assemblies of God in Vietnam.

Only a week after the Communists took over Saigon, Paul was put in prison for being a pastor. Over the next 25 years, he served a total of 10½ years in prison, forced labor camps and re-education camps for preaching the Gospel and starting churches. Even in prison, Paul continued to share the Gospel and his testimony, and many people accepted Jesus as their personal Lord and Savior. When they were released from the prison camps to return to their villages, these Christians shared their testimonies, people accepted Jesus as their Lord and Savior, and new churches were started. The prison camps were the start of many churches in North Vietnam, which of course was not the outcome that the Communists had hoped for or had expected!

During the 25 years that Paul was in and out of prison, he met his wife, Ruth, and they had four beautiful daughters. A curse had been put on Paul after he became a Christian that he would never have a son. His fifth child, a son, showed Paul's family that God's power is stronger than the curse of the devil. As a result, over 300 of Paul's relatives came to know the Lord.



Woman Walks After Four Years Confined to Wheelchair



Charisma Magazine article

For four years, Marie Cribbs' life was filled with pain. Wheelchair-bound as a result of complications from diabetes, two bouts of breast cancer and psoriatic arthritis, she couldn't lift her arms or legs and dealt with extreme pain every day. "She had chemotherapy and whenever the chemo left her system, her arthritis came back in a fury and left every one of her joints inflamed," explains her husband, Bill, who served as her caregiver during this time. "It made it very hard for her to move, and, because of that, her whole body degenerated, and it was impossible for her to walk."

That all changed in May when Marie, who had been unable to attend church regularly due to her condition, made a decision to go to a service at Magnolia Church in Port Neches, Texas, where Paul Ai was speaking.

"I'm going to go," she told Bill. "I feel like something is going to happen."

Ai, founder of Vision Outreach International, is known as "the Apostle Paul of Vietnam." A former witch doctor, he came to Christ during the Vietnam War and spent 10 years in communist prisons for his faith. He now plants churches in South Asia from a base in Cambodia.

After a two-hour message on prayer, Ai called up anyone who needed prayer

and healing. When Bill rolled Marie past Ai and his wife, Ruth, Marie felt "an intense burning" in her back. The couple then began to pray over her.

"Pastor Paul commanded all my cells and my legs to align with the Holy Spirit," Marie recalls. "Then Ruth extended her hand to me," beckoning her to stand up.

"Immediately, I stood up and started walking!" she says.

The Cribbs' daughter, Lolly, says her mother is "back to walking and jumping and running as if she was a teenager."

"Now, by the grace of God, I am healed. I will be a walking witness the rest of my life," Marie says.

Bill says he's noticed other changes in his wife as well. "She used to wake up in the morning with pain in her face and her brow furrowed. Every night she's had a visitation by the Holy Spirit in her sleep. She wakes up, and her face is glowing."

—Gina Meeks

If we will work on our walk, our walk will work wonders in our world. See 1 John 2:6 <http://tbcwnc.org/>

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

Thou hast multiplied the nation, and not increased the joy: they joy before thee according to the joy in harvest, and as men rejoice when they divide the spoil.
Isaiah 9:3

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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

Why Don't We Do Family Discipleship Anymore (part 2)

By Jason Koon
Burke County

This is part two of a series examining the importance of family Discipleship, exploring some of the reasons that many seem to avoid this, and overcoming some of the obstacles to training our kids to live well as Disciples of Jesus.

Objection #2: We Don't Have Time

Again, short answer: Yes, You Do!!! The key here is intentionality rather than addition. When I say we need to train our children up in the faith most of us have the idea that I'm saying we need to add more activity into an already busy day, but that may not be the case. Do you eat dinner? Do you do homework? Get up in the morning? Do bath time? Attach it to one of those things.

I remember several nights when my children were young, reading a bible story to them while they were in the bathtub. Maybe before dinner time, you sit down, say the blessing and take five minutes to read a few verses of Scripture together. Maybe you plug it into homework time; after math and reading are done, we have a few verses of Scripture we need to go over and a couple of questions we need to answer together. There are tons of ways to make Discipleship apart of your daily life without adding more activity into an already packed day. Maybe you need to go to bed 10 minutes later or get up ten minutes earlier. We don't have a problem doing this if we have sports practice, or if homework didn't get finished the night before.

I'm going to resort to guilt tripping here – which I rarely do – but I'll make an exception on this one. Is Jesus as important to you as sports or good grades? If you're not willing to carve out five minutes in your day for Jesus and you are willing to do that for these other things. He's not, plain and simple.

Objection #3: I Don't Know Enough About the Bible

For some of us, this is probably the most legitimate objection. It can be intimidating to be responsible for the Biblical Education of another person, when many of us feel weak in our own knowledge of the Scriptures. Fortunately, we live in the information age, and there is no reason that says that you and your children can't learn together. It just might take spending a few dollars on some good Gospel-centered resources.

Get a good study bible to help with understanding more difficult passages of Scripture as well as the overarching message of God to humanity. My favorite is the ESV Study Bible, but the Christian Standard Bible and the Life Application Study bibles are good choices as well. There are bible dictionaries that contain a wealth of resource on just about every biblical topic you can imagine, and probably a few you've never dreamed of. And there are tons of good books out there



for kids and adults that can help you as you grow together in your knowledge of the Scriptures. Whatever the reason, whatever the obstacle, the most important thing is that we are committed to the importance of raising our children to know and follow Jesus.

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

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Plumtree Presbyterian Church

God Still Heals!

By Pastor Ryan Bridgeo,
Avery County

"Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, [and] cast out devils." (Matt. 10:8)

This summer, Global Awakening, a ministry located in Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania, organized 150 young people from all over the world for a thirteen-day healing and prayer outreach, in Campinas, Brazil. I was blessed, as the pastor at Plumtree Presbyterian Church, to go on the trip with my wife, Holly, our three sons, Jordan, Taylor and Micah as well as five other young people, Jesse Jones, Jillian Young, Mackenzie Condrey, Anna Gragg and Aaron Tomblin.

In the first phase of the trip, we began each morning with worship, as well as teaching sessions on outreach, healing, and prayer. In the evenings, we would put our training into action. Global Awakening's leaders, Randy Clark, Tom Jones, Blaine Cook and Kim Maas would speak in the evening services and WE were the intercession and ministry team. Can you picture it? HUGE church services, filled with hungry people ready to receive all the Lord had for them, salvation, physical and emotional healing? Plus, 150 young people activated to do the ministry time? It was amazing!

Each service was powerful and had huge responses to our invitation for salvation. After the salvation call, there was time for healing prayer. It was our time to step into activation. We made a line across the front of the church and stood with our Brazilian translators (Brazilian youth who went through the same training with us) and waited to see who God brought our way. The prayer lines stayed full as people, often not able to pay for doctor's care, came for a desperate



Jordan, Holly, Jesse, Mackenzie, Aaron, Anna, Ryan, Taylor, Micah, Jillian

touch from the Lord.

Holly prayed for a lady who came forward in response to a word of knowledge given for a "crushed right ankle". She had broken her right ankle five years prior and had a platinum plate and multiple screws placed in her ankle. She was in constant pain even after the surgery. God touched her that night, and restored full mobility to her ankle and took away ALL pain! Praise Jesus!

Aaron prayed for a lady who had been burned in a food industry accident. She had bad scarring on her face and hand, big white blotches on her beautiful brown skin. Aaron tuned his ear to heaven, and prayed what the Lord put in his heart. As he was praying, the lady began rubbing her face where she had scarring. Aaron asked her, through a translator, what was happening and why she was rubbing her face. She told him that she was having a tingling sensation and felt new skin growing! We rejoiced in what the Lord was doing. The next evening, she returned to the church to report the continued work of the Lord. She looked completely different. Her scarring was almost completely gone! Where the skin had been stark white, it was brown, almost a perfect match. It felt soft and fresh, like baby skin. We could hardly believe our eyes!

During the second phase of the trip, the 150 were divided into 15 ministry teams. We were sent out into the smaller churches in the community, to be fully activated to do every aspect of the ministry, even the preaching and teaching. It was wonderful to see young people stepping into these roles. During the day we walked the neighborhoods and visited homes to pray for the sick. In the afternoons there was teaching and in the evenings, preaching and ministry time, all conducted by the young people! It was beautiful. God continued to show Himself mighty on the behalf of those giving and receiving ministry. Many hearts were touched and many bodies restored. Praise His Name!

On one of our evangelistic outreaches, our small group was invited into a local home in response to our invitation for prayer. The very small house was home to 11 people, with four generations of family represented. We began by praying for the great grandma, who had three health ailments, she had chronic neck pain, shortness of breath from years of smoking and dizziness when she walked. God healed all three health issues! This opened up their hearts to receive the Gospel of the true, living God. They ALL prayed to accept Jesus as their Lord and Savior! Hallelujah!

The Great Commission was coming to life right in our midst! There were many other healing testimonies from our 'Plumtree Group', almost too many to remember by the end of each night. Total, with the entire Global Awakening group, there were 189 salvations, 38 rededications and 3,535 accounts of God's healing touch during our time in Brazil!

Since being home in NC, we have stayed in activation mode, not wanting this fire to die out. We continue to pray for the sick. We have seen God do miracles right here in our own home church and even at places like Wal-Mart. God is amazing and we give Him all the glory! We are excited to see what God wants to do here in Avery, Mitchell and surrounding counties.

I want to personally invite anyone who needs a physical or emotional touch from the Lord to come out to our monthly healing meetings at Plumtree Presbyterian Church. The healing services are on the 2nd Sunday of each month at 6:30 pm. Our next meeting is Sunday, September 10th. Come join us in expectation that God is the same yesterday, today and forever, in Brazil and in the USA. He wants to heal His people.

Plumtree Presbyterian Church is located in Avery County at 4527 Highway 19E in Plumtree, NC. Ryan and Holly Bridgeo can be reached at 828-765-6919. For more information you can visit the church website at www.plumtreechurch.com or email pastor@plumtreechurch.com.



Ryan praying for a man during an evening service.



Micah, on the right, praying for a man on an evangelistic outreach.



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Ryan Bridgeo can be reached at 828-765-6919. For more information you can visit the church website at www.plumtreechurch.com or email pastor@plumtreechurch.com

Burke United Christian Ministries

New Location for Thrift Store

By David Burleson
Burke County

Many exciting opportunities are occurring at Burke United Christian Ministries (BUCM). Daily, we have the opportunity to provide food, clothes and assistance to many in our community who need just a little extra help. It is a blessing to show Christ's love to others as we help meet their needs.

One of the most exciting opportunities is the opening of our NEW clothing store. Our clothing store has been relocated to the opposite site of the Burke Mission Station where the Thrift Store was located. We are now able to expand not only our space but also our offerings for our shoppers. The previous clothing store has become the BUCM Clothing Closet specifically for our clients and the homeless.

The Grand Opening for the new clothing store was on Saturday, August 12 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. The dedication ceremony was a huge success. A big thank you to my Pleasant Ridge Church family and others for sharing songs, comments and prayers throughout the dedication ceremony. The following made the day very special: Dr. Kevin Frederick – Board Chair, Mrs. Rhonda Lee – Board Vice-Chair, Dr. Jim Smith, Keith Burkhart, Mr. Greg Riddle, Ms. La'rel Worman, Mrs. Julie Phillips, Ms. Brittany Davis, Ms. Willette McIntosh, Mrs. Tonya Jaynes and Mrs. Labeth Smith.

The move to the new store would not have been possible without the help of our dedicated staff and volunteers. A very special thanks must go out to our Clothing Store Manager, Diane Bradshaw and her husband, Billy without whose determination, hard work, vision and long hours we could not have been ready to open at this time. BUCM is also eternally grateful to David, Tonya and Callie Jaynes for their countless hours of dedicated service and financial support. Our clothing store assistant, Dot Beam and her husband DA also gave countless hours of time to our move along with our volunteers Libby Cook, Linda and Terry Piercy, Caroleen Coffee, Brittany Davis, Delores McNeely, and the Gibbs Chapel Youth. Appreciation goes to our good friends, Thomas and Steven. Ambrose McNeely Fencing has also assisted with our fencing project. A big thank you must also go to the BUCM Board of Directors, Burke Charitable Properties and Mr. Dale Barrier for supporting the expansion of the ministry of BUCM. We are most thankful for God's guidance and provision. As God always does, He came through right on time with many extra volunteers through the World Changers that gave over 360 hours of service to BUCM. Thanks Pastor Mike Chandler and Dwight Winters for letting God use you to make this extra volunteer effort happen.

We are very proud of the progress we have made at BUCM and appreciative of the support we receive from our sustaining churches, donors and volunteers. Our ministry could not occur without these wonderful groups.

With these new opportunities at BUCM, we need each of you even more. Please consider being part of our BUCM ministry in one or more of the following ways:

- Make BUCM Part of Your Annual Budget
- Be a Food Harvester
- Work in the Soup Kitchen
- Assist in the Food Pantry
- Donate Gently Used Items for the Saved for You Clothing Store
- Volunteer in the Clothing Store or our Clothing Closet
- Donate Children's Shoes or New Underwear
- Donate Food for the Food Pantry or Soup Kitchen
- Volunteer in the Office Area (Typing, Folding Newsletters, Answering Phones)
- Read with or Tutor a Child After School
- Eat Lunch with a Client
- Work in the Firewood Ministry
- Transport Clients or Potential Clients to BUCM
- Place a Collection Barrel at your Church or Business
- Be Part of our Ministry of Presence (Just come have lunch with a client who needs someone to talk with, pour a glass of water or just shake someone's hand.)

As summer progresses and children are home, the need for food for the BUCM Food Pantry increases. Our pantry is in continual need of non-perishable items. Some of our high need items are:

Canned Meat, Macaroni and Cheese, Peanut Butter, Chicken Noodle Soup, Pasta, Pinto Beans, Canned Fruit, Cereal, Jelly

In the world in which we live, it takes our entire community to meet the needs of our neighbors. Each of you are a vital part of our community and it is essential we work together to meet the needs of all our citizens who are in need. Please know that there are many ways we can partner together to assist others.

Please know that we are very willing to come and tell the BUCM story at any church or organization. Just let us know a good time to do this.

Please remember to keep BUCM and me in your thoughts and prayers. There are many difficult decisions we are called on to make and through prayer we can continue to make the appropriate decisions for our ministry. Thank you again for making BUCM a wonderful, caring place for others.

David Burleson is Director of Burke United Christian Ministries



34th Annual

MOUNTAIN GLORY FESTIVAL



Oct 14, 2017 - 9:30am - 6:00pm
Where Main Street Meets The Mountains
• Marion, North Carolina



Marion, North Carolina celebrates the arrival of autumn in the Blue Ridge during their annual Mountain Glory Festival. For 34 years, beautiful downtown Marion has hosted this popular celebration on the 2nd Saturday in October. This year, make plans to visit on October 14th between 9:30 AM - 6:00 PM.

Celebrate small-town life in the mountains. Visitors looking for original handicrafts will find plenty of choices shopping with three jam packed blocks, featuring locally made arts and crafts. Enjoy lots of festival foods and the wide variety of live entertainment, focusing on traditional Bluegrass and old time mountain music.

Don't miss the annual Mountain Glory Quilt Show inside the McDowell Arts Council. The quilt show is the gallery's featured, October exhibit. The kids will have fun in the "Children's Arena" with hands-on activities, the Monkey Bridge and a best-dressed pet contest.

To find additional area events, attractions and lodging information, visit www.blueridgetravellers.com or call toll free (888-233-6111) to receive a free visitor guide and map. The festival is sponsored by the City of Marion. For festival information visit: www.mtngloryfestival.com or call 828-652-2215.

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Dive In!
By Pastor Kurt Bomar
Avery County

We've all done it. We've waded into a chilly pool or stream on a hot day in anticipation of refreshment. But then our toes hit the cold water and we think, "do I really want to do this?" Little by little we continue to question our total commitment as we slowly wade in (all the while looking over our shoulder to make sure someone doesn't splash us or push us in.). Finally, we realize the torture of the slow approach is too much to bare and we make the full plunge. Then we think, "why didn't I do that from the beginning, this feels great!"

There's a story in the Bible that reminds me of this summertime ritual in Ezekiel 47. There Ezekiel is led to the waters flowing from the Temple. First, he stepped in up to his ankles, then downstream a bit he steps in up to his knees, further down he goes in up to his waist and finally the water is over his head.

Don't miss the picture here. The Spirit of the Lord is always inviting us to step into the waters (water in Scripture almost always is a picture of the Holy Spirit).

Some of us will wade in up to our ankles and be content to stay there. That is, we are standing in Christ and believing in him.

Others choose to go deeper, up to our knees. Our knees being a picture of prayer, we fall on them and pray for others.



Others go deeper yet, up to their waist. Our waist being a picture of the reproductive part of our body, these people share their faith and reproduce other Christians by actively witnessing to a lost world.

And finally, others just take the plunge allowing the Lord to have His will over their lives, totally surrendering to Him day by day and

hour by hour.

Each level of commitment brings with it a level of refreshment, but as we have all learned at the pool, the greatest refreshment comes when we make a total commitment.

Where are you in your level of commitment? Are you a solid believer, not being tossed to and fro in your faith? Do you have a daily pattern of prayer for others? Is it a priority for you to share your faith? Have you placed the Lord on the throne of your life giving Him free reign to rule over your every decision?

Here's the special part. Jesus invites us to go all out for Him and He promises a level of refreshment that can only be maximized by taking the full plunge. But at the same time, He is the perfect gentleman, He will invite, but He will not force. It's up to us.

My suggestion? Dive in, take the plunge!

Selah (think about it)

Kurt Bomar is pastor of Walnut Grove Church.

Lees-McRae President to Retire in May 2018
By Nina Mastandrea
Avery County



Banner Elk, N.C. — Lees-McRae President Barry M. Buxton announced that he will retire in May 2018 and that a search for his replacement has begun. Buxton has served as the president of Lees-McRae since June 1, 2010 and is the 15th president in the 116-year-history of the institution.

In announcing his retirement, Buxton expressed gratitude to Lees-McRae students, faculty, staff and the Board of Trustees. "I am humbled by my years at this sacred place, but the people of Lees-McRae have left me truly grateful and blessed," he said.

Throughout his tenure, the college experienced enrollment growth, balanced operating budgets, expansion of curricular offerings, and saw its regional accreditation reaffirmed by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. Under Buxton's leadership, the college broadened its educational reach with the addition of online programs that grew from 49 students to almost 300 students in four years.



The historic campus witnessed a physical transformation with construction of 30,000 square feet of additional student space, including the May School of Nursing and Health Sciences, the May Wildlife Rehabilitation Center and the Lauritsen Technical Theatre and Design Studio. Buxton also oversaw the renovation and modernization of the intellectual center of campus – the college library – in to the Dotti M. Shelton Learning Commons.

During Buxton's eight and half years as president, Lees-McRae completed \$7.5 million in additional physical improvements. Over the same period, the college net assets grew by 58 percent and institutional debt was reduced by 38 percent. Buxton returned the campus to its residential roots with more than 90 percent of Banner Elk students living in college facilities. He also established Lees-McRae as one of the nation's only pet-friendly campuses and led the effort to be designated a Bicycle-Friendly University.

Buxton currently serves as president of the NCAA Division II athletics conference, Conference Carolinas, as well as on the executive committee of the North Carolina Independent Colleges and Universities.

A. Hope Williams, president of NCICU, summed up his service to Lees-McRae and the state saying, "Dr. Buxton cares deeply about students and their success, about the college and about all of higher education. His warmth, sincerity, energy, and creativity will be missed by the college community and by all his colleagues in higher education in North Carolina."

In a diverse career spanning 35 years, he has been a teacher, researcher, publisher, editor and community leader. In 2016, Buxton received the prestigious Order of the Long Leaf Pine from former North Carolina Gov. Pat McCrory. The award is one of the highest civilian-focused honors the governor of North Carolina can bestow.

Prior to Lees-McRae, Buxton served as Vice President for Special Projects at the Savannah College of Art and Design, where he was responsible for major gift solicitation, leadership development and foundation relations.

A native of Blowing Rock, North Carolina, Buxton has a long history of involvement with non-profit organizations in Appalachia. During the 1980s, he served as Executive Director of the 16-member Appalachian Consortium. Buxton holds two degrees from Appalachian State University, where he received his teacher certification and was an E.F. Lovill Fellow, and a Ph.D. from the University of Nebraska.

"I am so proud of all we have accomplished together, and know there is more to achieve," Buxton said. "I look forward to my time remaining at Lees-McRae, and will continue to work with faculty and staff to elevate everything that we do."

Nestled in the Blue Ridge Mountains of western North Carolina, Lees-McRae College is a private, four-year college offering diverse baccalaureate degrees, strong athletic programs and outstanding faculty. Field-specific career preparation and hands-on learning enhance the broad core curriculum. For more information, please visit www.lmc.edu or call 828.898.5241.

Nina Mastandrea is the content manager of Lees-McRae College

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Mitchell County 4-H

Delegation Attends Annual Electric Congress:

Mitchell County

A delegation from Mitchell County attended the 70th Annual 4-H Electric Congress July 11-13 at the University of North Carolina Charlotte. 155 4-H'ers, adult leaders and North Carolina



Daniel Silver, Kailey Brown, 4-H Extension Agent, Luke Silver, Wayne Huddleston, Account Manager with Duke Energy.



Cooperative

Extension agents from 47 counties attended the three-day event. Since 1947, Duke Energy and Dominion Energy have sponsored the annual congress to emphasize electrical energy concepts, conservation, and safe efficient use. Daniel and Luke Silver represented Mitchell County well at Electric Congress. They have worked hard to help others learn more about electricity in the past year.

Mitchell County 4-H'ers Attend NC 4-H Congress:

4-H Congress, Day 1 and State Presentations

This year's 4-H Congress, held in Raleigh July 29-Aug. 1, attracted more than 500 young people and their adult leaders for activities including presentations on a variety of subjects, leadership and citizenship training, service opportunities, officer elections and more.

Mitchell County 4-H'ers received honors during the recent State 4-H Congress.



Josh Silver, Jesse Silver, Luke Silver, Kailey Brown, 4-H Extension Agent, Jessy-Kate Glenn, Charlotte Hubbard, and Corbin Buchanan, at State Presentations.

Corbin Buchanan, 14, son of Travis and Mitzi Buchanan of Spruce Pine was an honored state presentation participant in the Small and Companion Animals category. Jessy-Kate Glenn, daughter of Darrin and Susan Glenn of Spruce Pine honorably placed 6th in the State Horse presentation category. Charlotte Hubbard, 11, daughter of Ray and Sherri Hubbard of Burnsville won Bronze in the Poultry presentation category. Jesse and Josh Silver, 12, son of Jonathan and Amanda Silver of Spruce Pine won Silver with their team presentation in the Livestock and Dairy Production category. Also Luke Silver, 14, son of Jonathan and Amanda Silver of Spruce Pine won Gold in

Beef Chagrill and received a \$75.00 scholarship for his category win. Mitchell county 4-H is proud to have such talented youth participate in state presentations this year.

4-H Honor Club

Daniel Silver was inducted into the 4-H Honor Club, one of the highest honors a 4-H'er can achieve. Membership in the Honor Club is based on service to the 4-H program, leadership, moral standards, 4-H activities and project achievement. Less than one-half of one percent of North Carolina 4-H'ers are selected for membership each year.

4-H Congress, Day 2

This was a very special day for Mitchell County as our own Daniel Silver gave his spotlight speech. Every outgoing 4-H State Officer gives a spotlight speech at 4-H Congress, and Daniel's speech brought many to tears. He helped us realize what is truly important. That we should always be ourselves, and strive to be the best we can be as 4-H'ers. He thanked his family for always supporting him and honored them with a plaque for helping him through his 4-H career.

Daniel has done so much for the NC State 4-H Council in the past year. Mitchell County 4-H would like to congratulate him on a wonderful job as our State 4-H Council Reporter.



4-H Congress, Day 3 and Scholarship Winners

On Monday Mitchell County 4-H'ers were honored at the Donor Luncheon. Congratulations to the following 4-H Scholarship recipients. Their accomplishments in 4-H combined with great academic success will surely serve them well as they further their education. Journee Glenn, 18, Daughter of Darrin and Susan Glenn of Spruce Pine received the Robert and Helen Runion 4-H Scholarship in the amount of \$1,000. Daniel Silver, 19, son of Jonathan and Amanda Silver of Spruce Pine received the John C. and Cathy H. McLean 4-H Scholarship Endowment for the Western District in the amount of \$1,000, the Mitchell County 4-H Discovery Scholarship in the amount of \$500, and the Robert and Helen Runion 4-H Scholarship in the amount of \$1,000.



continued on page 27

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Morganton Seventh-Day Adventist Church

Look at the Son!!

By Cindy Mercer
Burke County



Perhaps you were recently one of the many million people on planet earth to view the historic 2017 "Great American Eclipse". Maybe someone even mentioned (more than once) to NOT LOOK AT THE SUN during the eclipse. Did you look? Well, of course most people did... hopefully with the "special eclipse glasses." Multiple friends and family members instructed us to not look because it could be harmful we were told. So whether you participated in a solar eclipse party, pulled off of the interstate or gathered with friends in a field... one thing is for sure, the event is one that will be a moment in history not forgotten!

In some strategic points on the eclipse path, there was a moment of darkness... other areas experienced only heavy cloud coverage as if a storm was coming. And then in predictable fashion, the sun reappeared and brought forth magnificent light again. And just like that, the long awaited total solar eclipse was part of the past... not to be seen again until April 8, 2024 that will be visible in a diagonal path crossing from Texas to Maine, according to NASA.

Now that the excitement is over for this event... consider the following that a good friend of mine posted on Facebook titled, "Pre-eclipse"-- He who made the sun, the moon and the stars, The God of the Universe, the Creator of all things!! The One who with His own hand placed the stars just where they needed to be. Master Designer of the earth and all that is in it. Son of Man and Son of God! If there is one thing we can know by the eclipse is God ordains the heavens to move and man cannot change or alter what God wills! That means as He moves the heavens, He can also grow a mustard seed into a nation, make water into wine, make a crippled man walk and a blind man see! He alone can make a stony heart into a heart of flesh! When you see the eclipse don't wonder at the event but wonder at the God who created the event and His greater miracle of your changed heart! To God be the glory!

As I read her post, immediately there was another post by another friend that reminded us that "Satan is seeking to veil Jesus from our sight, to eclipse his light, for when we get even a glimpse of his glory we are attracted to him. Sin hides from our view the matchless charms of Jesus; prejudice, selfishness, self-righteousness, and passion blind our eyes, so that we do not discern the Savior. Oh, if we would by faith draw nigh to God, he would reveal to us his glory, which is his character, and the praise of God would flow forth from human hearts, and be sounded by human voices. Then we would forever cease to give glory to Satan by sinning against God and talking doubt and unbelief. We would no longer stumble along grumbling, and mourning, and covering the altar of God with our tears. If we would behold Jesus, believing his words, we would reflect the image of him who hath called us out of darkness into his marvelous light, and what a wave of glory would flow back from earth to heaven!" {Signs of the Times, October 17, 1892}

Consider this... we can allow dark moments to "steal" our "sonshine"... but as many people witnessed on August 21, 2017, the darkness from the total eclipse was soon replaced by light. As a matter of fact the darkness only lasted about 2 minutes. When we are in darkness it can seem like an eternity. Praise God we have the infallible Word of God that provides this inspiration, "I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." -John 8:12. Remember, it is ok to LOOK AT THE SON!

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 cjmercer@tds.net. Check out www.morgantonsda.org. Their passion is to share the love of Jesus with all who will listen.

TREASURES

By Joyce (Joy) Harwood Baldwin

*When you leave this world below
Will you leave anything at all.
Have you taught your Children
On the masters sweet name to call.*

*Worldly treasures to my dad
They never meant a thing.
I was worth more than any diamonds
In church to hear him sing.*

*We work our lives away at best
Providing food and clothes.
And every other thing they need
So much more only Heaven knows.*

*Then when it comes down to the end
Do they know about The Lord?
Gold and silver won't pay their way
At last to enter our Fathers' Abode.*

*Don't waste away the time you have
On earthly things that all decay.
Leave everlasting treasures
That cannot fade away.*

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.



When our family felt the call to minister through foster care, it was very much about accepting a child out of a broken world into ours. But we have learned that as we lived to make a difference in their lives, it has been their lives that have changed us. You see, you cannot bring brokenness into your home and not be broken by it.

In the midst of this has been the heart of the Gospel. We also were broken, helpless, and hurting. But Jesus went to extravagant lengths to enter our brokenness and be broken for us. Fostering is a practical reminder of this Gospel truth. It is a call to step out of your own story and wrap yourself in the brokenness of another and willingly be broken by it.

In the end everything changes- you change them, but perhaps more importantly, they change you. Make a difference foster/adopt a child. Contact McDowell County DSS 828-652-3355.

4-HAIRE Competition

Our own Jessy-Kate Glenn was an AIRE participant and had her interview on day 3 of 4-H Congress. Jessy-Kate did a wonderful job as it was her first time participating. Jessy-Kate Glenn was a state alternate winner in the AIRE competition. AIRE – Application, Interview, Resume and Essay competition – is a four-step process by which youth are chosen to attend national 4-H events. As an alternate Jessy-Kate may have the opportunity to attend National Congress. Congratulations to Jessy-Kate on her success at this level of competition.

Please like us on Facebook to view pictures from all the 4-H Congress events <https://www.facebook.com/Mitchell-County-4H-226821009309/>.

Mitchell County 4-Her's participated in the McDowell County Junior Livestock Show on August 5th:

On Saturday, August 5th, Mitchell County 4-Her's participated in the 71st Annual McDowell County Junior Livestock Show. Of the participants Colton Cox, 14, son of Eddie and Niki Cox of Spruce Pine and Jacob Honeycutt, 15, son of Dean and Pam Honeycutt of Spruce Pine showed beef cattle. Colton Cox received Grand and Reserve Champion Angus Heifer, Grand Champion Senior Showmanship, Premier Exhibitor, and Grand Champion Black Hereford in the All Other Breeds Class. Jacob Honeycutt received Grand Champion Limousine in the All Other Breeds Class. Jacob was also a first time livestock showman, and did a wonderful job showing his heifer. Several of the Mitchell County Livestock club members came to support their showmen. Mitchell County 4-H is very proud of the hard work and dedication these two young men have shown in working with their livestock. Good luck to both Colton and Jacob as well as the entire livestock club as we continue with the 2017 livestock show season. For those interested in learning more about becoming a Mitchell County 4-H Livestock Club member please contact Kaley Brown at the (828) 688-4811 or email her at kaley_brown@ncsu.edu.



4-H is North Carolina's largest youth development organization, equipping more than 247,000 young people each year with the skills to succeed and improve the world around them. For more information about 4-H in Mitchell County please contact Kaley Brown, 4-H Extension Agent, at kaley_brown@ncsu.edu or Kim Slotnick, 4-H Program Assistant, at kim_slotnick@ncsu.edu. Also by phone at (828)688-4811.

BEAR CREEK BAPTIST CHURCH

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Thursday's at 7:00pm

Hope & Help from

Addiction Through Christ

And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together. John 4:36

DRUG TAKE-BACK EVENT

Saturday, September 23
10am-2pm

The Prescription Pad of Burnsville
730 E Main Street

Turn in your unused or expired medication for safe disposal.

We will accept:

- ✓ Prescriptions
- ✓ Over the counter pills
- ✓ Liquid medications
- ✓ Vitamins
- ✓ Pet medicine

We cannot accept:

- ✗ Needles and sharps
- ✗ Mercury (thermometers)
- ✗ Chemotherapy/radioactive substances
- ✗ Oxygen containers
- ✗ Pressurized containers/inhalers



Drug Dropbox Locations:

- Mitchell County Sheriff's Office - 828-688-3982 (Mon.- Fri. 8am-7pm)
- Spruce Pine Police Department - 828-688-9974 (Mon.- Fri. 8am-5pm)
- Yancey County Sheriff's Office - 828-682-2124 (24 hours/7 days a week)
- Burnsville Town Hall (Mon.- Fri. 8:30am-4:30pm)

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Avery County

Avery County Chamber - Sept. 1-2 15th Annual Mile High Kite & Crafts Festival Beech Mountain, Sept 2 Beer & Wine Celebration, Old Hampton Store & Tavern, Linville, Sept 2-3 Art on the Greene, Historic BE School, Banner Elk, Sept 5-9 Avery County Fair, Fairgrounds, Newland, Sept 8-10 Autumn at Oz, Beech Mountain.

Greater Banner Elk Heritage Foundation—Sat. Sept. 2—Downtown Banner Elk Walking Tour Sat. Sept 9—Historic and Contemporary Quilt Show For more info call 828-898-3634 or check BannerHouseMuseum.org or email BannerHouseMuseum@Yahoo.com

Burke County

Burke County Chamber - Changing Gears Changing Lives Charity Ride September 16, 2017

Join us for a law enforcement led ride through Catawba County to raise money for local children in foster care.

Save the Date!

November 16, 2017

Foothills Higher Education Center

What is your favorite Olympic Sport or Team? This year's theme is World Games and can be any team or sport. Past, Present or Future! The Chamber will be Sport Sailing, so jump on board with your best theme and see if you can win the Gold, Silver or Bronze Medal.

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.

Are you ready to LoveLOUD October 9-14?

LoveLOUD is a week of missional service opportunities designed to engage CRBA churches in sharing Christ's love in Burke County in a variety of practical ways. Churches can be involved in one of three kinds of projects:

1. Construction Projects
2. Community Service
3. Evangelistic Outreach

For more information on how you and your church can be involved give us a call at 828-437-0137.

Morganton Seventh-day Adventist-Burke County - Everyone is "Welcome to the Friendly Town of Tumbleweed" Morganton Seventh-day Adventist Church Social happening September 24th., at 12:30 p.m. For directions and more information, please contact Cindy at 870-510-8048.

Health Social - Sunday, September 10th., 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.

God's Closet - Morganton is seeking gently used or new children's clothing, shoes, and bedding (ages birth to teen) for our next FREE shopping event. Items may be dropped off anytime under our covered drive-through at the Morganton Seventh-day Adventist Church, 2187 Jamestown Road, Morganton, N.C. Please label box / bag with "God's Closet." All donations are greatly appreciated! For more information, please contact Janet at 828-244-3876. Like us on Facebook @GodsClosetMorganton

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

McDowell County

Grace Community Church - New Prayer Line Launches in Marion, North Carolina - James 5:16 says "The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective." A. J. Gordon said, "You can do more than pray after you have prayed, but you cannot do more than pray until you have prayed." Churches in McDowell County believe God's Word and agree with A. J. Gordon. That's why they have launched 659-PRAY, a prayer line where people can call anytime, leave a message and know that churches in McDowell County will be praying for them. Here's how it works. The prayer line (659-PRAY) is housed at Freedom Life Ministries (freedomlifeministries.org). Each day prayer requests will be sent to 25 partnering churches in McDowell County who will immediately send those requests to prayer warriors in their churches who will pray for them. The effect is knowing that your prayer request is covered daily by hundreds of people across McDowell County. 659-PRAY will begin on September 1. Between now and then, please ask your pastor if your church is involved. If not, encourage your leaders to reach out and get on board. For more information, please call Robin at (828) 724-9599. - Contact: Chris Allison Cell Phone: 828-559-7312 E-Mail: chris@rocketsleddesign.com.

Clinchfield Baptist Church-We will be having Our "Homecoming Day" at Clinchfield Baptist Church on Sunday, September 10th at 11:00. We look forward each year to this time when we welcome former members and good friends back to visit. We hope you will join us for the time of worship and fellowship as we celebrate our 102nd year.

First Baptist Church of Marion - Mark Your Calendar! 2nd Annual McDow-

ell Community Unity Service Sunday, September 24, 3:00 p.m. East McDowell Middle School Auditorium Led by community leaders and pastors from across McDowell County. Special music by Old Fort Community Choir and others. Various speakers, including Rev. Danny Hampton, director of Freedom Life Ministry. Information fair with various community ministries and agencies to follow the service. Central focus of service and information fair will be responding to the opioid epidemic facing our county and country. "Ways to turn an audience into an army to help our neighbors in need."

Glenwood Baptist Church - McDowell County 2nd Annual Sportsman Banquet Sept. 30 Steve Rockey will speak. He is a Master Sportsman and Pro-Staffer. Music will be Heart Cry. Tickets: \$10.00 and includes entry in grand prize giveaways (must be there to win), a meal, door prizes, access to Vendor booths and a Silent Auction. Grand prize giveaways are Fully Equipped Muzzle Loader, Fully Equipped Crossbow, 2 Youth Guns, Adult Shotgun and an Adult Rifle September 30, 5:00 pm Glenwood Baptist church at 155 Glenwood Baptist Church Rd, Marion, NC for tickets or more info call 828-738-4998 or visit www.gwbaptist-church.org.

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.

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.

Zion Hill Baptist Church 1036 Zion Hill Rd, Marion Pre-Labor Day Jubilee Thursday Aug 31- Sunday Sept 2. 7:00 pm except Sat is 6:00pm. Spirit Filled Preaching and Inspiring Music Dr. Joe Arthur and Pastor Neal Walker. Music by the McKameys, the Primitive Quartet, the Rochesters, the Edwards Family and New Vision. For more info call 828-738-0992.

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 - The Hinson Girls will be performing at Bear Creek for the 5th Sunday night singing on Oct 29th at 6:00pm
Celebrate Recovery

This is a Christ and Biblical Based Program, giving hope 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.

Berry Chapel Baptist Church - "Cry Out, America" Pray! Patriot Day - 9/11 Monday, September 11, 2017, 6:30 p.m. This is not just another meeting...another "to do" on your agenda. Please come. Let's come together and pray...brothers & sisters in CHRIST...for our town & county, for North Carolina, & for the United States of America. Joel 1:14...this is the word of THE LORD.

This is a call to prayer from the National Day of Prayer Task Force, which is a nationwide call for prayer!

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 jmutouzs@yahoo.com.

Hospice of the Blue Ridge Cruz-In for Hospice--- Car Show & Swap Meet--- September 9th at 9:00 to 4:00 Donation Entry Fee---Downtown Bakersville, NC Next to Fire Dept. Classic, Muscle, Sports & Custom Cars, Trucks and Motorcycles Prizes-Raffles-Music-Food & Drinks Local Crafts.

Mitchell County Chamber - 26th Annual Overmountain Victory Celebration

September 14-17, 2017 At the Museum of North Carolina Minerals Milepost 331 on the Blue Ridge Parkway

Schedule of Events

School Days From 9:00 am to 2:30 pm on Thursday, Sept. 14 and Friday, Sept. 15 Area school children will participate in special demonstrations. Reservations are required. Contact Ranger Faison at 828-348-3519.

Encampment Open to the Public From 9:00 am to 2:00 pm on Saturday, Sept. 16 Re-enactors will demonstrate crafts and skills of the Revolutionary War period throughout the day.

Re-enactment of the Battle of King's Mountain held at the Historic Orchard at Altapass at 2:30 pm on Saturday, Sept. 16. The reenactment will be held at the Historic Orchard located three miles north on the Parkway at milepost 328

Candlelight Tours 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm on Saturday, Sept. 16

Take an evening tour by candlelight through a Revolutionary War period encampment and catch a glimpse of history.

Drum Head Religious Service Sunday, Sept. 17 10:00 am Service conducted in the style of a colonial service to conclude the event.

Women Seeking God Freedom Retreat "Inviting ladies of all ages, to join us for our 5th annual Freedom Retreat at High Pastures Retreat Center in Burnsville, NC on October 6th-7th. Our theme this year is becoming women who "Let Go and Trust God" If you often find yourself trying to take control of people and situations instead of trusting God with them or consumed with fear and worry, this year is for you! We want to become women with deep roots planted by the living water, that don't fear or worry but remain green and fruit bearing even in the seasons of drought as Jeremiah 17:7-8 states.

You will hear testimonies from local women Lacey Cannon, Kim Hobart, Jordan Honeycutt, Olivia Grindstaff and Shelley Grindstaff who are learning to let go and trust God with the people and situations in their lives. Worship will be led by Jordan Anglin. This is a non-denominational event lead by Shelley Grindstaff. She has a heart to see the body of Christ joined together in worship and broken women find the freedom that is only found in Jesus Christ and the Truth of His Word.

It begins at 5:30 on Friday October 6th with dinner at High Pastures followed by worship and speaker from 6:45-9. Saturday, it begins at 8am with breakfast followed by worship and speakers from 9am -2pm with lunch being served at 12. Cost is \$55 for room and 3 meals. Staying is encouraged to have focused time with the Lord, away from distractions but there is option of conference only for \$5 if you cannot stay for whole conference. Meals can be purchased separately as well. Registration and deposit for room and meals are needed by Sept. 25th. Space is limited. Registrations can be picked up and dropped off at Higgins UMC church office in Burnsville or contact Shelley Grindstaff at sgrindstaff@yanceync.net to receive by email or with questions call 284-6846. Also look up Yancey Women Seeking God on Facebook.

Shelley and her husband have been serving together in ministry for 24 years. She has led womens ministry called Mary Ministries for 16 years at the various churches they have served at. They are currently attending The Bridge Church in Spruce Pine. Her husband Steve is also filling in as interim pastor at South ESTATOE Baptist in Burnsville. She works as a nurse in the Yancey Student Health Centers. They have two beautiful teenagers. Caleb, who will be leaving in September to go on mission with YWAM and Olivia a junior at MHHS who will be speaking with her mom this year.

Mitchell County Historical Society Sept 18—History of Harris School—7pm Harris Middle School Auditorium Chris Hollifield will present the story of how the Harris School was founded and discuss its rich history through the years.

Mitchell-Yancey Substance Abuse Task Force - Annual Drug Take-Back Day: Save the Date! Each year, the Mitchell Yancey Substance Abuse Task Force MYSATF collaborates with local law enforcement, local pharmacies and pharmacists, and task force volunteers to collect unwanted/unused prescription medication from community members. To date, over 500,000 pills (from 2010 to 2013) and 466 additional pounds of drugs (from 2014-2016) have been collected and safely disposed of. This year our annual "Drug Take Back Day" will be held on September 23rd at the Prescription Pad in Burnsville.

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.

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.

Regional Artist Project Grant Workshops This Month - The Regional Artist Project Grant (RAPG) deadline is October 13, 2017. Artists seeking to apply are encouraged to attend one of the FREE grant-writing workshops. The first workshop will be held on August 24 at 4pm in the Burnsville Gallery (102 W. Main

Street). The second is scheduled for August 29 at the Arts Resource Center in Spruce Pine (2nd floor, 269 Oak Avenue). The workshops will last approximately one hour. Grant requirements will be discussed and any individual grant ideas evaluated. Toe River Arts, in collaboration with Avery County, Buncombe and Madison county arts councils, and the North Carolina Arts Council, a division of the Cultural and Natural Resources Department, provides funding through RAPG for projects (in all arts genre) that enhance an artist's career; the workshops are highly recommended. Registration is required. Please call 828-682-7215.

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 DT's in Spruce Pine. We will be ending by 10:00am. Open to all-for more information call Barbara Harrell at 828-467-3644 or email at barabarab@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.

Carolina Mountains Literary Festival- September 7-9, 2017, Burnsville, NC. Twenty-five free author readings, free concert. Registration required for Saturday Keynote with James Reston, Jr., Banquet, three writing workshops, altered book-making workshop. cmlitfest.org

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.

Weaverville Wellness Fair Saturday, September 23, 2017 8:30am to 12:00pm Weaverville United Methodist Church 85 N. Main Street FREE HEALTH SCREENINGS Mission Hospital Weaverville Fire Department Woodfin YMCA Foot Rx Asheville Project Linus Project C.A.R.E. Pisgah Legal Services YMCA of WNC Buncombe County EMS Seniors Helping Seniors Southeastern Physical Therapy Weaverville Yoga Helpmate The Preschool Outreach Project Meals on Wheels Mountain Mobility Weaverville Police Department Buncombe County Sheriff's Office The Vitamin Shoppe NC Cooperative Extension Jenny To The Rescue The Healing House of Weaverville Sally Ekaireb, Certified Healer/Counselor Optix Eye Care Radiation Therapy Associates of WNC Publix Pharmacy Maureen McDonnell, RN/Nutritionists Choice Weaverville United Methodist Church Asheville Heart CPR, LLC Brian Center of Weaverville EXHIBITORS INCLUDE: WELLNESS PRESENTATIONS: 9:30am 'Gentle Yoga' (with chairs/appropriate for seniors) Barbara Shauer & Darleen Benson/Weaverville Yoga 9:30am 'Meet The Healing House Practitioners' Ann Peterson, L.Ac. (Neuro-Acupuncturist/ Herbalist)/Linda Letourneau, OTR/L, (Occupational Therapy and Elder care)/ Deborah Schuldes, (Reiki Master) 11:00am 'Hands Only CPR'—Larry Rowe, Asheville Heart CPR, LLC 11:00am 'Strong Yoga' (a sample of Ashtanga & Yoga Inbound) Jonathan Harrah & Randi Janelle/Weaverville Yoga

Parkway Playhouse—Jeff Messer and Graham Livengood play rival Country Club Directors fighting for the annual golf tournament cup in Parkway Playhouse's production of Ken Ludwig's The Fox on the Fairway running September 2nd-16th. Tickets are available at www.parkwayplayhouse.com or by calling 828-682-4285.

Over the next several months, the group of "over 50" reading thespians will be sharing its stories with audiences of all ages in our community. For more information about the Parkway Players or how to bring them to your organization, please visit www.parkwayplayhouse.com or call 828-682-4285.

September 2017 FREE Classes from the Mayland Small Business Center: Introduction to Social Media Marketing (2.5 Hours) 9/5, T, 5:30-8:00 p.m.

Mitchell

Which Social Media Site is Best for my Business? (2.5 Hours) 9/7, TH, 5:30-8:00 p.m. Mitchell

WEEK ONE: How to Start & Finance a Small Business (3 Hours) 9/11, M, 5:30-8:30 p.m. Mitchell

Connect with Your Customers by Telling Your Story (2 Hours) 9/13, W, 5:30-7:30 p.m. TRAC Art Resource Center, Spruce Pine

WEEK TWO: How to Write a Business Plan (3 Hours) 9/18, M, 5:30-8:30 p.m. Mitchell

Small Business Wrap Up (2 Hours) 9/19, T, 5:30-7:30 p.m. Yancey

Class Three: Posting, Tweeting, and Blogging to Build Sales (2.5 Hours) 9/19, T, 5:30-8:00 p.m. Mitchell

Crafting Effective Advertising Pitches and Ads (3 Hours) 9/21, TH, 5:30-8:30 p.m. Newland

Class Four: Social Media Management Strategies for Business (2.5 Hours) 9/21, T, 5:30-8:00 p.m. Mitchell

WEEK THREE: Marketing your Business (3 Hours) 9/25, M, 5:30-8:30 p.m. Mitchell

Etsy, eBay, Amazon? Best Online Sales Platforms for Artists (2 Hours)

9/27, W, 5:30-7:30 p.m. TRAC Art Resource Center, Spruce Pine

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. Get your business going and growing!

The Power of Fragrance

By Marlene Houk
Burke County



Slowly my daughter opened the file folder, sneezing at the musty dust drifting upward into the morning sunlight. Papers littered with long ago importance slipped off her lap. Tattered bits of memories teased the edges of her thoughts as sounds of long ago laughter bubbled somewhere near her heart. Ten years stretched behind her with its faint traces of friendships, shared joys and halved frustrations. Grades and grins traced the pathways of her mind as she traveled long forgotten paths. With a simple whiff, we often are transported instantly to the exact same emotions and reactions that may have surged within us a decade ago.

The next time you pop a couple of almonds in your mouth, think of a twin set of brain structures that are named after the almond. They are tiny components whose name comes from the Greek which means almond. They are called the amygdala, they help us to recall the emotions associated with events. These small segments of the brain's memory system empowered my daughter to recall with lightning clarity the memories of years past and to relive the emotions associated with that time.

In an online article from NBC news, an expert confirms that smell is connected to our memories. "Smells do bring back memories," says Dr. Ken Heilman, James E. Rooks Jr. Distinguished Professor Neurology and Health Psychology at the University of Florida and a member of AAN. "Smell goes into the emotional parts of the brain and the memory parts, whereas words go into thinking parts of the brain." The article goes on to quote him as saying, "When you smell things you remember your emotions ... it's very, very true."

<http://articles.mercola.com/sites/articles/archive/2015/08/06/smells-trigger-memories.aspx>

How infinitely wise our Creator is to design us with the sense of smell, connect it to our emotional memories and then bath the experience of smell with the weight of spiritual significance! We understand the power of a memory of fragrance to bring pleasure, recall joyous times and attach an emotion for a lifetime. The following verse uses the word picture of fragrance to explain its spiritual significance. Just as a new baby exudes sweetness and love with his or her newborn smells, so God considers us as newborn babes in Christ, a sweet reminder of His Son and the mystery and majesty of the spiritual new birth. Upon accepting Him as Savior, we immediately desire the "sincere milk of the word." (1 Peter 2:2) And all around are sisters and brothers who catch a whiff as they snuggle the new life.

2 Corinthians 2:15 says, "For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish:

When we belong to God, we become a sweet savour of Christ, wafting the fragrance of His love and longing for all to come to Him and find rest for their souls. Just as warm cinnamon buns fresh from the oven create a longing to taste one, so we, as Christians, can create that same longing as we allow the sweet fragrance of His love to waft from us and into the direct path of those around us. Practically speaking, Philippians 4:18 and Proverbs 27:9 advise us how to send the sweet-smelling gifts of the fragrance of Christ into the hearts of those around us. It is through the:

1. gentle everyday gifts of meeting needs and the
2. sweet counsel of a friend that is willing to listen and to enter into a conversation designed to heal and to help.

My daughter found what she was looking for in that tattered file folder. However, the memories lingered, following her gently throughout the day, and they became topics of conversation as she remembered her college friends and the good times of youth. Much like these memories, the fragrance of our Christianity lingers after we leave the presence of others, perhaps prompting them to further talk about the sweet fragrance of Jesus and His love. The next time you immerse yourself in the fragrance of nostalgic memories that bring a smile, remember that a life of pure devotion to Christ can bring a sweet fragrance into the heart of those whose lives are desperate for a gentle reminder of God's all-encompassing love for them!

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

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Back to School Bash

Unity in God's Work

By Marcus Benfield
Mitchell County

Hello everyone, I trust you are happy in the Lord as we begin to anticipate the beautiful Fall Colors here in Western North Carolina. Our area will see a lot of travel yet for the next several weeks as many come to look at the changing leaves. People will come from all around from all walks of life, however they will be unified in one fact; they all want to see the beautiful colors.

That is the subject I want to deal with this month (Unity). God gets glory when His people unite as we experienced on August 12, 2017 at our Back to School Bash where 10 Churches and 13 business came together from all across our community of faith and saw God get the Glory as we fed, witnessed to, offered fun & Games, Christian music, as well as school supplies to over 350 people. How? Because of Unity.

By way of introduction let me say, when we and/or our friends are facing trials we appreciate those who pray for us.

Before Jesus went to the cross, He prayed for every person who would be saved by Him.

John 17:20-21 - "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me."

Please notice that Jesus prayed for the unity of those who would trust Him! This is a unity of every truly born again Christian. This unity is to be a testimony to those who do not know Christ as Savior.

Psalm 133:1 states the importance and beauty of this kind of Godly unity. "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" Looking at other portions of Scripture, we can find some of the ways there should be unity among true believers.

I. UNITY OF PERSONALITY - CHILDREN OF GOD - John 1:12

Very often we say, "He's just like his father", or "She's just like her mother." We tend to have personality traits similar to the personality traits found in our parents.

According to John 1:12, a person who is saved is a child of God.

The moment a person is saved the Holy Spirit does a work in his life and he is changed. John 3:1-8, II Corinthians 5:17

As children of God, we should now all demonstrate some of the personality characteristics of our Heavenly Father.

God is forgiving. We are to forgive.

God cares about the physical well-being of others. We should care about the physical well-being of others.

God is holy. We should strive for holiness in our own lives. I Peter 1:15-16

II. UNITY OF PURPOSE - AMOS 3:3 & Ecclesiastes 4:9-12

We cannot walk together in unity unless we are in agreement. We must agree on the purpose of our lives. I believe every one of us should have a three-fold purpose for living. If all Christians have these purposes, we will be unified!

1. To Love and Obey God - Matthew 22:37
2. To Love Each Other - Matthew 22:38, John 13:34-35
3. To Win Souls to Faith in Christ - Matthew 28:19-20, I. Peter 3:15, Mark 16:15

III. UNITY OF POWER - THE HOLY SPIRIT - Ephesians 1:19-23, 3:16, 5:18, Acts 1:8

Paul prayed that the Ephesians would understand the power that is at work inside of them (Ephesians 1:19-23). He also prayed that the Holy Spirit would strengthen them within.

Later, he commanded us to be filled with the Spirit (Ephesians 5:18). There



will be unity as the Holy Spirit controls all who are saved!

IV. UNITY OF PRAYER - Ephesians 6:18, 1 Timothy 2:1-4, Acts 2:42, Acts 4:31

When the church unifies in prayer, God does wonderful things!

In conclusion let me say I truly believe God desires unity in the Church and in the lives of His people. All Churches who preach the Gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ are a part of The Church and we should strive to work together to evangelize our county for the Glory of God!

I also want to say a Heartfelt Thank you to the Following Churches and Businesses whocame together in unity to make this day a Great Success!!

The following churches from across 3 counties were directly involved with our event!

Crab Orchard FWB., Spruce Pine First Baptist, Spruce Pine Methodist, Altapass Baptist, Liberty Hill Baptist, Bear Creek Baptist, The Bridge Church, Berry Chapel Baptist, Lilly Branch Baptist, and Bolen's Creek Baptist.

The following Businesses also gave us much needed help and support!

Blue Ridge Christian News, Fun Time Inflatables, Pittman Signs, Stamey's, Lays potato chip, Little Debbie snack cakes, Vallen, WKYC-WTOE, Mayland Community College, Celebrate Recovery, Mountain Community Health, Mitchell County Health Department, and Shoes for Sharing.

So, you see precious readers, if we come together in unity God can do great things! Let us continue to work together and take our communities back from the destruction that satan has brought about through drugs, alcohol, sexual perversion as well as a host of other things. If we stand as The Church, the church Jesus referred to as "My Church"; Then the gates of Hell cannot prevail against it!



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



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North Carolinians cannot conceive of a scenario where they could be fired for misconduct or lying on their application forms and then get their jobs back. However, the Internal Revenue Service has made a practice of just this and, for the second time, has been caught by the IRS watchdog.

A recent report from the Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration (TIGTA) found that 200 of the 2,000 employees that were rehired to work at the IRS from January 2015 to March 2016 were originally fired for substantiated performance or conduct issues, including willfully failing to file taxes. While working for the government agency responsible for collecting taxes.

In response, I have reintroduced the Ensuring Integrity in the IRS Workforce Act of 2017. This bill, S. 1643, would bar the IRS Commissioner from rehiring employees separated from the agency due to such issues. The rampant abuse at the IRS has continued and thrived for far too long, and the time to put a stop to these atrocious practices is now.

The American people are sick and tired of Washington at its worst. We have Americans paying the salaries of IRS workers who have repeatedly cheated the very government they took an oath to serve, and a Commissioner who won't hold them accountable. I've had enough, and I know you have too.

This month, the Senate Democrats ceased their blockade of the President's key staff, allowing more than seventy nominees to move through the Senate. More individuals were confirmed to important posts across the federal government in one afternoon than in the previous six months combined. Hopefully this is a sign of things to come so that we can let experienced individuals get to work in critical positions to serve the American people.

I was proud to have led hearings for a few of these individuals: David Glawe of Iowa, the new Under Secretary of Intelligence and Analysis for the Department of Homeland Security, and Susan Gordon of Virginia, the new Principal Deputy Director of National Intelligence. These dedicated public servants have spent their lives working to protect their country, and I'm thankful for their willingness to serve their country yet again.

I am also humbled to see several former staff members going on to important positions throughout the administration. I am grateful for their work on behalf of North Carolinians, and I know they'll bring the same dedication to all of the Americans they now serve.

The astonishing level of obstruction in the Senate has come to a brief lull, and I am encouraged to see Senators working together for the betterment of the American people. There are still many nominees that have been considered by their respective committees but have yet to be confirmed. When Congress returns, we should pick up right where we left off.

Since 2007, the National Human Trafficking Hotline has received 3,700 phone calls and logged nearly 900 cases regarding human trafficking in our state. This ranks North Carolina in the top ten most trafficked states in the nation. Even more cases go unreported, making this lucrative criminal activity a difficult one to control and prosecute. Our state can do better. In this spirit, and with a commitment to curbing a damaging cycle of servitude, danger, and violence endured by the victims, the General Assembly passed Senate Bill 548 which deals a blow to the criminal and inhumane activity of human trafficking. Behind escort services, the second highest prevalence of human trafficking is found in the massage and bodywork industry. While many massage and bodywork establishments are reputable, some operate as a front for human trafficking.

Senate Bill 548 — Strengthen Human Trafficking Laws/Studies, sponsored by Senators Randleman, Daniel, and Brock, combats this illicit trade, through the following:

- Establishes standards for and requires licensure of establishments providing massage and bodywork therapy services through regulation by the N.C. Board of Massage and Bodywork Therapy.
- Requires massage and bodywork therapists to obtain a statewide privilege license.
- Makes it a Class 1 misdemeanor to employ any person to provide massage and bodywork therapy services to the public who is not licensed to provide such services and is not exempt from licensure requirements.
- Increases the felony level for human trafficking. Now, adult trafficking is a Class C felony and child trafficking is a Class B1 felony.
- Directs the Department of Health and Human Services to study the feasibility of providing human trafficking training to health care providers, emergency medical providers, and relevant first responders.

Not subject to regulation are on-site massage performed at the customer's location; establishments within a hospital, nursing home, or similar facility licensed by DHHS; massage and bodywork therapy provided by a sole practitioner, student clinics operated by a Board-approved school, or massage and bodywork therapy programs offered by accredited community colleges, colleges, or universities; and chiropractic physician offices in which massage and bodywork therapy is provided only by a massage and bodywork therapists licensed in North Carolina.

This bill provides law enforcement, as well as the massage and bodywork therapy's regulatory and licensing board with the necessary tools to stop the crime of trafficking at its source, before it can even begin.

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

NC Senate District 47



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

NC House District 118



Rep. Michele D. Presnell
Michele.Presnell@ncleg.net
919-733-5732

The destruction of monuments and other objects of remembrance throughout history did not erase the history they represented.

- In 1944, Nazi Germany destroyed numerous buildings, castles and parks in Poland.
- From 1959 to 1964, Nikita Khrushchev closed and/or destroyed more than 10,000 mostly-rural churches as part of his anti-religious campaign in the Soviet Union.

• In 2001, the Taliban destroyed 6th century Buddha statues they declared to be "heretical idols."

• ISIS has destroyed countless historical monuments and artifacts. Their acts have been referred to as a "cultural cleansing."

We are Americans. We preserve our past and our heritage so we may learn from our successes and our failures.

Destruction of monuments dedicated to historical figures and heroes of our past will not delete the history they represent. In fact, their destruction will only divide us further.

Today, the target of cultural cleansing is Civil War and Confederate monuments. If you support destruction of monuments to that part of our shared history, who is to say monuments to a part of history you want to protect won't be a target tomorrow?

Destruction of monuments is a slippery slope, indeed.

Hundreds of thousands of Americans died during the U.S. Civil War. Monuments and statues across our state commemorate the sacrifices of some 40,000 North Carolinians who died during the war – and the families who sacrificed with them.

In 2015, I voted in favor of a bill that protects all monuments across our state equally from destruction and removal. I stand by that vote, and I will not vote to lessen the protection of monuments should the occasion arise.

If you were to dedicate your time and energy to erecting a monument today, would you want future generations to tear it down in a fit of short-sighted rage? No, you dedicated your time and energy to that purpose because you wanted future generations to remember something significant.

Monuments that our forebearers built should remain so we and future generations may learn from our past.

Willful destruction of property against monuments dedicated to our past and the general lawlessness and violence that surrounded acts of the past week cannot be tolerated. I support the Durham County sheriff's decision to charge those involved in the destruction of a monument in Durham on Monday.

Gov. Roy Cooper said this week that monuments should come down, and the history they represent belongs in museums and textbooks. If he got his way, removal of that history from textbooks and museums would be next.

You cannot rewrite our history, Gov. Cooper. I will not be party to any attempt to do so.

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Allen's Offerings

Yesterday and Today

By Allen Buchanan
Mitchell County

The other day I drove my dad to The Produce Stand at Grassy Creek. I sat in the van while dad and others shopped in the pouring rain. In front of me was a large bin overflowing with fresh peaches. They were simply beautiful and inviting. I thought surely Dad wouldn't overlook them. He didn't and on the way home I asked him for one. I couldn't remember the last time I sunk my teeth into a fresh peach.

As I sat eating the peach, I didn't take the time to peel it. Once I split it open and removed the seed, it was all mine. Biting into it, sweet juices ran out of the corners of my mouth and off my chin. I had a thought flood my mind from my youth. One summer, my Uncle Dewitt Buchanan had gone to SC and gotten a pickup load of peaches. I happened to be at his house on the day he was going to sell them. In the 60's, salesmen would go door-to-door. My cousins, Brooks and Keith, helped their father and I got to ride along.

Selling peaches door-to-door may have been a job for some families, or it could have been considered a ministry even though money was involved. It gave many people the opportunity to have fresh fruit they may not be able to have otherwise.

Fruit and produce wasn't the only products that a salesman might deliver to your door. Encyclopedias, Bibles, cookware, vacuum cleaners and religion were all sold in that fashion. Yes, religion came into our

communities by way of door-to-door salesmen who often shared false doctrines. In some states, this still occurs. I've often heard discussions as to why those determined people were eager to go door-to-door. Yet most Christians do not visit their neighbors to share Jesus.

Now stop for a moment and consider how times have changed. Technology has brought so much more into our homes. Nearly every item you once had to go to a store to purchase can be bought online. We are no longer visited by door-to-door salesmen who may also bring one false doctrine. Our minds are challenged constantly by every religion known to man. Whether it reaches us by way of radio, television, computer, smartphone or video game, as Christians we've got to know what's right and wrong. As Ephesians 6:13 (KJV) reminds us:

Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple. Romans 16:17-18 KJV

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



Shoes for Sharing

Selfless Ministry

By Lois Duncan
Yancey County

I had convinced myself that I was too old to do anything for the Lord, and was praying that somehow I could tell young people to "go and do" while they could. And, that there is so much work to be done for the Lord; souls that need to be saved. It was with these prayers that "Shoes for Sharing" was born.

One day at work I was out on the playground with the kids. It was a beautiful fall day and the children were running and playing. Right in front of me were two little boys. I noticed that the sole of one of the shoes of the first little boy was all torn off and his shoelaces were way too long. The side was out of the other little boy's shoe and he could not keep them on his feet. It was at this point that God spoke to me and said, "See, you aren't too old to do something. These kids need shoes and so do many more just like them. This is to be your ministry."

Proverbs 3:5-6 says, "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths." I had never done anything like this before and had no idea how to start. I stood up on Sunday morning and told my church what God had called me to do. Before the day was over, God had given me the name for the ministry, shoes, money for shoes, and a shoe closet. At this point I could say, He was directing my path.

Over the past two and a half years I have been able to give away countless pairs of shoes to children ranging from infants to teenagers. One of the greatest blessings I receive is seeing the reaction of joy and excitement when a child receives a pair of shoes. They are so happy. It is such a joy to see a young child who has received a pair of shoes stomp around, especially those that have received shoes that light up!

I have shared this ministry and have been able to distribute shoes through different organizations such as social services, school systems, and churches. No matter the size or type of shoes needed, God has always made a way for me to provide them. I was overjoyed to be able to give away 103 pairs of shoes at the event sponsored by the Blue Ridge Christian News and local churches. Philippians 4:19 says, "But my God shall supply all your needs according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus." He has been faithful in providing for every need for this ministry.

If you know of a need for shoes please contact me. Please pray for this ministry that it can be used for the furtherance of His Kingdom.

Lois Duncan is a member of Bolens Creek Baptist Church. You can contact her at (828) 284-2223 or loisduncan1404@gmail.com.



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The Name Of Jesus Is One Of The Greatest Names In The World!

By Timothy Eller
McDowell County

His name was actually not given to him by his mother and father. His name was given to him by an angel:

Luke 1:30-31.
30 And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God.
31 And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS.



The angel stated that his name would be called Jesus.
Luke 2:21
21 And when eight days were accomplished for the circumcising of the child, his name was called JESUS, which was so named of the angel before he was conceived in the womb.
Isaiah 9:6
6 For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

His name is said to mean Jehovah has become our salvation or deliverer. He was also known as Emmanuel being translated "God with Us" (Matthew 1:23).

Acts 4:12 Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.
So my question, I leave with You, who was this Jesus?

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.



Main Street Walking Tours

By Morrissa Ang
Burke County



Valdese, NC – August 16, 2017 – The Valdese Main Street Program has completed phase one of the "Then & Now Walking Tour" of Downtown Valdese. With the help of the public, the Valdese Main Street Promotions Committee was able to feature tall tales, brief recalled histories and images for over 20 buildings in the downtown district.

A "Community Sharing" event that was held at the Old Rock School on February 27th, 2017 helped to thrust the project forward when over 25 Valdese locals came to share their memories of downtown. In total over 60 people helped to make phase one of the project complete.

"The Valdese Main Street Program is extremely excited to bring the "Then & Now Walking Tour" to residents and visitors alike," states Morrissa Angi, Community Affairs & Main Street Director for the Town of Valdese. "This project will showcase old stories shared between friends, encourage strolling through downtown while taking visitors and residents on a walk down memory lane." The project began in a brainstorming session during a regular meeting with the Valdese Main Street Promotions Committee. "Locals refer to buildings by their previous business names. One example is the new coffee shop that is planning to open in mid-October. Instead of calling it Old World Baking Company, states Angi, local say oh, yes you turn right at the old Sav-A-Center." Taking from this idea the project began to flourish. The Promotions Committee began gathering old newspaper clippings, photos, and stories to share in the booklet.

Memories of favorite foods, hiding in clothing racks, first movies, community dances, getting into trouble and of course the famous smell of the Waldensian Bakery are a few examples of the stories shared in the publication. "Since the Then & Now Walking Tour was released at the Waldensian Festival, we have enjoyed hearing the public chuckle as they read through it", states Angi. A complimentary copy of the Then & Now Walking Tour booklet is available at the Old Rock School Tourism Office, which is also the first stop as you begin the walking tour. The booklet can also be downloaded from visitvaldese.com.

"I am tremendously proud of the hard work that has been put into this project by the Valdese Main Street Program. We have a very dedicated group of committee members who work very hard to revitalize the Valdese downtown district and to showcase all that Valdese has to offer," shares Angi.

The Valdese Main Street Program is a community based organization devoted to the redevelopment of Downtown Valdese as an ideal place to live, work, play and retire. Meetings are held on the first Thursday of every month at the Old Rock School at 5:30pm. Those interested in attending should contact Morrissa Angi for more information.

Morrissa Angi is Director of Community Affairs and Tourism

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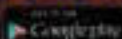
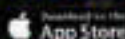


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The Inspiring Word

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Pastor Terry Cheek Th.D.
McDowell County



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

Since our last BRCN was published there have been many things take place internationally, nationally, regionally and even locally. These continue to affect our lives and bring concern into our homes. The crisis and concern brought into our lives is the subject of our article this month. With a topic, this broad there is no way to cover it in detail with one article. We will begin looking at crisis and concern this month and continue as necessary to provide hope, encouragement and strength from God's word to your life and home.

Probably the most intense moment at the beginning of August would arguably be America's standoff with North Korea. Anyone having real knowledge of world events knows that even though North Korea is very small and very poor they are also controlled by a very unstable dictator Kim Jong Un. Our current focus has been turned to N.K. ability to deliver a Nuclear warhead to the U.S., but let's not forget they also possess Chemicals and the ability to deliver biological weapons as well.

America's leadership found themselves in a very delicate situation. Making the wrong move at the wrong time would have escalated a dangerous threat into a situation being lived out for America and North Korea. While we don't agree with Kim Jong Un we do not want to bring the misery of Nuclear war to any human. However, our leaders were not going to allow that threat to be carried out against our people either. To say we were in a tense situation would be an understatement.

As I reflect on this event and the tension it brought to our lives, I am reminded of a passage from God's word. Luke 21:25-28 "And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; (26) Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken.

(27) And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. (28) And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh."



As the Lord taught His disciples about things that would take place shortly in Jerusalem He also spoke to them on a broader level. Part of that teaching was given in the previous paragraph. While the events may not be in numerical order they are given as a general warning and indication of Christ's return. Distress of nations is obvious today. The distress of nations like N.K. is obvious, but looking beyond North Korea, we find distress which is just as dangerous, but very close to home. Recently in Charlottesville VA. we saw an ugly situation escalate to a national level with violence and deception creeping into the hearts and lives of people everywhere. Racism, once thought to be largely a part of our history and something we had grown through and put behind us nationally, has suddenly been resurrected. At least the fear of racism has been resurrected. I will not use this article as an opinion piece for Charlottesville, racism, the alt-right or alt-left. I will say this, racism is unjustified anger toward another person because of their color or race. There is no place for it in the heart of a born again Christian. To blame racism on anything other than unconfessed sin is a sin itself. Tearing down history and even rewriting it will not erase it. Pretending sin doesn't exist doesn't erase it either. When Jesus said, "looking after those things which are coming on the earth", He spoke about being distracted by events caused by sin and eventually result in greater sin. I fear what we witnessed in Charlottesville was a testimony of this statement. A horrible act of violence perpetuated by Satan to destroy people for his pleasure. Let's be careful and not get so wrapped up in the drama and the trauma that emotion takes us to a greater sin than we have already witnessed. I fear if we are silenced over the tearing down of monuments we will soon find ourselves facing the removal of God's word because it is considered offensive. The precedent for that argument is being set today. Let's prayerfully, and with love seek the Holy Spirit's direction through God's word and seek the right remedy for the crisis and concern we face.

Our time has come and gone, until next time may God keep you firmly in His grip!

Terry Cheek is Pastor of Calvary Baptist Church in Marion.



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Mitchell County SafePlace

SafePlace Tips for Back to School Safety

By Tracy Black, Associate Director
Mitchell County



Mitchell County SafePlace is all about keeping ourselves and our children safe. This concern is not just centered around Domestic Violence but in every aspect of life including Back to School. This month I'd like to use our space to give everyone some tips on how to keep your children safe.

For Parents

- Be very clear with the school as to who may, not only check your children out of school, but who can pick them up as school lets out or at bus stops. We suggest you keep this list short; possibly yourself and one trusted friend or relative.
- Children know that we expect them to listen to their teachers in school but do they also know that you expect them to listen and follow the instructions of the bus driver? If not, make sure the children understand that the bus driver is looking out for them and is trying his or her best to make sure they remain safe.
- If your child's bus driver informs you of behavior issues, PLEASE, take it seriously! It doesn't mean your child is bad, just that it could distract the driver and jeopardize the safety of 20-30 other children.
- If you have a Domestic Violence Protective Order in place, make sure the school not only has a copy on file but also discuss with them how the school will respond if the order is violated on school grounds or at school sponsored events.
- Make sure you and your child have a "safe" word that only you and they know. Your child will know that anyone who tells them you sent them to get them isn't telling the truth if that person doesn't know the "safe" word.

For Kids

- If you have to cross the road getting on the bus, wait for the bus to stop, the door is open and the bus driver motions for you to cross.
- ALWAYS cross the road in front of the bus, NEVER behind it.
- Don't wear headphones on the bus, especially during loading and unloading.
- Never bend down to tie your shoe or pick something up when you're crossing in front of the bus. The driver can't see you and you will be in danger.
- Follow all of the rules of the bus. They are there for your protection.
- Have a "safe" word with your parent(s). NEVER go with anyone who doesn't know this word.
- Be a good role model. Your younger brothers and sisters are watching you and it is your duty to show them the right way to act.

For Drivers

- Slow way down in school zones!
- Don't change lanes in a school zone, there may be a child crossing.
- Be extra cautious near high schools. There will be a disproportionate number of new, inexperienced drivers. We were all young once so let's look out for them!
- Stop at least 10 feet behind a school bus. The driver needs to be able to see you in his mirror. They are responsible for these young lives so they need to be able to see every potential hazard.
- NEVER, EVER, EVER pass a stopped school bus. Remember, where there are buses there are children!

Keeping these few tips in mind, we can have a safe, happy, fun school year. Together we can make the 2017/18 school year the best ever!!!



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

Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe: come, get you down; for the press is full, the fats overflow; for their wickedness is great. Joel 3:13

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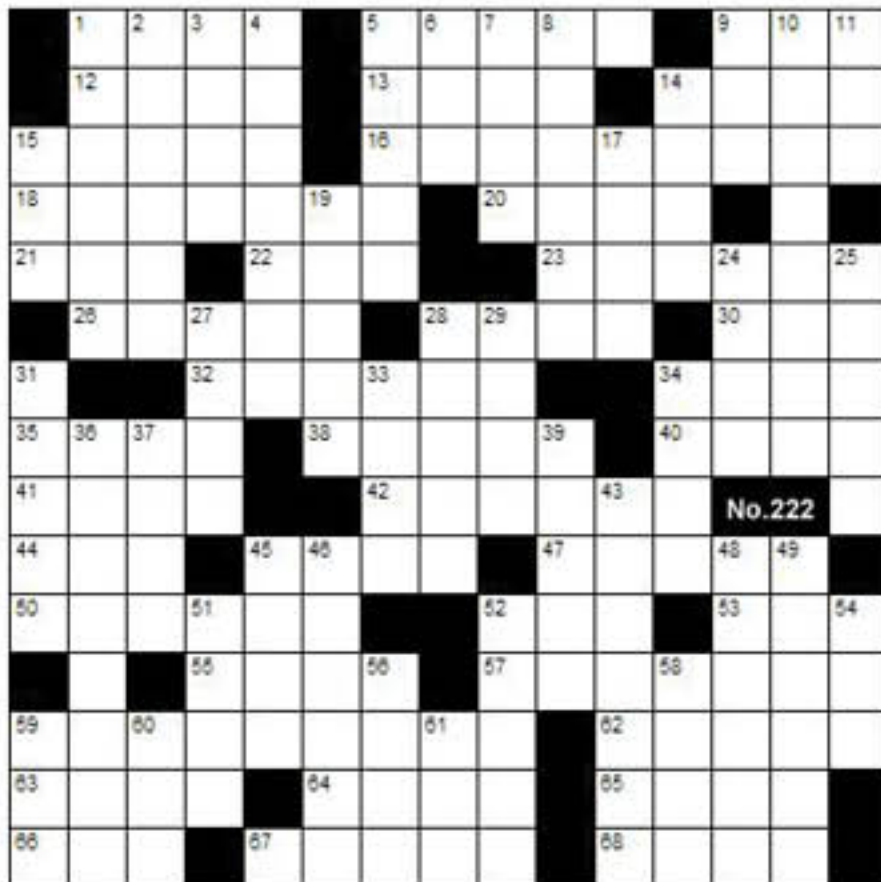
1 _____ and Dumah, and Eshean (Joshua 15:52)
 5 which devoured, _____ in pieces, and stamped the residue (Dan 7:19) KJV
 9 abbr. for the 16th book of the O.T.
 12 They _____ at me and say, "Aha! Aha!" (Ps 35:21)
 13 Awake, and _____ to my defense! Contend for me, my God (Ps 35:23)
 14 the lizard, and the snail, and the _____ (Lev 11:30) (KJV)
 15 Can you loose the cords of _____ (Job 38:31)
 16 God will judge the _____ and all the sexually immoral (Heb 13:4)
 18 Your _____ boundary will be the coast of the Great Sea (Num 34:6)
 20 Rescue me from the _____, do not let me sink (Ps 69:14)
 21 opposite to windward side (naut.) (Acts 27:4)
 22 You have _____ them with the bread of tears (Ps 80:5)
 23 They fasten it with hammer and nails so it will not _____ (Jer 10:4)
 26 You will drink it and _____ it dry (Ezek 23:34)
 28 I will send _____, saying, Go, find out the arrows (1,3) (1 Sam 20:21) (KJV)
 30 Eber, Misham, Shemed who built _____ and Lod (1 Chron 8:12)
 32 his hands were _____ until the going down of the sun (Exodus 17:12)
 34 there appeared _____ him an angel of the Lord (Luke 1:11)
 35 Surely the nations are like a _____ in a bucket (Isa 40:15)
 38 the judgment of the great _____ that sitteth upon many waters (Rev 17:1) KJV
 40 If a bird's _____ chance to be before thee (Deut 22:6)
 41 and onyx stones and other _____ to be mounted (Ex 25:7)
 42 I beheld when he had _____ the sixth seal (Rev 6:12)
 44 the poor man had nothing except one little _____ lamb (2 Sam 12:3)
 45 abbr. for the first book of the N.T.
 47 When it _____, she has no fear for her household (Prov 31:21)
 50 the supreme commander, sent by _____ king of Assyria (Isa 20:1)
 52 Israel will _____ and blossom and fill all the world with fruit (Isa 27:6)
 53 seventh letter of Greek alphabet
 55 The Angel which redeemed me from all evil, bless the _____

(Gen 48:16) KJV

57 the _____ will lie down with the goat (Isa 11:6)
 59 Do not take _____ of a hired man who is poor and needy (Deut 24:14)
 62 turn to God, so that your sins may be _____ out (Acts 3:19)
 63 Indeed, the very hairs of your _____ are all numbered (Luke 12:7)
 64 miracles to deceive _____ the elect if that were possible. (Matt 24:24)
 65 son of Seth (Gen 4:26) KJV
 66 What is man, that thou _____ mindful of him? (Ps 8:4) KJV
 67 I will put _____ to the pride of the mighty (2,3) (Ezek 7:24)
 68 The animals take cover; they remain in their _____ (Job 37:8)

DOWN

1 Do two walk together unless they have _____ to do so? (Amos 3:3)
 2 Then shall stand up in his estate a _____ of taxes (Dan 11:20) KJV
 3 They cooked it in _____ or made it into cakes (1,3) (Num 11:8)
 4 Jesus said, "This voice was for your _____, not mine (John 12:30)
 5 is not this a _____ plucked out of the fire? (Zech 3:2) KJV
 6 Therefore, _____ yourselves of all malice (1 Pet 2:1)
 7 you should set aside _____ of money in keeping with (1,3) (1 Cor 16:2)
 8 their associates: Shebaniah, Hodiah, _____, Pellaiah (Neh 10:10)
 9 there will be neither dew _____ rain in the next few years (1 King 17:1)
 10 heavens by fire, and the _____ will melt in the heat (2 Peter 3:12)
 11 He said to _____, "Daughter, your faith has healed you (Mark 5:34)
 14 together with them in the clouds to _____ the Lord in the air (1 Thess 4:17)
 15 the great _____ and the raven will nest there (Isaiah 34:11)
 17 Will you keep to the old path that evil men have _____? (Job 22:15)
 19 they will _____ the ruined cities that have been devastated (Isa 61:4)
 24 I wish I could be with you now and change my _____ (Gal 4:20)
 25 they saw the fig tree withered from the _____ (Mark 11:20)
 27 the poison of _____ is under their lips (Romans 3:13)
 28 you _____ the tongue of the crafty (Job 15:5)
 29 the horn, flute, zither, _____, harp and all kinds of music (Dan 3:7)
 31 must not shave their heads or shave off the _____ of their beards (Lev 21:5)
 33 whose consciences have been seared as with _____ iron. (1,3) (1 Tim 4:2)
 34 loose the bands of wickedness, to _____ the heavy burdens (Isa 58:6) KJV



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36 and that he is a _____ of them that diligently seek him (Heb 11:6) KJV
 37 Take a pot, and put an _____ full of manna therein (Exodus 16:33)
 39 eschew evil, and do good; let him seek peace, and _____ it (1 Pet 3:11) (KJV)
 43 He has given King David a wise son, _____ with intelligence (2 Chron 2:12)
 45 We all growl like bears; we _____ mournfully like doves (Isa 59:11)
 46 red dragon with seven heads _____ horns (3,3) (Rev 12:3)
 48 did their work with one hand and held a _____ in the other (Neh 4:17)
 49 This is a trustworthy saying. And I want you to _____ these things (Titus 3:8)

51 I will be _____ and rejoice in thy mercy (Ps 31:7)
 52 Make these into a sacred anointing oil, a fragrant _____ (Ex 30:25)
 54 Do not _____ to what I command you and do not subtract (Deut 4:2)
 56 You are my God; _____ your servant who trusts in you (Ps 86:2)
 58 fetch olive branches, and _____ branches, and myrtle (Neh 8:15)
 59 he warmeth himself, and saith, _____, I am warm (Isaiah 44:16)
 60 went to a wine _____ to draw fifty measures (Haggai 2:16)
 61 abbr. for the first book of the pentateuch

Solution on page 14



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- Friday, Sept. 15th - Mtn. State Fair (Free gate admission 65yrs. and older)
- Friday, Sept. 29th - Farmer's Daughter (TN)

Heaven

By Pastor Bruce Cannon
Mitchell County

And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: (Luke 21:25,26)

Isn't it amazing that not one thing catches the Lord off guard. He has known for all of time an eternity what would be happening on planet Earth presently. He knows the good, the bad and so forth.

As I write this article, I just finished watching the solar eclipse. It has been spoken about in the news media for weeks. People, a hundred million or so, made vacation plans around this event so they could be in the path of it and experience this rare phenomena.

Currently I am doing a study on the book of the Revelation and note another event, even more rare, which is being anticipated by a billion persons or so. Instead of a solar eclipse, there will come a day when the Son of Man will come back to planet earth riding on a white horse. Every eye will see Him and He will set up His Kingdom on earth and will rule it for one thousand years. (Revelation 1:7, 19:11-16, 20:4). *He will put all enemies under His feet and will cast Satan into the bottomless pit for the thousand years. There will be peace on earth. There will be no fighting among the nations during that time.*

Those who know Christ as personal Savior and Lord will have been given new bodies, glorified ones. There will be no sickness, no more dying, no more evil as eternity begins. Every believer will have made it home safely where the streets are gold and so forth.

Sounds almost too good to be true. But it is true! How do I know? So many passages in the Bible tell me so. And, like those of you reading this article, I believe the Bible to be true and without any error whatsoever.

When I think about Heaven and all it holds I have to bow my head and pray the same prayer John prayed, *"Even so, come, Lord Jesus."* (Revelation 22:20)

Do you know Him? Have you made Him Lord and Savior of your life? If not, why not do so today? It is such a simple process! All we have to do is as simple as saying our ABC's. We acknowledge He is the Savior...the only one. He died on a Cross to save us from our sins. We believe that He will save us if we call on Him. (Romans 10:9,10). And we must confess. We confess that we have sinned (Romans 3:23). *We confess that we believe He is the only means of forgiveness of sin and that He will forgive us if we ask Him to....no matter what we have done in our past.* (Romans 5:1, 8:1)

Why not do that today? It will be, without the shadow of any doubt, the greatest decision you will ever make in your life!

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.



Mia Hall Selected as the Next
Director of Penland School of Crafts

By Robin Dreyer
Mitchell County

Penland School of Crafts is pleased to announce that artist, educator, and administrator Maria "Mia" Hall will be its next director, succeeding Jean McLaughlin, who has led the school since 1998. Hall is currently interim chair of the Department of Art and Design at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock (UALR), where she has been a faculty member for ten years.

A native of Sweden, Hall holds an MFA in furniture design and woodworking from San Diego State University in California, where she worked closely with renowned woodworker and teacher Wendy Maruyama. In 2007, she was hired by UALR to develop a furniture design program and to teach furniture design and contemporary craft courses. During her time in Arkansas, she worked on the development of the department's curriculum, served on six hiring committees, helped design and establish a visiting artist workshop series, and organized public events that increased awareness of the university's craft program. In 2016, she was asked to take the position of department chair, leading fifteen full-time faculty, four staff, and twelve part-time instructors.

She has also been involved with the finding, design, and construction of the new, 65,000-square-foot Windgate Center of Art + Design at the university. She worked on the feasibility study and the design development phase, and she served on the committees that chose the architect and the contractor. As chair, she is the department's project manager and will be overseeing the task of moving ten disciplines into the new facility before it opens in January 2018. In addition to her many activities at the university, she has served on several foundation boards.

Hall's personal work, primarily furniture and mixed-media sculpture, has been shown in numerous exhibitions at venues such as the Arkansas Art Center, 108 Contemporary (OK), University of the Arts (Philadelphia), and Blue Spiral 1 (NC), and is held in many private and public collections.

Hall describes Penland School of Crafts as "one of the leading institutions for the study of craft-based art making," going on to say that, "in a society that puts increasing value and importance on science, technology, engineering, and math, promoting the hand skills, decision making, ingenuity, inventiveness, and analysis that are required to practice skilled making is not only necessary, but essential."

Alida Fish, chair of the Penland board of trustees and a member of the search committee, says that the committee saw in Hall the kind of skills and experience it was looking for in a new director. "We were particularly struck," she says, "by her genuine interest in people and her commitment to Penland. This, combined with her forward-looking and innovative thinking, is sure to result in a winning outcome for the school."

In accepting the position, Hall said, "I am honored and humbled to be chosen as the next director of Penland School of Crafts. Jean McLaughlin has for years been a formidable role model for me, and I find the Penland staff truly inspiring. My family and I look forward with great enthusiasm and excitement to being part of this phenomenal institution's future."

Hall is married to metalsmith and educator David Clemons, a long-term artist-in-residence at UALR and a regular instructor at Penland. They have a ten-year-old daughter, Fiona. Mia Hall will become Penland director on January 1.

Penland School of Crafts is an international center for craft education dedicated to helping people live creative lives. Located in Western North Carolina, Penland offers workshops in books and paper, clay, drawing and painting, glass, iron, metals, printmaking and letterpress, photography, textiles, and wood. The school also sponsors artists' residencies, an outreach program, and a gallery and visitors center. Penland is a nonprofit, tax-exempt institution which receives support from the North Carolina Arts Council, an agency funded by the State of North Carolina and the National Endowment for the Arts, which believes that a great nation deserves great art. More information at www.penland.org.



Mia Hall



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"Since 1982"

"Aha" Moments

By Ken and Jan Merop
Avery County



I was frustrated!

No doubt about it, hunting for an apartment as a single mom with a very low income left me wavering with indecision, fearful of where we would go. Time was of the essence as my landlord needed my apartment and I had to vacate. However, every rental ad was beyond my means.

As I prayed, an idea came to mind. I would drive around town looking for "For Rent" signs. Perhaps this method would lead me to the right place.

A very long story short...I met a lady who invited me to a piano recital (right in the middle of all this drama in my life). But, her invitation had a purpose. As a Christian, she believed God sometimes worked things out in ways we might not expect. Why not introduce me and my need to neighbors who would be attending?

With some hope in my heart, I attended. After the announcement a lady (who would soon become my neighbor) came up to me to tell me about an apartment for rent next door to where she lived.

When I met with the landlord, the price was too high for me. But I'd been directed to seek aid from a rent subsidy program. Because of it, this larger apartment became our home for less than we had paid in the little apartment.

An "Aha" moment to be sure as God came through as only he can.

Recently, in the quietness of my heart, I asked the Lord to especially help me with trusting him with our finances. I hoped in my quiet time, God would point me to verses on trust that would give me hope.

And he did. But differently than I expected.

In this "Aha" moment, he opened my spiritual eyes to see other verses and concepts in the light of trust. Through my morning readings, I was led to verse after verse that didn't necessarily say, "Trust in the Lord with all your heart." But, rather enlightened my soul to who God is in all of his fullness that I might realize, once again, that he is my portion forever.

Eventually, I walked right into Ephesians 3: 20 -21, NKJV which says, "Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever, Amen."

"Aha!" Exceedingly abundantly above all we ask or think! Imagine...that's beyond trustworthiness. Selah

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*With legs that appear so delicate they couldn't hold up a flea,
the butterfly tenaciously clings to the nourishing blossom...
proving there's strength where none appears to be.*

Aha! And we must do the same.

Attach ourselves to our life-giving Lord,

Who infuses us with His strength...

Delighting in His promises and standing on His Word.

*"...by which have been given to us exceedingly great
and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers
of the divine nature..."*

2 Peter 1: 4



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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Honor Saluting Honor

By Dr. Mark Creech

I would like to share something taken directly from The American Patriots Almanac by William J. Bennett and John T.E. Cribb.

"The Civil War came to an end, for all practical purposes, in April 1865 when Robert E. Lee's starving, exhausted Confederate army found itself hemmed in by Union forces in Virginia. On April 9, Lee met with General Ulysses S. Grant in a farmhouse at Appomattox Court House to offer his surrender. Grant's terms were generous: the Southern soldiers were to be pardoned and could go home with their private property, including their horses, which could be used for a late spring planting. Officers could keep their side arms, and Lee's hungry troops could receive Union rations. "This will have the best possible effect upon the men," Lee observed quietly.

"Three days later the formal surrender took place as Confederate troops marched to stack their weapons and lay down their flags. The Union officer in charge of the ceremony was Joshua Chamberlain, a hero of Gettysburg. Leading the Southerners was General John B. Gordon, who had been wounded many times in combat.

"Chamberlain watched Gordon approaching. As he later described it. "The General was riding in advance of his troops, his chin drooped to his breast, downhearted and dejected in appearance almost beyond description." Something stirred in Chamberlain's breast. He gave an order, a bugle call sounded, and his men came to attention with their rifles on their shoulders. It was a salute of honor.

"General Gordon looked up in surprise. Recognizing the gesture, he wheeled his horse, dipped his sword, and ordered his own men to return the salute. Lee's defeated veterans stepped forward with heads high and eyes level – honor saluting honor.

"Then it was over. The Union had been tested and had survived. With a salute of soldierly respect, the nation's wounds began to heal. Both sides faced a new beginning as Americans all."

If these men, participants in that horrible War Between the States, having watched their comrades fall in battle, and at the end of that great conflict turn to honor and salute each other, how can we dishonor their memory with lesser behavior?

People gathered around a statue of Robert E. Lee holding it up as a symbol of white supremacy is exceedingly vile and ungodly.

But there is no sin, no threat to our Union, in visiting such monuments recognizing as Dr. Jerry Newcombe has eloquently stated it, that historical figures are not always "two-dimensional cutouts in a simplistic morality play of obvious good versus obvious evil."

We can honor our past without being in bondage to it.



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

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Why Children Should Obey Their Parents

By Dr. Tom Walker
McDowell County

We are living in an age of rebellion and defiance. It is evident both in our homes and in society as well. Years ago, defiance from children was not tolerated, but it seems today we have become too lenient in regard to it in our families. Discipline is taught in the Word of God. Proverbs 22:15 says, "Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him." Children should be made to obey their mother and father. It should not be an option in the home but a requirement. There are blessings that come through obedience. Of course, the word "obey" means to do what a law or a person says to do." In the Word of God, obedience is spoken of highly. 1 Samuel 15:22 reminds us, "Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams." Obedience reveals wisdom, respect and love. Those elements are missing in so many homes in our generation. Why should children obey their parents? There are several good reasons that I am going to share with you today.

The Bible Commands It

In Ephesians 6:1, the Bible says, "Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right." Look closely at what that verse says to us. If it is right to obey your parents, then it stands to reason, it is not right when children refuse to obey the wishes of their mom and dad. If something is right, it is correct, it is the thing to do. The word "obey" is in the Greek present tense, which suggests an ongoing continued action. As far as the mode goes it is imperative mode, which means it is not an option but a command from the Lord. It is absolutely necessary to have an orderly society that children obey their parents in the Lord. The phrase "in the Lord" suggests there is a limit to the child's obedience. When a parent is not acting in the Lord, he is not to be obeyed. The Lord has nothing whatsoever to do with the filth of unrighteousness and abuse of precious children. If a child can break away and free himself from such parental corruption, he has every right to be freed from his parent. The Lord came to set men free from the abuse and the filth of sin, not to enslave men to it, and especially not to enslave children to it. One of the most severe warnings ever issued in all of history was issued by the Lord Jesus to adults who abuse children (Mark 9:42-48). The abusing parent had better heed, for one of the things that God will not tolerate—absolutely not tolerate—is the abuse of a child. We must proclaim the Word of God: children are to obey their parents, but they are to obey only if the parents' desire and instructions are in the Lord. If a parent is beating a child black and blue or sexually abusing a child, the child should go to some other adult he feels close to



and ask for his help. And we as ministers of the Lord—ministers who are called to proclaim Christ and to do what we can to bring His righteousness to earth—must teach the truth from the pulpits of the world" (Preacher's Outline and Sermon Bible).

Longevity Encourages It

God told Israel in Exodus 20:12, "Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee." Although that was spoken to Israel it certainly can be applied to us today.

I believe God many times will honor the child who is obedient and shows the proper respect to his or her parents, with longevity of life. Some young people's lives have probably abruptly come to an end because they were not wise enough to listen to what their mother and dad had to say to them. In the Old Testament, some children were taken by the elders to the gates of the city and stoned because they would not co-operate with their parents. Deuteronomy 21:20-21 tells us, "And they shall say unto the elders of his city, this our son is stubborn and rebellious, he will not obey our voice; he is a glutton, and a drunkard. And all the men of his city shall stone him with stones, that he die: so shalt thou put evil away from among you; and all Israel shall hear, and fear." The people of the past and the Word of God takes disobedience to parents as a very grave and serious matter.

Order Demands It

If we are to have an orderly and decent society, children must be taught to obey when they are young. Rebels and anarchists in society often come out of homes where they were not taught to be under authority. There is a chain of command in the home, and even so in our society. The Bible teaches us to be in submission to the authorities that be so that things can be done decently and in order. Kids must learn to put themselves under the authority of the mom and dad, to prepare them to be responsible citizens, when they become late teens and enter adulthood.

Love and Respect Produces It

If a young person respects his parents and has the love for them he ought to have, then obedience will flow out of that love and respect. Where love and respect are missing, there is chaos, confusion and turmoil in the home. Why not let the love of God flood your soul and love and respect for the parents will come supernaturally?

God Smiles Upon It

Since God commands us to love our parents, He smiles upon us when we are doing what He wants us to do. If a child is to have the smile of God upon his life, then he would be wise to listen to what his parents have to say to him. Then, he should co-operate fully with them as they seek to guide his life until he is in the place to make his own decisions. I had rather have God's smile than God's frown.

Peace of Mind Accompanies It

Paul the Apostle said to the church at Philippi- "Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you" (Phil.4:9). When we do not do, what we know we ought to do, there is a lack of true peace in our hearts. It is best to just do the will of God and we will have peace and serenity of heart in a troubled and confused world.

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



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Answering the Call, Paying the Price,
Reaping the Rewards

By Rebecca Gwyn
Burke County



As I sat in the beautiful chapel at The Cove in Asheville, NC, trying to focus on what it was that God had brought me there for, in my spirit I heard God clearly ask me, "Are you willing to forsake it all?" Absolute fear struck my heart as I began to think about what my answer could cost me. If I answered, "Yes", I knew I must be sincere in my answer because the price could be great. If I answered, "No", the cost would be even greater. So, I had to choose. Was it to be God or home and family?

As I sat there with tears streaming down my face, I battled with my response. The first thing that came to mind was my children. I could easily give up the material things, but my children had always been my life. Would I be able to leave them behind, if need be, to follow God? I must admit, I struggled. I still struggle at times. But, as I sat there contemplating how I would answer God, my mind went to the cross and the great price that was paid for me. The sacrifice that was made so that I could have eternal life and a relationship with God. How could I possibly say, "No", when I owed Him my very life?

With tears still flowing, I gave Him my answer, "Yes, I am willing to forsake it all". I knew from that moment forward would be a journey into the unknown. Simply trying to follow as He leads. I was scared, but determined to hold up my end of the bargain. He said He would never leave me nor forsake me. My job was simply to follow.

I now have a much deeper respect for the story of Abraham. When Abraham was called out from among his people, from the land of Ur, he had a decision to make. To be obedient and follow or refuse.

Abraham was called to follow God into the unknown. He did not know where he was going, how long he would have to stay, what he would have to leave behind, what enemies he would face. Nothing. He simply pulled up stakes and went. He got sidetracked at times, but he always got back on course. He didn't always do things the right way. He made mistakes. Even though he failed at times, God did not. He kept His promise.

Because of Abraham's obedience to forsake all and follow God, his descendants became heirs to a land flowing with milk and honey. Because of his obedience, a great nation was born of which would be the avenue for the Messiah to come. Because of his obedience and willingness to forsake this world, we are now heirs to the Kingdom.

When we answer the call, "Follow me", are we ready to pay the cost? Do we take it seriously? Are we willing to forsake it all in order to follow Him into the vast kingdom of obedience? Are we willing to say as Jeremiah, "Here am I Lord, send me"?

Too often, we as Christians want the blessings of God without any real sacrifice or service. We are satisfied sitting on our comfortable church pews singing, "Oh, How I love Jesus", as long as He doesn't require anything of us. We do not want to get out of our comfort zone. Therefore, we forfeit the promises and blessings of God. We fail to reap the rewards God has for us down here. We will ultimately reap the reward of Heaven because God keeps His promises. But, we are in no hurry to claim that either because we are happy where we are. The sad part of that is, when we do get to Heaven we will stand before God empty handed. Nothing to offer Him for the great and many blessings He bestowed upon us simply because He loves us.

God has called us to be followers of Jesus. He has asked us to count the cost. He has promised us a reward. Are you ready to say, "Yes, Lord, I'll go"?



Rebecca Gwyn is the Director of REACH for Women Ministries.

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Solution on page 14

HARRIS HIGH CLASS OF 1965 - 52nd Reunion - Saturday, September 30 from 1:00 -6:00 pm at Grassy Creek Baptist Family Life Center (no charge as expenses will be paid by Class Treasury). For further info contact Peggy Biddix Riddle - 828-765-9730 or Paul Pritchard - 828-765-3157. There will be a dinner at Twisted Laurel Restaurant Friday night (pay for your own meal). For further info contact Judy Harrell Godat - 423-753-4247 or 423-676-9698. Y'ALL COME!



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The Rotary of Spruce Pine

Chief Summerlin

By Doug Sudduth
Mitchell County

The Chief of the Spruce Pine Police Department, Bill Summerlin, presented an informative program on Thursday, August 10, to members and guests of the Rotary Club of Spruce Pine. He was introduced by Rotarian Ruby Greene. He thanked the Club for their generosity and service to the community.



Police Chief Summerlin receiving a locally handmade Rotary mug from Rotarian Ruby Greene

A former detective, Chief Summerlin provided statistics about the overwhelming world-wide drug problem and how even in small towns like ours, families can be profoundly affected.

In a lively anecdotal style, Chief Summerlin shared information about "Shop with a Cop," a project of the Spruce Pine Police Department that helps local disadvantaged children. He invited Rotarians to become involved in this program as volunteers are always needed. He closed his remarks with a challenge to "do something good, make a difference in someone's life."

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



Christy's Corner

Beavers

By Christy Lowman
Burke County



This month we are going to talk about beavers. Now I bet you are thinking: What in the world could I possibly learn about beavers when it comes to God? Keep reading, and find out!

There are two types of beavers; the American beaver and the European beaver. Beavers are mammals, they don't eat meat, and are nocturnal. They live in colonies, live up to 24 years and can weigh as much as 60-77 lbs. God gave beavers huge teeth, (almost an inch long) and very strong jaws. Their teeth continue to grow their entire life. This is so they can bite through trees to build their dams and domelike homes called lodges. Beavers have a scaly tail, waterproof fur, webbed feet and see-through eyelids which are like goggles. These help them navigate under water. Beavers can also swim up to 5 miles an hour and stay under water for fifteen minutes at a time.

Have you ever heard of the term "busy as a beaver" or "eager beaver"? These sayings were created because beavers are very hardworking animals. They start their first job at a year old. They babysit their new baby brothers and sisters. Can you imagine taking care of a baby when you were just one-year old? Beavers are also intelligent. They build underwater doors so they can get out of their homes and access their underwater food supply during winter when there is ice on the top of the water.

Did you know that God gives each person his very own talent to do things for



Him? God also gives animals talents too. One of a beaver's talents is that they are awesome engineers and architects. They can build dams and structures that change landscapes, closes off streams, turn fields and forests into ponds and

wetlands, raise the water table, and much more. Beavers may not know it but by using their talents they create fresh water and thriving habitats for other mammals, fish, reptiles, and birds. Lots of endangered and threatened species are able to live in the wetlands beavers create. Their structures also provide people with vital natural resources. Because of the environment beavers create, the Native Americans call them the "sacred center."

Beavers in Alberta Canada have created a gigantic dam. It is so big that astronauts can see it from space. This dam is 2800 ft. long and 14 ft. tall. Scientists believe that these beavers relatives have lived there since the 1970s. These beavers joined together to create these large wetlands for protection and food. How cool is that? This huge beaver dam/lodge reminds me that if we have asked Jesus into our heart then we will get to live in heaven with Him and our family. Did you know that Jesus is in heaven right now building a mansion for you and me? We will get to live with Him for all of eternity! Isn't that great news?

In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. John 14:2 King James Bible

Things to think about:

1. Do you know what your talent is that God has given you? If not, it is okay. Start praying for Him to show you what it is. He will! I promise.
2. How can you be a "busy beaver" for Christ?
3. Have you asked Jesus into your heart so He can prepare a mansion in heaven for you? If not, please think about doing so. If you do want to, talk to an adult about it and they will help you! All you have to do is invite Jesus in!

Dear Lord, I pray that you will forgive each one of us of our many sins. I also pray that you will help us be busy beavers for Christ by sharing the gospel to others. Please show these children what their special talents are so they can use them to glorify You. I pray that each one reading this article will surrender their heart to you so you can build them a mansion in heaven. In Jesus's name, I pray AMEN.

See you next time!

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Christy Lowman is a Christian author and illustrator that lives in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains with her husband and two children. She enjoys writing and illustrating books for all ages. Some of her short stories are published with Guideposts and HCL. Christy gives all the glory to God in everything she does. A portion of every book sold from the Small Bible Character Series will be donated to battle human trafficking. If you enjoy her books, 'like' her author page on Facebook and let her know! You can buy her books at https://www.amazon.com/s/ref=dp_byline_sr_book_1?ie=UTF8&field-author=Christy+Lowman&search-alias=books&text=Christy+Lowman&sort=relevancerank You can reach her at <https://www.facebook.com/authorChristyLowman/> or christyszoaps@yahoo.com.

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Son of a Preacher Man

As the son of Billy Graham, Franklin Graham learned many lessons from his father. Read more about his journey from rebellion to reverend.

For all his youthful rebellion, Franklin Graham learned where he started—with family and the church—was where he always belonged.

Fast cars. Fast motorcycles. Fast planes. "Anything that blows smoke and goes fast, I like it," says Franklin Graham.

son of world famous evangelist Billy Graham. His hankering for adrenaline-pumping experiences hasn't changed even though he parted ways with the rebellious days of his youth and followed his father to the pulpit.

When he crisscrosses the globe on international relief missions, Franklin buckles himself into the cockpit and pilots the plane to whatever destination he's headed. "I've been flying for around 35 years," he says. "Aviation is the one thing I learned in school that I use every week. We have 14 aircraft in the organization, and I fly all of them except the helicopter."

Franklin maintains a hectic schedule of world travel for two organizations. In 1979, he became president and chairman of the board of Samaritan's Purse, an international relief agency with corporate offices in Boone. There, he helps provide assistance to victims of natural disaster, war, disease, and famine in more than 100 countries. He's also the CEO and president of the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association—roles he took on in 2000 and 2001, respectively.

After serving God throughout the world, Franklin anticipates returning to his home, located on more than 100 acres in Boone, and his wife, Jane Austin Cunningham Graham—a hometown girl he met when he was eight years old. It's also the place where they raised their three sons, William, Roy, and Edward; and daughter, Jane Austin.

"It's the only home my wife and I have ever owned. We were just kids when we first came up here to Boone," he says. "I've lived all my life in Western North Carolina, and I can go anywhere in the world. But there's something special when you land in Charlotte, and you see the mountains to the west."

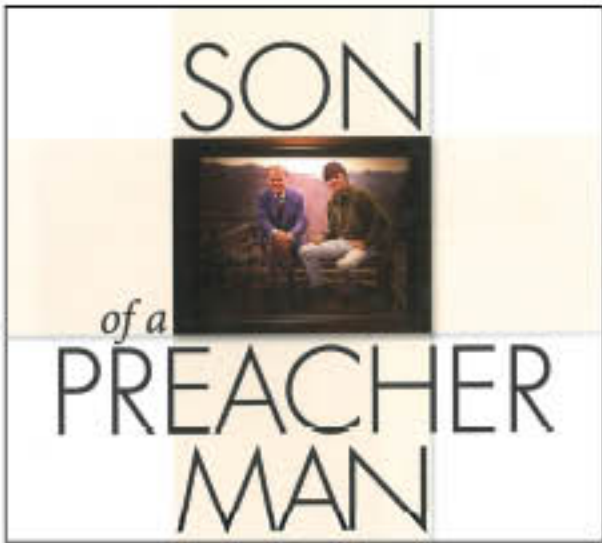
That notion, that he can be anywhere in the world but chooses to come back to the familiar, is a theme that runs through Franklin's life—professionally, personally, and spiritually.

Battle for Control

Franklin's features are strikingly similar to his father's, especially his magnetic eyes. On the day of this interview, he's dressed in black jeans, purple shirt, and a black Harley Davidson ball cap. He looks more ready to jump onto a motorcycle than lead the faithful and help the needy.

His oversized office provides more insight into his personality and interests. It features an executive desk and conference table, along with a luxurious sitting area that resembles a living room decorated with the leather sofa and chairs and oriental rugs. Some of his hunting conquests—deer and elk—are preserved over the stone fireplace; Franklin has enjoyed the sport since he was a child. And antique guns are displayed on the walls. A multitude of family photos are showcased on the walls, as well as framed photos of his parents arranged on the bookshelves. There were times in his youth when his choices and behavior gave his parents pause as they wondered about the direction their fourth child would take in his life. His teenage years were riddled with fights, cigarettes, and alcohol. In his book, *Rebel With a Cause*, Franklin writes: His parents "knew much more clearly than I did pressures I faced of being a 'preacher's kid' as well as the oldest son of a 'Christian legend.' I'm sure God gave them wisdom to know that if they pushed me too hard to conform, I might take off running and never come back—not just away from them, but perhaps from God, too."

His parents sent him to a boarding school—Stony Brook in New York—when



he was 13. Enduring his freshman and sophomore years there, he then intensified efforts to persuade his father and mother, Ruth, to allow him to finish his studies at Owen High School near their home in Montreat. They finally agreed to a transfer following Christmas of his junior year. But he continued to be a handful and Owen's principal quickly suspended him for fighting. Franklin also pushed the limits by staying out late and resisting wake-up calls to go to school.

His mother devised creative tactics to wake him, including stuffing a little firecracker under his door and crawling across the roof to knock on his window when he locked her out of his room. Her meddling made him "madder than a hornet," but today he admires the spunk she showed and credits her for his bold spirit. "Mama always had a sense of adventure," says Franklin. "I remember one day there was a rattlesnake in the yard. She took a marshmallow fork and tried to pin the head of the snake down because she wanted to pick it up by the tail. I said 'Mama, what are you going to do with that snake when you pick it up?' She said she just wanted to pick it up. I don't think she ever knew what fear was."

Ruth wasn't afraid to dish out tough love to her wayward teenager, but tensions continued to flair at Owen. The principal agreed to let Franklin finish his high school credits while attending LeTourneau College in Longview, Texas. "I did get a diploma from Owen, but I wasn't there my senior year," explains Franklin. "I think they threw the diploma at me." When LeTourneau officials kicked Graham out for breaking rules, he returned home and spent two years at Montreat-Anderson College (now known as Montreat College).

Then in 1972, during a trip to Jerusalem, Graham underwent a personal transformation and committed his life to serving Jesus Christ. He writes, "that night I had finally decided I was sick and tired of being sick and tired. My years of running and rebellion had ended. I got off my knees and went to bed. It was finished." He believes the rebellion he experienced as a young man helps him relate to people he encounters through his ministry. "I went through a period of my life when I questioned and when I didn't want God to be the Lord of my life," says Franklin. "I wanted to be in control. I don't think there's anybody who's ever lived who didn't want to be in control. I found out that trying to be in control only messes things up worse. I think there are a lot of people who are where I was at one time. It just allows me to say, 'Hey, I've been there. I know what you're going through.'"

Preaching a Familiar Message

Franklin has witnessed much suffering during his missions for Samaritan's Purse. He saw "bodies everywhere" and breathed in a "stench that was unbelievable" after a tsunami pulverized Thailand on December 26, 2004. He's comforted people in war-torn countries, and he's helped provide food and medicine to those suffering from dreadful diseases all around the world.

He recently talked with a man in Uganda who shocked him by saying he was thankful he has AIDS. Through his disease, and through the support of Franklin's missionaries, the man found a relationship with Christ. "I've never had anybody tell me that before," says Franklin. "It made me so grateful for our team of men and women who showed love and compassion for him."

As Franklin has matured into his role as an evangelist, it's common for people to compare him with his father. But they are separate individuals, with very different styles. "There's only one Billy Graham," he says. "There will never be another Billy Graham. My father and I are a lot different, but the Gospel that we preach is the same."

Franklin is not the only grandchild to follow in his father's footsteps; many of his close family members are involved in his work. All his siblings, including sisters Anne, Ruth, and Virginia, and his younger brother Nelson have a history of operating the family's organizations. And Franklin's two oldest sons, Will and Roy, have also chosen to serve in the ministry.

In the year [2007] marked a period of significant personal concern, celebration, and grief for Franklin. In March, his youngest son, 27-year-old Edward, suffered shrapnel wounds while serving in Iraq. Then, on May 31, Franklin was beside his father, who turned 89 in November, as he greeted a large crowd and three former presidents to officially dedicate the Billy Graham Library in Charlotte. This wonderful family celebration was followed by sorrow, as Franklin's mother died, at the age of 87, just a few weeks later.

Today, Billy Graham is in declining health and no longer conducts his famous revivals. Instead, Franklin has taken on that role. He called the crusades "festivals," and this year alone he's preached to hundreds of thousands of people, both stateside and international venues such as Panama, Ukraine, Ecuador, and Korea. If you were to ask Franklin where he gets the inspiration and the guidance to maintain such a large ministry and be involved in so many support efforts, the preacher in him would likely give credit to a source on high. But the direction he received from a family who never gave up on him is equally evident.

This article first appeared in WNC Magazine in 2007.



Accentuate the Positive

By Cheryl Shuffler
Burke County

Principal meeting focuses on workforce development

Burke County Public Schools hosted its annual administrators strategic planning session July 17 and 18 in downtown Morganton. The two-day retreat focused on economic development and helped directors, principals and assistant principals connect the dots between education and the workforce.

Guest speakers included Ed Phillips, Burke County director of tourism; Sharon Jablonski, Morganton Main Street director; Bryan Steen, county manager for Burke; Alan Wood, president/CEO Burke Development Inc.; Kasey Cotter with the Historic Burke Foundation; and Randy Burns, Burke County Board of Education chair.

The principals toured the Old Burke County Courthouse, Catawba Brewery Company and downtown Morganton as well as several industries, including Leviton, Continental and Seiren. They also visited the site of the future N.C. School of Science and Math West on the campus of the North Carolina School for the Deaf, Broughton Hospital to learn about the proposed re-use project, and the new Mountain View Elementary School construction site.

"This retreat was laser focused on economic development," said Burke County Public Schools Superintendent Dr. Larry Putnam. "We held an intense two-day event and talked about everything from teaching soft skills to enticing our students to stay in or return to Burke County to live and work after they graduate from Burke County Public Schools. We have been getting out and taking industry tours for three years now and have worked hard on relationships with Western Piedmont Community College and our County Commissioners and just wanted to connect the dots for our school leaders on what is made in Burke, how bright our future looks and the role our school system plays in economic development."

Wood told principals the existing industries in the county are doing well and even expanding, including Continental, and there are many opportunities on the horizon for Burke County. "The keys to attracting industries are the education system and the workforce, and I brag about our school system all the time," Wood said.

Steen said, "You have a very important job in economic development. I am glad you have had this opportunity to see what our county offers as we continue to work together."

At the end of the two-day retreat, the principals reflected on what they had learned and observed.

Several of the principals who have children of their own said they are excited about what jobs are available for the Burke County workforce and see that the workforce and education communities are taking steps now that will hopefully lead to their kids to coming back home after college.

"As a parent, it is exciting to see what's coming for my own kids," said Heidi Bristol, principal at Ray Childers Elementary School.

Kristen Edwards, assistant principal at East Burke Middle School, said, "This has helped me to see our purpose and the big picture of what we are preparing our students for and that is to come back to our community and to contribute to our community. My family is a close family, and I'm glad there are things to come back to for my kids."

The industry tours allowed principals to interact with some of their students' parents.

Chesterfield Elementary School Principal Charles Williams said, "It was interesting to see where our parents work and where they spend the majority of their day."

Table Rock Middle School Principal Jennifer Hawkins said she saw real-world applications for classroom lessons. She said, "As a teacher, I always liked to have an application for a concept, and on these tours, I saw some examples of that. Continental had an electron microscope. That will make it real for the students to know that."

Anna Moose, assistant principal at Freedom High School, said, "This retreat has helped me think about what we are doing to help cultivate skills in students that are needed for the workforce."

Lannie Simpson, director of ELL, said, the two days helped show her the importance of instilling life-long learning. "The rate of innovation is so fast and changing so much that we can't train specific skills because they will be obsolete."



She reiterated the importance of teaching students to be adaptive and willing to learn new skills.

Burns said, "I see traditional education moving away from the model of giving the students a problem to solve to having student identify the problems that need to be solved and then solving them."

He also thanked the principals for all they do and reinforced his commitment to helping our students by continuing to build upon partnerships with Western Piedmont Community College, local governmental agencies and business and industry. He said, "Everything is about relationships."

The principals also took part in several fun activities, including painting and then hiding rocks for the Color Burke! Facebook project.

BCPS elementary schools to start GEMS clubs
Activities focus on STEM for girls

Seven teachers and media coordinators from Burke County Public Schools are now Girls Excelling in Math and Science (GEMS) club coaches. Elise Hembree, from WA Young; Karen Breedlove from Forest Hill; Emma Watson from Salem; Karen Goins from Drexel;

Amanda Garrison from Drexel, April Robinson from Oak Hill and Lisa Nichols from Valdese were among the 27 educators from across the region who spent the week of Aug. 7 at the NC Center of Engineering Technologies (NCCET) training to start GEMS clubs at their schools.

The goal of GEMS clubs is to enhance self-efficacy and skills in female students in elementary and middle schools. These school clubs focus on females in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) careers through inquiry-based activities.

This project was developed and implemented by STEM West, the educational arm of Workforce Development of the Western Piedmont Council of Governments, and funded by the Duke Energy Foundation and the Appalachian Rural Commission. STEM West partnered with the NCCET and The Science House of NCSU to provide training.

Dr. Laura Bottomley of Women in Engineering from NCSU kicked off the training. She shared research about females in STEM careers and why these clubs are important to the community. On the second day, GEMS coaches Dee Chinault and Corry Broxterman from Charlotte Mecklenburg shared practical experience they learned from their club of five years. On the third day, Gina Barrier of The Science House/NCSU, trained the coaches in data-collection devices and Makey, Makeys. The GEMS coaches have access to the free equipment loan program to use in their GEMS clubs.

WA Young, Forest Hill, Drexel, Salem, Oak Hill and Valdese will start their new GEMS clubs in the fall. Using grant funds to purchase materials or fund club field trips, they will provide experiences for approximately 30 girls in each club to build their confidence and provide opportunities in the STEM fields.

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



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