Youth Revival
Submitted to God
By Carissa Blevins
Mitchell County

I was asked to write a letter about my experience of being part of the Tri-County Youth Revival. This revival has been a blessing to me and everyone that has been part of it. The experience of hearing the word of God from two high school boys is glorious. We need people our age to teach us about God because it shows us that God works on people even when we are young. Just walking into the church, you can feel God move.

During this revival, I got the opportunity to stand up and testify. Last year I faced a lot of sickness. I had four surgeries from kidney stones, and I have scar tissue. I had two stents as well. I also faced Anesthesia Depression and a disorder called PTSD. I have to go to therapy now, but tell myself it is because I am strong. In March of this year, I went back to my doctor, and I got the best news I could have possibly received. God healed me. My kidney looked good. After that appointment, God told me I had to tell my testimony at this revival. I wanted to share what He had done for me.

Stories like mine were told at this revival, and it helped me to hear them. The singing at this revival was such a blessing. Our theme song at this revival was “It’s Under the Blood.” We sang this song every night just to remember God died on the cross to save our sins. We also sang “I’m Not Ashamed” because we aren’t ashamed to stand and say that we love Jesus. The preachers, Josh and Keven, were wonderful. They have brought the word of God each night in a special way. They talked about how we shouldn’t live our life with one foot in Heaven and the other one on Earth. They talked about how you can get saved and how God forgives you. Also, Keven preached about how we should be submitted to God. The way this two special men have helped the youth, and the way they can touch the adults is amazing. Many people have been saved, and many people have rededicated their lives to God. A young man named Tyler Boone even got called to preach. I, on the other hand, have made some new friends and have gotten closer with old friends. This is something that has truly been a blessing to me. I am so thankful to be part of something so committed to God. This revival has not only made me a better Christian, but it has everyone involved. I am so blessed to have been able to come to this because it has made me a better person and made me closer to my God.

Youth Led Tabernacle Revival April 2018
By Ashley Aycock Stockton
Mitchell County

Oh, I love him, that’s all I want to say! What a blessing it was to be a part of such as amazing 2 weeks of worshipping God with brothers and sisters in Christ! 9 souls saved by having the Blood applied, 1 God called man surrendered to Preach, and 30 plus people rededicated their lives to Jesus Christ. The Holy Ghost was so present in these meetings you couldn’t help but just smile and take it all in! 9:30 never felt so early after two a half hours of worship service every evening. The difference in going through the motions and having church is the Presence of the Holy Spirit, and I think God we experienced that every night! This meeting was birthed in the hearts of 2 fine young men of God, Bro. Josh Forbes, and Bro. Keyven Buchanan, who preached directly to our hearts and followed the leadership of the Holy Ghost. God gave these two a vision of what he wanted done, and they were obedient to what he had led them to do. The young people led this revival, leading the choir every night, and testifying to God’s faithfulness! It should be a charge to every adult in attendance to remember what God said in His word in Romans 1:16, “For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.” What a blessing it was to see 12-year-old boys shooting, and denominations of all our Christian faith come together for a time to worship. I feel like God gave us all a little taste of Heaven... Boy, that is what Heaven is going to be like. One of these days we will shout and sing the praises of Our Father in Heaven with all the saints gone on already, what a day that will be!

Casey Stockton - Member of Mt. Carmel Baptist Church, surrendered to God’s call to preach the Gospel in May, 2017

Welcome Garth Davis, MD, to the team!

To learn more about Mission Weight Management’s comprehensive in-person and web-based programs and enroll for a free information session, call (828) 213-4100 or visit missionweight.org.

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May 2018 - Blue Ridge Christian News page 1
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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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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Advertisers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>APPLIANCEs</td>
<td>Pine Branch Baptist (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Plunette Presbyterian (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Spruce Pine United Methodist (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>St. Lucian Catholic (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Bridge (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>West Burnsville Baptist (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AUTOMOBILES - Dealers</td>
<td>Buchanan Young (27)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>John Greene Chrysler (7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AUTOMOBILES - Tires</td>
<td>Spruce Pine Tire (21)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AUTOMOBILES - Service</td>
<td>John’s Automotive (27)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOOKSTORE</td>
<td>Dellingen Bookstore (34)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BUILDING SUPPLY</td>
<td>Summit Building Supply (12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COLLEGE</td>
<td>Hampton College (30)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPA</td>
<td>James Miller (11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHURCHES</td>
<td>Atgass Baptist (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bear Creek Baptist (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Berry Chapel Baptist (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Burnmeadow Baptist (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Faith Fellowship (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>First Advent Christian (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>First Baptist Spruce Pine (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Grassy Creek Baptist (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Great Hope 7th day Adventist (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Morganton Seventh day Adventist (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Billy Graham/The Cove (19)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Freedom Life (35)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>High Pastures (40)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Valdese Tourism (42)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yancey Chamber (21)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FARM SUPPLIES</td>
<td>Griffith’s General Store (27)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FURNITURE</td>
<td>Book Store (45)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>L&amp;B Furniture (25)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Peoples Furniture (18)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Southwest Trading (15)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HAIR SALON</td>
<td>Rumors Salon (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HABITAT</td>
<td>Yancey/Mitchell Habitat (24)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HEALTH CARE</td>
<td>Rabunsville Community Clinic (26)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Carolina Home Care (14)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mission Health (1, 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Prott Health Care (47)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CarPartners Hospice &amp; Palliative Care/McDowell (12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hospice and Palliative Care of the Blue Ridge, Inc (13, 39)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hospice of Lutherton (11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hospice of Yancey (25)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HOUSING</td>
<td>Clayton (26)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INSURANCE</td>
<td>Andrews &amp; Andrews (14)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fortner Insurance (30)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Miller Insurance Group (41)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mitchell Co. Farm Bureau (36)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nation Wide / Trent (23)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MULCH</td>
<td>Mckinley Construction (17)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NURSERY</td>
<td>Lakeview Garden (44)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Christmas Tree Garden Center (35)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHARMACY</td>
<td>The Prescription Pad (24)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLUMBING/HEATING</td>
<td>Barlow Plumbing Heating (9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REALTORS</td>
<td>Watson Realty (18)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TREE SERVICE</td>
<td>Ray’s Tree Service (43)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RESTAURANTS</td>
<td>Ables Restaurant (23)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bantam Chef (22)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>BBQ’s Good Eats (35)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>D.O. (9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Western Sizzlin (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RETAIL</td>
<td>BB’s Oyster Bar (31)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Grassy Creek Grocery (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMALL ENGINE REPAIR</td>
<td>Summit Building Supply (12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THRIFT STORE</td>
<td>Hospice and Palliative Care of the Blue Ridge, Inc (45)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TRANSPORTATION</td>
<td>Yancey Transit (34)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Church Directory

The Bridge Church of WNC
207 Pinebridge Avenue
Spruce Pine, NC 28777
www.bridgewnc.org
Pastors - Tom & Tammy Anglin
Sunday Service 10:30AM
Wednesday Service 7:00PM
Church Office M-F
9:00AM-3:00PM
"Home of the Country Christian" School
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 17:23)

Morganton Seventh-day Adventist Church
2167 James Road
Morganton, NC 28655
828-584-8212
Pastor Rick Mercer
Sabbath (Saturday) Bible Study - 9:00 am
Sabbath Worship - 11:00 am
"Veggie Buffet after church"
Wednesday
Praise, Prayer, Proclaim - 7:00 pm
www.morganton7sda.org

Grassy Creek Baptist Church
7930 Old U.S. 226 Hwy
Spruce Pine, NC 28777
www.grassycreambc.org
Sunday School 10:00am
Morning Worship 11:00am
Sunday evening 6:30pm
Wednesday:
J.A.M. (Jesus and Me) 7:00pm
Seekers (Youth) 7:00pm
Mid-week Worship 7:00pm
"That Mitchell County may know Christ"

Bear Creek Baptist Church
327 Bear Creek Road
Bakersville, NC 28711
www.bearcreekbaptist.com
Reverend Bruce Cannon
Sunday School 9:45 AM
Worship Service 11:00 AM
Discipleship 9:00 PM
Evening Worship 6:45 PM
Wednesday Worship 7:30 PM
"For God so loved the world, he gave his only Son..."

Great Hope Seventh-day Adventist Church
2074 U.S. Hwy 70 E
Morganton, NC 28655
828-475-2420
Pastor Barry Mallory
Sabbath (Saturday) Bible Study - 10:00am
Sabbath Worship - 11:30am
"Vegetarian Buffet after church"
Wednesday Praise, Prayer & Proclaim - 7:00 pm
www.greathopesda.com

Spruce Pine United Methodist Church
11080 Hwy 236 South
Spruce Pine, NC 28777
www.sprucepineumc.org
sprucepineumc.net
828-765-3748
Pastor Rev. Jeremy Troxler
Sunday School - 10:00am
Sunday Worship - 11:00am
Choir Worship - 7:00pm
The mission of Spruce Pine United Methodist Church is to be a ambassadors on a hill spreading the Good News of Jesus Christ through Worship, Fellowship, Education, and Nurturing Service

First Advent Christian Church
215 Lemor Road
Morganton, NC 28655
828-437-8206
www.firstmorganton.org
Pastor Mark Bradshaw
828-437-8206
Reverend Bobby Joe Greene
Sunday School - 9:45-10:45am
Worship Service - 10:45am
Sunday Evening - 6:30pm
A Bible-believing Fellowship Loving God and Loving People

Berry Chapel Baptist Church
29C Chapel St.
Spruce Pine, NC 28777
828-766-6596
www.berrychapelbaptist.com
Pastor - Steve Williams
Sunday School 9:45 AM
Worship Service 11:00 AM
Sunday Evening Campus Ministry - 5:30 PM
Wednesday Evening
"Where Everybody is Somebody And Jesus Christ is Lord!"

Faith Fellowship Church
Champ-Ray Rd.
Morganton, NC 28655
(828) 877-6984
www.fnc.org
www.floralid.org
Pastor: David Gillespie
Sunday School - 10:00 am
Worship Service - 11:00 am
Wednesday Bible Study - 7:00pm
Theophia of good men are planted by the Lord, And he delighteth in his way." Psalms 37:33

Burkemont Baptist Church
4868 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

Pine Branch Baptist Church
44 Church Rd.
Spruce Pine, NC 28777
Phone: (828) 765-9101
www.pinebranchbaptist.net
Reverend Bobby Joe Greene
Sunday School - 9:45-10:45am
Worship Service - 10:45am
Sunday Evening - 6:30pm
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May 2018 - Blue Ridge Christian News page 4
Climactic Moment is History

By Billy Graham

The Greater New York Billy Graham Crusade, in June 2005, was Billy Graham’s final Crusade, although he preached later at two Franklin Graham Festivals (New Orleans and Baltimore). The following sermon, preached on the final night of the New York Crusade, carried the message that Mr. Graham proclaimed throughout his nearly 80 years of ministry: We are all sinners, but God loves us and will forgive us when we turn from our sin and by faith put our trust in Jesus Christ.

Almost everyone understands that we are approaching a climactic moment in history. The world is going to come to an end.

In the New Testament the new birth is mentioned nine times. Repentance is mentioned 76 times. Baptism is mentioned 20 times. The coming of Christ is mentioned 311 times. Jesus Christ said that as the days of Noah were, so shall also come the coming of the Son of Man.

When the situation in the world becomes the way it was in Noah’s day, you can know that Jesus’ return is near. In Noah’s day the world was filled with wickedness, violence, hate. In one generation every man’s thought—the evil was a world in which marriage was attacked and violence prevailed.

Think of the headlines of our papers today. All of that is happening today, and I believe that today God is warning us.

Noah was a good man. The Bible says he walked with God. He was a man of moral integrity. He worshiped God. The Bible says by faith Noah, being warned by God of things not yet seen, moved with fear. People ask, “Is it legitimate for a person to come to Christ out of fear?” Absolutely. Many people in the Bible came to God because of fear.

But God is a God of love. The primary message about Jesus in the New Testament is that God loves you. Some of you feel unloved. Some of you feel depressed, or you feel you don’t have purpose and meaning in your life. God is there to rescue you from that situation. If you repent, He will forgive your sins, because when Jesus died on the cross God laid on Him the sins of all of us.

The resurrection of Christ . . . changed the midnite of disappointment into a sunrise of joy; it changed the midnight of fear to a sunrise of peace.

—Billy Graham

It would be great if you could come home tonight and know that you’re different, that you have a new strength with God, by faith in Christ.

When I read the news today, the only bright spot I see in the horizon is the return of Christ. I believe He is coming back. In the New Testament there are so many passages about the coming again of Christ. I could spend all afternoon reading them. Jesus said, “I go to prepare a place for you; and if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, there you may be also.” (John 14:2-3) If I died right now—and that’s a possibility—I’d go straight into Heaven and see Jesus.

Most of the interviews that I’ve had here in New York have asked the same question about death— “What happens when you die? Are you looking forward to death?” Yes. I’m looking forward to death.

We are going to die. We’re all under judgment. War does not increase death. Did you know that? Think about it. Some may live a little longer than others.

Thousands of people were killed when the Allies invaded Europe in 1943 at Normandy. And thousands of people have died in Iraq, Vietnam, Korea and many other places. But that does not increase death, because we are all going to die; we’re going to join them in death.

“The Scriptures declare that we are all prisoners of sin.”

Galatians 2:12, NLT

But when we die, we’re going to be divided. Some will be eternally lost and some eternally saved. We are saved through Jesus, if we put our faith in Him. Jesus loves us, and He wants to prepare a place for us. When Christ ascends into Heaven following His death and resurrection, the angels asked His disciples, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven” (Acts 1:11).

Jesus is going to come back. Are you ready? Now when is that going to happen? When Jesus and the disciples met together, the disciples asked, “Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel? And He said to them, ‘It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority’” (Acts 1:7). He also said, “But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only.” (Matthew 24:36).

But the Scripture says, “For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first” (1 Thessalonians 4:16). There’s going to come a day when there will be a gigantic shout from Heaven, and then the archangel is going to speak. At that moment, those who have died—your fathers, your mothers, your relatives, your friends who are dead in Christ—are going to rise from the dead.

“He who believes in Jesus Christ will not be disappointed.”

1 Peter 2:6, NASB

For years, every time I would come to New York, I would pass a graveyard on the way to Times Square. I don’t know the name of it, but there are graveyards all over New York. And those graves are going to be opened, if they are people who knew Christ as their Lord and Savior. And we’ve going to join them. Those of us who are not here, who are still living, see going to join them in the air on our way to Heaven.

Then the Bible teaches us that there’s going to be a great coronation, with millions of angels. Thousands of people who have followed Christ in their life here on earth are going to have a gigantic banquet called the Marriage Supper of the Lamb. Jesus is the Lamb. He’s going to be crowned King of kings and Lord of lords, and that glorious moment that will be.

I’m looking forward to that. In fact, George Beverly Shea, whom you just heard sing “How Great Thou Art,” is 96, and I’m 86, on my way to 87. I know that it won’t be long before both of us are going to be in Heaven.

“Repentance means that you say to God that I am a sinner, I am sorry for my sins, I am willing to turn from my sins. But Lord, You have to help me to turn.”

—Billy Graham

Jesus said, “Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect” (Matthew 24:44). The Bible says, “Prepare to meet your God” (Amon 2:14). Are you prepared? Have you opened your heart to Jesus? Have you repented of your sins?

You ask, “What is repentance?” Repentance means that you say to God, “I am a sinner, I am sorry for my sins, I am willing to turn from my sins. But Lord, You have to help me to turn.” I’ve tried so many times to give up things I know that are wrong, and I just can’t do it.”

Then, by faith, receive Jesus, who died on the cross for you. Open your heart and say, “Yes, Lord Jesus, come in. I’m ready to follow You.” ©2005 BGEA

Open your heart to Jesus today.

Treat Her like Mother’s Day

Mother’s Day is Sunday May 13th

Mother’s Day is coming up soon. Give Mom the day off and let us do the cooking, we’ll even do the dishes!

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May 2018 - Blue Ridge Christian News page 5
**Hospice and Palliative Care of the Blue Ridge**

**Bless Your Heart**

By Brent Price
Mitchell County

Here is the South “Bless your heart” is probably one of the most common phrases I know. One day I decided to keep count and heard those words uttered at least a dozen times. Yet each time the meaning was different. Think about it.

Someone offers you an unexpected kindness. “Well, bless your heart.” Another person is experiencing a world of hurt. “Bless your heart” with an added “A.” And over there—well he’s just pure foolish. It doesn’t look like he’s ever going to be able to get it together. “Bless his heart.”

There’s a whole lot of blessing going on out there and you’d better be on your toes if you’re going to catch it all. Not every “Bless your heart” is necessarily a blessing. Many of us have gotten careless with some pretty important words. I love you. I’m here if you need me. Bless your heart. These powerful words and important premises are often spoken far too casually.

The Hebrew word that we translate as “blessing” encompasses an entire world of meaning—a bowing down, an offer of praise, to make holy, to offer thanks. It is an increase of God’s abundance and an affirmation of God’s continuing desire to share more of Himself.

Maybe that’s what the old hymn is trying to tell us when we sing “Come thou fount of every blessing” God’s love overflows and runs over the sides blessing everyone in its path.

If God has blessed you with a new car, but no one else gets to ride, you haven’t been blessed. If your house is warm, but no one else is welcome to sit in its warmth, where is the blessing? Are you headed for a nap after Thanksgiving dinner while your neighbor’s children go hungry? Right again. You haven’t been blessed.

When we share our blessing we become part of God’s desire to consecrate and make holy. Hold it tight and it dies. Set it free and watch what God will do with “your” blessing.

**HANDS THAT PRAY**

By: Joyce (Joy) Harwood Baldwin

A mother kneels beside her bed
With tears she made her plea
Father bless my children
Just the way that you’ve blessed me.

Her stature frail and shaking
Her hands were worn and dry
She held them up to Heaven
This was her feeble cry:

I tried by your instructions
And now they’re on their own
You said that if I did my best
They’d make their way back home.

These hands are old and feeble now
I pray they’ve stood the test
Now as they stretch toward Heaven
Lord, You can do the rest.

**AMEN**

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 Lick Missionary Baptist Church in Wears Valley, “home away from home.” She is currently singing with the Gospel Group “Jonah’s Voice” out of Mars Hill, NC. Her latest song “Homecoming” will soon be heard by many.

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Substance Abuse Task Force

Opioid Deaths Prompt Ohio To Reimagine Classroom Lessons, Starting With Kindergarten
As shared by Jeff Spielberg
Mitchell and Young Countians

Kevin Lorson helped develop HOPE: the Health and Opioid Prevention Education program. (Courtesy of Wright State University)

By Sarah Vander Schaaf
Ohio, a state where 4,329 people died of drug overdoses in 2016, a death rate second only to neighboring West Virginia, is facing the fight against the opioid epidemic into the classroom with a new style of drug-abuse prevention education.

Ohio's plan, controversial in a state that prides local control over schools, features lessons that begin in kindergarten. Instead of relying on scare tactics about drug use or campaigns that recite facts about drugs' toll on the body, teachers are encouraged to discuss real-life situations and ways to deal with them and to build social and emotional skills that experts say can reduce the risk of substance abuse.

Joy Edgel, principal of Belpre Elementary School in southeastern Ohio, said that, until recently, kindergarten safety efforts typically focused on stranger danger and on avoiding household hazards. But three years ago, a first-grader brought a heroin needle to school in her backpack. She explained how her father used the needle and said that she had it to school to keep a younger sibling from stepping on it.

"I gave her a hug," Edgel said. Then she called the police.

"This is here. This is real," Edgel told her staff.

This year, Belpre began a pilot of the Health and Opioid Prevention Education, or HOPE, program, developed by Kevin Lorson, a health and physical education professor at Wright State University and a team of educators with a grant from the Ohio Department of Higher Education.

In one lesson, 25 children sat on a carpet and helped their teacher make a chart. "What is an adult?" the teacher asked, writing responses on a large notepad affixed to the wall.

"What does the word 'trusted' mean?"

Finally, she put the two key words together and asked pupils to brainstorm about people who could help them make healthy choices and feel safe, people they could identify as "trusted adults."

A second lesson emphasized the importance of never taking or touching medicine "unless a trusted adult helps you." That prompted one child to tell the class about the time he fell, and his third-grade sister offered him pain medication she had been prescribed for an injured arm. "I told her I couldn't take her medication," the boy announced.

From the mouth of this "smart cookie," as his teacher called him, came one of the core goals of HOPE: to instill in children at an early age the ability to make healthy choices and ultimately curb what Ohio Attorney General Mike DeWine called "the worst public-health crisis in our lifetime."

HOPE also fulfills a practical need, one created in 2014 when the Ohio legislature passed a bill requiring schools to teach the connection between prescription opioid abuse and heroin addiction.

"You do know no one is doing this, right?" Lorson told state legislators in 2016 during a discussion of the bill's requirement. Schools lacked the tools to follow through, he said.

The signs that drug misuse was affecting some children in Belpre, a city of 6,500 separated from West Virginia by the Ohio River, had been appearing with more and more regularity, school officials said.

More kindergartners exhibited trouble regulating emotions and outbursts. In some cases, grandparents and other relatives served as primary caregivers, stepping in because a parent was struggling with addiction. As in 2015, Hunter Barkey, a popular senior at Belpre High School, died of a heroin overdose.

In response, the district added training to recognize signs of trauma and adverse childhood experiences. Educators learned to look at the circumstances that might be affecting a student with behavior problems.

Edgel described what might happen to a boy whose father was in jail. "He's living with Grandma. Grandma is sick. He's going to have a rough week."

With the drug epidemic affecting their small community, carving out time from core subjects to teach HOPE wasn't a hard sell," Assistant Principal Elizabeth Brown said.

The lessons have helped illuminate complicated home lives. Fourth-graders doing a role-playing exercise to practice standing up for themselves and refusing drugs wanted to make sure the teacher knew a parent "was still a good person" even if he or she had trouble with addiction.

And a few sixth-graders "got emotional," teachers said, while thinking about misusing prescriptions and over-the-counter drugs. The reality at Belpre Elementary and other Ohio schools in the state is that some children's ADHD medication,

...I continued on page 11

A Meditation

Finding God's Will
By Timothy Eller
McDowell County

Finding God's will is not like searching for a needle in a haystack. It is simply just walking through the doors that God opens. The most important decision is determining which doors are being opened by God. In this crazy world we live in today, everybody wants a title, however according to John Maxwell, most people don't desire a towel. And these grabbing for a title, few desire the towel of servanthood. According to Maxwell, Jesus never strove for a title; he picked up a towel and washed people's feet. You can only rise as high as you are willing to serve.

T.L. Osborne stated in his book "Soul Winning": "Jesus was not crucified in a cathedral between two candles, but on a cross between two thieves at a crossroads so cosmopolitan that they had to write his title in both Greek, Latin and Hebrew." "During his crucifixion Cyrus talked about, thieves cursed, and soldiers gambled". Is this setting the best to win the lost? Where are you not willing to take 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.
Forgiven Ministry

By Jody Griffin
Avery and Mitchell Counties

And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children and the heart of the children to their fathers... (Malachi 4:6, KJV)

One Day with God is a ministry event sponsored by Forgiven Ministry, Inc. (located in Taylorsville, NC). This amazing organization, with the help of countless volunteers and generous donors, brings children of incarcerated parents together for a full day of caring and fun with their father/mother. At AMCI, I have the incredible honor of raising funds, helping to plan and then actually praying/serving throughout the day of One Day with God at our facility.

I have personally seen the impact of this ministry in the lives of many men and can testify to the truth that Malachi 4:6 is clearly seen during these events! The motivation of being allowed a "normal" day of life with their child(ren) drives the men to check themselves to insure that their attitude and actions reflect their desire for personal growth and improvement. Some have cast that they literally "live" for this day. They see their hopes on the possibility of sharing this with their children. And they desperately want to show their children how Dad is becoming someone who will be committed to them in every way possible while they are away from them.

On this One Day of the year, children come buzzing with excitement to sing, play, do simple crafts, eat and learn alongside their fathers! And fathers are taught how to bless and express God’s Love to their children within the framework of each of these activities.

Everyone hears about the Love of God found in Christ Jesus, and sees that Love in action in many ways. There is a level of JOY in the place that one doesn’t find every day! That JOY is not limited to the dads and their children, but is likewise seen and felt in the staff who will willingly work that day, (several who volunteer to work on a scheduled day off), and in the volunteers who work in an assigned area throughout the event. You can see it on the faces of every person, hear it in their laughter and singing, and feel it in their hands shared between little ones and their Dads.

YOU can help make this JOY possible! Forgiven Ministry estimates that the costs associated with these events is $175.00 per child for a full day with their Dad. That may sound expensive, but it actually is all inclusive! The food, the supplies, t-shirts, the materials, the special guest (cleaners/jugglers/athletes/and much, much more), the backpacks for each child filled with school supplies and reminders of the day they’ve spent with their father are provided for the day!

Volunteers serve as ‘hosts’ to the children, and stay with them and their Dad throughout the day. Others serve by leading games and activities, helping with setup/cleaning and countless other ways. Your contributions fund this day! Your money, time, and energy make it happen and without you, it MAY NOT happen. We are praying for you this day to make our One Day with One Day with God Camp possible this year! It is scheduled for Saturday, July 28, 2018!

Go to forgivenministry.org for more detailed information. Contributions can be sent directly to them at:

Forgiven Ministry, Inc.
PO Box 117
200 Macedonia Church Road
Taylorsville, NC 28681

Or, feel free to contact me personally at jgriffin1@ncdps.gov.

I will gladly meet with anyone who can help make this a reality for these fathers and their children. And I am available to speak to your group/organization about this opportunity!

God Bless You for reading this and for allowing God to lead you to pray/give to make this year’s camp possible!

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Forgiven Ministry is a partial of Central Baptist Church in Spruce Pine and Community Funded Chaplain at Avery-Mitchell Correctional Institution.

Bear Creek Baptist Church

Welcomes You to Celebrate Recovery

Thursday's at 7:00pm

Hope & Help from Addiction Through Christ

For more information visit www.bearcreekbaptistchurch.com

American Cancer Society

Coaches vs. Cancer Fundraiser

Info supplied by: Debbie Atkins
Western North Carolina

Coaches vs. Cancer Fundraiser at Subway® Restaurants Returns $18,213 for Local Families Battling Cancer

ASHVILLE, N.C. — Eleven Division 1 head men’s basketball coaches from North Carolina wrapped up a special Coaches vs. Cancer fundraising campaign and the net result was $18,213 in donations to help fight cancer.

The contributions were collected in January and February from generous customers at local Subway® restaurants in Western North Carolina, the greater Charlotte area, and Piedmont Triad.

Former NC State basketball coaches Larry Hunter of Western Carolina University and Nick McDevitt of UNC Asheville volunteered their time for the awareness and fundraising effort.

Other coaches participated from Appalachian State University, Charlotte 49ers, Davidson College, Elon University, Gardner-Webb University, High Point University, North Carolina A&T State University, UNC Greensboro and Wintrop University.

To demonstrate their commitment to the campaign, the coaches served at guest Subway Sandwich Artists during lunch at local Subway® restaurants in their area.

“We are grateful to the coaches, Subway and the community who make it possible for us to continue supporting local outreach for cancer research, prevention and patient services like rides to life-saving cancer treatments and our 24/7 call line,” said Ivan Schwartz, executive director of the American Cancer Society in the Southeast Region.

The Coaches vs. Cancer program is a collaboration between the American Cancer Society and the National Association of Basketball Coaches (NABC). Locally, the North Carolina Basketball Coaches Association has joined the effort to promote healthy living, raise awareness and support for the fight against cancer. For more information on Coaches vs. Cancer, visit the American Cancer Society website at www.cancer.org.

About the American Cancer Society:

The American Cancer Society is a global grassroots force of 2 million volunteers saving lives in every community. As the largest voluntary health organization, the Society’s efforts have contributed to a 25 percent decline in the cancer death rate in the U.S. since 1991, driven by less smoking, better treatments, and earlier detection. We’re finding cures as our nation’s largest private, not-for-profit investor in cancer research, ensuring people facing cancer have the help they need and continuing the fight for quality health care, innovative screenings and more. For more information, to get help, or to join the fight, call us anytime, day or night, at (800) 227-2345 or visit cancer.org.

About Subway® Restaurants:

Subway® offers a fresh alternative to fast food, serving 7.5 million made-to-order sandwiches a day. Guests choose from 37 million combinations of quality proteins, fresh vegetables, and bread baked daily. The world’s largest restaurant chain serves nutritious and delicious subs, soup, and salads at more than 44,000 restaurants in 113 countries. The Subway experience is also delivered online at www.Subway.com and through the Subway App, available in select markets at the Apple App Store and Google Play. Founded by them 17-year-old Fred DeLuca and family-friend Dr. Peter Buck more than 52 years ago, Subway® is still a family-owned business today working with more than 21,000 dedicated franchised in communities around the world. Subway® is a Registered Trademark of Subway IP Inc.
The Importance of Our Mothers

By Doug Harrell

Our mothers tend to set the tone in our homes as we are growing up and this can make all the difference in the world to our future success or failure. I think God gives women a special ability to love and care that men were never really created to have, and I do think God designed women to play a role in marriage. The man certainly has a role to play that is just as important; but it is different. Most of the time the woman is the great communicator. Study proves that the average woman will speak around 20,000 words per day while the average man speaks about 7,000 words per day. I believe that 95% of us, men, could benefit by increasing our communication with our wives.

Prayers of the Saints

By Pastor Terry Cheek Th.D.
McDowell County

Thanks for returning to read another publication of “The Blue Ridge Christian News” and our article “The Inspiring Word.” The mouth of Blue Ridge provides the Christian with many opportunities to share and pray for the power of God in our lives. I feel there is one event that takes place in May which if practiced properly will help the saints of God live a closer and more powerful life for Christ. This is the National Day of Prayer. Prayer is a privilege for the saint. Through it we have access to the throne of God. Yet, prayer provides for you and me the incentive to live a more righteous and revived life. I want to write this month and encourage you to pray. Why, you may ask?

Prayer of the Saints is precious. We learn from Revelation 5:8 and when he had taken the book, the four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb having every one of them harps, and golden viols, full of odors, which are the prayers of saints.

Prayer of the Saints ascends in incense before God. We learn from Revelation 8:3And another angel came and stood at the altar having a golden censer, and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne.

From the previous verses we learn how important prayer is to God, but how important should it be to you and I? Psalm 65:2 reminds us; O thou that hearest prayer unto thee shall all flesh come. Everyone will come to God in prayer. Think of that and notice our world. Every time there is a disaster or traumatic even even the most liberal scoping of God’s word will ask for prayer on behalf of the afflicted. Prayer is such a wonderful and influential tool to the Soint of God.

With an encouragement to participate in prayer there is a promise from God’s word to answer prayer. For example, in Psalm 61:15 the Lord answers the Psalmist with this; He shall call upon me, and I will answer him: I will be with him in trouble, I will deliver him, and honor him. “Of course, this promise was made to the Saint, saved and sanctified for the presence of God. Who could forget this famous passage about prayer, found in Luke 11:3 and I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.” Then in John 14:14 the Lord provides this word; “If ye shall ask anything in my name, it will be done.” Our Bible is full of encouragement to pray.

I have tried to provide a foundation from God’s word for you and me to pray. May I have a few minutes to tell you about someone directly affected by prayer. I know a man who spent his youth as far away from God as a young man could. He wasn’t an outlaw from many perspective but from Gods perspective, he needed to be born again. This young man didn’t know God, but many people were praying for him. Saints of God, every one of them. God did not act immediately but those prayer warriors did not give up. They kept on praying. One of them was his mother who would pray with resolve with many until one day this young man and son came to know Jesus as Lord and Savior. This young man was me. I realize how powerful a dedicated prayer life is and how important it is to see the lost born again. I am reminded of another verse and I will share it as I close. James 5:16 “Confess your failings one to another, and pray for another, that it may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.” The saints of God should be strengthened by one another, able to confess and discuss our faults and failures knowing our brothers and sisters will have our back with sound counsel backed by prayer. God’s word reminds us it will accomplish much. So, how is your prayer life? Until next time may God keep you firmly in His grip.

Terry Cheek A Pastor of Calvary Baptist Church is Marien.
Tim's Treasures

By Tina Tran
Burke County

"And he sat down, and called the twelve, and sate with them; if any man desire to be first, the same shall be last of all, and servant of all." Mark 9:35

The cold rain was pouring down, but it wasn't difficult, as it might have been as well as light. As I pulled within sight of the Rutina's building, I could see the line extended out past the overhang of the entrance. People were litera-

tely standing in the rain. I had seen the sign earlier that morning for the Chicken Dumping Dinner starting at 6:30, but here it was only 4:30, and there was already a line out the door. I sneaked around but somehow it was so bad that we couldn't get in. So I pushed into the General. I needed to drop off some paperwork anyhow, so I

Barney and Otis were at their usual spot, Otis by the bush and Barney curled up in the lower pot by the door. The store's overhang protected the dogs as they passed the drizzly day in stride. There was lots of activity for the little town. "More than usual," I thought to myself as I made my way out the door.

I stepped inside and placed the April copy of the Blue Ridge Christian News in the place where newspapers were to be, and they seemed to be the morning thing for sure. Tina, the store's proprietor, was busy with several customers, so I didn't want to bother her. Instead, I walked to the wall where there were several pictures of the downtown area, and after a few moments, I noticed a few days before the flood that nearly erased all existence from the valley back in 46. As I scanned the images, I started looking at the huge map that covered most of the wall. There were the names and places that the elders of the church often spoke about, Edgemoor, Montier, Na. Then I started to pick out other places that listened with a "clap" after I described them. That seemed to be the way more churches than the cafe. Then I tried to find the name of the road on which they sat and realized there was no way. 321. Confused, I looked for a key for the map, and then it dawned on me, the date of its publication was 1913. This map was hand-drawn by one of the people who moved to the area.

"Another item of interest, I must return to someday," I mused as I looked out the window to see if the line had dissipated, it had not. As the customers began to leave the store, I was finally afforded the chance to speak to Tina about the papers being in the right spot. She issued me that they were on time and that they had run out.

"Several folks have been in picking them up," she reported with a smile.

"That's great," I replied, then continued, "I thought I'd drop them off while I wait for the line to go down.

"Oh, wow," she said. "We were lucky, and somebody brought us ours," she said pointing at the syco-cat to go backwards containers behind the counter.

"Good for you!" I looked out the window again to see if I could get in now without having to wait in the rain.

"They've had a fundraiser for the little girl with cancer." At the sound of her answer to my question, I asked her, my heart sank.

"There's probably a lot of folks coming from out of town that normally don't come which is why it's so easy." All I could do was shake my head. I thought of little Sam Holt back in Georgia and wonder if they had come through the same year. When he was diagnosed with a congenital brain tumor, many thought we'd never see him grow to be a young man, but the community of Goldston came together, not only in fundraising but as a community of believers in prayer.

Sam is still with us today, thanks to God.

"Looks like I know how I can make it without getting too wet. I have a blessed evening I called back," as I headed out the door.

"You too," she said, waving.

The parking lot was full, so I parked over by the old medical center and walked. The front door of Rutina's building was open with a few more people still filling out the door, but at least now the line was well within the shade of the porch roof. Back in the day in Goldston, I would have already seen or spoken with several people I would have made, but now, in this new place, I really know anyone. So, I could only say to all the faces and everyone at the JAM program who had a good friend, Ana. The first and last time we had met in person was when they came to the last Lay Speaking engagement I had given in Sugar Grove, NC. We then formally introduced ourselves and John told me that most of his friends just called him "Fletch." It was an honor to know someone that I had only seen on Facebook had shown up to this event, and I held up to my surprise, and I told myself, that is God writing through me, and that it would be God speaking through me that they came to hear. In all that we do, we should always know that when we truly serve the Lord, we do all for him and for self. Then when I decided to move down copy of my book, "Brooke to Heaven," as part of my presentation, it was a presentation that was still amazing even when I was out before I got to my new

friend. We both laughed. In my mind, I knew it was God's way of saying, "You'll be seeing him again." It was then I said, "i guess I owe you a book."

So, when we shook hands in our brief rendition of sorts nearly standing in the rain in front of Rutina's building in Colletville, the first thing I said was, "Great to see you and yes, I've got your book."

As we made our way to our seats, it was heartbreaking to find some of the members of the church I attend, Rocky Springs Baptist Church, scared and enjoying the rain, but not my pastor, Ray was there, a man that had been diagnosed a year ago with stage four lung cancer. His story alone is one of faith, miracles, and the healing power of prayer. We spoke briefly, as we often do at these kinds of functions, and then I moved on to talk with Fletch, who was now also trying to find empty seats.

Once we were finally seated and squeezed around the table, Fletch's friend Ana asked how I was doing if they wouldn't mind if we got grace. They all were more than happy to oblige. From the corner of my eye, I could see hands reaching out to hold others. It was then that I began to see the web of connections open for my new friends. I learned that nearly everyone in the place had been part of their lives at one point, yet they had never lived in Colletville, which made it all the more special.

It all began innocently enough when Ana asked the lady across from her if she used to drive Brownies to a camp in a station wagon. The lady was still championing her Chicken and Dumplings when Ana asked, so it took her a minute to swallow. She could almost see my face running in her mind as she thought back through the many years. "Well, actually I drove Girl Scouting, she mutely said, and that would have been when I was at Zions U.C.C."

"Are you Mrs. Lloyd," Ana continued.

"Yes, I am.

"Oh, my goodness," Ana replied almost drooping her fork. She was immediately transported back to time when she was a young girl in 2nd grade. Mrs. Lloyd had only driven her once to a day camp for Girl Scouting, but they had brought Brownies along for the experience. You could see them both connect back to a time when their lives were much different. The elderly lady explained how she would drive them to camps in that old station wagon. From that point on, there were so many things to catch up with, children to share, and a lifetime of living.

As people passed by, either Fletch or Ana would wave to people they hadn't seen or spoken to in years, barely recognizing one mother.

As Ana was sharing with Mrs. Lloyd, the lady next to her spoke up that she thought she remembered Ana from somewhere. It wasn't long before Fletch's friend had rediscovred Mrs. Enime Watson, a former E.C teacher at Patterson Elementary School. The mystery of tiny one-room schoolhouses that cause so much on the map that I had seen earlier in the store as they continued to recall their shared working experiences. It was as if God had given her a glimpse of what was to come.

Then a lady who was obviously related to the elderly lady Ana had made the connection too, sat down next to her. Her plate had been there for some time, untouched. She began to eat as the shared with Mrs. Lloyd how she had done all she could to help.

At this point, I noticed Fletch intently gazing at the lady that had sat next to him. He finally broke his silence when he called to her, "Mary!"

She looked up again almost as stunned as Mrs. Lloyd had been when Ana had recognized her.

"Yes," she paused.

"Well, my apologies for seeming like I was staring, but I thought you knew," John replied, smiling broadly.

"That I am," he grinned from ear to ear.

"In fact, I've been asking the food to show me the way, but I wasn't sure," she said laughing. Later I would learn that it had been two years since they had worked together and not seen each other. Meanwhile, Anna, Mrs. Watson, and Mrs. Lloyd were still racing through the years.

Again, my mind drifted off to Goldston and all the families lives that were connected either through their church, their school, or their neighborhoods. Then in my new world, the school at which I teach, and how when we come together as one, we make all the more difference, not just in one life that might need help, but in all of those that believe there were there, but wasn't sure, the said laughing. Later I would learn that it had been two years since they had worked together and not seen each other. Meanwhile, Anna, Mrs. Watson, and Mrs. Lloyd were still racing through the years.

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really are a safe place. Your parents didn’t make a good decision. You are still going to be okay,” Braun said. Teacher feedback about HOPE has been positive, particularly because the 20-minute lessons are developmentally appropriate, easy to implement and do not feel like “one more thing,” Braun said.

But while early prevention education sounds good in theory, the state can’t force its more than 600 school districts to follow a specific approach. Ohio is “a very strong local-control state,” said Kenia Haycock, senior policy consultant at the Ohio School Boards Association. “Boards have the authority to determine the curriculum.”

Ohio law prohibits the State Board of Education from establishing health-education standards. It is the only state in the country that lacks such standards. “You have the state with the opioid epidemic and a state without health-education standards,” said Wright State University’s Lorson, former president of the Ohio Association for Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance.

The extent of opioid abuse in Ohio has galvanized the state’s leaders to take the fight into the classroom.

Venessa Yakes, the ranking Democrat on the Ohio state Senate’s education committee, has spent a year and a half working on a bill that would allow for better reimbursement rates for school nurses. “The lack of resources can create a roadblock when you’re trying to promote resistance from legislators who are concerned it will affect the state’s substance-only approach to sex education.”

Bumber stickers on state vehicle tourists “Starting Today,” a campaign Gov. John Kasich launched to connect communities with resources for discouraging misuse of drugs. The initiative also promotes HOPE on its website. “We want to make sure every kid knows what we’re doing,” the attorney general, led a committee that last year endorsed prevention education beginning in kindergarten.

“People research and read every year,” he said in a telephone interview. “What makes us think we can wait until the fourth or fifth year to do something about the drug problem? If this is as important as I think it is, we need to get serious about it.”

“Prevention is not about one drug,” said Michelle Miller-Day, a professor of community psychology at California State University, in Oklahoma City, and an expert on prevention curriculum. “It is about social, emotional development in kids so that when they’re faced with stresses or boredom or a quick fix for pain or ‘I need to stay up late today,’ they can deal with emotions normally.”

It can’t be too important, she said, and telling kids to simply say “no” is not enough when “the good-looking captain of the football team is offering me a beer,” said Miller-Day.

Knowing how to make effective decisions (assessing options, reflecting on what will happen) should start long before hearing messages such as “Don’t do drugs.” This is what it does to your brain and liver,” she said.

Reaching kids when they are 6 or 7 and forming habits and behavior is important, said Melanie Lynch, an award-winning health teacher in the North Allegheny school district in Pennsylvania. By the time students are in high school, Lynch said, “It’s too late, the whole lesson on coping. I can’t afford that kind of time.”

HOPE also relies on the classroom teacher rather than an outside guest or a special assembly.

“The teacher is so important. They are there every day. They are as inside. We trust that person,” Lorson said.

The lack-of-awareness and prevention of drug education are difficult to measure. Tim Bruckner, an associate professor of public health at the University of California at Irvine who has analyzed prevention programs in other states but is not familiar with Ohio’s efforts, said effectiveness is based on many conditions, including funding, employment of best practices and engaging, interactive delivery.

“It’s really hard to change people’s behavior or delay initiation of adverse behavior,” he said. Only 10 percent of substance-abuse-prevention programs used in middle and high schools show evidence of effectiveness, he said.

But the stories are visible every day in Washington County, where Belles says she has treated 177, a third of whom, a 14-year-old boy who had been methamphetamine from Mexico, according to John Braden, a lieutenant with the Washington County sheriff’s office. Earlier this year, 11 high school students in the region tested positive for methamphetamine. And a lab reported a batch laced with fentanyl. Crystal methamphetamine is cheap and abundant.

“I don’t know if HOPE is the magic bullet,” Lorson said. “But the focus on these key concepts and skills has given folks a place to rally around.”

As the opioid epidemic rages, the fight against addiction moves to an Ohio community.

Nearly 1 million people were out of the workforce because of opioid addiction in 2015.

Emergency room data shows the opioid crisis continues to accelerate.

As this article shows, schools around the country are beginning to understand the importance of educating children early on about substance use and abuse, especially around prescription drugs. We are thankful that both Mitchell County and Yancey County Schools have partnered with the Mitchell Yancey Substance Abuse Task Force and our Youth to Youth programs to implement this education in their schools.

Sarah Sashko teaching children not to touch or take any medication unless it is given by a trusted adult. If children are not sure whether something is candy or medicine, they are instructed to ask an adult before taking it.

We are also thankful that Yancey County Schools is planning ways to utilize a partnership with DAX and RHA to provide substance use-abuse education in the classrooms next year.

Mitchell and Yancey may be small, rural counties, but we are utilizing cutting edge strategies for substance use-abuse prevention strategies in our communities! Thank you to our school systems and other partners for working to implement this prevention programming!
God’s Powerful Voice
By Jerry Lewis
Madewell County

I have met people with powerful voices. When they speak, people listen. They walk into a room and the entire dynamic changes. Maybe you recall the calming voice of your mother, or perhaps it’s her commanding voice you remember most. Maybe the assertive voice of your father comforts you, or his correcting voice still confounds you.

God’s voice exceeds them all. Consider the psalmist:

The voice of the LORD is over the waters; the voice of God thundereth, the LORD, over many waters. The voice of the LORD is powerful; the voice of the LORD is full of majesty. The voice of the LORD breaks the cedar; the LORD breaks the cedars of Lebanon. He makes Lebanon to skip like a calf, and Sirion like a young wild ox. The voice of the LORD fashions forth flames of fire. The voice of the LORD shakes the wilderness; the LORD shakes the wilderness of Cadash. The voice of the LORD makes the dove give birth and the tortoise bear, and in his temple all say, “Glory!” (Psalm 29:3-9, ESV)

In the beginning God created...” with words, his voice. He started with nothing and said, “Let there be.” and there was. Here in Psalms we discover that his voice is not diminished at all. The God who created with words, shares His unique creation with the same voice with which he created it.

Jesus did too. A sleep in the boat, tired from the demands of his day, he was suddenly awakened by his disciples. The boat was rocking, waves crashing, fear mounting. They thought they were dying!

And they went and woke him, saying, “Master, Master, we are perishing!” And he awoke and rebuked the wind and the raging waves; and they ceased, and there was a calm. And he said to them, “Where is your faith?” And they were afraid, and they marveled, saying to one another, “Who then is this, that he commands even winds and water, and they obey him?”” (Luke 8:24-25, ESV)

You may be in a situation right now that only God’s voice can handle. Unless He steps in, there is no hope. A broken marriage, incurable cancer, unbelievable debt. You need God’s voice. David ends his Psalm with this affirmation: “May the Lord give strength to his people, may the Lord bless his people with peace.” (Psalm 29:11, ESV).

Ask for his powerful voice.
And ask again... and again... and again.

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

www.brenews.com
Family Friday Nights
By Morrisa Angi
Burke County

Valdese, NC — Family Friday Nights in Valdese will begin the first Friday in May at 7:00pm located at the Wells Fargo/Town parking lot and continues through the month of September. “We are so excited for this year’s Family Friday Nights Summer Concert Series. New bands will join us for the first time and many favorites are returning to the stage”, states Morrisa Angi, Community Affairs Director for the Town of Valdese. “The concerts are offered all summer long and are a great place to meet up with old friends or to make new ones.” The season offers a wide variety of music including everything from country to beach music.

Kicking off the summer series this year will be The Crew on Friday, May 4th at 7:00pm located at the Wells Fargo/Town parking lot. The Crew, an Asheville dance and entertainment band formed by William Jones and Steve Hughes in 1993. Through the years The Crew has performed all over Western North Carolina at many public events, such as Bele Chere, the Hendersonville Apple Festival, and the Jackson Park Fourth of July Celebration. They have also been a favorite at local nightclubs, country clubs, weddings and private corporate events. Of course, there have been a few name changes throughout the years. The group started out as Hanson Ranso, then shortened the name to Ranso, and now they are simply known as The Crew. In the past several years they have directed their musical interest to the legendary classics of the 80’s and 90’s. Today they continually expand their sets with salutes to more great artists, including classics of the 80’s, 90’s and 2000’s. Their main focus when performing is to provide great music and a good fun atmosphere. Whether you are into toe-tapping, shoulder swaying, a blast from the past, or dancing like nobody’s watching, this band will deliver.

Concessions will be for sale during the concert series and different civic groups will offer 50/50 raffles every Friday. Season lineup cards will be available for pick up at the concession trailer and will feature special offers and discounts from participating merchants. Checkers, Tic-Tac-Toe and other games will be available for public use. Myra’s Cruise In will begin every Friday night at 6:00pm and downtown shops will remain open late. For further information about events in Valdese and the full Family Friday Nights Concert Schedule go to visitvaldese.com.

2018 Season Lineup:
MAY 4: THE CREW
MAY 11: THE CLYDES
MAY 18: THE BAND 28690
MAY 25: CHAD TRIPPLE & 2 LANE BLACKTOP
JUNE 1: THE TONY BAILEY BAND
JUNE 8: THE NIGHT MOVE BAND
JUNE 15: LITTLE JOHNNY TRAILER TRASH
JUNE 22: THE TRUE GRASS BAND
JUNE 29: INDEPENDENCE DAY CELEBRATION &amp; FIREWORKS WITH TOO MUCH SYLVIA
JULY 6: THE SHAKEDOWN BAND
JULY 13: JASON LEE MCKINNEY
JULY 20: SHELBY RAE MOORE
JULY 27: ANGELA EASTERLING
AUGUST 3: CARSON HILL
AUGUST 10 & 11: WALKER MILL FESTIVAL
FRIDAY: LITTLE JOHNNY TRAILER TRASH @ 7PM & THE ARIMUS PYLE BAND @ 8PM - Honoring the music of Ronnie Van Zant’s Lynyrd Skynyrd
SATURDAY THE BAND OF OZ @ 7PM
AUGUST 17: HANNAH KAMMER
AUGUST 24: FOX & COMPANY
AUGUST 31: SKATE PINK JUKEBOX
SEPTEMBER 7: GAIL FRIDAY
SEPTEMBER 14: BLIND JUSTUS
SEPTEMBER 21 & 28: TBA

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

Women’s Prayer Breakfast: If you would like to join a group of women who are dedicated to praying, learning about God’s will, and fellowship, 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 Farrall at 828-467-3644 or email at barbarahfarrall@gmail.com. May meeting is 13th, at 8:00am.

Yancey County

Higgins - The Blue Ridge Emmanuel Men’s Walk will be May 17-May 20. Do you know Christian men that would be blessed by the gifts that a Walk to Emmanuel has to offer? Please call Randall Garland 828-7490 or Peckie Bingham at 205-0199 if you have any questions. Missions will pay the first 4 sponsor ships so please give us a call. This is life changing so if you have not attended, please pray about this and let us know soon!

Parkway Playhouse Invites You To Get Involved - Burnsville, NC: Become a member of the Parkway Playhouse Volunteer Guild. Volunteer to usher, bake a cake, cook a casserole, lend a truck or your muscles. However, you want to plug in, we can use you. By becoming a member of the Guild, you make the continued success of Parkway Playhouse and Parkway Playhouse Junior a reality, but you also get great incentives. You can earn a free ticket for every nine hours you volunteer. The biggest bonus is the family you will be joining and the fun and satisfaction you will get working with your new friends. Visit our website at www.parkwayplayhouse.com or send us an email for information on how you can get involved at guild@parkwayplayhouse.com.

For more information about Parkway Playhouse including performances, classes, and volunteer opportunities, please call 828-682-4285 or visit the Parkway Playhouse website at parkwayplayhouse.com.

Biltmore Spirit is set to open the 2018 Parkway Playhouse Mainstage Season on May 9th.

Shoals Creek Baptist Church - Relay for Life Survivor Brunch @ 10 am, May 5th: Foot of the Cross Women’s Conference with Liberty Hill Baptist Church. Shoals Creek Baptist Church from 9am to 3pm on May 19th: Family Day and Flag retirement ceremony May 29th following morning worship service.

Yancey County Meals on Wheels (Burnsville): Volunteers needed to deliver meals to Yancey County shut-ins, any weekday, 10 am - noon. If you would like to volunteer, please call the Yancey County Senior Center at 828-682-6611.

ASAP (Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project), in partnership with Duke University World Food Policy Center, University of North Carolina Center for Health Promotion and Disease Prevention, and MAHEC, will present the Healthy Eating in Practice Conference August 28-29, 2018, at the Oral Grove Park Inn. Dynaha Miller, M.D., author of Farmacology, will give a keynote address on the intersection of farming, food, and health.

On June 23 and 24, over 20 Appalachian Growers’ family farms will welcome visitors to their farms during ASAP’s highly anticipated Farm Tour. This fun and educational weekend offers the public a chance to experience firsthand how food is grown and raised in the mountains, sample farm-fresh products, and meet the community’s local producers.

This year represents the 10th anniversary of ASAP’s Farm Tour. ASAP will present a variety of activities to celebrate the anniversary including contests, giveaways, and a special celebration of the Farm Tour at Asheville City Market on June 2, 2018.

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Clint’s Chronicles on the Funny Farm

The Rest of the Story
Doug Harrell

As you can see, this Funny Farm Story was written almost seven years ago and still rings through with Clint’s uncanny ability to take the normal and really bring it to the next delightful step. Skinning a deer, digging potatoes, stack cakes... things that most of us don’t give a second thought, become totally hilarious when Clint put pen to paper! As usual, I am sure you will be doing belly laughs as you read the story.

FUNNY FARM

Dear friends,

Heaven knows that hundreds of you seem to revel in my near miseries with empathy... from close-in with rabid groundhogs to “chuckling” encounters with electrified barbed wire, my life has been nothing but exciting since moving to Mitchell County in 2010. While my journeys as Former Clint have obviously provided numerous moments of wondrous humor, other mysterious events marked my time on the farm. And I want to share a few of those as well.

Here goes...

“Feeling” Deer
My son Adam is a deer hunter, I am not. The only “mum” I ever made was with my mama to the A&P Store. Most stomach department (you know there is no one there who knows the history of the store). Other than that, the only wild critter I ever killed was a rabbit from my Uncle Lunn’s property, where he also had a rather productive still!

As a senior executive with Verizon Corporation twelve years ago, I often returned home late night from business trips all over the world. One night, I returned exhausted, to my “Texas home” after a journey to Sydney, Australia. As I stepped into the driveway, headlights on, I saw what appeared to be a deer on my property. I was very excited, my son demonstrated how one goes about the business of “dressing” a deer. (You’ve long wondered why they call it “dressing” as you remove all of its organs, and then take it back from the farm to do it all over again)

Fast forward to Harrell Hill Road, it was fall 2016, another beautiful, crisp day in the mountains. My friend Doug had dispatched me into the hills to gather firewood (a story for another day) when I noticed a mule deer at Keith’s marker barn. Slowing my faithful, bucket-of-loose-bolts—oops—I mean Jeep— I saw what appeared to be a large deer suspended from a tree limb in my yard (a funny scene at Harrell Hill earlier that morning). I thought it was an upside down deer hanging over the fence, it was not. It turned out to be a large doe. I got in the house and asked my wife to call the vet...and wait. What was going on?

The tractors, shiny and new like the Easters Keith’s markers drive, were backing up, slowly removing the hide from the doe. “Fascinating”, I remarked to myself and myself alone. I decided to visit Keith, and Vic, and whoever the heck else was involved in this newfangled method of eating edible items from a wild animal.

“Nice deer”, I said to these mountain men. They acknowledged my presence, gave me that friendly yet cautious smile I get from many farmers—especially these who’ve learned of my outdoors prowess. I interpreted Keith’s “Good morning”, Clint as an invitation to approach and investigate the matter further. I felt accepted, like one of the guys, as though I were a native...shhhhhhh, the joys of “belonging”.

As I drew near the tractor I raised to myself, “This is good, aren’t they shimming this hide the way my son does?”, clearly a new technique and possibly well, after hearing right here on Cool Breeze in that “cutting edge” of a revolutionary movement in deer cleaning, I was so happy... “Never seen anyone peel a deer before, folks! That was all it took...”

Well, I thought these men would talk off the tractor and run over their own feet...guests, chuckles, bowing and carrying on something fierce. Amidst stories, gristles and chuckling sounds Keith replied, “Did y’all hear what he said, ‘peel a deer’? Yeah, that’s it. Clint. We’ve gotta PEEL this deer.”

All I know is, Webster’s Dictionary says... “peel” to “strip off an outer layer of skin... I just say, “climbing” looks like a young man, and he was peeling that deer...

Pancake Cake
One day soon I plan to write about “Homecoming” and “Decorate” Days... because I never knew of such happenings until coming to the mountains — what a learning experience that has been.

Anyway, a while back I attended a reunion of my friend Barbara Harrell’s family. (FYI, I’ve never been to a reunion in my lifetime!) Well, the only person in Mitchell County that isn’t related to everyone else in Mitchell County. Mostly I look forward to our annual pancake feedings (these gatherings I look forward to for the people but I haven’t met them yet!). I’ve heard to tell, there isn’t anybody on this planet who can cook-out, out-taste out-anything mountain folks.

This particular Rachaman reunion was no exception.

I’ve learned the skill of “reinforced plate” which allows one to tote 15 pounds of delicious meat and vegetable delicacies on flimsy paper plates. And I can stack it HIGH, pyramid style in a popular method. When I did have some free time, I mean DELICIOUS steaks I don’t care who ya are! But, to me, the main course is something a man has to survive to earn a ticket to the sweetest collection!

After my fiddle of the entire circle of desserts I circled that dessert table like a hunting tiger. The choices were overwhelming but I was honing in on one when I saw a large cheese tractor. pancakes stacked upon pancakes...stacked upon pancakes... “Hmmm, wonder what that is?”

I discerned that it was indeed a cornucopia of pancakes, and it appeared to have peanut butter between the layers. “How interesting,” and I adore pancakes and peanut butter... I self-identified. I returned to my table, ecstatic with my choices and especially the pancake cake.

“Seo,” I began speaking to my bride, “you’ve never had a pancake cake.”

provingly proclaiming this novel discovery! Turning aside, shock and awe intertwined with mischievous giggles, Kay asked her neighbor, “Did you hear what he said, pancake cake...” “Here we go again...polite giggles (since they are not so ladylike), heads turning aside to smile and suppress laughter, yada yada yada.

To be fair, Kay didn’t leave me hugging out there in a breeze of others’ cackles forever. No, she parted my hand gently and whispered softly, “We call those stack cakes, don’t they call ‘em pancake cakes”.

Well, never again will I make that fiasco and...it wasn’t peanut butter cementing the layers... everyone knew it was peanut butter apple stacks. And just between us friends...Barbara’s Aunt Jovina makes our magnificent pancake-cake, oops I mean stack cake! In fact, I’m wondering if Aunt Jovina’s stack cake is similar to the mountains which once fell from heaven.

Still humbled in the Hills,
Former Clint

www.bncnews.com

May 2018 - Blue Ridge Christian News page 15
Chelsea’s Blog

Victim
By Chelsea Elevins
Tazewell County

Ever feel fearful of what lies ahead? Yeah, me too. I am most definitely the awkward girl that sits in the corner and desperately wishes she had the confidence to go talk to those pretty girls who seem to have so much fun.

Doesn’t the devil love to come at us and tell us we are the victim in times of vulnerability? I know I can’t be just me, right girls? The victim of failure, rejection, and imperfection. Don’t we all want victory but continue to hold onto the character of victim and rejection.

I get it. You’re socially awkward, or you are uncomfortable, and you sit there and look at everyone else and their life seems perfect and you can’t help but question where you messed up along the way.

Let me say I have certainly played my fair share of victim and rejection. But you know what I’ve realized during those times... I’ve learned victim only keeps you from the victory in Jesus.

A few weeks ago, I went with a couple friends to a Christian retreat with FORGE ministry (go check it out if you haven’t!) and there were lots of unfamiliar faces. Everyone was having a great time and I was enjoying myself as well—honestly. But then there was volleyball. I wanted to join in and play but I didn’t want to be the awkward girl I mentioned earlier. I didn’t want to be that girl who nobody knows and awkwardly joins in. A few moments later a friend of mine mentioned he wanted to go join in as well and he repeatedly kept expressing his interest. I think he was just waiting for someone to join in with him. But nobody did.

Not even me. Even though I really wanted to go join in as well. And so you know what? I didn’t go and neither did he.

And I look back on that time and wonder why? Instead of joining in, we watched others live in victory while we stood in the corner and played the victim.

I look back at that moment and feel ashamed. Not because I wasn’t good enough to play but because I talked myself into believing that I wasn’t. I talked myself into believing I had been rejected without even reaching out first to get a response.

I reflect on this moment and I can’t help but think that so many times we do this with Christ.

So many times, I live a life so different from the promises God has given me to live by.

We hold back from a love that He so desperately wants to give because we are afraid of rejection. And I think how that must break His heart as He reaches out so desperately to give us the love so longingly look for, yet we run Him away.

We run at a marathon pace to try and achieve what God simply wants to slow down enough to receive.

I began to think about rejection and the ring of it and I was immediately brought to David. I read about David and I see that he encountered rejection and the pure ring of it at his very own father rejected him. But still David continued to trust that God was in the midst of his crossroads. Don’t get me wrong these were certainly times when David failed, but over and over I see him running to God regardless.

David says: my father rejected me and called me unqualified for the job but God has called me by name. Completely. His own words and so I continue to run to Him in complete trust that He will provide me with that, that I need.

David shows us that with God there is a fullness.

With God there is no lack. In Psalm 34:6 David says: Simply goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life. And I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

I think David is telling us something important here. I think God’s love and plan for us is so much deeper than what we limit it to. I think what David is saying is that sometimes life is that sometimes people are gonna say you are the victim and you are gonna feel rejected. Sometimes some will say you will face your giant. But God, says go and I will not only give you your giant. I will equip you with what you need to stay your giant in my name.

Sometimes we may be rejected and feel like somewhat of a victim, but we can’t let that keep us from receiving the victory of staying the plan God has for us.

David knows this to be true despite everything else... God’s love will follow you.

We have to lay down those fears that keep us from receiving the love so desperately want to give us. We have to lay down those desires of proving yourself to someone whose opinion will never matter as much as God’s opinion of you. We have to lay down each and everything that keeps us from remembering the simple truth David tells us: His goodness and mercy will follow us the days of our lives.

It is then we walk away feeling free and held by a relentless, overwhelming loving God.

It is then that we see that we don’t have to try understand each thing that happens for us to fully trust Him.

And though things may not go our way and our hearts get a little broken in between God’s goodness, He sits and waits and makes it all right. You are not a victim to the card life has given you. You have been specifically designed for the game and with God, you win. Although we may not always see it, God is good. His plans are good. His requirements are good. His salvation is good. His grace is good. His forgiveness is good. His resurrection is good. His victory is good.

Here’s the thing, the only love that will ever fill you, is Jesus.

And His sits and waits. He waits for every comfort, question, and affection but so many times we turn it away in fear of rejection or maybe even rejection to our plans according to His.

But y’all, He really does have everything worked out. With Jesus, the gaps are filled. With Jesus, the heartache is eased. With Jesus, the needs are met. With Jesus, the questions are answered, and the problems are solved. Fully. Completely. Perfectly.

In Him. With Him. By Him.

Take the time to sit with Him and turn to Him. Even in the times you feel exhausted running to him, get to Him daily. He is there, and He is waiting.

Regardless of the rejection you’ve faced, this is what I know about Him. He is good and His love is great.

His love isn’t based upon our circumstances or ability to play volleyball, or our level of social awkwardness. Instead, it’s simply packed on us and it is the very place where the should live every single day. Loved. By a never-ending, overwhelming, reckless God.

His love grounds us in the face of rejection and storms. With Him, we may feel the wind, but they are never destroying. Man, isn’t He awesome?

Because of this love I no longer live in fear of rejection or play the part of victim. Instead I gloriously live in victory because of the love of Jesus that follows me all my days.

I run to Him. I sit with Him. I get to Him daily. And He fills me with victory in His love.

He has enough for you too.

So, I pray you run to Him, sit with Him, and get to Him daily regardless of how exhausted you may feel running to Him. Because by running to Him, you are running to a love that covers everything else.

Before the next big decision in your life, before the next step you take in your dream, before feeling less than, before feeling unqualified, before taking the next hurdle, heartbreak or struggle. Run to Him.

Let Him fill you.

Depend yourself to the fullness of God.

Receive his victory and love.

And most of all, once you receive it... live by it with every single breath and step you take.

Chelsea Elevins lives in Burnsville, attended Mountain Heritage High School and South College.
Morganton Seventh-Day Adventist Church

God Still Tames Lions
By Rick and Cindy Mercer
Burke County

Have you ever had a bunner of a day? My guess is yes. We all have had days and situations that we do not care to repeat—ever. But often, after the fog clears, we realize that that rough time taught us something that made us a better person or at least challenged us to grow.

One of my favorite persons of inspiration is Corrie ten Boom. I never tire of reading the amazing difficulties that she went through, yet only to see beautiful triumphs following the valley.

The following is a thought that a friend shared once that reminds us once again that God and His angels are always surrounding us.

The story that was shared and that maybe you are familiar with starts with a cold winter day toward the end of World War II, when a woman walked out of what had seemed even worse than a lion’s den. She was leaving the Ravensbrück concentration camp, where countless human beings had been systematically starved and worked to death. As the heavy iron gates closed behind her, Corrie ten Boom could hardly believe that she was alive—and free.

Corrie had been arrested by the Nazis for hiding Jews in her house in Holland. She and her family believed in a God who gives refuge to all, and they committed themselves to this dangerous work. This quiet matron in her 50’s had not imagined she could survive the horrors of a labor camp. But God had sustained her during the ordeal. Corrie saw many women brutalized at Ravensbrück. Many perished, including her dear sister Betsie. But many of those women died with the name of Jesus on their lips because of the witness of those two sisters. “Those women,” Corrie wrote, “were well worth all our suffering.” Finally, as a result of what turned out to be a clerical error, Corrie was released.

One week later all the women age 50 and over at Ravensbrück were gassed.

As she walked out of this lion’s den, Corrie had learned something invaluable. Across the world she gave this testimony: “There is no place on earth so dark, so deep, that God’s love is not deeper still.”

God’s love penetrates prison camps and lions’ dens. Wherever God’s people are, He is there. The old hymn states it well: “Just when I need Him, Jesus is near, just when I fancy, He is near. Ready to help me, ready to cheer, just when I need Him most.

The God who sent his Angel to slay the lions’ mouths for Daniel is smothering forever. Are lions roaring in your ears today? The lions of doubt and discouragement may loom in your pathway. You may feel like you will be consumed by the lions of anger and resentment. The lions of lost and unwanted alienation may appear to eat you up. But God still shut lions’ mouths and delivers from their dens.

When the devil “walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour” (1 Peter 5:8), God still tames lions. He did it for Daniel, and He will do it for you.

You can rejoice today because God still tames lions. My God sent His Angel and shut the lions’ mouths, so that they have not hurt me, because I was found more upright than Hiram, and also, O King, I have done no wrong before you.”

Rick Mercer is the pastor of the Morganton Seventh-day Adventist Church at 2187 Jamestown Road, Morganton. They can be reached at 828-320-3549 or cjmercer@ebk.net. Check out www.morgantonsda.org. Their passion is to share the love of Jesus with all who will listen.

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“No Regrets Things in Life”

By Pastor Dean Honeycutt
Mitchell County

I did not really know which direction to go with this article until my son got hit in the mouth with a baseball. The line drive got him good, and thankfully he kept his lower teeth. The incident made me think about my family and how precious they are to Pam and me. A lot of illnesses and sadness has been going around here lately, many of my friends have been diagnosed with cancer, and some small children have had serious sickness, and some have gone to be with Jesus. The most precious things in life are not on four wheels, in my bank account, or the land my house sits on. The most precious thing in life is Jesus and the gift of salvation. Because of Jesus I can love and appreciate with much gratitude the family God has given me.

Life is so short we need to grasp every moment and the time we have with our families. Thank the Lord we will spend more time with our loved ones in heaven than we do on earth, but we often do not think of eternal life this way. We tend to only think of the here and now. When my children were younger, and we were getting ready to go somewhere, I would say, “Bobby”s car seat up and move me out!” That would signal it is time to get in the van and leave the house. In the van I would on occasion read roll call starting with the name of the eldest and move to the youngest. It was fun hearing each one of them say “here.” Our names are written in the Lamb’s Book of Life, and when we get to heaven Jesus is going to take roll call, and I am so thankful when He gets to our names we are going to be able to say “here.”

Spend time with your family and build confidence in your children. Take time to pray with them and read the Bible with them. They will cherish what you cherish, they will value what you value, and they will follow what you follow. If they see Jesus is important to you, then Jesus will be important to them. One of the most precious things is to lead your children to Jesus Christ. Talk with them often about Jesus and why He came to earth. Pray for their salvation and that God given appointed time lead them into a saving relationship with Jesus. So, when the roll is called up yonder the entire family can say “here.”

Life is too short to find yourself at the end of it with a lot of regrets. After the passing of my dad in 2008 I was challenged to live a life of “No Regrets,” and with God's help I am determined to make choices that will minimize regrets in my life, because we cannot change the past, but we can choose to live for God in the future. Each day is a blessing from God and every moment spent with family is precious.

The Lord bless you and Happy Mother’s Day.

Pastor Dean Honeycutt shepherds Snow Hill Baptist Church in Eagleville, NC. He can be reached at 828-438-2125, snowhillbaptist@gmail.com, or visit their website at www.snowhillbaptist.com.

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The Train is Coming...

By Morissa Angi

In honor of Valdese celebrating 125 years since their founding in 1883, the Valdese Public Arts Commission and the Town of Valdese have come together to create a commemorative art piece that will be located across from the Valdese Town Hall on Massel Avenue. The art installation will depict the arrival of the original Waldensian settlers who came to Valdese on May 29th, 1893 as they departed the “No. 11” train at the Valdese Depot. The installation will be created by the artists of Oak Hill Iron & Wood of Morganton and will feature a full-scale train and silhouettes of original settlers made out of iron. Standing between twelve and fifteen feet tall and extending parallel to Massel Avenue for over thirty feet, the installation will honor those who founded Valdese. The original settlers will be listed on a bronze plaque which will be created by the Waldensian Heritage Museum. The project will be completed during the summer months of 2018 and will make its debut at the Waldensian Festival on August 11th, 2018.

The cost for the installation has been pledged by the Valdese Public Arts Commission, the Town of Valdese, and Waldensian Heritage Museum. The Valdese Public Arts Commission would like to request your support for this tremendous project. Your contributions will be used for landscaping, lighting and a walkway extension. Those interested in making a donation can mail or bring check or cash to the Waldensian Heritage Museum or the Valdese Community Affairs Office located at the Old Rock School. No donation is too big or too small and any support you provide will be greatly appreciated. Your tax-deductible contributions will add additional features to the installation and will help make this project even more of an iconic image for the Town of Valdese. Help us celebrate 125 years of our hometown! Project updates will be available at www.valdese125.com | For inquiries about the project please call 828-679-2129.

Donations can be made by:

Checks payable to: Waldensian Heritage Museum

*Please note - 125 TRAIN ART - in memo line

Mail to: Valdese Tourism Dept. - P.O. Box 615 Valdese NC 28690

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Dave Says

Dear Dave,

Why don’t you recommend having short-term disability insurance while doing the first three Baby Steps of your plan? It seems like a good idea for me, when you’re in the beginning stages of getting your finances in order.

Bob

Dear Bob,

You could certainly do that if you want, possibly even through your place of employment. I’m a big fan of folks having long-term disability insurance when they’re in their prime wage-earning years. But short-term disability is something I’ve always considered to be gimmick insurance, and that’s something I don’t recommend or buy.

I get the argument, too, that short-term disability coverage usually isn’t very expensive. But during the first two Baby Steps — getting a $1,000 beginner emergency fund set aside, and paying off everything but the house — you’re trying to limit expenses as much as possible. Chances are you wouldn’t need it in Baby Step 1, because that covers your full emergency fund of three to six months of expenses.

Hope that helps, Bob!

Dave

Dear Dave,

My husband and I are trying to buy a house, but we both have low credit scores, so we’re having trouble securing a loan. We’ve heard talk about getting a mortgage loan with so credit score. Is this the same as a low credit score? Laura

Dear Laura,

No, it is not. A low credit score is “indefinable.” A low credit score indicates you’ve had — or still have — debt in your life, and you haven’t done a good job of paying creditors on time. Two things will help solve the problem of having a low credit score. One is time. If you’ve had instances of late payments from years ago, time will help heal that to a degree. The older the issue becomes, the less they count against you. But my guess is if you two probably have some bad debt. By bad debt, I mean things that were never paid, or accounts that are in collections. If that’s the case, you need to contact those people, and settle these debts in full — and in writing — as quickly as possible. Officially close the accounts, too, before you try to buy a home.

When it comes to buying a house, Laura, I always advise folks to first be debt-free and have an emergency fund of three to six months of expenses set aside.

Dave

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“Hear what the Spirit says.”
-REVELATION 3:23 NKJV
Well Done
By Pastor Dan Quirello
Burke County

The Bible uses several images to describe the nature of the Christian life. One of the more common is that of a race. This race is not a sprint; it is a marathon. We are not in this race for a short burst of time; rather, this race is a life-long course that entails many obstacles and dangers. Paul expressed his desire “That I may finish my course with joy.” (Acts 20:24). Paul makes it very clear that each believer has a course designed by God. My course is not the same as your course—not in yours the same as mine. We are each responsible to run the course which God has given to us as individuals. As believers, our motivating passion should be to hear the words “Well done thou good and faithful servant.” What does it take to finish well?

1. A passionate love. Our love for God should be so strong that every other relationship should pale in comparison. The Bible teaches that we are to “love the LORD your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might.” (Deuteronomy 6:5). Jesus said, “If any man love me, he will keep my word: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.” (John 14:23). If we do not have a passionate love for God, we will not finish well.

2. A focused pursuit. Jesus taught, “But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.” (Matthew 6:33). Mary was commended for choosing the one thing that was needful (Luke 10:42). We are far too easily sidetracked by too many things. A disciplined runner knows the importance of keeping his focus solely on the finish line. A focused pursuit is vital to finishing well.

3. A frequent evaluation. We must take time to prayerfully consider where we are on our journey. With no time for evaluation, many have tragically veered off course. David prayed, “Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting” (Psalm 139:23-24). Let’s determine to implement these principles into our lives so that we might finish our race well.

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

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

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Take a Seat Please
By Luna Ellis
Kingston, Tennessee

Okay, everyone please be seated. No, not there! That’s my seat! Just like Papa Bear’s chair, Mama Bear’s chair and Baby Bear’s chair it’s not possible for us to have our own chair in our homes. My husband preferred a recliner but I like a cozy upholstered rocker instead. Just as in our homes, some church going Christmas have “our” seats in the church building also. Several years ago while visiting a church we chose a seat on the side aisle about half way down the auditorium. In a few minutes we looked to our left and two unprepared ladies were standing there looking at us. I said, “Are we in your seat?” They responded with a nod. So...we, the visitors, politely stood and found another place to sit, hopefully not infringing on anyone’s private property. If these ladies were truly going to be so insistent they should have at least posted a “No Trespassing” sign! A pastor once said that he could always tell from the pulpit who was absent any given Sunday because certain people were not in their regular places. Why do we who are told to love one another practice segregation in all places our church services? This is also true when it comes to “church fellowships.” Who is sitting with you at your table during the fellowship meal? Most likely it’s your immediate family, the same people you eat with every day. The church fellowship meal is a great opportunity to spread your wings and find someone different with whom to converse. It’s a great time to reach out to the widow, widower or the single person who is there alone and especially any stranger in your midst. Something as simple as a “Surprise Birthday Party” church fellowship meal in the month of January. Each table is marked with a month of the year and everyone is told to take a seat at the table marked with the month of his/her birth. There’s a cupcake with a candle at each place setting. When everyone is seated they are told to light the candle in front of them and sing, “Happy Birthday to Me.” It turns out that the “surprise party” is for everyone who will celebrate a birthday throughout the coming months. Everyone’s ages will be that year’s toasted “gifts” can be given to the youngest or the oldest table. This is not only a fun time but it’s a great opportunity to “force” someone out of their comfort zones. How about it? Are you willing to take the leap and wander into the “unknown” by sitting with someone different next Sunday? If you’re not willing please post a “Do not sit in My Seat” sign and save the visitor from having to relocate. To really mix things up the pastor could say to the congregation “ Fruit basket turn over!” Goodness! In some churches that could be worse than choosing the color of paint or carpet!

Luna Ellis resides in Kingston TN, next door to grandchildren. Church is West Colonial Hill Baptist Church.
Young Guns Shooting Sports Teams
By Chad Ray
McDowell County

McDowell County 4-H Young Guns Shooting Sports teams traveled to Catawba Valley Wildlife Club in Vale, North Carolina for the District 8 North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission Hunter Education tournament on March 24th. Participants competed against teams from across the 8th district in shotgun, 22 rifle, archery and hunter skills. McDowell 4-H had both a junior and senior team. The seniors placed 7th overall with a score of 3,198. Top rifle shooter was Ayson Biddix with a 178, top shotgun shooter was Candace Holfeld with 190, top archer was Joseylin Childress with 184 and top in Hunter Skills was Brandon Peel with 169. Also competing was Clay Wilson, Adam Miller and Ethan McKee.

Our Junior team finished 2nd place in the junior competition and qualified to move on to the state tournament to be held in Elberbe, North Carolina on April 21st. Top shooters were: Luke Laving rifle, Joseph Gowen and Luke Laving shotgun, Ty Allison Archery, and Gannar Dierichs Hunter Skills. Also competing were Ben Mason, Logan Crisp, Nathan Moore and Kellen Raison.

The McDowell 4-H Young Guns would like to thank all the parents and volunteers that made this possible with a special thanks to the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission, Carolina West Shooting Club and the Friends of NRA. For information about McDowell 4-H please contact Chad Ray at (828) 652-8104.

Chad Ray is the 4-H Agent in McDowell County.

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Mitchell County Senior Center

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Bob Plot is a member of the Order of the Longleaf Pine, a Blue Ridge Heritage Area Artist, and an award-winning author of books and numerous magazine columns in national outdoor magazines. His work has appeared on UNC-TV's The History Channel, and the John Boy and Billy Radio Show. He continues the family tradition of raising Plott Hounds on his farm in Eufaula, NC.

www.brcnews.com
May 2018 - Blue Ridge Christian News page 21
The First Step to an Exciting Life

By Joyce Meyer

It’s so amazing to me that God wants to be involved in every area of our lives. I remember when I got this revelation, and it changed my life.

At that time, I was part of a bowling league and we played once a week. I remember one night when I wasn’t bowling very well, and I heard His prompting in my heart that said, “Ask Me to help you.” Immediately I thought, “I can’t ask God to help me bowl!”

But the truth is, He wants to help us with everything we do. And when I started letting Him be involved in every area of my life – following the leading of the Holy Spirit – that’s when life got really exciting!

What does it mean to be led by the Holy Spirit? Some may refer to it as being filled with – or sensitive to or anointed by – the Spirit. It sounds really spiritual, yet being led by the Spirit is actually a very practical part of living the Christian life. Simply put, to be led by the Holy Spirit just means to be obedient to Him. The Holy Spirit does such awesome, yet practical work in the lives of God’s children. He is our Comforter, Counselor, Helper, Intercessor, Advocate, Strengthener and Standby. He teaches us and guides us into truth, and He even brings the things we learn back to our remembrance as we need it.

And the best part of it all is that He lives in each of us. Ephesians 3:16 (AMPC) tells us that He enables us to be “…strengthened and reinforced with mighty power in the inner man by the Holy Spirit…” (Emphasis mine; referring to your innermost being and personality).

He comes to live in our hearts when we’ve been saved, and then He teaches and guides us according to God’s plan and purpose for us. One of the ways He does this is by convicting us of the sins in our life, and we learn what’s right and wrong as we grow in our faith. We may get by with things that are not right for a while, but the time comes when we need to grow up.

I remember when I would go to church every Sunday and then gossip about the pastor or whatever I didn’t like about the service. Of course, I was not a very happy Christian during that time. And I couldn’t bring the same type of people I was with me to others either. Critical and judgmental attitudes like that, or murmuring, being unthankful, and complaining hinder our relationship with God and our representation of what a Christian is.

But eventually, I began to get this nagging, uneasy feeling every time I would say something negative about the pastor, or anyone else for that matter. I could feel that what I was saying was wrong, and I knew in my heart it was the Holy Spirit telling me it was time to grow up and mature spiritually.

I’ve come to the point in my relationship with God where it doesn’t take long for me to be aware when I say or do something that is not pleasing to God. And this is what He wants for all His children: to develop sensitivity and obedience to His voice as He leads each of our lives. Romans 8:14 (AMPC) declares that “…all who are led by the Spirit of God are the sons of God.” This term “sons” indicates a special status of intimacy and dependency in our relationship with Him.

God is not looking for spiritual robots. He doesn’t want us all just following a bunch of rules for the sake of obedience. Jesus made a way, through His perfect sacrifice, for our sins to be completely washed away and removed from us so we can have a personal relationship with God. We are free to obey Him simply because we love Him, and we know that everything He tells us to do or not do is for our good. We just need to learn to follow His lead.

It’s actually exciting to follow the Holy Spirit, and He wants us to lead us all according to the plans God has for each of our lives. I’m not saying it will always be easy. King David was called a man after God’s own heart, but we know it wasn’t because he did everything right. However, David had cultivated a passionate heart for God’s will. He learned how to recover from his failures and move on in God and because of that “God testified concerning him: ‘I have found David son of Jesse a man after my own heart; he will do everything I want him to do’” (Acts 13:22 NIV).

In our relationship with God, our part is to pray, study His Word, and learn to develop our own sensitivity and obedience to the Holy Spirit’s lead. His promise to us is, “I will give them one heart [a new heart] and I will put a new spirit within them; and I will take the stony [unyieldingly hardened] heart out of their flesh, and will give them a heart of flesh [sensitive and responsive to the touch of their God]” (Ezekiel 11:19 AMPC).

Trust the Holy Spirit and follow His lead. You’ll discover His way is the best, most exciting journey you can take!

For more on this topic, order Joyce’s three-teaching CD series Keys to Loving Your Journey. You can also contact us to receive our free magazine, Enjoying Everyday Life, by calling (800) 727-9673 or visiting www.joycemeyer.org.

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

Patton, Liberty Artists
Recognized for Talents

By Student News Ambassador Robin Herrall
By Cheryl Shuffler

Burke County

The Asheville Museum of Art has recognized students from Patton High School and Liberty Middle School with Regional Scholastic Art and Writing Awards. Winners from Patton are:

- Cole Graf, a sophomore, won the Silver Key for his drawing.
- Marina Totty, a junior, won an Honorable Mention for her drawing.
- Joel Vasquez, a senior, won an Honorable Mention for his ceramic toga.
- Dillon Zander, a senior, won an Honorable Mention for his ceramic blowfish.

Winners from Liberty are:

- Katelyn Thao, an eighth grader, won the Gold Key for a drawing titled “Fox and Feather,” and an Honorable Mention for her piece titled “Mother’s Skirt.” Katelyn’s “Fox and Feather” will be on display at the Biltmore Estate through May.
- Annabel Macias, a seventh grader, won a Silver Key, for a self-portrait.
- Hannah Shores, a seventh grader, won an Honorable Mention for an acrylic painting titled “Desert Wasteland.”

Robin Bias, the visual art teacher at Patton, said, “I was so thrilled to know these students won the Scholastic Contest Art Awards. It’s a great feeling when you see your students achieve success in the classroom, but especially when they gain recognition outside of the classroom. I’m very proud of their achievement.”

Amber Rickertsen, the visual art teacher at Liberty, said, “I am so proud of these three young ladies who worked so hard and are being recognized for such a high honor for middle school students to achieve.”

As a Gold Key winner, Katelyn is eligible for the National Scholastic Art Awards Program. Judges look for works that incorporate creativity, originality, technical skill, and the artists’ personal voice or vision.

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The Women’s Social Club
By Beth Davis
Mitchell County

“There are not strangers here. Only friends you haven’t yet met.” - William Butler Yeats

She walked in quietly... may be even a little tensely. Silently putting down her things, turning on lights, carefully pulling out her materials, making sure everything was “just so” to make everyone feel welcome. It was important that everything be perfect. How many women would show up? Would ANY women show up? No one showed up.

Mildly distressed, two weeks later she did the very same thing. Wash. Ein. Spin. You know the drill.

Again, no one showed up.

Encouragement morphed into determination. Again, she quietly laid out her own personal Welcome Mat. And then she waited... and waited... and waited. And then... Two women very quietly, very tentatively, stepped in...

“Welcome, welcome! Please! Come in!”

And thus, finally, began the Women’s Social Club at SafePlace Bilingual Advocate, Jennifer Alegre, had so carefully planned.

They chatted and got to know each other, and it just so happened that two of them shared a birthday... on that very day. So naturally, the women had an impromptu birthday party. They talked about the first birthday they remembered, and each shared what that birthday celebration was for them. It’s conversations like these that help build mutual bonds and foster deep friendships.

The Women’s Social Club was created for our Latina sisters to feel more like a part of our community. It’s a much-needed pressure-free opportunity that provides camaraderie, support, and friendship. The Women’s Social Club also helps Latinas feel connected, significant, appreciated, important, and safe in the community they call home.

In addition to spur of the moment birthday parties, there are also activities and crafts... sewing, jewelry making, taking and cooking, and even beauty days. Having Jennifer, who can help with resources and support with no language barrier, in the community is a tremendous boon.

The Women’s Social Club meets 10:00am-11:30am, every 2nd and 4th Thursday at the Trinity Episcopal Church Parish Hall, and welcomes all Latinas women ages 18 and up. Transportation and child care are provided. For more information, please call Jennifer Alegre at Mitchell County SafePlace - 828-765-4015.

El Grupo Social de Mujeres:

“Aquí no hay estrafios; Solo amistades que aun no has conocido.” - William Butler Yeats

Entró callantitos... de una forma un poco tímida. Silenciosamente dejando sus cosas, presionando las bolas, cuidadosamente siendo sus materiales, asegurándose de que estuvieran de manera que hiciera todas sentirse bienvenidas. Era importante que todo estuviera perfecto. ¿Cuántas mujeres llegarían? ¿Se atreverían a acercarse? Nadie lo sabía.

Ligeramente desconcertada, dos semanas después ella hizo lo mismo. Las mismas rutinas.

De nuevo, a lado de lado.
El desprecio se convirtió en sorpresa. Ora vagando con brazos abiertos se paso a esperar... y espera... y espera. Y luego...

Dos mujeres muy calladas y tímidamente entraron con los pies de puntillas. “Bienvenidas, ¡Hola! Por favor pasen, pasen.

De este modo, finalmente, empezó El Grupo Social de Mujeres que la Defensora Bilingüe, Jennifer Alegre de Mitchell County SafePlace había planeado tan cuidadosamente.

Se pusieron a platicar y se empezaron a conocer, cuando salió a la plática que dos de ellas compartían el mismo cumpleaños... ese mismo día. Así que naturalmente, tuvieron una fiesta de cumpleaños pequeña y espontánea. Comparaciones sobre su primera memoria de un cumpleaños, y cada una hablaba sobre cuál festejo de cumpleaños les fue su favorito. Son conversaciones como estas las que ayudan construir vínculos únicos y formar amistades profundas.

El Grupo Social de Mujeres fue creado para nuestras hermanas Latinas, para que se sintieran como parte de nuestra comunidad. Es una oportunidad libre de presión que proporciona camaradería, apoyo y amistad. El Grupo Social de Mujeres también ayuda a las mujeres Latinas sentirse unidas, significativas, apreciadas, importantes y a salvo en la comunidad que ellas llaman su hogar.

La adición a las fiestas de cumpleaños espontáneas, también hay actividades, manualidades, talleres de cocina, recepciones, días de belleza, proveemos transporte y cuidado de niños. Teniendo a Jennifer quien puede ayudar con recursos y apoyo sin barreras idiomáticas en nuestra comunidad es una gran bendición.

El Grupo Social de Mujeres se junta cada 2° y 4° jueves del mes en la Iglesia Episcopal Trinity. Invitamos a todas las mujeres Latinas de 18 años en adelante. Para más información y como conseguir transporte por favor llamar al 828-765-4015 y preguntar por Jennifer Alegre.

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

By Elaine Percival
Mitchell County

Meeting on April 5, 2018, the Rotary Club of Spruce Pine bid farewell to Rotarian Doug Sudsmith, who has been a faithful and supportive member for twenty-four years. With words from fellow Rotarians, he related the group with a number of personal stories. In recognition of his many contributions to Rotary, the club presented Doug with an inscribed plaque designated him as a Paul Harris Fellow. He and his wife, Billie Ruth, will be missed by the entire community. Doug truly exemplifies the motto of Rotary: “Service Above Self.”

At a recent meeting of the Rotary Club of Spruce Pine, (3/29/18) Mitchell County Manager Kathy Young was presented a locally designed mug from Rotarian Reid Duncan. If you ask Kathy Young, to describe a typical day in her job as Mitchell County Manager you will quickly learn there is no such thing. Some days begin as early as 5:30AM and on others, she may take her last phone call after 10:30PM. Ms. Young has served Mitchell County faithfully in a number of positions and has worked with every Mitchell County Manager for thirty-eight years. Introduced by Rotarian Reid, she fielded a number of questions dealing with, but not limited to, taxes, traffic, tourism, and oversight of employees. The Rotary Club of Spruce Pine appreciates Ms. Young’s presentation and commands her for the excellent service she provides to the citizens of Mitchell County.

“Faces you know.

“Faces you trust.”

We cannot change the outcome, but we can affect the journey.

~ Anne Richardson
Forgotten Gospel
By Jason Koon
Burke County

This is the second article in a series on some of the central truths of the gospel that are slowly becoming endangered in today’s Church culture.

The Kingdom

The word Gospel literally means “good news.” It was used to describe a town-crier running through the streets with an announcement. Sometimes, it would also have been used of a herald going into a town ahead of the King, announcing the King’s arrival to the people. I wonder if that’s what Early Christian’s had in mind when the coopted this word and made it their own?

So, if the Gospel is an announcement, what are we announcing? Today’s Church seems to lack a generally agreed upon consensus of what this primary announcement is. If we are carrying a message, what is the message that we are carrying? To come, the announcement is a list of rules to keep and behaviors to avoid, for others it is feeding the hungry or digging wells, for others the announcement is that God loves you, or maybe even that you’re valuable and you need to believe in yourself because God believes in You. All these announcements – except the last one – are important pieces of biblical teaching. We are called to feed the hungry and dig wells. We are called to avoid sin and to recognize and rest in God’s love for us, and while these are all important teachings, they are not the central message that God has given us to announce.

In Matthew 24:14, Jesus said, “...and this gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world.” The gospel, the good news, is the announcement concerning The Kingdom of God coming into the world. Join the Baptist and the same thing, Matthew 3:2 summarizes his message as: “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” And according to Mark, Jesus in the early days of his ministry, took up a similar mantra, “the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel” (Mark 1:15). I could go on and on, text after text, verse after verse, old testament and new, all showing that the primary focus of the Gospel message revealed to us by Scripture is The Kingdom.

Unfortunately, this message of the Kingdom of Heaven is largely absent from our gospel conversations today. If I were to summarize the message of the Church today the way Matthew and Mark summarized the messages of John and Jesus, I would have to say something like:

• “Ask Jesus into Your heart, because he has a wonderful plan for your life.”
• Or maybe, “pray to receive Christ so you don’t go to hell.”
• There’s nothing wrong with any of these messages. They’re not unbiblical or incorrect, but they are incomplete. And to be honest, these messages don’t even come close to the glorious announcement that the King has arrived, that he has taken his sins upon himself, paid the price, and granted us participation in his work by placing his wisdom and his spirit inside of us. These modern messages ring hollow and unconvincing. But the King has come, the Kingdom has been established in the hearts and names of his people. And while we are still foreigners living in a foreign kingdom plagued by sin and death, the Kingdom of Heaven is alive and well in our hearts and minds as we persist in the hope that he will soon return to fully and finally set up his glorious reign on the earth. Now, that’s good news.

Jason Koon is Pastor of Bridget 2 Church in Morganton, NC.

My son, keep thy father’s commandment, and forsake not the law of thy mother: Proverbs 6:20

Brunch and Run
By Don Ford
Mitchell and Yancey Counties

Relay of the Blue Ridge would like to invite everyone who is a cancer survivor or caregiver to the annual Survivor’s Brunch at Shadal Creek Baptist Church in Burnsville, NC on Saturday, May 5th at 10 AM. Door prizes will be given away at this special event. For more information about this and other upcoming Relay for Life events, please contact Rhonda Buchan at (828) 766-1610.

RELAY FOR LIFE SPOTLIGHT – LOU EDWARDS

When you hear the word “cancer,” what comes to mind? One definition of that word is a person who is suffering and struggles to live. That same mantle describes Lou Edwards, a volunteer for Relay for the Blue Ridge.

Mrs. Lou Edwards is spreading others to get involved with Relay for Life in Yancey County. She and her husband Bob live in Burnsville, NC. Mrs. Edwards is a mother, grandmother and pastor’s wife, yet she still finds time to champion the cause to find a cure for cancer.

When asked why she is passionate about Relay for Life, Lou responded, “So many in our family have been taken from us due to cancer...including a sister, mother-in-law and sister-in-law.” In addition, her brother-in-law Terry is a cancer survivor.

Lou is certainly involved in the FLF effort. She has secured over 20 sponsorships, sold over 100 luminaries and provided supplies to the Yancey County Relay teams. Lou also sold her homemade fried apple pies at the Hoops for Hope Fundraiser recently held at Mitchell High School.

Mrs. Edwards stated, “All of us ought to be involved since cancer has affected so many lives, but whether or not you have a name, the important thing is to get involved.” If you have a family member with cancer, remember to live every day with them to the fullest.” Anyone who would like to become a cancer survivor and join the Relay for Life effort, please call (828) 666-1610.

Don Ford has served the Lord as a minister for 40 years. He and his wife Deborah have one daughter who lives in Georgia.
We are Thankful
By David Burleson
Burke County

We are very thankful that spring is officially here, and, hopefully, most of old man winter is behind us. The Burke United Christian Ministries is very thankful and appreciative of all the churches, groups and individuals that supported our work during the cold winter months. As a team, we were able to meet the needs of hundreds of our friends and neighbors who needed just a little extra to make it through the winter.

As we look back over the winter months, we see God working through our ministry to support and encourage others. For December, January, February, and March, EUCM was able to do the following with the help of our community partners:

- Assisted 7,251 Families
- Assisted 15,680 Individuals
- Provided 366 Showers to the Homeless
- Provided 356 Homeless Food Packs
- Provided 195 Homeless Individuals with Tents, Sleeping Bags, Blankets or other Items
- Provided Firewood to 36 Families
- Provided Clothing to 1,765 Individuals totaling $18,197.89
- Provided Heat Assistance to 401 Individuals totaling $37,845.21
- Provided Rent Assistance to 64 Individuals totaling $7,218.31
- Provided Assistance with Utilities to 108 Individuals totaling $5,965
- Provided 26,884 Meals in the Soup Kitchen
- Served 2,859 families in our Food Pantry totaling 20,673 individuals with 217,318 pounds of food.

As evidenced by the above statistics, the winter months were busy at EUCM. This work could not have been accomplished without our wonderful volunteers and staff. On April 16th EUCM celebrated our volunteers at our annual banquet. A big thank you to the following who made the banquet happen:

- Mrs. Mary Ellen Weise, Committee Chair
- Mrs. Terre Colabella
- Mr. Glen Roep
- Mr. Stephen Kucicak
- The First Methodist Church of Morganton and Rana McMahon
- The Freedom and Patton Anchor and Interact Clubs along with the National Honor Societies along with their sponsors, Kelly Baker, Michelle Gregory and Toshia Hakkis

Our volunteers are the lifeblood of EUCM. Each and every volunteer is vital to our ministry. A huge thank you to each soup kitchen team that prepares delicious meals for a daily lunch and dinner on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday evenings. Our soup kitchen teams are as follows:

AARP 3361
Bethel Church of Christ, Bethel UMC, Elm Ridge Health Care, Bridge 42, Burke County EMS, Burnknob Baptist Church, Calvary Lutheran (2 teams), Curiss UMC, Continental Teves, Crosslink, Decatur Memorial, Easter Seals UCP, Enon Baptist, First Advent Christian Church, First Baptist Morganton, First Presbyterian - 2 Teams, First UMC, Gaston Chapel AME, Gibbs Chapel, Grace Baptist, Grace Episcopal, The Rising Church, Hope United Methodist, Hospersville Baptist, Linville UMC, Mission AME, Morganton Elder's Lodge, Morganton Public Safety, Morganton Service League, Mr. Home Baptist (Youth, Brotherhood, Seniors Group), Mountain Grove UMC, Mull's Grove Baptist, New Day Christian Church, Nor Morganton UMC (2 teams), Newfields Chapel, Pleasant Ridge Baptist, Pleasant Ridge UMC, Ramsey's Girls UMC, St. James UMC, St. Stephen Baptist, St. Stephen's Episcopal, St. Paul's Episcopal, Summit Community Church, United Baptist, Victory Church, Walker Road Baptist, WINNOWS, Zion Baptist.

We also want to thank our other volunteer groups:

Food Pantry Volunteers, Front Office Volunteers, Clothing Closet Volunteers, Clothing Store Volunteers, Crafters, Food Harvesters, Dining Room, Warehouse, Silverware, Wood Ministry

BUCM is asking our community partners for their input on the effectiveness of our ministry through an online survey. Our partners have or will be receiving an email with specific instructions on completing the survey. For those receiving the survey, please take time to complete it so we are able to better meet the needs of those we serve.

To continue to support our clients and provide them with an additional hand up, BUCM is opening a Learning Lab with 16 computer workstations and other teaching resources. Because of a generous grant from James Tool and Waldensian Presbyterian Church and the support of Western Piedmont Community College, BUCM clients will be able to use this lab to work toward obtaining their high school equivalency (formerly a GED), enroll in on-line college classes, complete job training programs, do job searches, have food preparation classes, learn how to budget, and a variety of other activities. We also plan to offer tutoring and in the late summer for our students in the summer months. Our prayer is that these new resources will provide new opportunities for those we serve.

BUCM would once again be asking for churches to do a Backyard Bible School during the summer for the children who come to our ministry. Last year’s Bible School was a great success. If any church is interested just give me a call at (828) 435-8075 or email me at burlesondirector@gmail.com.

Also, BUCM, Burke United Way, the Outreach Center, and the Burke County Public Schools are collaborating to provide back to school supplies and clothing for our Burke County students during the annual, Build a Backpack event on Sat-

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David Burleson is Director of Burke United Christian Ministries

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May 2018 - Blue Ridge Christian News
Bits 'n Pieces

Avery County

Make plans now to join us on May 17, 2018 for the 20th Anniversary of the Hugh Fields Crossnore Children's Golf Classic. For sponsorship opportunities or to register your team, contact:

Clare Moore
Advancement Associate
(828) 733-4305
clee@crossnore.org

Crossnore Organization: Dr. Jerry Mandoe is currently looking out for an assistant who is self-motivated, reliable, articulate and eager to learn with minimal supervision required to work from-home part time as his Personal Assistant.

Job Scope:
• Screen and direct phone calls and distribute correspondence
• Manage diary and schedule meetings and appointments
• Make travel arrangements
• Produce reports, presentations and briefs

Wages: $100.00 weekly
Hours: An Average of 12hrs weekly
If interested, submit your resume/cover letter to Dr. Jerry Mandoe
manoej1005@gmail.com

Avery County Chamber: May 14, 2018 Golf Classic, Laurelville Golf Club

Pineytree Presbyterian Church - You are invited to join Pineytree Presbyterian for special meetings with Rodney Hogue on the weekend of May 4th - 6th. The schedule for the weekend looks like this:

Friday - May 4th, 6:30 pm
Saturday - May 5th, 7:00 pm
Sunday - May 6th, 11:00am and 6:30pm (Healing Service)

Dr. Rodney Hogue has been in full-time ministry since 1977. He pastored over 31 years on the west coast in Washington and California, his last being 23 years at Community of Grace in Hayward, California. Rodney began to minister in the areas of deliverance and healing in the 1980's while pastoring in churches in Washington state. His passion is to equip believers to minister in power for healing, deliverance, and to see the restoration of lives to fulfill one's destiny. Rodney now ministers itinerantly equipping believers nationally and internationally to walk out their identity and expand God's Kingdom which includes demonstrating the Kingdom of God with power. He and Mary reside near Abilene, Texas.

Barrie County

Be There at the Job Fair - Area employers are invited to participate in the Fourth Annual Barrie County Public Schools High School Job Fair on Wednesday, May 9, 2018. This annual event is a great chance to connect with over 400 Juniors and Seniors for job openings and career opportunities. We will promote the event to students who may be looking for full-time careers/jobs upon graduation, as well as those seeking part-time jobs in any capacity. The event will be held at C Davidson High School at 700 Loveleady Road in Valdese. Set up begins at 7:30 am, and the event will last until 2:10 pm.

If you have questions, please call Ms. Jamie Norton, MED, CTE Coordinator. Career Development Instructional Mentor and Internet Coordinator for BCPS at 828-238-3977.

Save the Date!
June 1, 2018 at Silvercreek Plantation Golf Course

Barrie County Chamber - The Barrie County Chamber is currently looking for our next President/CFO to lead the chamber. Please see the job description at this website. https://tinyurl.com/y8fo4cgp

Catawba River Baptist Association - Our community is blessed to have so much diversity and with that comes opportunities for churches to show the love of Jesus. We have many families with children with special needs and the church is in a perfect position to minister to those families with love, patience and understanding. With that in mind, CRBA will be offering training for churches and individuals on Tuesday, May 15th from 5-8 p.m. at CRBA office in Morganton. Please put this on your calendar and make plans to join us.

Our first ever Friends of Catawba River Baptist Association Benefit Banquet will be Tuesday, May 22 at 6 p.m. at Mount Hope Baptist Church. Our special guest will be Lawton Williams who pastored the First Baptist Church of York, Georgia. Dianne loves the Lord who has used him mightily as pastor, church planter, and church revitalizer having a world-wide ministry. Please join us as we ask God for the miracle of being debt free Association. For FREE tickets and more information please give us a call at 828-427-0137.

CRBA Men’s Ministry will be hosting CRBA’s Annual Family Skating Party for Barrie County. Join us Sunday, May 20th from 2-4 p.m. at the Skating Pavilion in Morganton. This will be a fun way to bring our family and join us. Also, Catawba River Baptist Association will be taking care of the entrance fees and skate rentals so feel free to bring your family and friends!

World Changes (helping CRBA change Burke County one family at a time) will be happening June 15-17 and we need your help. We need 12 additional men/ women who will serve as Crew Chiefs for the benefit of students. These folks should have some construction skills. We also need 2 more churches who will provide lunch for a team. We plan to be through Friday. Lastly, we need churches to help clean the school each morning after the students leave for workforces. If you or your church can help us with any or all of these needs, please give us a call at our CRBA office at 828-437-0137.

Morganton Seventh-day Adventist-Burrage County

1. God’s Closet-May 4- Friday from 5-12 pm
Visit us as Facebook at God’s Closet-Morganton for more info
FREE Insect, Children and teen clothing, shoes and bedding. No documentation required. Only 1 entry fee and you shop for 1/2 hour and get free stuff!
Drawings for free prizes and gift cards and free childcare while you shop!
We take donations all year long.
2. Health for Life-Burke will be hosting their free, monthly plant-based health social on May 26, 2018-Sunday at 3:30 pm. Everyone brings a plant-based dish and the recipes enjoy plant-based meals together! Location routes between volunteers’ homes. Please call Cindy at 870-510-5049 or email at jcincaer@tds.net for more information and directions to event.
3. Celebrate Conference Seventh-day Adventist annual camp meeting at beautiful Lake Jambalaya! May 27-June 2, 2018. For more info visit www.carolina7.org

God’s Closet - Morganton
Phone: 828-244-8376
E-Mail: morganton@godscloset.com
Website - www.godscloset.com
Facebook Page - God’s Closet - Morganton
(40)GodsClosetMorganton

After visiting the God’s Closet - Morganton Facebook Page please Like and Share with your friends!

Town of Valdese Community Affairs & Tourism

May 21, 2018: 6:00 pm Home brew competition at the LPDA.
May 28, 2018: 10AM Festival at LPDA that will have family-friendly activities for all. Activities include: booc leasons, courtne, grape-stomping, basket weaving, and special food!
Festival Di Birra 3-7pm at Waldensian Mill
May 23-June 1, 2018: Waldensian Archives/Geograpies and special events at the Waldensian Eirginage Museum. Meet with a representative from the Archit
Tivola Valdese of Italy to learn more about your heritage. By appointment only.
June 1-2, 2018: A Cultural Symposium- Four Faces of Waldensianism. Four Faces of Waldensianism: Italy, France, Germany, and South America. Special presentations by:
• Clairense Pasquet: Pastor and Historian of the Waldensian/Methodist Church of Italy.
• Gabriel Aulie: Writer and Historian of the Southern French Waldensians of the 15th & 16th Centuries.
• Albert de Lange: Writer and Historian of the Waldensian Settlements in Germany.
• Javier Pavo: Waldensian Ristorier from Uruguay on the settlements in Argentina and Uruguay and their ongoing witness today.

McDowell County

Cross United Methodist Church - 247 Shairding Road at Cross United Methodist Church in Marion. The food is available for anyone in the county who is in need and is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week with no questions asked. We do ask however that you take only what you need so items will be left for other winners who may be in need. The church is located at 65 West Cross Street in Marion just past Blue Ridge Terrace Apartments in the Cross Mill Community. Donations of non-perishable food items and gently used items are very much needed and can be dropped off at the pantry or you may call 828-442-8006 or 828-460-9257. If you would like to make a monetary donation, make checks payable to Cross United Methodist Church c/o of Susan Gossett, 65 Willis Drive, Marion, N.C. 28752. Your continued prayers for this outreach ministry are very much appreciated.

First Baptist of Marion - Triscilla Shiner Simmons Saturday, May 19 9:00am - 4:00pm. Blanton Family Ministry Center $10 Ticket Light Breakfast & Lunch. Tickets available at the Church Office New Ward. Note: Groups: We all struggle to know how to structure our time around God. Join this group as they explore and practice sacred opportunities to connect with your Creator. You might add a few new practices to your spiritual toolkit along the way! Led by Dr. Mark Burton: Foods as Medicine Did you know that diet has become the leading cause of disease that cause death and disability? Did you know that some of our leading causes of death and disease, including diabetes and heart disease, can be reversed by diet? If you are curious about how food can be used as medicine to improve your health, you are invited to a 7-week study on Food as Medicine by Dr. Melanie Orange. Staying Like a Christian Led by Scott Hagman. Study will continue throughout the semester. Location: Blanton FMC Lobby

Grace Community Church - Ecuador Mission Trip

We will be taking a group to Ecuador in June of 2018 to help with construction, medical assessments and support for women and children. The cost is $1500 (more info to come). If you are interested email rolina@graceforall.org

www.brecnews.com

May 2018 - Blue Ridge Christian News page 28
Bits 'n Pieces

Mitchell County

Bear Creek Baptist Church - Women’s Prayer Breakfast May 11th 8:00am at Letchworth Campground. All women are invited. Join us to pray for all who are serving in the armed forces. The next meeting will be in September.

Senior Adult Rally: Berry Chapel Baptist Church Monday May 7th at 10:00am Lunch provided.

Celebrate Recovery
This is a Christian and Biblical Based Program, giving hope and help for men, women and families suffering from addiction. Any questions contact Josie Wise at 315-0681.

There will be a meeting every Thursday night with someone there to talk to women, men, and their families.

Bethel Missionary Baptist Church - Benefit Singing for Magnolia Burleson Saturday May 15th, 2018 at 5pm.

Calvary Chapel Asheville - Spring Pine - Calvary Chapel Church in Asheville supporting a homes fellowship and Bible Study in Spring Pine. The fellowship is held on Thursday evenings at 7:00pm at 79 East Rd. (Entrance area—off Bousley Creek Rd). Call John Johnson 704-793-3799 for information and directions. And bring your Bible.

Mitchell County Historical Society: We are pleased to announce our second presentation in our Speaker’s Series with The Story of the Plott Hound: NC’s Official State Dog. Our speaker is Bob Plot, NC Humanities Road Scholar, who will share the history and sometimes hilarious, true stories of the breed that he’s inherited from his own George Plot first brought into this county in the 1770s. An extra treat is that our own Will Eitter will be joining Bob in this program as a special musical guest.

This event will take place at the MITCHELL SENIOR CENTER. Lunch is held on site. On May 31st at 7:00 PM. If you are unsure of the location of the Senior Center, please give us a call at 907-0727. Please come and enjoy the fun!


First Baptist Church - A Self-Defense Class will be offered by Pastor Rocky on Saturday, May 15th. Three Classes will be offered (10:00am-11:30; 12:00noon-1:30pm; 2:00pm-3:30pm) Classes are limited to 10 per class. A sign-up sheet is in the vestibule.

Relay For Life, Relay of the Blue Ridge would like to invite everyone who is a cancer survivor or care provider to the annual Survivors’ Brunch at Sloat Creek Farm, May 19th. Please come and enjoy a day of fun, music, food and fellowship. The event will take place from 11am to 4pm. For more information please contact Rhonda Buchanan at (828) 467-3439.

North Carolina Rhododendron Festival Celebrates 72 years and 2 days of the Festival. On May 16 and 17 the Town of Bakersville, "Gateway to the Road Home to the Arts," will host its 72nd North Carolina Rhododendron Festival, which is among the oldest and most respected festivals in the Southeast. The Rhododendron Festival Arts and Crafts Fair on both Friday and Saturday will have live music all day, a special children's event on the road on Saturday, food vendors including local farm to table sales, authentic Hispanic and Oriental choices, wood fired pizza, and popular sweet treats; regional arts and crafts people; commercial vendors; inflatable tents and train rides for the kids; nonprofit exhibitors, and the famous Davey Derby. There's a classic car show on Saturday as well as a 10K road race starting early Saturday and Saturday night til midnight. The Festival will feature the Rhododendron Festival Parade on Friday and Saturday evenings. Come to Bakersville! You will be a few steps away from 2 world class galleries and other great local artists. Arts and Crafts people as well as commercial vendors spaces are available. Contact Dr. Don Barrow delphaharison@gmail.com or 828-284-1914 http://www.rhododendronfestival.org.

Support Group For Caregivers Of Those With Memory Loss to hold meetings the first Friday of each month from 1-3pm for the entire year. 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, 330 Hospital Dr. in Spruce Pine, from 1:00 PM to 3:00 PM. High Country Caregiver Foundation welcomes and encourages all caregivers to attend.

Families dealing with a loved one with memory loss can quickly become exhausted, 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 a chance to share 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) 814-5987 or Janet Orms at joms6469@gmail.com.

Downtown Spruce Pine - I have completed the 2013 calendar of events for this year. We have added a new event “Downtown Day”. This will be a day geared to bring our locals downtown to celebrate Main Street and all we have to offer. We are still working out the details, but will have activities, games and music planned and hope you will be part of the day. We have also scheduled 3 outdoor movies, in addition to the summer concerts. (Sponsorship opportunities are still available for these events if you would like to help. Many thanks to Tree House Mountain Sales, Mountain Furniture, Superior Installation and Topalog for their support this season.)

- Restaurant owners - we would like to get your ideas/feedback on how we can help get more patrons to your door when we have our concert/movies/farmers market. There is definitely a missed opportunity here. Coupons’ special deals?
- Bring with brown bag lunch, please call or email me and share. I will take all ideas back to the PR committee for discussion.
- If anyone wants one of the Historical Society Depot ornaments, I have them in my office still. Just let me know when you are coming if you are interested in one.

- I have multiple businesses interested in locating downtown. If you have a "move in ready" space available or one coming available, and I have not been in touch, please contact me as.
- In case you missed it…I am excited to partner with the Spruce Pine Farmers Market for hosting the event in Central Park every Wednesday, beginning April 16th. The winter market will be in the visitor center the first Saturday of March.

Mitchell County Baptist Association - Mitchell Association has volunteered to be a drop-off point for churches to bring their old material, bibles and literature to be used by the organization "Love Packages." This material will be picked up on a regular basis.

For more information on this organization, please go to lovepackages.org. This purpose of this program has been to give out Bibles and literature to those in the community overseas. They are matching missionaries and workers around the world to reach the lost, plant churches, train leaders, disciple believers and serve the poor. The office has a list of what can be used.

Good News Bible Clubs: There will be a new chapter for Mitchell Yancey Avery and McDowell Counties. Growth is always good. Training dates for the new volunteer is Aug. 4th Burke and McDowell-Glenwood Baptist Church 9-3 Aug. 15th Avery and Yancey County location to be announced 9-3.

Senior Adult Day - Monday May 7th 10:00am Berry Chapel Baptist Church, Guest speaker Renee Henderson. Good food and Good Fellowship.

Mitchell County Chamber - Spruce Pine Farmers Market Finds New Home We have a new winter location for the market!!

We will be at the community room of Spruce Pine Main Street at 167 Locust Street. We will be inside from 11-4pm. This will be our winter location the 1st Saturday of the month from January until April. Come shop local with us.

The NC Mineral and Gem Festival is one of the largest and longest running events in our area and it takes everyone to make it happen each year! Please consider joining our team as an event sponsor this year!

It takes nearly a hundred volunteers to make this event happen for our community and we know that it takes our great sponsors too!

Our sponsors’ support helps us spread the word about the event throughout the southeast to bring more people to the event and to our local businesses.

Email us for sponsor information.


We are pleased to offer an Equestrian Day Camp for riders of various skill level.

Campers will work on general horsemanship, riding skills, trail work, and equestrian arts and crafts projects. Campers will also perform their newly acquired skills for their friends and family on Friday. Camp will be held Tuesday-Friday, 8 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. Camp is $150.00 and is for children ages 8-14. For more information please call 828-765-2655.
The Right Angle
By Marlene Hunk
Burke County

As I watched, the confident young man lurched back just in time to narrowly miss tumbling over the cliff. But, wait, that couldn’t be! We were in the middle of a rocky crevasse. My eyes couldn’t fathom the mad jungle of branches and frightening drop-offs in front of me. While my heart slowly resumed its normal beat, I saw him carefully look at what had caused his near miss with death. Across the chasm, the anamorphic drawing leaned menacingly, mocking our scrutiny. But when I looked at it from a different angle, I realized that it was simply two-dimensional, not three. What the young man had feared did not exist. What he had assumed was irrelevant. And the sudden change of direction was unnecessary.

Do you know the definition of anamorphic art? According to the Britannica.com website, Anamorphosis, is the visual art, [s] an ingenious perspective technique that gives a distorted image of the subject represented in a picture when seen from the assumed position but so constructed that if viewed from a particular angle, or reflected in a curved mirror, the distortion disappears and the image in the picture appears normal. It was first employed in the 17th century. The first examples appear in Leonardo da Vinci’s notebooks.

Look up http://www.trysteau.com/portfolio/ for some examples of street art using this anamorphic method. They look so real that “it’s difficult not to react to the emotion of what your brain is assuming. The clever angles distort reality and alter our minds, distorting us from walking on crutches to walking on the sidewalk.”

This method allows us to see the unexpected and change our perspective. Sometimes, our lives slide into distortion when we view it from our perspective rather than the Bible’s insight. Our issue becomes frightening, looking like an curse. But, when we look at the problem through the perceptive angle of Scripture, our lives return to normal, and our fear sink away, possibilities bloom and hope is reborn! The following verse urges us to look at the correct angle of our lives, through the eternal perspective rather than an earthly one.

2 Corinthians 4:18 While we look not at the things which are seen, but the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.

This correct perspective will restore our hope and trust in the Lord who designed the portrait of our lives with His own palette of stunning colors. The right angle to assessing our own situations is so succinctly stated in Philippians 1:6-7: Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it unto the day of Jesus Christ.

The women in the Gospels underscore this critical idea of looking at life through the right angle of God’s Word. Mary Magdalene was from the town of Magdala, a prosperous Galilean seacoast village even in biblical times. But to Mary, the town held unimaginable memories of the horrors of demonic possession. The anamorphic picture of her past labeled her with the shame and fear of her tormentors. The roaring lion of evil had possessed her with immense power and had ravaged her and consumed her from the verge of her soul to her body. But when I looked at it from a different angle, I realized that it was not the same.

So, today, when we look at our own lives, we, like Mary Magdalene can choose to look at it from a different angle. We can look at it from the angle of Romans 8:28 where God redeems our victimization; our betrayals and our shame. Jesus Christ! Our Savior gives us a new angle full of hope and forgiveness and tells us to walk on in faith.

As the smuggled back a couple of steps, the sidewalk traveler realized that art designed to trick him, and then simply walked confidently over the crevasse of the jungle, ready to resume his journey in life.

So, the next time you are tempted to believe what your eyes see, take a step back, look at your perceptions and perceptions and perceptions from the biblical angle of eternity as directed in 2 Corinthians 4:18. It will clear up the distorted images of life, relax the soul and provide powerful biblical thinking to overcome the anamorphic misperceptions of life!

Marlene Hunk is a regular contributor to Blue Ridge Christian News. Her passion is to dive deeply into the truths of Bible women and to discuss those in Bible Studies called Exchange Pass to Bible Women. She and her husband discover joy, nurture, and challenge in their church. Her contact is marlenehunk@bellsouth.net.
Jesus Is Still The Answer
By Rev. Mark H. Creeth

Because he will be away from home in June, and knowing my love for old books, my son recently gave me my father’s Day gift early. It’s a first edition copy of Joseph Augustus’s Bible Handbook: An Introduction to the Study of Sacred Scripture, dated 1866.

As I thumbed through its pages, I came across Augustus’ beautiful description of Christ and his ministry. It reads:

“[Christ] is himself, in truth, the gospel. His coming and work, apart from all that he directly taught, constitute the glad tidings of great joy unto all people. Did men need a real sacrifice for sin, in which the ties of the naut shall find their explanation and end? That sacrifice he offered. Did men need a perfect rule of life? That rule he gave when he dwelt among us; and immortality he brings to light, and life for evermore by teaching it, or promising it, as by the actual fact of himself rising from the dead in our nature, and on our behalf. There is, indeed, no question in religion which it is essential for us to know, which the life of Christ has not solved.”

How marvelous are all these words! They are so eloquently stated that it seems almost sacrilege to say that they reminded me of the bumper sticker, “If you think your car is not long after giving your life to Christ as a teenager.”

It simply reads, “Jesus is the Answer.” For me, Christ had addressed every issue of the human condition. My conviction then has been no way diminished through the years. What is it that Christ has not touched for the better? What problems does his person or purpose not solve? Did he not say, “Behold, I make all things new!” (Revelation 21:5)

Before Christ, human life was exceedingly cheap. But it was Christ who gave it dignity—dignity for men and women, dignity for children; dignity for every race, red, yellow, black, and white; dignity for the slave, dignity for the poor, and dignity for the elderly.

Poverty has been a part of every era, but it was Christ that inspired relief for the impoverished as no one before him or since. Were you aware that before Christ there was hardly a trace of an organized charitable effort? But when he came, and the Gospel was spread through the world, charity began to thrive.

Education is something that has always been around, but it was almost exclusively for the elite in society. But because of Christ and the interest manifested by him for all men, there developed the motive for providing education to the masses.

It was because of the Savior that the concept of civil liberties was born. Noah Webster put it this way:

“Almost all the civil liberty now enjoyed in the world owes its origin to the principles of the Christian religion. The religion which has introduced civil liberty is the religion of Christ and his apostles, which enjoins humility, piety, and benevolence; which acknowledges in every person a brother, or a sister, and a citizen with equal rights. This is genuine Christianity, and to this, we owe our free constitutions of government.”

I suggest the issue of civil liberties has never belonged to the ACLU but instead is really the domain of Christ who gave rise to civil liberty.

It may even be said modern science would have never existed were it not for Christ. The American Evangelical Theologian and Philosopher, Francis Schaeffer, writes about this and rightly contends:

“Alfred North Whitehead (1861-1947) and J. Robert Oppenheimer (1904-1967) have stressed that modern science was born out of a Christian worldview. Whithead was a widely respected mathematician and philosopher, and Oppenheimer, after he became director of the Institute for Advanced Study at Princeton in 1947, wrote in a wide range of subjects related to science... Whithead, in his 1936 book, Science and the Modern World, said that Christ was ‘the mother of science because of the medieval insistence on the rationality of God.’

So many other proofs of the incomparable impact of Christ on the world might also be given.

But Robert J. Hutchinson, a veteran religion writer, eloquently summarizes the question, saying:

“What is undeniable to the honest historian is that this one man’s life, teaching, and symbolic acts essentially created a social and cultural revolution that reverberate far beyond Palestine and altered almost every institution on earth — and is still felt today.

“In short, Jesus changed everything: politics, art, science, law, the rules of warfare, philosophy, sexual life, the family.

“Even Napoleon was amazed ‘Alexander, Caesar, Charlemagne, and myself founded empires, but upon what foundation did we rest the creation of nations? Upon force. Jesus Christ founded an empire upon love, and at this hour millions of men would die for him.’

“Thank it of. If Christ changed the whole world in this manner, how much more could be changed your little life if you were to personally trust him for the forgiveness so much by teaching it, or promising it, as by the actual fact of himself rising from the dead in our nature, and on our behalf. There is, indeed, no question in religion which it is essential for us to know, which the life of Christ has not solved.”

Grant Money
By Denise Murphy
Mitchell County

On Thursday, March 19th, the Western Region FFA Coordinator, Andy Vorcerman, traveled to Mitchell High School to deliver a check to the Mitchell High School FFA. The presentation was part of the NC Tobacco Trust fund grant program, and was presented to Mitchell High FFA Officers and FFA Advisor Mr. Chad Hargraves. The Mitchell High FFA applied for a grant totaling $1,055.00. The money from this grant was used to purchase a new spreader for use with FFA agricultural projects as well as classroom projects. Pictured below with the check and new equipment are (left to right): Shadie Stewart-FFA Secretary, Dakota Clark-FFA President, Mr. Chad Hargraves-FAA Advisor, Sean Housb-FFA Vice President, Elijah Smith-FFA Sentinel, and Tucker Hobson-FFA Chaplain.
Many of you have probably seen the news recently about former Deputy Director of the FBI, Andrew McCabe. Attorney General Sessions fired McCabe late last month for lying to the FBI about his conduct during the Clinton email investigation. As more and more information continues to come to light, one thing becomes clearer: we need a second special counsel to investigate the inappropriate conduct that seems to have occurred at the Department of Justice. Remember, Andrew McCabe was a central figure to the investigations leading up to the 2016 presidential election, including the investigations of the Hillary Clinton email server and the Trump campaign. His firing is an important indicator of why we need more information about the Department of Justice’s activities.

Rep. Jim Jordan (R-OH) and I interviewed with Laura Ingraham on Fox News about the issue. In the coming days, weeks, and months, I will keep working with my colleagues to ensure that officials in our federal justice system are honest, transparent, and forthcoming about misconduct that has occurred. You deserve no less than the full truth about what occurred. We will keep working to get it to you.

Visit to Coast

Our district continues to be well represented in the nation’s business leadership community. Great to meet the team at the Marion, NC location of Coast! They’re one of the global leaders and suppliers of industrial thread and consumer textile crafts business.

Working to Fight the Opioid Epidemic

I recently had the chance to meet with some of our local team in Hendersonville for the Henderson County Opioid Leadership Forum. Our local officials and law enforcement are doing an incredible job to combat this problem. As a reminder, if you haven’t done so already, I want to encourage you to visit my website and read about the bill my office introduced recently on this issue—H.R. 4862, the Opioid Abuse Deterrence, Research, and Recovery Act. You can read the full bill, a section by section summary, and letters of support from experts like those at the American Association of Neurological Surgeons. We want to do everything we can at the federal level to help provide appropriate resources and assistance for our local officials to combat the problem of opioids.

The media has widely covered the Atlantic Coast Pipeline infrastructure project and the fund set up by Gov. Cooper in January into which energy companies paid $58 million prior to the governor’s issuance of a permit allowing construction of the pipeline to begin. Many questions have been raised about the ethics and legality of the $58 million fund. Through a public information request, WRAL-TV obtained selected documents from the Cooper administration. However, the documents provided no details on how the funds would be distributed and the governor, despite being required by law, has not responded to indemnifiers who have made multiple requests for the same documents.

Legally, control and disbursements of state monies is under the control of the legislature, not the governor. An overwhelming bipartisan majority of legislators took action in February and passed House Bill 90, shifting the $58 million from the governor’s fund to school districts in the affected counties and place it back into his fund, which he claims is for economic development and environmental mitigation. Gov. Cooper and his brother own several properties in close proximity to the proposed pipeline and could stand to benefit from his pot of money. On February 12, Sen. Bill Rabon, Senate rules committee chair, and Rep. David Lewis, House rules committee chair, sent a demand letter for answers to fifteen questions regarding the fund. Gov. Cooper’s office gave either no response or partial response to the questions. On March 7, Sen. Rabon called for Senate President Pro Tem Phil Berger and House Speaker Tim Moore to initiate a formal investigation into the governor’s pipeline/shale fund arrangement. A week later, state GOP leaders filed a complaint with the U.S. Department of Justice asking for an investigation into whether Gov. Cooper violated the Hobbs Act in requiring a pay-to-play scenario for issuance of the Atlantic Coast Pipeline permit.

I urge the governor to be transparent and answer truthfully and completely all questions posed by Sen. Rabon and Rep. Lewis; turn over all requested relevant documents; and end his effort to return to his personal shackle fund the $58 million that the legislature transferred to school systems in the counties affected by the construction of the Atlantic Coast Pipeline. Instead of being self-serving, do the right thing, Gov. Cooper!

In conclusion, 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 Senate District 46

As the General Assembly prepares to reconvene for the 2018 short session, I thought I would recap some of the recent accomplishments that we hope to build on this year.

For the past several years, tax reform has been a top priority for the Republican majority. In October 2017, the nonpartisan Tax Foundation ranked North Carolina 11th best for business, up from a low of 41st, passing 36 states in 3 years. North Carolina is also currently ranked as Site Selection magazine's most competitive state for business, as Forbes No. 2 best state for business, Chief Executive Magazine's No. 3 best state for business, and CNBC's No. 5 best state for business. This sharp increase in our economic competitiveness means more jobs, higher wages and better opportunities for North Carolina families and businesses.

In 2017, the General Assembly reduced the tax burden on families and small businesses by cutting both the personal and corporate income tax rates. The 2017 budget, which was passed over Governor Roy Cooper's veto, includes several large tax changes.

- **Individual Income Tax:** On January 1, 2019, the individual income tax rate will decrease from 5.49 percent to 5.25 percent.
- **Standard Deduction:** The standard deduction will increase in 2019. For single filers, the deduction will increase by $8,750 to $10,000, while the deduction for married filers will increase from $17,500 to $20,000.
- **Corporate Income Tax:** Also on January 1, 2019, the corporate income tax rate will decrease from 3 percent to 2.5 percent.

These changes continue the major tax reforms Republicans have made since taking the majority in 2011. In 2011, the top personal income tax rate in North Carolina was 7.75 percent. By 2019, it will have fallen to 5.25 percent. At the same time, the standard deduction has grown from $6,500 for married filers in 2012 to $20,000 in 2018, and the corporate income tax rate will have decreased from 6.9 percent to 2.5 percent in 2019.

2017 was also a record year for employees in North Carolina, with unemployment rates reaching a 17-year low and the creation of over 1,000 new jobs. All of this was accomplished while eliminating a 2.5 billion dollar deficit, paying off a 2.5 billion dollar debt to the federal government, and increasing the Rainy Day Fund to a record high 2 billion dollars.

Despite all of this good news, there are still major challenges before us: the recent security crisis in our state prisons, as well as the national focus on making our schools safer and more secure. The NC House recently created a Select Committee on School Safety to make recommendations to the General Assembly to consider, and I am currently working on a school safety bill which I plan to introduce as well. More to come on these topics after the General Assembly convenes on May 15th.

It is an honor to represent Burke and Cleveland Counties in the NC Senate. – Warren Daniel

Senator Burr Introduces Military Medics Program Expansion Bill & Take Our Daughters and Sons to Work Day Resolution

I was proud at the end of last week to introduce legislation with Senator Patty Murray which would expand upon a successful public-private partnership between the U.S. Army Special Operations Command, the Carolinas Healthcare System, and Wake Forest University, effectively shortening the time of post-military Physician Assistants’ certification from 2 years to 5 months for military medics. The bill would require the Pentagon to partner with medical schools and healthcare systems in states with a Special Operations (SOCOM) presence to allow military medics to transfer their field experience into credit for a Master’s Degree to become Physician Assistants (PAs).

There’s no question that our nation’s medics on the field have substantial experience in saving lives. Doctors and hospitals across the country would benefit from the skills medics already have from their service, and with this bill, medics can get their certification to become a physician’s assistant in a quarter of the time under current law. This pilot program is successful here in North Carolina, and the universities and medical professionals agree. Rolling this out nationwide is a great solution and I look forward to the Senate’s passage of this bill.

I also supported the introduction of the ‘Take Our Daughters and Sons to Work Day’ Senate Resolution with Senators Heitkamp and Tillis this week. This year marks the 25th anniversary of the program encouraging parents across our country to bring their children to work to empower and inspire them through the example they set in the professional workplaces. The key to every child’s bright future is in their education. This program exemplifies the tangible results of a good education and shows each child what they’re working towards. I couldn’t be more proud that the Take Our Daughters and Sons to Work Foundation calls Elizabeth City, North Carolina home and with 40 million kids involved annually, I know this program will only grow and continue to help show each child his or her full potential.

NC House District 118

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

SpaceX gets satellite internet approval

When I took office in 2013, only about 22% of K-12 schools had access to broadband internet.

Today, 100% of public K-12 schools in North Carolina have access to high-speed, broadband internet. 88% of those schools have a dedicated fiber connection.

While students benefit greatly from high-speed internet access at school, many of my constituents — especially in more rural areas — lack access to high-speed internet at home.

On March 29, the FCC released its approval of SpaceX's plan to launch satellite internet that would provide worldwide coverage.

Traditional methods of building internet infrastructure present unique challenges in mountainous Western North Carolina. Entities that build internet infrastructure may be inclined to avoid large investments in infrastructure that only serve a handful of homes.

But SpaceX's plan is different. They're building a constellation of satellites that they call Starlink, and they're using satellites instead of cables. SpaceX plans to launch their Starlink satellites into orbit at an altitude of 150-700 miles above Earth's surface, which will reduce latency and improve end-user experience.

As part of the FCC's approval, SpaceX is required to launch half of the 4,425 satellite array by 2024, and the full array by 2027.

Marshall company signed underagreement for packaging

Pritpack, a packaging company in Marshall, Madison County proves every day that packaging impacts many more parts of our lives than food, retail and e-commerce.

Pritpack specializes in flexible packaging for the medical industry. They were kind enough to give me a tour of their impressive operation in March.

Pritpack ships their products all over the world. Their cutting-edge packaging helps save lives.

I would like to thank them for inviting me down for a visit, and for continuing their important work in Madison County.

God Bless America
An atheist communist state rejects any acknowledgment of God, and thus seeks to assert itself as the sovereign authority, leading to inevitable ruin and misery. Just a few weeks ago, Fidel Castro's son, a nuclear physicist who studied in Russia, took his own life. With no God, there is no hope.

The secular worldview dismisses God as irrelevant in the affairs of men and government, and views critical moral issues as independent of God's moral character and principles. Clearly, definitions of right and wrong are impossible to determine, having been replaced by cultural whims and situational ethics.

Over and against every competing worldview, the Bible forcefully declares, “Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind” (Romans 12:2). In other words, the only way to see all of life accurately is through the transforming lens of Scripture.

The Biblical worldview says that man is a God—One who is personal, powerful and caring—who created the world and everything in it. It states unequivocally that man is created in God's image, living in accordance with God's original design. Man—born and unborn, rich and poor, able and disabled—has intrinsic worth. Almighty God is a sovereign God, ruler over nations, states, empires and governments. He is to be worshiped and obeyed through the precepts and principles revealed in His infallible Word. He not only exists, but He is sovereign over all of history according to His wisdom and purposes, and He is intimately involved in every aspect of life.

The Biblical worldview also asserts the existence and reality of sin and evil. "All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). War, disease, violence, injustices and the myriad of problems that beset the world are the result of man's rebellion against God. No amount of higher education, no enlightened political agenda or social program can cause or remove the devastating consequences of sin. "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick" (Jeremiah 17:9).

The Biblical perspective also recognizes the active opposition of a personal adversary, the devil, who is constantly on the prowl to tempt and destroy. The devil aggressively opposes God and His people, wreaking havoc in virtually every arena. A deceived, a liar and a murderer, he seizes every opportunity to carry out his diabolical schemes. Any attempt to create a utopian society, to permanently solve global problems, is doomed to fail.

For now. But one day soon, as the Biblical worldview triumphantly proclaims, the Lord Jesus Christ will return to earth, meting out eternal judgment to those who have rebelled against Him while gathering to Himself the saints, who will rule along with Him in a new Heaven and a new Earth. There will be no more sickness, no more death, no more disease, no more violence, for our enemy will be cast into an eternal lake of fire, and sin will be no more (Revelations 21:10).

This is the only worldview that sees clearly, rightly and rejoices the heart for eternity. ©2018 BGEA

Do you have a Biblical worldview? Receive Christ today.

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

By Preacher Chris Rathbone

Mitchell County

This generation has been accused of being a generation that lacks commitment. That may be true in a sense but actually if this generation is guilty of anything it's being over-committed. That is to say we commit ourselves too much to so many things that we could really do without. Our society has conditioned us to believe that if we aren't busy all the time with something we are missing out on a full life. Social media posts are replete with photos of people's families involved in various activities. Recently an automotive commercial highlighted an SUV that has all the room to carry the things needed for a family that lives under that arrangement. The parents proceeded to tell their neighbor about all the activities in which the family was involved. Obviously, the point was to sell the vehicle, but what caught my attention was the fact that the family portrayed had their entire calendar filled with so much... too much.

What I have witnessed being a pastor for around 15 years is how so many Christians and their families are too busy for the things of God, but always have time for all the other activities. When called upon to serve in some capacity in the body of Christ, the response is often, "Well, pastor, I just don't have time to commit to that. Let me pray about it and I'll let you know." For the most part what they are hoping is that they are "praying about it" someone else will commit to it. The problem is that most everyone else is thinking the same thing, and church has about 15% of their members doing 100% of the work while the other 85% are "praying about it." No except: all the 10% work when no other church has to be scheduled around the tugs of God.

Talking with other pastors over the years this problem is rampant in most churches. Christian families commit to so much stuff they have no time or energy left over for serving the Lord through the local church. The things of God are secondary around everything else when everything else is supposed to be scheduled around the tugs of God. Not only is it hard to find Christians who are willing to step up to serve in church, it's getting harder to find Christians who will place a priority on even attending services regularly. While larger churches can feel the effects as bad, smaller local congregations often struggle from week to week because Christian families do not place a priority on worship attendance or discipleship. Parents who should be leading their children to church and setting the example of church attendance will too often teach their children that it is okay to let everything else come before worshiping or serving the Lord with other Christians. What many parents don't realize is that they have been shown by example that church attendance is not important. Each generation will place less and less priority on the most important thing a family should be doing together, worshiping together with the church. God's plan for reaching our families always begins at home. We as parents are ultimately responsible for discipling our kids. If we are so busy and committed to so many things that we don't have time to lead our children to church, folks we are too busy!

The Bible teaches us that the church is like a body with many different members (1 Corinthians 12). Each member of the body has a specific function. Even though each member is different with different gifts, each is needed for the body to function properly. If you have ever experienced an injury to a member of your body: say your foot, the entire body is affected by having to compensate for the member of the body that isn't functioning as it should. Paul wrote that the eye cannot say to the hand that it has no need of it anymore. The head cannot say to the feet that it has no need of feet anymore (vs 21). Just as our physical bodies need all members to function as it should; the body of Christ needs all the members to function as it should. It's our role to proclaim they are Christians say that they don't need to attend church. That statement goes against scripture my friends. Whether we want to acknowledge it or not, we need each other. We need every member to fulfill the function God has given them as part of the body of Christ. The eyes guide the hand to grasp, just as the hand grasps what the eyes see. The head guides the feet on a path, the feet carry the head down the path the head wants to go. We are many members of one body. There is to be no division in the body so that the members have the same care one for another (vs. 25). Just as a member of a physical body would wither and die if separated from the rest of the body, so would a Christian who has separated himself from the body of Christ, the church body.

As a pastor, over the years I have personally witnessed this happen to Christian individuals and families. It happens a little at a time. Miss a service here, miss a service there, miss several in a row, miss a month, attend only on special occasions, etc. Then before you know it there's no desire at all. The excuses began to flow, sin begins to creep in, the spiritual life is drained, and often a total collapse of morality takes place and consequences begin to raise their head. Many times, the one who walked away from the very thing that was sustaining them with life giving nourishment, is what they will blame for the consequences they are suffering! They'll blame God, blame the church, blame someone else, etc., etc. And remember, this all started because they allowed everything else to come between them and Jesus and His church.

The point I'm trying to make is this: let's keep our priorities in order. Let's not forget that learning about, serving, and worshipping Jesus should be the most important thing in our lives. Let's be first and foremost in our life and family. Would you stop for a while and take stock of what is going on in your family? What does your family as a whole place a priority on? Is it the things of God or the things of this world? Are you as a parent leading your family to worship with His church or are you leading them to believe its ok for anything or everything else to come before Him? Would you pause for a moment from all the chaos and ask yourself: What comes first?

Hebrews 10:24-25 And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.

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

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Evergreen Church

This month we will be looking at Luke 24:44-48. And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me. Then opened they their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures, and said unto him, This is it. And it was written, and it was believed of them that he suffered and rose again from the dead the third day: And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things. Bless the Lord for his Holy Word, which bring us wisdom, guidance, comfort, and countless other blessings. Rebecca that its message can transform our grief into joy, just as it did for the two who met Jesus on the road to Emmaus. LODF, we praise you for the wonderful gift of your written Word. Thank you for the example of Jesus, who faithfully followed and taught the Scriptures, instilled in us his deep love and regard for your Word. Give us understanding so that we might teach your truths to others and proclaim the good news of your news to a needy world. Sharing the Word (46:53). God opened our eyes (v. 31) and opened our understanding (v. 45) so that when He opens the Scriptures to us (v. 27, 32), we may open our mouths and tell others about Him (v. 46). Jesus gives us the commission, the power, and the message. There is no reason to be silent. When we experience a joyful worship (v. 52, 53), we will have little problem giving the world a joyful witness. We reflect on Luke’s version of the Great Commission. In it, the risen Lord summarizes the gospel is five truths, each of which is double. Firstly, there is the double event, namely the death and resurrection of the Messiah (v. 46). The Good News begins with history. It was an event before it could become an experience. Secondly, there is the double proclamation. On the basis of the name of Christ crucified and resurrected, forgiveness (the gospel offer) and repentance (the gospel demand) are proclaimed. True, the gospel is a free offer, but what is free is not always cheap. We cannot turn to Christ without simultaneously turning from evil. Thirdly, there is the double scope. The gospel is to be made known to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem (v. 47). That is, in opening the door of faith to the Gentiles, God did not close it on the Jews. We must firmly reject the extraordinary teaching of a “two-track” gospel, which maintains that there is need for Jews to believe in Jesus because they already have their own covenant with Abraham. But everybody needs to come to Christ! Fourthly, there is the double celebration of the gospel. On one hand, there is the Old Testament witness to the Messiah (v. 44, 46), while on the other, “you [the apostles] are witnesses of these things” (v. 48). Thus, the death and resurrection of Jesus have in the Old and New Testaments a double attention. Fifthly, there is the double mission. The Great Commission involved a double sending (v. 47, 49) - the sending to the Holy Spirit and the sending of them into the world. The two missions go together, for the Holy Spirit is a missionary Spirit. Thus, the risen Lord has given us a beautifully balanced and comprehensive account of the gospel. We are commissioned to proclaim repentance and forgiveness on the basis of the new covenant announced in the gospels and letters. We are to go and make disciples of all nations (v. 47). This commission includes a double sending. John McCoy is pastor of Evergreen Church in Roan Mountain, Tennessee. He is also chaplain at Roan Highlands Nursing Center.

Bible Study Fellowship International (BSF)

Q. Are you thinking you would like to know more about the history of Israel or more about the Bible?

A. If you answered “yes”, then you might like to join Bible Study Fellowship International now! BSF is a multidimensional organization that offers in-depth Bible study. You may join now locally and finish out the current study of Romans and get your name on the registration list for next September when we delve into a new study, “People of the Promised Land” or “People of the Promised Land Part II” covers the history of Israel’s leaders from Joshua to Solomon and includes some of Psalms and Proverbs.

Q. You may be asking, “Isn’t that a lot of material?”

A. Yes! That is a lot of material, but we only meet once a week during the school year and you may take time to study during the week. BSF starts a study each year after Labor Day - Sept. 11th through May 5th (this year). They have developed 10 studies designed to be presented during the school year. Participation is a discussion of questions in class is encouraged but not required, and no one should be put on the spot. Like any class, you get out of it what you put into it. The hope is that God will speak individually to participants through the Scriptures as they study the Bible.

New Study in Bible Study Fellowship International (BSF)

By Angie Duncan
Mitchell and Burke Counties

Shop Local. Eat Local. Insure Local.

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Happy Mother’s Day

May 2018 - Blue Ridge Christian News page 36
Who’s Keeping the Score
By Pastor Steve Williams
Mitchell County

We live in a day where accountability is a problem. From the White House to our house people don’t think they will be held accountable. Just look at our government leaders, and our public officials; they have failed to be held accountable and now look at where we nation is. Even worse than our government we need to look at Christians and our churches, and where we are. Many churches and Christians have fallen into the same sad set as the world. They think others will be held accountable, but not them. Followers of Christ have a responsibility to preserve the Christian foundation of our society and stop the tidal wave of moral decay. Christians have the responsibility to protect and uphold biblical values, because we will be held accountable on what we have let happen. People today may think there’s nobody keeping score, but they are really mistaken, because God is.

Look, Christians have failed to take serious responsibility. We love our many freedoms we have that are protected by our Constitution and should be grateful for the liberties we have. However, along with our wonderful rights come important responsibilities. As believers, we need to also understand that we have responsibility to God in which we will be held accountable. Christians have a God-given responsibility to reach and defend our beliefs. There are some things, I believe, believers can fight for in the political realm, like the Right to Life. Sanctity of marriage, lower taxes, and better stewardship of how our tax money is spent. And we also need to be better stewards of our natural resources, just to name a few. We need to preserve and protect our values that we hold so dear.

Our liberty in Christ does not give us the right to be slackers in our walk with Christ in this world, and our duties in this world. Accountability simply means you will be held responsible for your actions. Remember, God is keeping the score. I realize in the day we are living many people are not held accountable for their actions. The society we live in tries to tell people they are not responsible for their actions. They tell people you were born that way or it’s nobody else’s fault you are the way you are. Well, if you want to believe that as you will be in for a rude awakening one day. Because the Bible says in Romans 14:11-12 “For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So, then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.” So, remember— God’s Keeping the Score, not you.

Words of Wisdom
- Accountability breeds responsibility. Steven Covey
- Careful and accountability in democracy is veryimportant. Hypocrisy has no place. N/A
- I think we need more accountability and more transparency. John Timne
- Honesty, integrity, and accountability should be the hallmark of a Christian’s life. N/A

Questions you need to ask yourself?
- What will I be accountable for this week?
- Why will I be accountable?
- How will I demonstrate my accountability?

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

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May 2018 - Blue Ridge Christian News page 37
Crossword

ACROSS
1. He is not __ he has risen just as he said (Matt 28:6)
5. The lazy man does not ___ his game (Prov 12:27)
10. anyone who says to his brother, ‘___, is answerable to (Matt 5:22)
14. Joshua sent men from Jericho to Ai, which is near Beth (Josh 7:2)
15. They strike my cheek in scorn and ___ together against me (Job 16:10)
16. ___ put forth his left hand, and took the dagger (Judg 5:21 KJV)
17. do not let your ___ hand know what your right hand is doing (Matt 6:3)
18. The son of Ulam (1 Chron 7:17)
19. They crossed at the ___ to take the king’s household over (2 Sam 19:18)
29. struggling with all his ___ which so powerfully works in me (Col 1:12)
32. Essau was the father of the ___ (Gen 36:9)
33. the darkness is passing and the ___ light is already shining (Jn 2:8)
36. You will rule them with an ___ (Ps 2:9)
38. 31. bucklers and swords, ___ bow and spear (Josh 7:21)
39. Tell them everything I Command you: do not ___ a word (Jer 26:2)
40. men and women of ___ will sit in the streets (Zech 8:4)
43. is that saying true, One sower, and another reapeth (John 4:37 KJV)
44. son in Hebrew
46. We ___ whenever we are weak but you are strong (2 Cor 13:9)
47. I will also give you wealth, riches and honor (2 Chr 1:13)
48. to us, O God Almighty! (Ps 80:14)
49. struck the high priest’s servant, cutting off his right ___ (John 18:10)
50. have no excuse, you who pass judgment on someone else (Rom 2:1)
51. put an end to sin, to ___ wickedness (Dan 9:24)
52. In the end it bites like a snake and poisons like ___ (1:5) (Pro 23:32)
53. a rat (Jer 51:38) (KJV)
54. Touch not or stroked lightly (Ezek 23:21)
55. He committed no sin, and ___ was found in his mouth (1 Peter 2:22)
56. there was what looked like ___ of glass (1:3) (Rev 4:6)
57. and ___ to be desired to make one wise (1:4 Gen 3:6)
58. he had turned to the Lord (1 Tim 4:16)
59. each of whom could sling a stone at a hair and not ___ (Judg 20:16)
60. and wave them before the Lord as ___ offering (1:4) (Ex 29:24)
61. for he commanded the waters and water (Luke 3:21 KJV)
62. Do not set foot on the ___ of the wicked (Prov 4:14)
63. Your enemies will ___ before you (Deut 33:29)
64. The animals take cover, they remain in their ___ (Job 37:8)
65. Jesus was led by the Spirit ___ the desert to be tempted (Matt 4:1-2)
66. Praise the Lord with ___ care is called far above (Eccles 9:2)
67. I ___ to those whose sin does not lead to death (1 John 5:16)
68. him to my care, and I will bring him back (Gen 42:37)
69. In the first row there shall be ___ a topaz and a beryl (Ex 28:17)
70. They speak vanity every ___ with his neighbour (Ps 12:7)
71. Joshua son of Nun, who had been Moses ___ (Num 11:28)
72. high as the Lord’s bridges for a distance of 1,600 ___ (Re 14:20)
73. for after the ___ of these words, I have made a Covenant (Ex 34:27)
74. He will sit as a ___ and purifier of silver (Mal 3:3)
75. braved in their own conscience as with ___ iron (1:3) (1 Tim 4:2) ASV
76. authority to drive out all demons and to ___ diseases (Luke 9:1-2)
77. The fear of the Lord ___ life to life (Prov 10:27)
78. precious stone (Exod 28:11)
79. He failed you to pay the workmen ___ your fields (James 5:4)
80. the Pharisees began to ___ him vehemently (Luke 11:53)
81. with purple and blue and crimson___ and fine linen (2 Chr 3:14)
82. Saul and Abner son of Ner ___ down (1 Sam 26:5)
83. in my wrath I will ___ violent wind (Ezek 13:13)
84. ___ the pillars at the porch of the temple (1 Kings 7:21)
85. ___ there ___ olive trees by it (3:3) (Zech 4:3)
86. he comes with clouds and every ___ shall see him (Rev 1:7)
87. Son of Abraham (Gen 21:3)
88. Let love and faithfulness ___ you; bind them around your ___ (Prov 3:3)
89. To whom will you ___ me that we may be compared? (Isa 46:5)
90. it came between the ___ of the Egyptians (Exodus 14:20)
91. not alone at Ephesus, but almost throughout all ___ (Acts 19:26)
92. ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you ___ (Matt 11:28)
93. a Samarian woman came ___ water, Jesus said to her (John 4:7)
94. the reebleck, and the fallow ___ and the wild goat (Deut 14:5)
95. Our sheep will increase by thousands, by ___ of thousands (Ps 144:13)
96. member of the first family of the Bible

DOWN
1. lest he ___ thee to the judge (Luke 12:58 KJV)
2. there is one ___ to the righteous, and to the wicked (Eccles 9:2)
3. I ___ to those whose sin does not lead to death (1 John 5:16)
4. into him to my care, and I will bring him back (Gen 42:37)
5. In the first row there shall be ___ a topaz and a beryl (Ex 28:17)
6. They speak vanity every ___ with his neighbour (Ps 12:7)
7. Joshua son of Nun, who had been Moses ___ (Num 11:28)
8. high as the Lord’s bridges for a distance of 1,600 ___ (Re 14:20)
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23. Son of Abraham (Gen 21:3)
24. Let love and faithfulness ___ you; bind them around your ___ (Prov 3:3)
25. To whom will you ___ me that we may be compared? (Isa 46:5)

Solution on page 14

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May 2018 - Blue Ridge Christian News page 38
The Importance of Pain
By Pastor Kurt Bonar
Every Sunday

Last month I wrote about the importance of worship and reconciliation. This time I want to look at something we often try to escape. Pain. I think we all understand the value of physical pain that teaches us long term safety. But is there a spiritual value to pain? I think so.

Remember the story of Jacob wrestling with the Angel of God? When the match was over Jacob would not let go of the Angel. “I won’t let you go until you bless me!” What did the Lord do? He touched his hip socket dislocating his hip. From that day on Jacob limped through life.

Gen. 32:21 Therefore to this day the Israelites do not eat the tendon attached to the socket of the hip, because the socket of Jacob’s hip was touched near the tendon.

Even today, the orthodox Jews commemorate not Jacob’s cleverness, ingenuity or intelligence—they commemorate his pain.

But let’s look at another character in the Bible who was very familiar with pain. We find a lame man in John 5:6. When Jesus saw him lying there and learned that he had been in this condition for a long time, he asked him, “Do you want to get well?” “Sir,” the invalid replied, “I have no one to help me into the pool when the water is stirred. While I am trying to get in, someone else goes down ahead of me.” Then Jesus said to him, “Get up! Pick up your mat and walk.” 8 And once the man was cured, he picked up his mat and walked. The day on which this took place was a Sabbath. 9 And so the Jewish leaders said to the man who had been healed, “It is the Sabbath; the law forbids you to carry your mat.” 10 But he replied, “The man who made me well said to me, ‘Pick up your mat and walk.’”

11 So they asked him, “Who is this fellow who told you to pick it up and walk?” 12 The man who was healed had no idea who it was...

“Whoa, I can walk!” he shouted, “wait a minute” the leaders said, “who healed you? I don’t know. I’m just so happy that the pain is gone!” Later we would see Jesus excluding this pain free man.

You see, one of the purposes of pain is to lean on Jesus. We need to talk to him, get insights from him and be intimate with him, not just say “Whoa!” and forget about him.

I would love to be free from all pain, but not at the expense of forgetting about Jesus. God knew that Jacob would have a great impact on his descendants. But He said, Jacob I can only use you if you empty yourself of all your “talents” and lean on me so I’m going to have to hurt you. Think about those you respect and love the most. Do they hold that position because of the money they’ve made or their popularity or power? Not likely. It’s more likely because you’ve seen how they have endured pain.

Mom and Dad, the degree that your friends, kids and grandchildren see you limping through life and drawing from him strength, character and depth is the degree that they will cherish your legacy.

Dedicated to Dennis Robinson
Selah, (think about it) (inspired by “A Pillar by Day” Jen Courson)

Kurt Bonar is pastor of Walnut Grove Church.
Yancey Hospice & Palliative Care

Joins the Tearios Collaborative Network
By Ronnie Gregory
Yancey County

Ronnie Gregory, CEO, Yancey Hospice and Palliative Care, is pleased to announce the organization has joined the Tearios Collaborative Network (TCN). The TCN model allows non-profit hospices to leverage best practices, achieve economies of scale, and collaborate in ways not possible as a stand-alone organization. TCN sees collaboration to better prepare each agency to participate in emerging alternative payment models that will ultimately advance their charitable missions.

In today’s healthcare environment, an opportunity to join a larger network of providers often carries with it the disadvantage of losing an organization’s local identity,” said Ronnie Gregory. “However, the TCN model not only offers significant benefits of a larger entity, but also focuses on each hospice maintaining its local identity, leadership, board of directors, and staff.”

By joining together and sharing resources, community-based non-profit hospices across North Carolina can achieve a lower cost of service. With lower costs and increased economies of scale, TCN and its members offer a service model that delivers care the way it should be. Equipping community-based non-profit hospices to succeed reflects the essence of the original hospice movement; taking care of the needs of people in their community who are dealing with advanced illness.

Ronnis concluded, “This model of community-based hospice caring for our neighbors in our community is consistent with the higher standard of care Yancey Hospice and Palliative Care has provided for the past 36 years.”

Ronnie Gregory is from Burnsville, NC. He is the Executive Director of Yancey Hospice and Palliative Care.

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

Pause...and Consider

Roots, Wings And An Anchor
By Ken and Jan Merop
Avery County

When a child has one parent leave, his biggest concern is that the other parent will stay. As the staying parent, I had to answer those tough questions from my pre-school child.

He was seeking stability in the roots of his family. Would those roots dig deep enough to keep him emotionally secure and physically protected? I prayed and trusted God to help me give him security.

As he grew, he began to itch for some independence, wanting to walk to school with a friend and sometimes alone. I held back for a while until one day I realized I needed to trust him and God as I let go in appropriate ways. At first, I walked with him part way. Later, he walked alone in the same direction I’d travel to my part-time job. I’d catch up with him as I slowly drove. Seeing his progress, I’d wave and drive on – praying fervently – knowing he was testing his wings.

Roots and wings develop healthy self-confidence – two key rooms held in their hands.

By creating a loving, nurturing and safe home where our children are cherished, they dig deep roots. This is home and it is good. This is family and family loves, cares and protects.

Once a child feels secure at home, his “wings” itch to spread a bit further. By giving our children appropriate freedoms according to their age, abilities and trustworthiness; we have tuned the key to self-confidence and adventure. But, there is another key that is essential. That key opens the door to grounding them spiritually.

Their roots and wings will be more effective when their anchor in God holds fast. With faith in God through an abiding relationship with Jesus Christ, our children can face the storms that may threaten their roots or render them incapable of flying for a time.

As moms, we have the awesome privilege of training our children in the things of the Lord and helping them get to know God personally. As we love God with all our heart, soul and strength, we can teach our children by our words and behavior as seen in Deuteronomy 6, 7, NIV, where it says, “You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up.”

Roots, wings and an anchor for the soul – three keys a mom needs on her key ring. Sean

HEART OF THE MATTER

The bee’s work has just begun. But in order to fulfill its design, the bee must begin with the flower’s care. We, too, must find our center. A heart seeking God will find its gentleness. “And you will seek Me and find Me, When you search for Me with all your heart.”
Jeremiah 29:13

Kan and Jan love residing in the mountains of Avery County. Visit Jan’s new blog @paceandconsider.net. Journeying with Jan and Kan’s photos at kamersphotography.com.

Can a woman forget her suckling child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee.
Isaiah 49:15

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On Top With Taps
By Kate Gott
Mitchell and Tancoy Counties

A few weeks ago, Gabe and Troy Boone, Brent and Noah Buchanan, Levi Jones, and Jayden Woody performed in a free-to-the-public bluesgrass and old-time music concert at Black Mountain Res Powell.

TAPS is made possible, in part, through grants from the NC Arts Council. This year Toe River Arts is pleased to announce the receipt of a $1,000 grant from the scholarship fund of the Wayne C. Henderson Music Festival, Inc. The money will be used to help bring the region’s musical heritage to life as part of a TAPS experience. The ETSU Old Time Ramblers, booked to perform and work with the kids in the program this spring had to postpone due to weather. Monies received from the Wayne C. Henderson Festival, Inc. will help defray additional costs as the Old Time Ramblers kick off the program in September and perform at the Harris School auditorium.

Each year, since the festival began in 1995, a percentage of the proceeds has been set aside to fund scholarships to “at risk, young, local, traditional musicians in continuing their music exploration and education” and “non-profit organizations teaching traditional music to students.” More than $185,000 has been awarded through the 2017 festival organization. And this year, Toe River Arts was chosen as a recipient.

Toe River Arts’ TAPS is one of the most successful programs in the organization. Each year, middle school students in both counties are given an opportunity to perform and learn music on instruments loaned from the arts council. They meet weekly to learn the basics of banjo, guitar, or Appalachian dulcimers, and the heritage music and stories so prevalent in our region. Last year, over 30 local children participated in the program. Toe River Arts hopes that number will continue to grow over the coming school years.

To learn more about the arts council’s educational programs or to contribute to Toe River Arts programs, please visit the website, www.toeriverarts.org. On the homepage, you’ll find a link to a short YouTube video of the kids’ performance at Black Mountain.

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

Moving in the Will of the Lord
By Marion Stephan
McDowell County

“Now the LORD had said unto Abram, ‘Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father’s house, unto a land that I will shew thee.’” (Genesis 12:1)

After meeting in Icard for 17 years, the “Servants of Righteousness” chapter of the Christian Motorcycle Association (CMA) has picked up its roots and relocated to Morganton. Why? “God moved us,” asserts Randy Karwell, president of the chapter.

Karwell explains that a CMA chapter recently opened in Hickory and could minister to the nearby Icard area. However, Morganton has been untouched by the organization’s evangelical ministry.

The “Servants” discussed the idea of moving and voted unanimously to do so, says Karwell.

As of March 24, the chapter is meeting at a Morganton’s Golden Corral restaurant, 865 W. Fleming Drive, on the second Saturday of each month. The agenda includes an optional breakfast and fellowship at 8 am, followed by a business meeting, sharing, and prayer at 9. The next meeting is Saturday, May 6.

Meetings are open to motorcyclists and non-motorcyclists who share the organization’s emphasis on evangelism, missions, and fellowship in Christ, according to Karwell. Servants of Righteousness ministries include visiting persons in prisons and hospitals, participating in the annual “Bikers with Roses” motorcade for Salvation Army’s Purse, and evangelizing through local bike and networking events.

“If you love biking, sharing, and spending time with other folks,” the CMAs here for you, Karwell says. “It’s not a gang and it’s not a club.” The organization’s motto is “teaching the world one heart at a time.”

For more information, call Randy Karwell at (828) 446-7514, or email him at rtmw@ymail.com. The chapter’s website is at cmasru.org/NC_SERVANTSOFRIGHTEOUSNESS/default.aspx. The chapter also has a Facebook page at www.facebook.com/servantsofrighteousness.

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

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

H.O. Hirt, ERIE Founder
A New Puppy!
By Christy Lowman

We have almost made it completely through all of the armor of God. There are only a few more to discuss. I thought we would take a break and talk about something else this month. My family and I have been super busy lately. Can you guess why?

We got a new puppy! It took a lot of persuading but I am so glad I said “yes!” At times she can be a handful, but she is a very good girl. Sometimes the puppy acts more human than dog! Her name is Ruby and she is a Rotweiler. She is 8 months old and already 40 lbs, so she is a BIG girl! She listens to commands and loves being around us. Ruby loves peppersoni, and peanut butter cookies. She also loves bats and rooting and digging holes in the dirt. One thing she doesn’t like is the leash. Ruby is terrified of the leash! She is afraid it is going to attack her! Silly hub!

Unfortunately, Rotweilers have gained a bad reputation. So, I thought I would tell you some cool facts about them.

Rotweilers are a breed dating back to ancient Rome. The Roman army would use them to guard their cattle. While the army cattled they proved to be excellent guards. Their name Rotweiler means “butter’s dog.” In medieval times butchers would travel to towns with a cart full of meat to sell. The cart was pulled by a Rotweiler because of their size. The butcher would also store his money in pouches around the dog’s neck to keep thieves from stealing it. After the railroad came into play, these dogs were not needed anymore and almost became extinct. In both World Wars these dogs were used as police dogs and raised back their popularity. They had several jobs including search and rescue, messenger, guard dogs, and guard dogs. Rotweilers love spending time with their human families and think they are lap dogs. The first one was brought to America in the 1870s by a German emigrant. They are big dogs and can reach up to 130 lbs. They are sometimes called “wolf dogs” because of their large size. They rank in the top 10 breeds for being very smart! I have been surprised at how easy it has been to train Ruby. She loves learning new things and wants to please her human family.

Recently I was looking through the pictures we have taken of Ruby. What I discovered was that in all of them she was smiling. I realized that Ruby is a very happy dog and she is excited to be a part of our family. This made my heart smile. I thought to myself “What is God wanting me to learn from Ruby?” First of all, she taught me not to judge a book by its cover. On the outside Ruby looks scary with her large size, piercing black eyes, and thunderous barking. But she is so big that she looks like an adult dog. But once you get to know her, you will see that she is a sweet, friendly, loving, and gentle puppy. In the Bible, Rahab had a bad reputation. But Rahab was able to overcome her reputation. Despite what she was known for she was a very big woman. She hid the spies that God sent into Jericho and saved their lives. It helped God’s people take over their promised land. Just like Rahab, Ruby has chosen to rise above her reputation and be a good dog.

Second of all, I realized that Ruby was teaching me something very valuable. Ruby was teaching me to always look up and stay focused on Jesus. I might be having the worst day ever, but instead of focusing on the bad I should always focus on the good in my life. I have so much more good things going for me than bad things. And I have so much to be thankful to God. So, every time something happens that makes me sad, stressed, or mad I think of Ruby and her smiling face looking up at me and I remind myself to smile and focus on Jesus. Jesus can and will make anything and everything better. He is our only and only true best friend.

Did you know that smiles are contagious? Try it and see. If you smile it will cause other people to smile. Smiling also sets what kind of day you are going to have. If you are always smiling chances are you are going to have a great day! Most importantly smiling makes your heart happy.

There are many Bible verses that go with this lesson, that I could not pick. Instead I included them all.

1 Peter 4:8 (NLT)
The Lord has done great things for us.

1 Peter 5:11 (ESV)
A happy heart makes the face cheerful,
but heartache crushes the spirit.

John 7:24 EST
You can identify them by their fruit, that is, by the way they act. Can you pick grapes from thorn bushes, or figs from fig trees?

Matthew 7:15 NLT

Dear Lord, please help us to always smile and give our promises over to Jesus. Help us to be thankful and to concentrate on the good things in our life. We have so many things to be thankful for. Help us remember that it is only by your good grace that we have these things. We give all the glory to You, Lord, and we come to you with a thankful heart. We praise you for everything you have given us!

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 JCM. Christy gives all the glory to God in everything she does. A portion of the book sales from the Small Bible Character Series is dedicated 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 her website: http://www.amazon.com/.

You can reach her at: http://facebook.com/authorChristyLowman or christytscoops@yahoo.com.

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May 2018 - Blue Ridge Christian News page 42
Prestigious Full-Tuition Elizabeth McRae Scholarship Recipients Announced

By Nina Marastrea
Avery County

BANNER ELK, N.C. — Two incoming fall 2018 students, Emily Griffith of Connelly Springs, North Carolina, and Lucas Price, of Hudson, North Carolina, were named beneficiaries of the celebrated, full-tuition Elizabeth McRae Scholarship.

The recipients who were ultimately chosen as the winners initially competed on February 17 as part of the College’s annual Scholars Day. Hosted by the Lees-McRae Honors Program, the day invites qualified Honors Program students to participate in essay and interview competitions.

More than 146 students qualified for the prominent Lees-McRae College Honors Program, having attained a 3.75 high school GPA and SAT score over 1150 (ACT score over 25).

Griffith, an upcoming graduate of Burke Middle College, intends to study wildlife biology during her time at Lees-McRae.

She said her decision to come to the College largely hinged on the school’s one-of-a-kind location, community and programming.

“The atmosphere at Lees-McRae is so different than that of any other college I have ever visited,” Griffith said. “There’s just something about the campus and community that makes it feel like home. I am so honored to have been given the opportunity to be a part of the Bobcat family!”

Price is completing his final months at Caldwell Early College. Similar to Griffith, Price gravitated towards the College’s atmosphere, faculty and staff. He will also pursue a degree in wildlife biology during his time at Lees-McRae.

“I feel that at Lees-McRae I will get a unique, experiential education and develop relationships that will last a lifetime,” he said. “Aside from the atmosphere of the campus, I chose Lees-McRae because of the awesome location, nestled in the mountains of western North Carolina.”

The Elizabeth McRae Scholarship was named after Elizabeth A. McRae, one of the two namesakes of the College. McRae was a summer school teacher at Lees-McRae in 1900 when it was an all-female school led by Lees-McRae founder, Rev. Edgar Trafts.

Lees-McRae College awards more than $14 million annually in institutional scholarships and grants and helps facilitate more than $27 million in financial aid. For more information on scholarship opportunities at Lees-McRae, visit leesmcrae.edu/typesofaid or contact the Office of Financial Aid at 828.888.8740.

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

Nina Marastrea is the content manager of Lees-McRae College.

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May 2018 - Blue Ridge Christian News page 43
The Sin of Indignation
By Shawna Thomas
Burke County

"Hearing this, the ten began to feel indignant with James & John." (Mark 10:41)

This verse highlights a danger that good Christians need to beware of: James and John had just asked Jesus that they might sit on His right and left in His glory. This was over-ambitious, prideful, and over-reaching. Jesus dealt with them graciously (thankfully He does the same with us!) but: 41 indicates that the fallout from their request was now infecting the other ten disciples in dangerous ways.

It says when they heard this conversation that James and John had with Jesus, they too (the other disciples) “began to feel indignant.” It was one thing for James and John to sit with their ambitious request. That was indeed wrong. But now the difficulty was not that of the two brothers — they had been corrected by the Lord — nor the danger lay in the RESPONSE of the other ten towards their two. Hard feelings could hinder their fellowship, tear the group apart and destroy their ministry. So, Jesus called them to Himself (42) and spoke about the importance of serving one another.

Christian today need to beware of this same temptation to indignation. It is one thing for someone we know to sin, whether it is sin like James & John’s or something different entirely. The Lord will deal with that person, just as He did with the brothers in Mark 10. But those who knew the sinful person now face the same temptation which lured the ten in this passage, becoming indignant towards the sinful one. Our bitterness over what they have done, is just as much a sin, and can be just as harmful, as their original trespass.

The older brother in the story of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15) is an example of this. The younger brother was the “original sinner” here. He is the one who left home and squandered his fortune on loose living. But the older brother also ended up sinning, by becoming indignant toward what his younger sibling had done. In fact, his bitterness towards his brother, if never resolved, may have been the more damaging long-term sin. We face similar dangers with erring brothers and sisters today.

Indignation is especially a temptation for the very “naïve,” “religious” person. Like the older brother in Luke 15, they may feel that they themselves are walking the narrow road, so their temptation is to despise the brother who is not. So even when we are not the instigator of a sin, we may still be lured into sin through our own bitterness at the sinners. These are SUCH difficult waters to navigate. No wonder the Lord told Cain in Genesis 4:7: "Sin is crouching at the door and its desire is for you." Sin is so deceitful, so insidious.

So, our own bitterness towards a sinning person may end up doing as much damage as the sin of the person we have grown to despise! We must be so guard not to be trapped up by indignation, what we might call “the sin of the older brother.”

Shawna Thomas is Senior Pastor at Pleasant Ridge Baptist Church in Morganton. His messages and devotions are available at www.shawnatomkins.com

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May 2018 - Blue Ridge Christian News; page 44
Buchanan & Young

Awarded Honor For 50 Years
By Kay Ellis Pollard
Mitchell and Tazewell Counties

Buchanan & Young, Inc. Awarded Honor For 50 Years As Chrysler Dealership
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Kay Ellis Pollard lives in Mingus in Mitchell County. She is a free-lance writer. She serves on the SafePlace and Blue Ridge Hospice boards.

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Wanderings: Along the Blue Ridge
Artist - Bryán Koontz
Thursday, June 14, 5:00-7:00 p.m.

Poetry Fields of the Blue Ridge
Artist - Julia Ralston
Thursday, August 9, 5:00-7:00 p.m.

River and Roads
Artist - Kim Abemethy
Thursday, July 12, 5:00-7:00 p.m.

These Many Distant Horizons
Artist - Rebecca King
Thursday, September 6, 5:00-7:00 p.m.

Crossnore Fine Arts Gallery | 205 Johnson Lane | Crossnore, NC 28616 | (828) 733-3144
Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain: but a woman that feareth the LORD, she shall be praised.
Proverbs 31:30

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