



# BLUE RIDGE CHRISTIAN NEWS



## A New School Year Begins

By Doug Harrell

Before another edition of Blue Ridge Christian News hits the street, our children and grandchildren will be back in the walls of classrooms across our state and nation. That first day will be an exciting one for many and a traumatic day for others. The most trauma possessed ones involved will probably be the mothers of the new kindergarten children that will be leaving home and the nest for the first real time! I still remember my first grade teacher, Mrs. Byrd, at Tipton Hill School where I attended many, many years ago and how exciting it was.

Today, many things are the same as they were then, and many things have changed. The school environment is very different in so many ways, some changes may be good, but many are not beneficial to the children enrolled today. The major difference today is not really in the schools though, it is in the change of the family structure itself and the teachings that were being taught in the home. Today we Christians tend to fault the school systems because we cannot have prayer like we used to, in fact, our days started with a morning devotion read over the PA system to the entire school and having prayer in our classroom was not uncommon at all. We all know this is not allowed any more and while I wish it were and do think it has nothing but positive influence on the children, the courts will no longer allow this. In the mid 1950's and sixty's the vast majority of our population, especially here in the Bible Belt of Western North Carolina, were professing Christians and prayer and Bible reading was a totally acceptable thing to do in all public places. Today those things are not necessarily true. While I personally wish these things still took place, I do realize that it is a different world today. When I was in school it was not common for there to be a single parent household, today that story is also very different. Today the number of children living in a single parent family has tripled what it was then and if you add the number that live in a family that the parents have divorced and remarried the numbers are even more amazing.

While I truly wish we could go back to having the 10 Commandments and other spiritual references in our schools, this will probably never really go back to where it was. What we really need to work on is the family unit, starting with the marriages. The world of social media and instant access to all kinds of things has had a dramatic impact upon each of our personal lives, and can be good or bad, depending on how we use it. Sexting never used to exist and Snapchat was not even thought of. The promotion of sexual images has become totally overwhelming. These things can certainly destroy marriages in a moment. We need to pray that our marriage may be strong and Christ centered, that we get couples to take time to be sure that they are evenly yoked in their beliefs and are willing to truly commit to each other that marriage will be until death do us part. Fathers need to step up and be the spiritual leaders in the family, reading the devotions and taking the family to church, not sending them. When we lose the family values and Christian values we see the drug addiction skyrocket as it has in the past few years, the going to church and praying together is not a guarantee that bad things will not happen, but it does lessen the chance. It at least gives the children a base to fall back on if things go wrong, and they sometimes will.

Longing for the "good old days" will not change the things that need to be changed unless we change at home. The school are not tasked with that, you and I are! Certainly, pray for our schools, our principals, our school boards and staff and especially our teachers, understand though that you and I are the home front, we are the front line of offense and defense against the devil's workshop. If the children are to be taught right from wrong, respect for authority and good work ethics, it is up to us. Make sure your children are clothed in the total Armour of God because, like it or not, they will be facing a battle for salvation in this old world, school included.



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## BLUE RIDGE CHRISTIAN NEWS

**Publisher/Co-editor** – Doug Harrell  
828-467-0280  
dough@brcnews.com  
**Office Manager/Co-editor** – Barbara Harrell  
828-765-6800  
828-467-3644  
barbarah@brcnews.com  
**Sales:**  
Doug Harrell  
828-467-0280  
dough@brcnews.com  
**Church Directory:**  
Doug Harrell  
828-765-6800  
dough@brcnews.com

**Distribution:**  
Mildred Parker  
Sid Houk  
Brent Ramsey  
Carolyn McMahon  
**Graphic Design / Layout**  
Lynn Yaccarino  
lynn@brcnews.com  
**Blue Ridge Christian News**  
261 Oak Ave.  
Spruce Pine, NC 28777  
Office – 828-765-6800  
Fax – 828-766-9157  
info@brcnews.com

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

Isaiah 52:7 KJV



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# Church Directory



## 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

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

**Pastor - Steve Williams**

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

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## Morganton Seventh-day Adventist Church

2187 Jamestown Road  
Morganton, NC  
828-684-8212

**Pastor Rick Mercer**

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

## Faith Fellowship Church

Champ Ray Rd.  
Morganton, NC 28755  
(828)-675-9284  
www.fccn.org  
www.fccnradio.org

**Pastor: David Gillespie**

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

## Altapass Baptist Church

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

**Dr. Marcus R. Benfield**

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

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Bible Believing Church"**

## Grassy Creek Baptist Church

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

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

## West Burnsville Baptist Church

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

**Pastor: Terry Long**

Sunday School: 9:45 a.m.  
Morning Service: 10:50 a.m.  
Evening Service: 6:00 p.m.  
Wednesday Service 6:30 p.m.  
Youth and TeamKid: 6:00 pm  
Church vision: To become passionate  
followers and servants of Jesus Christ  
while ministering to the spiritual and  
physical needs of our church and community.

## Burkemont Baptist Church

4668 Burkemont Rd.  
Morganton, NC 28655  
828-437-2357  
For more information,  
please visit  
www.burkemontbaptist.org

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

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

## Plumtree Presbyterian Church

4527 Hwy 19E  
Plumtree, NC 28664  
828-765-6919  
www.plumtreepresbyterian.org  
**Pastor Ryan Bridgeo**  
pastor@plumtreepresbyterian.org

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

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

## Bear Creek Baptist Church

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

**Reverend Bruce Cannon**

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

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

## Great Hope Seventh-day Adventist Church

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

**Pastor Barry MaHorney**

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

## Pine Branch Baptist Church

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

**Reverend Bobby Joe Greene**

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## St. Lucien's Catholic Church

695 Summit Street  
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Phone (828) 765-2224

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

## First Baptist Church of Spruce Pine

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

**Dr. Rocky Branch  
Senior Pastor**

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

**Knowing God, Seeing God, Serving  
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## Spruce Pine United Methodist Church

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

**Pastor Rev. Jeremy Troxler**

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

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

## First Advent Christian Church

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

**Pastor Patrick Bradshaw  
Associate Pastor Javier  
Guzman**

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

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## Jesus And A Cozy Corner Booth

By Chelsea Blevins  
 Emory County



If I told you I hadn't been on the struggle bus lately, I'd be telling a big one. Truth is, I've been riding the struggle bus twenty-four hours a day in attempts to recollect myself.

Drowning in doubt, comparing myself to others, worrying myself sick over past occurrences, worrying about things that haven't even happened yet, trying to fix everything. ... the list could go on and on. Surely, I'm not the only one who does this.

It sounds silly, but this has been me on level 10 lately. My mind is truly my worst enemy. Often, I feel like God laughs at my feeble attempts at trying to plan out, fix, and repurpose my life. Anybody else feel like they really try, but really just flat out fail? Yeah, me too.

Welcome to the life of me, Chelsea. Who has always given 100 percent in attempts of trying to make her life the way she feels it should go. Ya know, perfect.

Bahaha. ... what weak attempts I have at being in control of my life and thinking my ways are what's best for me. Funny right?

I sit back and think what causes us to run and be filled with doubt and disbelief or feeling unqualified for God's plan and only one excuse that covers it all comes to mind... FEAR.

Fear holds us back from SO many things, doesn't it?

I AM SO GUILTY to question God and his plan for my life.

I have a simple little notebook where I collect my favorite quotes, scriptures, etc. that stand out to me and that I never want to forget. It had been a rough couple of days covered in fear, doubt, regrets, and feeling unqualified so I picked up my notebook. Inside were the words written in scribble smudged ink pen....

### BE WHERE YOUR FEET ARE

I immediately began to ponder on these few simple words. I began to glance down and up at the literal place my feet had landed. Tears filled my eyes as I thought about all the places my feeble feet had been. The places Jesus has carried me. In times of fear, failures, and heartbreaks he followed and guided my footsteps leading me to the current place my feet reside. And to think I am fearful of the great things he has in store?

Often when feelings of inadequacy and fear settle in I think about the story of Moses. I read about Moses and I often am quick to think of myself. Doubtful and fearful of the plan God has ahead of me.

We read that God showed up to Moses through a burning bush. God began to call out to Moses to receive his attention. I just love what God says next as he grasps the attention of Moses, as he tells him to take his shoes off for the place he stood was Holy ground. Up until recently I never really understood the power or meaning in this statement. But now I see that where my feet are and where Jesus meets, is certainly a Holy ground. God calls Moses to deliver his people and Moses is fearful. He begins doubting the plan God has for him and he questions his ability. GUILTY. Moses had a speech problem and he was sure God couldn't have just asked him to do the very thing he felt poorly at completing. So, Moses begins to try and run away from the plan God has called him to do. GUILTY, again.

"But God, I can't speak well, what if they don't understand me?" But God, why me?"

These words hit me so hard as I began to think about all the times I have questioned and doubted the duty God had for me.

Although Moses doubted, God reassured him time and time again. Don't you feel him do that to you as well?

But the words spoken to Moses in reply to his fears speak utter volumes suddenly crushing every fear or excuse Moses could have as God speaks:

"I AM THAT I AM."

If they ask who sent you, tell them THE I AM sent you."

I think that God came down to Moses and snuggled him up a little as he spoke these words into Moses, I AM THAT I AM. His reassurance provided Moses with strength in his weakness as he whispered these words. There is something comforting in knowing that in a time of fear there is one who is in fact all we need. No explanations, no if's or but's but a simple answer that covers all.

"But God I fear..."

"But God, I need you to tell me what is next"

"But God, I need you to promise me it is gonna be okay."

"But God I need you to show me my heart won't be broken again before I will trust."

He replies with the same fear shattering answer, I AM THAT I AM.

Man, isn't it so comforting to know that no matter what you may face HE IS in the fact the answer to it all.

I soon felt his invitation as I heard these words.

The invitation to be where my feet are, a Holy ground, where I have the most personal one on one connection with Jesus. The one where nothing else matters and every fear runs at the sound of His name.

"Welcome to the party, you are invited. No dress code, makeup, or directions needed."

Just you and me.

So many times, I want a party with friends and dancing and laughter and beauty. But I often forget about the one on one-time Jesus wants with me. The time I need with Him. The party where it is just me and Jesus spending time on Holy ground.

The party where my feet are tired, my hands worn, and my heart feeble and I feel a little inadequate and unqualified. Yet, he holds me. He invites me to spend a little time with him in a cozy corner booth. My messy, ugly, broken self. And it's just beautiful and comforting that he wants me there. Just as I am.

He invites you too.

How many times has God called you and invited you onto Holy ground to accomplish that which he has for you? Yet you stand there and question your value as you fear, doubt, and worry.

Jesus pulls up a chair in that cozy corner booth and he invites you. He speaks comfort and reassurance over you— quieting your fears, inadequacies, failures, etc. with the simple words, I AM THAT I AM.

He inches closer with a soft smile and whispers,

"I'm here. Even though you feel worthless, you're not. Even though you feel a little lost

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## THE FINAL TEST

By: Joyce Harwood

*A little girl was sad each day; she sat there all alone.  
The children all made fun of her; she wanted to go home.  
They made her cry and hate the day, to speak she was not free.  
At home they loved her as she was; that's where she longed to be.*

*Then one day she met the Lord; He told her of His gift.  
He loved her so He gave His life; it gave her heart a lift.  
T'was then she realized her worth more than gold.  
Creator of the universe had chosen her, she was told.*

*You'll be the one that I will trust with many precious things.  
And when you come to life's hard road, you'll walk beside The King.  
Jesus whispered to her soul that what YOU think of you,  
Is what you really do become, I've made your life anew.*

*Competing now in high school, she's run among the best.  
Remembering what was in her heart has stood the final test.  
New teaching with authority, steady voice with head held high,  
Her students awed by wisdom as she looked them in the eye.*

*Lessons learned from childhood and the book above the rest,  
With the Bible as your roadmap, you will pass the final test.  
She read a note from parents who responded to her call.*

*"You're a blessing to our children, Signed, your old classmates, one and all."*

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

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A Historical Common Thread  
of Cultures in Decline

By Dr. Mark Creech

The prophet Isaiah was a towering figure in his day. He was not only a prophet of God but a tremendous statesman. A consultant to Kings Ahaz and Hezekiah of Judah, Isaiah displayed a remarkable understanding of the international affairs of his day. Sometimes his wise counsel was heeded and other times not.

Chapter 28 of the Book of Isaiah is a fascinating passage about a nation on the brink of collapse. It reads:

*"And these also have wandered through wine, and by means of strong drink have strayed; the priest and the prophet have wandered by means of strong drink; they have been swallowed down by wine; they have strayed by means of strong drink; they have wandered in vision; they have staggered in judgment: for all their tables are full of vomit and filth; not one place is clean" (Is. 28:7-8).*

The text concerns the people of Judah as distinguished from the people of Israel, who had separated from Judah. (Incidentally, the ten tribes are referenced as Ephraim in verses 1 and 3 of the same chapter and a similar charge is made against them.) The period cited is likely to be the dark time which followed the ephemeral splendors of Hezekiah's reign.

The drunkenness mentioned in the passage should be interpreted both literally and spiritually. The physical effects of inebriation are made to portray Judah's moral unsteadiness. The irregularity of the movements of an individual who is consumed by alcohol - unable to walk straight - unable to see matters clearly - unable to navigate directly to a precise point - is demonstrative of the nation's erratic spiritual and moral behaviors. Add to this the filthy way the drunkard discerns life, the filthy language used, and the filthy displays of impropriety so that everything is made unclean. The country's character, says the prophet, is like its drinking.

Sir Angus Watson once wrote, "The three rocks on which frail humanity most often makes shipwreck are drink, gambling, and immorality, which are intimately related, and of these three drink by far is the most common."

As it was with Judah, the widespread use and overindulgence of alcohol is historically a common thread among cultures in decline.

Freedom had her birth among the hills of Greece. Her writings are still studied by intellectuals today; military leaders admire the exploits of her Grecian officers; students of structural engineering and architecture dig among her ruins. But little is known about the rigid abstinence from alcohol which helped produce the mental and political giants who made ancient Greece.

By the time of the Apostle Paul, when he gave his sermon on Mars Hill, the priests of the many gods of the land were leading worshippers into the lowliest forms of debauchery. After the Panhellenic Empire came into power, the idolatry took on even greater forms of perversion and degeneracy. Within time, the Free States would lose their authority and influence. Local autonomous political units faded, and large population groups moved from the rural and small-town settings and into the urban centers where the consumption of wine increased by colossal proportions. Consequentially, the circumstances which produced the mighty heroes of Greece disappeared, and she was perfectly conditioned to fall to Rome.

Rome would also get caught in the mesh of wine before its fall. After the conquest of the Mediterranean basin, heavy drinking and degeneracy would replace the traditional values of temperance.

The Romans had methods that gave aid and assistance to excessive drinking. They would drink on an empty stomach to get drunk faster, vomit, then eat food, drink more wine, and play drinking games. Mark Antony, the Roman politician and General, was well-known for taking pride in destructive drinking behavior. The once great and mighty Rome would eventually turn aside from the kind of character suitable to defend itself against invaders from the North.

The point made here is not that alcohol was the sole reason for the destruction of these civilizations, but instead to argue that a culture's easy acceptance, widespread and excessive use of alcohol, is unquestionably an accelerant for every form of decadence, dissipation, and dissolution. Such is symptomatic of a people treacherously sliding downward.

Someone once used this illustration: If a man riding a spirited horse loosens the reins, the horse may go faster, not because the horse has been excited, but because the restraint has been taken off. The man who imbibes an alcoholic beverage is like a rider who loosens his lines or throws them away. This principle is not only true for the individual who drinks, but also for a nation that celebrates alcohol and other recreational drugs.

Today in America, even the prophet and priest have wandered on this issue. Its rare to hear a sermon about alcohol use from the pulpit anymore, much less a message faithful to the Bible's teaching on the subject. Rarely do clergy engage in the policy debates about the need for alcohol's regulation and control.

All the while, this nation reels in a morally drunken stupor, seemingly unable to walk a straight line in its political endeavors, suffering blurred vision, and unable to set the course for a bright future. Corruption, obscenity, and licentiousness have contaminated everything. Our national character is very much like our drinking with all of its associated problems.

Our nation must literally and spiritually sober up, lest it fade into obscurity as other great civilizations before it.

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



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# High Country Prison Ministry

## Miracles

By Jody Griffin  
Mitchell County

*Hearken unto this, O Job: stand still, and consider the wondrous works of God. (Job 37:14, KJV)*

On July 28, 2018 my eyes beheld a most magnificent sight...Incarcerated fathers spent an entire day inside the gates of the prison with their children. There was much laughter, singing, sharing and the spirit of Hope was alive within these walls! It could ONLY be the miraculous gift of a Gracious God Who could orchestrate such things!

Months ago, I presented the need for volunteers and financial contributions to this community that would be required for the events of this day to take place. Ever so slowly, the required monies/people began showing up. Prayer and repeated pleas flowed from my heart as I thought of the children whose lives would be touched by God's Love in action during this very special One Day with God Camp. I knew that I could not let my fear of failing these children and their fathers overtake me. I knew I needed to trust God, and that I simply needed to watch and see what God would do...

Through miraculous provision, as the Lord touched the hearts of people like yourself, the resources of Heaven arrived just in time! Thanks to the willingness of compassionate people, our Camp was fully funded once again this year and sounds of joy echoed all around!

Over the next couple of months, I hope to share some of the incredible things I saw that day. But for now, I must begin by giving all praise and honor to God for what has been done! There are a number of what I call "preliminary" miracles that need to be known by all.

First, the divine appointment I experienced through no knowledge or connection of my own. A few months out from our Camp day the funding shortfall was significant. From my perspective, I doubted that it was possible for this day to happen. My heart was heavy for the children who would miss this opportunity and for their fathers whose hearts were being turned to their children in a new way as a result of this opportunity being presented to them. It was an incredible burden to me as I sensed that it was somehow my responsibility to make this day happen. (Silly me... ☹)

Our Faithful Heavenly Father was at work in spite of my doubts! A miracle was about to take place! A member of our institution staff and myself had sent a request to an organization looking for ways to be used as Blessings in the Name of the Lord, expecting that they would do something but with NO idea they would challenge us the way that they did.

"Raise one half of your needed funds before we send you a check." they said. "And we will match what you have raised."

That 'half' equated to \$4500 and we had a current balance around \$3000! My heart raced, I tossed and turned each night. Our donation stream had slowed to a drop by drop pace. I called Forgiven Ministry who conducts these wonderful camps in prisons around our state and our country, even around the world.

My friend Karen, who manages the office of this incredible ministry said to me in the calmest, most faith filled tone, "Chaplain, we just need to stand still and watch our God do what our God does." That wasn't all she said...but it was all I needed.

That's it! I just needed to stand still! This could only be done in complete confidence in the One Who Provides All Things!

Within days, we had met (and exceeded) our goal of \$4500. Our 'miracle' match was on the way, and I just stood there and took it all in with utter amazement!

To all of you who prayed, who gave, and who believed that this day would come and to all of you who served the children and their fathers in any way I testify to you this day, that OUR GOD IS FAITHFUL! To GOD be the Glory! Great things He has done!

There is so much more to be said...but for now, let me encourage you to "... Stand still, and consider the wondrous works of God."

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



# Bear Creek Baptist Church

## The Tremendous Need for Earnest Prayer

By Bruce Cannon  
Mitchell County

There are so many reasons the Church needs to earnestly pray. First, a careful study of people living around our Churches reveal that an overwhelming percentage do not attend Church. In fact, it is estimated in some western North Carolina areas the percentage of people that do not attend can range as high as 75%. When one looks at the attendance trends of all denominations it is noted that most congregations have gotten significantly smaller in size over the past decades.

A second reason for prayer concerns the rise of activities the Bible refers to as "iniquity". In Matthew 24:12 the Scriptures state that in the latter days "iniquity shall abound." This simply is a "catch all" category for the actions we are seeing so prevalent today such as drug use, the breakdown of the home, the lack of a work ethic, criminal activities and so forth.

A striking similarity is easily seen in that the smaller and weaker the Church gets, the greater influence iniquity will have over a society. It is the voice of the Church empowered by the Spirit of God that holds evil in check. And if the Church is frail, evil will abound.

And while all of these things are true and seemingly leave us without hope, the truth could not be further from that. God has always used the dark times to draw a remnant of believers to prayer, faithfulness, concern and so forth. Someone has said that the darker the night, the brighter the light shines.

It is time for the Church to be filled with passion for her Lord and perform extravagant displays of lavish love. What better place to exhibit boundless zeal and holy passion than in the place of prayer?

Read these great Scriptures concerning prayer and take to heart the promises made:

*John 15:7 - If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.*

*Luke 11:9 - 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.*

*Psalms 34:17 - The righteous cry, and the LORD heareth, and delivereth them out of all their troubles.*

The psalmist asks in Psalm 43:5, "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? hope in God: for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God."

It's not time to be discouraged, defeated or depressed! It's time to be filled with hope because the God of the universe will hear our prayers and will answer. Pray with me that this present darkness will give way to a glorious time of revival and movement of the Lord as our King hears our prayers and will send a great revival in our land.

Rev. Bruce Cannon currently serves as the Senior Pastor of Bear Creek Baptist Church in Bakersville. Formerly he served as Director of Missions for the Bladen Baptist Association and has served on the General Board of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina.



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By Doug Harrell

Many of us are or have been blessed with wonderful parents that have taught and trained us correctly and hopefully shared the importance of developing a personal relationship with our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. I am fortunate to be one of those that has been blessed in all regards.

Thirty years ago, my wife Barbara and I were home one weekend and took time to sit down with her mother, Belle Buchanan, and my mother and dad, A. D. and Geneva Harrell. We told them all that we were planning on returning home in a couple of years and planned to stay in Mitchell County and be there to help take care of them in their old age. In 1990 we made that move home to the mountains and are still living here and if the Lord is willing, will do that until it is time for us to go to our eternal home. The twenty-eight years here has been a blessing beyond description. Now I know that many of you cannot make a move to come home to look after parents, but if you can, it is well worth the sacrifice to do it. The Commandment, "Honor Thy Father and Mother that your days may be many" is the only one with a promise attached to it. Dad and I were always close but to be able to spend twenty-two years working together on the farm, hunting together and just spending time together was a blessing greater than I can even describe. Our roles changed as the years went by and if you are able to spend time with your parents, you will see the roles change as the years roll on. We were working partners on the farm as long as Dad was physically able to do hard work and in the later years of his life, he was the one that kept an eye on things and let me know what needed to be looked after or fixed, and there are always things on the farm that need to be fixed! Dad had a massive stroke at almost ninety-six years old, lacking three weeks, and I found him out in field with an old mowing scythe that he was using to cut down some thistle before it went to seed. Two days later he left this earth for his heavenly home. The day he died I had told him, he was unconscious in the hospital, that I was going to go home and put up a field of hay that needed to be baled and I would be back later in the day. He had told me the day he had the stroke that there was a gate that needed to be fixed and a fence post that had broken off. Later that day when I returned I was told by the nurses that his breathing had been very labored for the past hour. I walked in the room, sat down beside him and held his hand, leaned over and told him, Dad the hay is up, the fence is fixed and the gate is repaired, all is okay. He never opened his eyes, but I am sure that he heard me. His breathing and his face relaxed, about fifteen minutes later he took his last breath. I am sure he waited on me to return with that news that all was taken care of.

Two years later, Barbara's mother, Belle Buchanan, passed away but we had years of visiting and being with her that are totally precious to us and I know were to her as well. She had been at home but went to stay with Barbara's sister in Hickory and her heart just stopped while she was there. This past week my mother, Geneva Harrell passed away at our home after being with us for six years, most of which required 24-7 care. I have gone through all this just to encourage you to honor and provide for your parents to the very best of your ability, knowing that all our circumstances will be different. There are no regrets and no wishing you had done this or that if you do the very best you can while they are alive. Barbara and I sat by my mother's casket in the funeral home and prayed together and gave thanks to the Lord for the life she had lived and the faith that she had, leaned over and kissed her forehead and told her, we will see you in the morning mother, make sure that you can do the same thing. Live your life with the knowledge that you will be able to see them again on the other side, because this life is but a vapor.

Doug Harrell is a life-long resident of Mitchell County, Owner of Harrell Hill Farms, Inc, a member of Bear Creek Baptist Church and Publisher of the Blue Ridge Christian News.

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. John 3:16



Fundraising

By Lana Ellis  
Kingsport, Tennessee



According to the Oxford Dictionary the meaning of the word "Fundraising" is the seeking of financial support for a charity, cause or other enterprise. One source said that the term "fundraising" was first used in 1869 but actually raising funds for a particular cause existed long before then. We know for sure it was practiced in the Old Testament. A noted example is found in Exodus 35. The Lord instructed Moses to have the people who "were of a willing heart" to contribute items for the construction of the Tabernacle. More than enough gold, silver, bronze, fine fabrics, animal skins, oil and precious stones were given. The "Tabernacle Building Fund" was a huge success!

Today with most fundraisers those contributing to the cause receive something in exchange. It might be cookies sold at the store entrance or magazines, popcorn and candy being offered at your door by neighbor kids. Pancake breakfasts, spaghetti suppers or fish fries are often used as fundraisers for service clubs. Church youth groups raising money for a mission trip are well known for their car washes!!! (If they're willing to take a week out of their summer break to repair a house or conduct a backyard Bible club I'll gladly contribute in spite of the smudges!).

What if contributing to a fundraiser would assure you that at your death you would go to heaven? Would you "buy" into it? The Catholic Church teaches that the souls of those who are deceased are kept in "purgatory". Purgatory is defined by The Catechism of the Catholic Church as a "purification so as to achieve the holiness necessary to enter the joy of heaven." Members of the church are given the opportunity to reduce the amount of punishment for sins and lessen the time spent in purgatory by way of "indulgences". Indulgences are earned by performing good deeds and quoting certain prayers. In the 1500's plans were in place to build the new St. Peter's Basilica, the most predominate building that stands even today in Vatican City. Knowing that it would take a lot of money to construct such an elaborate building it became necessary to raise funds. "Ah ha!" said the Power That Was, when the lightbulb lit up over his head. Rather than by just good deeds and prayers, what if one could "buy" indulgences? The idea became a reality and the practice of indulgences being granted in exchange for money became the "Basilica Church Building Fund". "Want to get to heaven faster? Toss you gold coins into the pot."

To speed up the collection of funds Johannes Tetzel was hired by Archbishop Albert with Pope Leo X's approval. Tetzel could have easily earned the title "Fundraiser of the Decade". Standing at pulpits throughout the land he would give the following "sales pitch":

"Indulgences are the most precious and sublime of God's gifts ... Draw, near, and I will give you letters duly sealed by which even the sins which you shall hereafter desire to commit shall all be forgiven ... There is no sin so great that indulgences cannot remit. Ye priests, ye nobles, ye wives, ye maidens and you young men, hearken to your departed parents and friends who cry to you from the bottomless depths. 'We are enduring a horrible torment', they scream, 'a small alms from you would deliver us. You can give it now if you will!'"

The saying "As soon as the coin in the coffer rings, a soul from purgatory springs" is attributed to Tetzel. At one of his "fundraising events" it is said that a man asked Tetzel if it were "really" possible to receive a letter of indulgence for a "future sin." Tetzel, eager to make a sale, answered with a resounding, "Yes". The man handed over his money to Tetzel and Tetzel added it to his bag with all the other collections. As Tetzel was leaving town he was attacked by the aforementioned man and robbed of all the collected money. The man told Tetzel that this attack and robbery was the "future sin" he had in mind!

About the same time Frederick the Wise, Elector of Saxony (Germany), had an ongoing fundraising event for "The University of Wittenberg Building Fund". It was in the Castle Church of Wittenberg that Frederick displayed his prized collection of over 19,000 "authentic" relics. People came from everywhere for the opportunity to walk through the exhibition. Upon purchasing their tickets they got to feast their eyes on things like "a twig from the burning bush, soot from the fiery furnace, hay from the manger, fragments from Jesus' crib, milk from Mary, a thumb from St. Anne (Mary's mother), bread from the Last Supper, a thorn from the crown Jesus wore and fragments of bones, teeth, and hairs from various saints". Not only did a purchased ticket give opportunity to enter the museum of "authentic" relics it also included indulgences. I imagine that as people exited the building they were handed a "letter of indulgence."

Ironically a former Wittenberg University student, a Catholic monk named Martin Luther, began questioning the sale of indulgences. It was on the massive wooden door of Frederick's Castle Church that Luther posted his Ninety-five Theses in opposition to the non-biblical "fund raising" practice of granting indulgences. This act was the beginning of the Protestant Reformation restoring the original teachings of Jesus and the apostles, who made no references to the granting, much less selling, of indulgences. The granting of indulgences is still practiced by the Catholic Church by reciting the prayer or act of charity assigned. Receiving indulgences in exchange for money, however, came to an end shortly after Luther took a stand against it. Well, so much for that fund raiser!

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





Freedom Through Truth

By Billy Graham

Men and women today are seeking various kinds of freedom. In many places of the world, people are gathering in crowds and shouting, "Freedom!"

Some time ago I was at a World Fair and saw the tremendous prospects of science presented in the exhibitions. I thought of what Einstein said shortly before he died. "I feel," he declared, "like a man chained. I get a glimpse of reality and then it flees. If only I could be free from the shackles of my intellectual smallness, then I could understand the universe in which I live."

Not only do we want political and intellectual freedom today, we also want moral freedom. We have sexual expression on a scale unknown in modern times. We thought it would make us happy, but we are miserable with it. We have found it destroying not only our morals, but our souls.

"We have sexual expression on a scale unknown in modern times. We thought it would make us happy, but we are miserable with it. We have found it destroying not only our morals, but our souls."

We say we want freedom from prejudice, freedom from ignorance and freedom from poverty. We even say we're searching for religious freedom. There are groups in North America that want to throw out all Christian emphasis, all religious symbols. They wish to be free from such "bondage." They say, "Do away with the recognition of God in national life."

Our forefathers did not feel that way. They desired that we should have freedom of religion, but not freedom from religion. "Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord" (Psalm 33:12). If we push God aside, may God have mercy upon our nation!

The Scripture teaches that the only truly free people in the world are those who have made Christ their Savior, Master and Lord. Jesus Christ said, "You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32).

What, then, is truth? People seek for that, too, as they seek for freedom. The scientist seeks truth about the physical universe. The philosopher tries to discover truth about human existence. The psychologist looks for truth about the action and reaction of the human mind. At the end of his life, Gautama Buddha said, "I am still searching for truth."

But here is a man, a giant among men, who appears on the horizon. He stands before His neighbors and friends and declares, "I am the truth!" (Cf. John 14:6). What an astounding claim. "I am the secret of all truth—all psychological truth, all sociological truth, all scientific truth, all philosophical truth, all religious truth."

The Secret of the Universe

The Scripture says that "by him all things were created" (Colossians 1:16) and "in him all things consist" (Colossians 1:17). There is something that holds matter together, and the scientist cannot tell you what it is. I believe that someday we are going to learn that the secret of it all is Christ: that if He took His hand off us for five seconds, we would blow apart. He is truth! Ultimate truth!

Now, you can reject this truth and think that you are free. You can say, "I have rejected Jesus Christ, I have rejected God, and now I am going to live it up." But you will find yourself in a bondage far greater than any you knew before. You end up with inner conflicts, guilt complexes, inferiority feelings, fears and neuroses, and your so-called freedom is a new enslavement.

When Christ told His disciples, "I am the truth" (Cf. John 14:6), He was either right and was telling the truth, or He was a blasphemous deceiver who knew that He was not the truth and was lying. Or He thought that He was God, and He did not know the difference. That would have made Him a maniac—a person who thought He was God when He really wasn't! Which was it? That is a decision you will have to make. You will have to decide who Jesus Christ is—a liar, an egoma-



niac, or what He claimed to be: God in the flesh, the ultimate reality and truth in the universe. If He is God and the truth, and He tells me to follow Him, I would be a fool not to do so.

God Demands a Commitment

We are all interested in truth, and Christ is the truth. When you give yourself to Him, He opens the doors of your mind in the most glorious way. You see a new dimension of life that you have been previously blind to. When you open yourself to Christ—to truth—your life lights up. Your whole inner life glows, and there comes a peace and joy and security that only He can give.

So, God demands a decision, a commitment, a surrender, a conversion. Jesus said, "You must be born again." It wasn't optional. He said, "You must be born again" (John 3:7) before you can get into the Kingdom of Heaven.

When you come to Christ, He gives you a freedom that is real: "Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed" (John 8:36).

What is this freedom? First, He frees you from the penalty of sin. I could preach from morning until night, describing what sin is. But I do not need to. You know that you have sinned against God.

We break the laws of God. We fail God. We fall short of His requirements. We are sinners. And this sin has done something—it has alienated us from God. Our sin comes between us and God, so that He has to hide His face from us and will not hear us. You may laugh at this. But remember: The Bible says that "fools mock at sin" (Proverbs 14:9). You can say that your offenses are small and don't amount to anything. But God is a pure and righteous and holy God, and in His sight, you have caused offenses; you have caused a cloud to come between you and God. You are separated from God so that your prayers cannot be answered, and all of our religious actions mean nothing in His sight. You can try to cover up your sins, but God says that you cannot get away with it.

But here comes the glorious part: Christ took the penalty of our sin. That is what the cross is all about. He died on that cross for people like you and me, sinners who had failed Him and had broken His laws. On that cross, God took all of our sins and laid them on Christ, so that He became sin for us. He took the judgment of our sin; He took the hell of our sin. And the moral accountability that you would ordinarily expect to face at the judgment, you will not have to face if you claim Him as your Savior.

I will not be at that judgment. Oh, yes, I have sinned; I have broken God's laws a thousand times, but I will not have to face the judgment. I will not have to give an account. Why? Because on the cross the Lord Jesus Christ took the accountability for me. He took the sin and judgment for me. That is the glorious grace and mercy of God that none of us can fully understand.

Oh, the depth of God's grace! Oh, the height of God's mercy, the breadth of God's love, that He is willing to say to you and to me, "I forgive you. You will never have to face the judgment!" When that gets through to you, you can go to bed and sleep a new kind of sleep.

The full penalty has been paid. The Judge will never say, "I pronounce sentence on you," because Christ has accepted that sentence for you. In Christ you are free. Accept it by faith and go your way rejoicing.

Freed from Sin's Power

Second, we are freed from the power of sin. Jesus said, "Whoever commits sin is a slave of sin" (John 8:34). Are you a slave of sin? In bondage to jealousy, to pride, to selfishness, to immorality, to gambling, to some drug, to sinful pleasure, so that sin has become your slave driver?

It may be that sin stands over you with a whip and lashes you across the back. You protest, "But I don't want to commit this sin. I don't want to tell this lie. I don't want to get drunk. I don't want to get involved with that person." But you yield to the domination of sin—you are a slave to sin. The very thing you say you will not do again, you do. It becomes worse and worse as you grow older. Your heart gets harder and harder, until finally there is death and judgment and hell.

But when you know the truth, the truth shall make you free. How wonderful! Sin is no longer in the throne room of my life. Christ sits there, and as I daily, moment by moment, yield my members to Him, He puts my life in order. Satan no longer has the power over my life that he once had. Sin is no longer in command. Oh, to be sure, I slip and fall, but Christ is there to pick me up and to put His arm around me and to love me.

Our Heavenly Father has seen everything that you have done. He is just waiting now for you to come and confess it, to acknowledge it and say, "Lord, here I am. I want a fresh start. I want a new day in my life. I want a new beginning. I want a new birth. I want to be yours from this moment." ©1963 BGEA

Adapted from an article published in Decision in July 1963. Scripture quotations are taken from The Holy Bible, New King James Version.

Find freedom in Christ today.





**Jamie Miller, CPA**

**Jamie M. Miller, CPA, PLLC**

1136 Greenwood Road Spruce Pine, NC 28777	2301 Rutherford Road Marion, NC 28752
phone: 828.765.4400 fax: 828.765.4880	phone: 828.652.6777 fax: 828.652.6755

jamie@highcountrycpa.com  
www.highcountrycpa.com







# Mine Creek Baptist Church

## Home

By Preacher Chris Rathbone  
Mitchell County

Summer is in full swing! Hot weather, mowing, vacation, thunderstorms, gardening, etc... Whew! Sometimes summer vacation is so busy it sure doesn't seem like much of a vacation. Well, kids are off from school, but most parents only get a week or two, if that, for vacation. We were fortunate and blessed enough to travel to the coast for a week as a family. I'm not necessarily all that fond of the beach because of the heat. The rest of the family seems to enjoy it for the most part so I'm ok to visit for a few days. The way our schedule worked out we were gone for 2 weeks in a row. One week for family vacation and another to Caswell for youth camp. So, I've had to endure two weeks of hot weather! Heat isn't necessarily my favorite weather. I'm more of a spring and fall kind of feller myself. When I hear someone talk of how they love hot weather, I just have to shake my head.

When I'm away from the mountains it sometimes feels as if I'm just lost and wandering around. The mountains, hills, and hollers are all landmarks to a mountain boy. Seems as though the land all looks the same when it's flat. No mountain peak to guide you, no valley to travel through that you know leads to a certain place. Mountains to me are my home. Though I pray my heart would follow the Lord where He may lead, I sure hope He keeps me in the mountains. The mountains have been my home my entire life. Apart from visiting a couple other places short term, these mountains have been it for me, and you know what, I'm completely fine with that! Years ago, when in between jobs, I spent about a month in Florida. On that trip my favorite thing was I-95 north!

Home is where memories are made. Many people will say that though they like to visit other places, it's always good to get back home. Home is familiar. Home is comforting. Home is in our hearts. Home always seems to have a drawing effect in my spirit that eventually leads to a longing to go back. I realize this may sound silly to many, but the older I get the more I love being at home! You can have all that traveling, all those bigger towns and cities, and those traffic jams, I'll take home anytime! Home is where I've grown to love my wife more each day. It is where God has privileged me to see my boys grow into young men. It's where we have laughed, cried, prayed, hurt, loved, grown in faith, worked hard, gave thanks, climbed trees, played ball, hugged each other, nursed each other in sickness, welcomed friends, helped each other, studied, apologized, and shared innumerable blessings from the hand of God. Home is just in our hearts! But even though we may love our homes down here, there's a longing in the souls of God's people of another home!

Even Abraham realized that this world wasn't his eternal home. Hebrews 11:8-10 teaches us that Abraham by faith obeyed God when God called him to journey to the land of promise. By faith, he journeyed in the land God had promised him as in a strange country. He dwelt with Isaac and Jacob in tents, not building a permanent dwelling. Even with the blessing of giving them a land to dwell in, Abraham understood that it was all temporary and that one day he would be moving to his real home!!!! Verse 10 states, "For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God."

Verses 13-16 teaches us that all those great examples of faith were convinced of the promises of God, embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.

They were seeking and desiring a better country, a heavenly home, a place, a city God has prepared for His people!

God's people have always realized that this world is not our real home. Even though there are great blessings in what God has given us here in this

world, it pales in comparison to what lies ahead for God's people. We must be careful to not forget that we will be going to our heavenly home one day. Those who have been born again by their faith in Christ have something even better to look forward to. The longer I live in this wicked world, the more I have a desire to go home. Don't get me wrong, I love the life God has blessed me to have here. So many blessings He has bestowed. But there is a longing in my heart to see my Savior, to dwell in the land where sin, sickness, death, disease, and heartache have ceased. Jesus said in John 14:1-3: "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."

My friends, as much as we may love our home down here, it is only temporary. Are you ready for home? Have you trusted Jesus as your personal Savior? Are you ready for the return of Jesus when He comes to take His children to the eternal home He has prepared for them? Christian have you become so caught up in your home here that you often forget this is not really home? Do you long for that home Jesus has prepared? Are you making preparations for His return? Oh, how I pray you're ready! Oh, how much Jesus loves us! Regardless of what this world may think, keep looking up, for Jesus is coming one day to take us home!

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



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But to one person  
You may be the world

Dr. Seuss



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To Hold Senior Adult Leadership Event in Boone

By Carol Layton  
Western North Carolina

North Carolina Baptist Aging Ministry (NCBAM) will hold three Senior Adult Ministry Regional Leadership Gatherings this fall. The western gathering will be held at Greenway Baptist Church in Boone on September 20.



Mark your calendar for the gathering nearest you!

• Western NC •

Greenway Baptist Church, Boone  
September 20, 2018

• Eastern NC •

Hayes Barton Baptist Church, Raleigh  
October 9, 2018

• Central NC •

NCBAM, Thomasville  
October 16, 2018

All events are held 10:00 am - 2:00 pm.

These gatherings will encourage ministers and lay leaders to recognize the value of their leadership as well as the world-changing value of missional senior adults.

Attendees will be inspired to affirm seniors to value their experiences, knowledge, and wisdom—and to infuse them with the knowledge that their neighbors, their families, and the world desperately need them!

Dr. Sandy Gregory, director of NCBAM, along with local senior adult leaders, will share insights on motivating, discipling, and empowering seniors to continue blessing others and living in the irrevocable

gifts and calling of God.

Each Gathering will also include music, regional highlights, round-table discussions, and a delicious lunch. Cost is only \$10. Reserve your space by calling 877.506.2226 or visiting [www.ncbam.org/events](http://www.ncbam.org/events).



Carol Layton is Office and Support Manager for North Carolina Baptist Aging Ministry (NCBAM)

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Marriage and Grace

By Rev. John H McCoury  
Roan Mountain, Tennessee



Paul Provides a good deal of information in 1 Corinthians 7 about three realities having to do with marriage and grace it takes to sustain it. Reality is a hard thing to live with. We all tend to be idealistic, especially when it comes to our closest relationships. We've all had dreams of our marriage, or for our spouses, or for ourselves. But we must also take off the masks of perfection and live with the reality of our humanity. The first principle we see in this chapter relates to sexual intimacy in marriage (1 Cor 7: 3-5), and it also applies to the intimacies of life and conversation. Paul speaks of rights and duties, and you will notice that everything is reciprocal. This is the first reality of marriage: Marriage requires mutual unselfishness. The application of this is broader than only to sexual intimacy. To operate completely unselfishly in this or any other realm takes grace—grace to accept, to forgive, to respect, to affirm, and to restrain; grace to give, and grace to receive gratefully. If you are not yet married and if you tend toward being more selfish than not if you're the type who clings to your own rights stubbornly—then please do the world a favor and don't get married. Marriage will constantly challenge you to release our rights and to give without getting back. The second reality of marriage is highlighted in 1 Corinthians 7:10-13 Marriage is a lifelong commitment. Unless you're ready to make one of those, do not get married. Maybe you got married before you knew the Lord, and have now come to know Him, but your spouse has not. That doesn't change your commitment. Yes, there are exceptional circumstances, though they are rare. But the basic rule that I would underscore here is that when you marry, you marry for life. Your spouse expects you to stay for life. It does something to a marriage when you can count on your partner to work through your differences. What does it take to stay? It takes grace! There's a third reality: Marriage includes troubling times. Again, it takes grace to get through them. There is trouble from calamity and disease. Trouble from the old, sinful nature. Trouble from children, neighbors, extended family, and even church squabbles. Trouble from the times in which we live. On the front end of marriage, you need to realize that you are eventually going to have troubles. I don't care how often you go to Bible classes or how much time you spend in church—you will be tested, and you will need a lot of grace in your home. Truly great people in the Kingdom of God are not usually the ones who make the headlines. In fact, they seldom are. I have



found that the folks who really make a difference in homes and hearts are not even known very well in their communities. Great people are people who show love and grace to others without any expectation of external reward. My plea is that you not limit the principles revealed in this chapter to the home, though this passage speaks of that directly. You should understand, whether single or married, that these same qualities are needed in every area of your life for you to become truly great. Let us remember that Marriage is a gift (vv. 1-9), and not everybody has the same gift. Some people have more self-control than others. People remain unmarried for different reasons (Matt. 19:11-12), and each one must know the will of God. Marriage is a ministry (vv. 10-16). He addressed people who had been converted after marriage and who wondered if they should remain with their unsaved spouses. "Yes," said Paul, "because you might win them to Christ." But even Christian spouses can have a wonderful ministry to each other as they grow in the Lord and love each other (Eph. 5:22). Marriage is a calling (vv. 17-24). When you become a Christian, that does not annul what you were before you trusted Christ. Jews are still Jews, slaves are still slaves, and married people are still married. But now, with the Lord's help, you can fulfill that calling in a greater way. Marriage is a challenge (vv. 25-40). Paul does not deny the blessings of marriage, but he does remind us of the burdens that marriage brings, especially when the times are tough. Building a Christian home is a great ministry, but nobody should enter into it lightly or carelessly. "Success in marriage involves much more than finding the right mate. It also requires being the right mate."

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





# Billy Graham Evangelistic Association

## Salt and Light on the West Coast

By: Franklin Graham

Franklin Graham's Decision America California Tour covered 900 miles of the Golden State, from Escondido to Redding. At each stop, Franklin preached the Gospel of Jesus Christ and called on Californians to pray, vote and engage in the political process.

I recently returned from preaching the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ in 10 strategic California cities, calling on God's people to fervently pray for their state and our troubled nation during our Decision America California Tour.

It was an incredible time! In 17 days, we covered nearly 900 miles from Escondido in the south to Redding in the north, with stops also in Pasadena, Oxnard, Bakersfield, Fresno, Modesto, Santa Clara, Berkeley and Chico.

In every city, thousands of people filled parks and outdoor venues in the evening to take up the challenge of interceding for the Golden State, where progressive state and city governments have openly targeted churches and Christians through restrictive legislation hostile to Biblical values.

In Berkeley, a center of radical leftism, I preached at beautiful César Chávez Park, named after one of California's best known political activists. I preached on the value of a soul, and the Holy Spirit worked to save and redeem. There, by the San Francisco Bay, we prayed for Gov. Jerry Brown, state legislators, law enforcement and others who make the state run every day.

Members of the Bikers for Christ joined us several nights to pray for our meetings and to ask God to bring revival to California.

At the Stanislaus County Fairgrounds in Turlock, just outside of Modesto, we celebrated the God-given principles called the Modesto Manifesto that were outlined by my father and his evangelistic team way back in 1948. If Americans still lived with that kind of integrity, we would be a far better place.

I called our Tour "Piercing the Blue Wall," referring to California's intolerant, godless liberalism that has overtaken so many universities, school boards, courts and local governments. The result has been a state that leads the way for the secular-progressive movement. At its core, this is a radical, biased agenda against the Christian foundations that have long undergirded our nation.

On June 5, the day we concluded our Tour in Redding, voters were headed to the polls to cast votes in crucial statewide primary elections. I encouraged the more than 57,000 people who attended our rallies to study the issues and vote for those candidates who were most closely aligned with Biblical values.

Can you imagine the difference it would make if Christians were elected to city halls, legislatures and school boards, like Tammy Musumeci of Las Vegas? What if California were to lead the way? Wouldn't that be something?

That's why I asked everyone to make prayer their first priority. It's Almighty God alone who can change a person's heart, and in whose hand lies all power and sovereignty over men, rulers and nations (Proverbs 21:1). Repentance has always been the key to personal renewal and national revival.

I thank God that as we traveled across the state, scores of men, women and children stood to confess Christ as their Lord and Savior. My hope is that they, in turn, will share their newfound faith in Jesus with families and neighbors. That's the power of the Gospel!

In August, I am headed into another bastion of progressivism and liberalism—the beautiful but spiritually starved Pacific Northwest. Starting Aug. 1, I will begin a seven-city tour of Oregon and Washington—states that have directly targeted and fined Christian business owners like florist Barronelle Stutzman in Richland, Wash.; bakers Aaron and Melissa Klein in Portland, Ore.; and drugstore owner Kevin Stormans in Olympia, Wash., simply because of their Biblical convictions on same-sex marriage and abortion.

The Pacific Northwest is one of the least church-ed and least evangelized regions of the United States. Evangelicals are far outnumbered by people who say they are unaffiliated with any church. I can't think of a better place to preach the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ and to see souls won for Him.

For Christians who attend, I will encourage them to participate in civic affairs, to cast their votes in important midterm elections and to even consider running for local and state offices. Believers are salt and light, not to be stored or hidden in a corner, but to be openly active in the midst of a corrupt culture.

The prophet Jeremiah preached to Israelites who were enslaved 70 years in the alien, idol-filled land of Babylon. It was a terrible time in Israel's history, but tucked into the Biblical narrative is a surprising verse: "Seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the Lord on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare" (Jeremiah 29:7).

Rather than let the people of Israel wallow in bitterness and anger against their captors, Jeremiah told them to pray for their rulers and to be constructive.

I don't know what the next few years or decades will bring. Only God does. But I know He has given us a brief window of time to do all we can for the sake of righteousness. We can still call people to repentance and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. We can still pray for revival.

This is no time for Christians to isolate ourselves and withdraw from engagement with our culture. We are not of the world, as Jesus said (John 17:14), but we most certainly are in the world. We have the responsibility for our sake, and especially for the sake of our children and grandchildren, to do all we possibly can to influence our communities with righteous conduct.



John Wesley, the great English evangelist, preached that you should do all the good you can in all the places you can to all the people you can. That's good advice for the believer today. Abraham Kuyper, a fervent Christian and former prime minister of the Netherlands, said, "There is not one square inch in the whole domain of our human existence over which Christ, who is sovereign over all, does not cry, 'Mine!'" God owns it all, and Christians should work hard in every sector of life for His glory and the welfare of all people.

I don't know what the next few years or decades will bring. Only God does. But I know He has given us a brief window of time to do all we can for the sake of righteousness. We can still call people to repentance and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. We can still pray for revival.

There is still a chance for our nation to call on the Name of the Lord and turn back to Him.

That's certainly my prayer, and the reason we at the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association are always going to obey 2 Timothy 4:2, which says, "Preach the word; be ready in season and out of season."

Seek the well-being of your city, wherever you are. Pray for it. Get involved in every corner of public life you can for the sake of the Gospel. Live boldly for Christ, and trust Him completely. Work while it is still day (John 9:4), and let's see what God will do. ©2018 BGEA

Scripture quotations are taken from The Holy Bible, English standard Version. God loves you and has a plan for your life. Get to know Him right now.

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

*Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.*  
James 1:17



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## Sudoku Solution

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

## A Deficit in Honesty Equals a Deficit in Peace

By Rev. Mark Creech



Proverbs 11:3 tells us how critical integrity is. It says, "The integrity of the upright shall guide them; but the perverseness of transgressors shall destroy them." Simply put, honesty develops and sustains life, but dishonesty tears it down.

In December of 1994 syndicated columnist Bob Greene told an inspiring story about a teen named Rob Mouw.

Rob played on the soccer team in his senior year at Wheaton Christian High School. In the final seconds of the big game against the favored team, Waubonsie Valley, with his team behind by only one goal, Rob was kicking the ball down the field, running at full speed toward the opposing team's goal. Just before he made his play for the goal, he caught sight of the scoreboard and saw the clock displayed zeros all the way across. But like any good athlete, Rob went for the goal anyway and made it. The referee signaled that the goal was good, and the game finished in a tie.

The Wheaton fans cheered exuberantly, while the Waubonsie Valley fans cried foul saying that the time had run out.

In that moment, Rob had a fateful choice to make. He could be silent and avoid a loss. After all, it was the referee's job to decide the calls. Or he could do what was right.

Rob then asked the referee whether the official time was kept on the scoreboard or the referee's stopwatch. The referee said the scoreboard time was official and then ran off the field. Rob went to his coaches and explained that just before his kick, he had seen zeros on the scoreboard clock. Since he hadn't heard a whistle, he kept playing. Still, his goal was late, and he didn't think it should count.

His coaches agreed, and so they went over to the opposing coaches, explained what happened, and conceded victory to Waubonsie Valley.

Bob Greene ended his article with this quote from Rob Mouw:

"Every time in your life you have an opportunity to do right, you should be thankful. For a person to know what right is, and then not to do it – that would be a sin. To have won the game – I mean, really, who cares? Doing the right thing is more important. It lets you have peace."

I suggest that we have a tremendous deficit of peace today, largely in part, because we have a tremendous deficit in honesty. A deficit in honesty equals a deficit in peace.

Lying seems to be the modus operandi of our politics. Some would argue it's always been that way, but it seems worse than ever nowadays.

As a registered lobbyist for the Christian Action League of North Carolina, I was stung by a state lawmaker's lie this week. In fact, it may not have simply been one lawmaker's lie but a party of lies that snookered this preacher.

I'll leave off mentioning names and circumstances. It's enough to say that lying always conjures up a host of emotions from the deceived: anger, frustration, betrayal, just to mention a few, especially when you've been operating with others in good faith.

Several years ago, Paul Burka wrote an article titled, Honesty is the Best Politics. He said:

"Lying is one of the two constant temptations of politics. (The other is money.) We even have a lexicon of political lying: spin, disinformation, misspeak. Politicians have an unwritten code that sanctions deceit under certain circumstances. If you are asked a potentially embarrassing question, for example, you don't have to tell everything you know. A few years back, a state legislator was asked by a reporter if he had received a gold watch as a gift. The answer was no. Later the reporter called back – what about a gold colored watch? "Yea," was the reply. "I got that one."

Burka says that politics is like a poker game "in which players agree that sending misleading signals is permitted." Burka adds, "Most politicians see their professions in this light. The best politicians know instinctively what the limits are, and the worst ones never learn."

Burka's assessment was spot-on.

Someone protests, "This is terrible! What can be done about it?" The cry of many is to "throw the bums out of office." But the problem is really more complicated than the politicians who lie; it's the culture of lying we have come to accept as normal. This culture of deceit is the enemy of our faith in each other, without which there can be no peace.

There's an old story about a little boy who was once asked by his mother to define a lie. He replied, "Mother, a lie is an abomination to the Lord, but a very present help in time of trouble." This is the problem with duplicity, double-dealing, trickery and guile. It seemingly produces a blessing for the moment, but it's one that ultimately morphs into a curse.

It's hard to believe that politics will ever be devoid of the pervasiveness of lying. Nevertheless, a few in the profession with the integrity and courage of a young Rob Mouw could significantly change everything.

It could happen. Let's pray for it. Let's work for it. We should start to expect it. It's the way of peace.

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





The Rest of the Story

Doug Harrell

Well Clint and Daddy D did catch the groundhog that had taken up residence under the porch and the hogs, Boreus and Sowus, were the daddy and momma hogs, all lived until harvest (slaughter). Clint was always taking it all to the limits and creating havoc along with the laughter filled way. His antics were always something to behold.

Funny Farm

Dear friends,

When you're me it's hard to decide which story to share next with 50,000 of my closest friends @. Oftentimes people are perplexed as to why I am willing to relay tales of my incompetence month after month. I tell them that I am a proof-positive that there is a merciful God Who looks after the fools of this world...and I am chief among them @.

The Farmer's Apprentice

It was early October, 2010, and time for the Family Fun Festival at Harrell Hill Farms. This annual harvest celebration is truly a wonderful event highlighted by Gospel music, face-painting for children, hay rides, excellent BBQ pork and other goodies, and the making of old timey sorghum molasses. If you've never attended this country festival you should make plans to come this year on Saturday, October 4th! Anyway, back to the story.

When I came to Harrell Hill Farms in the Spring of 2010, A.D. "Daddy D" Harrell kind of adopted me as somewhat of a "project." Day-to-day I was "in the custody" of Farmer Doug, as you know, but Daddy D. occasionally stepped-in when to provide me some special lessons. This was to be such a day as he pulled up to the barn and honked the horn of his Chevy pick-up truck. As always, I went running to see what was on his mind.

"Get in, I wanna show you something," he said with a wry smile. I was usually tentative when summoned this way but knew I was not to question his commands. I climbed into the passenger seat having no idea what would come next.

We meandered up Byrd Road, weaving slightly from left to right (Daddy D's eyesight wasn't what it once was!) until we arrived at Farmer Doug and Barbara's farmhouse and parked in the driveway. "Come on," was my only instruction, and I went.

Daddy D. carried an old, oil-stained brown bag which appeared heavy in one hand. As we approached the front porch he began digging in the bag, first tossing me a couple worm-riddled "sheep's nose" apples (I think that's what he called them), then he handed me some sticks and dried leaves, and finally unveiled a rusty contraption of some sort. I confess, I quickly identified the first three contents but couldn't imagine what we would do with the ancient, rusty, medieval torture device. Soon I would know.

Setting The Steel Trap

Please understand, Daddy D's hands were pretty gnarly...I don't mind telling you the man didn't have a single straight digit. I can only imagine how his hands had become so - ummm, weathered would be a nice term but they were a mess. I once remember him threading his boots with a pair of pliers because his fingers couldn't do it! At any rate, he said "I'm going to tell you what to do, but you have to follow my instructions. I would do this myself but my fingers can't manipulate the trap like they used to. Now, don't do anything until I tell you." Always the eager learner, I agreed to the challenge.

"Now look," he began, "we've got a groundhog under the porch here and it's digging tunnels all the way under the house. We're going to set this trap to try and get rid of it." By this time I am getting pretty excited, just think - "Farmer Clint The Trapper" @. It just had a certain ring to it, don't you think?

Another thing you have to know about Daddy D, he was fun and mischievous much of the time I spent with him, BUT...he was VERY SERIOUS when teaching me things which might be considered dangerous..."Clint, don't ever go into the woods with a chainsaw by yourself, be sure you have a partner!" ... or, "Son, you've gotta watch where you're going with that tractor and hay rake, you're running people off the road down there!"... "Always check to make sure the power is off on the fence before you climb over!" The warnings were endless.

Daddy D was a long time educator and was about to crank up his teaching voice. I'm not sure exactly what he planned to say but I have intimate recall of his next comment...to paraphrase, "DANG IT, BOY, YOU'RE GOING TO KILL YOURSELF!" (Oops, I think I made him mad) @.

You see, in my mind I already had graduated to "Farmer Clint the Trapper" and had the jaws of that steel monster wide open. As I went to put it on the ground it snapped with the force of a 500 lb. gator, narrowly missing my right hand. And I thought to myself, "Oh yeah, Daddy D said 'you have to follow my instructions.' Guess I failed that test."

I wiped my brow and looked him in the eye as Daddy D "dressed me down" for a little while longer - a verbal whuppin' I'd earned; then we went about the business of resetting the trap. He, with his very bent fingers actually did the "setting"; I was allowed only to sprinkle a few leaves and twigs in the vicinity. Daddy D put those sheep's head apples nearby as bait. "That'll get the job done," he said. And he winked at me - you know, that 'wink' we get from a parent which actually means, 'its okay now, I still love you, let's move on.'

Back At The Barn

While I was learning to be a groundhog trapper, Farmer Doug and Larry were



busy boiling the juice from sorghum cane. This is a very tedious process which requires continuous skimming to remove the various impurities and proteins which rise to the surface. It forms greenish foam - similar to the slime used in Ghost Busters - and it must be scooped into buckets for disposal. Anyway, there were a couple 5 gallon buckets of what I call "molasses scum" beside the pan.

"Hey, Farmer Clint, why don't you take some of that up to the pigs? They will be your friends for life," Farmer Doug laughed. Now that was rather funny since you may remember that I had some rather unpleasant encounters with these aggressive piggies earlier in my stay on the farm.

Obediently, dutifully, I grabbed a bucket of scum and walked to my truck. After having nearly chopped off my hand with a groundhog trap-thingamabob, I was "into" following directions to the letter. So, I left a 5 gallon bucket full of molasses drippings just inside the piggy fence. I looked forward to a new, improved relationship with the hogs after this little gift.

Too Much Of A Good Thing?

It has been said that too much of a good thing can be a bad thing. Apparently that is true of molasses and piggies.

The next morning, as we enjoyed Doug's patented buckwheat pancakes with molasses mixed with butter, it started:

Doug: "Hey, Clint... ummm, did you give molasses to the pigs?"

Me: "Yeah, and they REALLY liked 'em."

Doug: "Well thanks for that. I wonder, how much did you give 'em?"

Me: "Just one of the 5 gallon buckets full."

Doug: "Oh, a WHOLE 5 gallon bucket full?"

Me: "Yeah, but it was a couple inches from the top 'cause the rest spilled out into the truck bed."

Doug: "Hmmmm..." - now that crooked, wily, half-cocked smile overtaking his face.

Me: "Now what? You tell me to give the pigs some molasses, I give the pigs molasses. Didn't you want me to give them molasses?"

Doug: "Yes, I did. I was thinking more like a cupful in their evening feed. But you gave them 5 gallons, right?"

Me: "Yes I did. Are they okay?"

Doug: "Hmmm, not sure yet. When I drove by all 5 of them were lying on their backs with their feet straight up in the air."

Me: "Dead, are the pigs dead?"

Doug: "Naw, they aren't dead. Not sure if they will be or not since I've never given 5 pigs a 5 gallon bucket of molasses."

Me: "Darn it, Doug, I'm so sorry. I thought you meant...oh never mind @."

Doug: "Once again, it's my fault Clint. I forget that you're still new to the farm; I need to communicate better, to let you know exactly what I'm saying."

You must know that by now I'm feeling pretty much like the village idiot. I'd disappointed Daddy D by nearly severing my arm; now I may have killed Doug's pigs. What next?

Doug: "There's one thing about it, Pol-lard."

Me: "Yeah, what's that?"

Doug: "If they don't die beforehand, that will be some mighty sweet-tasting BBQ next fall!"

I received that message...my second "wink" of the day. (And those pigs lived until the next October @).

Still humbled in the hills,

Farmer Clint



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BIBLE GAMZ

TO AIR IS HUMAN

All the answers in this game contain the word "air". Fill in the word or words by putting one letter in each blank.

1. \_ \_ \_ \_

Lion lounge (Jeremiah 4:7 - NIV)

2. \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

Decent swap (2 Corinthians 6:13 - NIV)

3. \_ \_ \_ \_

Noah's Ark requirement (Genesis 7:15)

4. \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

A crown of splendor (Proverbs 16:31 - NIV)

5. \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

Cellar locale (Acts 10:20 - NIV)

6. \_ \_ \_ \_

Esau was (Genesis 27:11)

7. \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

Bible tractor? (1 Samuel 11:7 - NIV)

8. \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ ' \_ \_ \_ \_

John the Baptist's clothes fabric? (Matthew 3:4)

9. \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

Eli's final resting place (1 Sam 4:18)

10. \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

Shadow walk (2 Kings 20:11 - NIV)

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Solution: 1. Lair 2. Fair Exchange 3. Pair 4. Gray Hair

5. Downstairs 6. Hairy 7. Pair of Oxen 8. Camel's Hair 9. Chair 10. Stairway

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A Plea for Godly Leadership

By Pastor Dan Qurollo  
Burke County

Shortly before Moses passed from the scene, he cautioned the children of Israel against an attitude of complacency in the midst of blessing. After describing all the blessings, they would simply receive, he cautioned, *“Then [at that point in time] beware lest thou forget the LORD, which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage”* (Deuteronomy 6:12). Moses recognized that man’s natural tendency would be to grow complacent in the midst of blessing. Tragically, Israel failed to heed Moses’ warning and became complacent. They did not drive out the inhabitants of the land and soon became just like the surrounding nations. They lost their distinction.

To try to bring them back to Himself, God sent various prophets whose message was largely unheeded and even mocked at times. Eventually, God had enough and allowed the Assyrians to conquer northern Israel in 722 BC and the Babylonians to conquer the southern tribes ultimately in 586 BC. For seventy years, God’s people dwelt over nine hundred miles away in a pagan land.

At the end of the seventy-year captivity of Judah by Babylon, God moved in the heart of an ungodly king named Cyrus to issue a decree in 539 BC that enabled the Jews to return to their homeland to rebuild the temple. Zerubbabel led the first wave of Jews over the nine-hundred-mile journey from Babylon to Jerusalem. When they arrived, they eagerly began work on the temple. The first order of business was the altar, followed by the foundation of the temple. By 536, the altar had been erected, and the foundation laid. Then came the problems. Opposition set in and the work of God ceased. For the next sixteen years, the work of God sat idle. Meanwhile, God used two prophets named Haggai and Zechariah to minister and stir the people to complete that which they had begun.

In 458, Ezra led a second group to Jerusalem. His primary focus was on the spiritual restoration of the people, for the spiritual conditions were deplorable. In 444 BC, over ninety years since the original decree was issued by Cyrus, God moved Nehemiah to return to Jerusalem to rebuild the walls. Why the delay? Was it merely a matter of timing with God? Were the people content with the status quo? Were they overwhelmed by the nature of the project? We do not have answers to these questions, but God led Nehemiah to direct this badly needed project. The time in which he accomplished it was truly amazing. For nearly a century, thousands of Israelites dwelt in the ruins of Jerusalem. For sixteen years, they were content to build their own homes while God’s house lay waste. Two leaders redirected a large group of people to reconsider their priorities. For over ninety years, they were content to dwell in a city that was anything but secure. God led one man to lead a project that would alter that nation for years to come.

Without a doubt, we live in perilous times as a nation. God is increasingly less welcome in our society; tragically, He is not even welcome in many of our churches. Many Christians are not passionate for God and do not want a life of holiness; they prefer instead a life of convenience and entertainment. Without a doubt, there is a great need for God’s people to stand up and lead in a direction that is pleasing to the Lord. Are you one who will be with the status quo of society? Or are you willing to be that individual whom God uses to be different and lead accordingly? Will you be a Zerubbabel, Haggai, Zechariah, Ezra, or Nehemiah and rise up against the current and popular trend for God?

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

*Thus hath the Lord GOD shewed unto me: and behold a basket of summer fruit. Amos 8:1*



Forgotten Gospel: The Nations

By Jason Koon  
Burke County

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

The Nations

One of my favorite shows is Dr. Who, and one of my favorite moments is always the first time a new character sees the inside of The Doctor’s spaceship/time machine. Somehow, his ship bends the fabric of spacetime, so while it’s tiny on the outside – the size of a phone booth – it’s massive on the inside; room after room, including a swimming pool and a tennis court. A new character’s disbelief in these moments reminds me of the attitude with which I should be approaching the message of the Gospel – room after room of new discoveries, truths that seem too good to be true. However, in our individualistic, Americanized understanding of the gospel, we are often in danger of losing the sense of the bigness of it all, instead, seeing it merely as a personalized invitation to repent, believe, live, and nothing more. Now while, this is obviously a very important piece of the message, if that’s where we stop we miss out on the Gospel as this glorious announcement that the King has come, His kingdom is coming, and He is conforming all of us who believe into His image, so we will be fit for life in His Kingdom.

In Revelation 7:9-10, we see a clear picture of this grand overarching Kingdom theme. And I looked, and there was, surrounding the throne, bowing down in worship before God, a great, uncountable number of people. People from every nation, from every people group, from every race, language, socio-economic status; anyone and everyone who has trusted Jesus was standing around the throne, united in one singular purpose. The Worship of their creator and savior. Of course, I am paraphrasing, but this is the heart of what this passage is trying to communicate. God is creating – in the words of Dr. Tim Mackie – “one large multi-ethnic family.”

Mackie’s use of the word “multi-ethnic” brings out Scripture’s emphasis on all kinds of people from all nations. God is not just building a Kingdom, and if other kinds of people end up coming in, that’s ok. God intentionally sends us out to every nation, every language, and every people group, because He is intentionally including every imaginable kind of person. This is not extra credit, it’s foundational. For this reason, it’s not enough for a Church to say, “we’d accept people from different races if they came.” Instead, we must be actively breaking down those walls, seeking out the kind of Kingdom diversity Revelation describes. And if we’re not, if we’re limiting God, and possibly even finding ourselves in direct opposition to His plan for to make humanity into one large multi-ethnic family.

So, we must ask ourselves, are our Churches reflecting this Kingdom ideal? And if not, why are we falling short? Because we should be. Russell Moore said, “The Church is a preview of the coming attraction of the Kingdom,” and if Revelation 7:9-10 is how the coming kingdom will look, it is how my Church should look right here and now. My Church is not the most diverse Church out there, but we’re doing better than we were. We are not becoming a Church who accepts people from other races, we are becoming a Church who desires them, who is learning to seek this kind of Kingdom diversity out. We pray that God would send people from other nations and tribes to us because we want our Church to accurately represent what God’s Kingdom is going to look like.

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



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# Hospice and Palliative Care of the Blue Ridge

## An Ordinary Shave

By Brent Price, Outreach Coordinator  
Mitchell County

A while back my wife bought me a new razor. Unlike the multi-blade razors that promise the closest shave you've ever experienced, this razor is equipped with a single, double-sided blade. To change the blade you twist the handle and two little "doors" open. Replace the blade, twist the handle in the opposite direction to lock it in place and you're ready to go.

Some of you older folks might remember. It's not a razor that easily plows through two days of beard. You have to take your time and concentrate in order to get a close shave.

Since I tend to shave quickly, I usually forego hot towels and shaving cream. My revolutionary multi-blade razor enables me to fly through the task. However, the other day I decided to do it right.

I soaked my beard with a hot towel and broke out the shaving mug. Starting at the edge of one sideburn, I slowly drew the razor toward my chin. Every stroke that followed was deliberate and methodical resulting in a perfectly close shave.

Looking into the mirror I smiled and remembered. This is the way my daddy taught me to shave. Too many times to count, I watched him from preparation to end. He never altered his routine.

Hot water in a mug was transformed into a thick lather that was applied with a badger-hair brush. Long strokes were punctuated by distorted facial expressions that stretched the nooks and crannies of his face.

I always knew when he was finished. He ran his hand over his face, cocked his head back and forth and swished the razor one last time before tapping it on the rim of the sink. A couple of swirls of the brush cleared the sink of whiskers and it was over.

Shaving was merely a task Daddy chose to perform daily. Yet, I think he would agree that those times when we "shaved together" were moments made holy through the ritual of an ordinary act.

Help someone across an icy parking lot. Break bread together. Sit with someone and cry together. Teach a child to whistle. Deliver a casserole. Anoint someone with the precious ointment of grace or hope or peace. Do whatever needs to be done and do nothing when there is nothing to do but simply be present.

You might be surprised by something you weren't counting on, something you needed before you knew you needed it. Something that reminds you that nothing is really ordinary at all.

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



# Altapass Baptist Church

## Working Together

By Brother Marcus Benfield  
Mitchell County

Hello dear friends. I trust you are enjoying your summer. As we enter the final weeks of Summer vacation for our children and churches are trying to get their Vacation Bible Schools finished up things are still very busy. I'm sure many are ready for a vacation from summer vacation. However, as Christians there is nowhere to let up. Our work and witness must continue as long as we have breath and strength. Jesus said in Matthew 10:42 that

*"Whoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward."*

With that scripture in mind may we be looking for opportunities to be the hands and feet of Jesus as often as possible. One such opportunity is coming up in August. The community of faith is coming together to host our Annual Back to School Bash. It is scheduled for August 11th with a rain date of August 18th. It will be held on Sky view Circle behind the Chevy dealer. We will have Free food, school supplies, shoes, and other items as well as many inflatables from Funtime Inflatables available for the enjoyment of the children of our communities. We will also have music throughout the day.

You may ask how can I help? It's easy, you can get involved. Ask your pastor if you and your church can participate? This is not about any one church or denomination. It's about the Christian community of faith reaching our neighbors in Jesus name! Jesus also said, *"A house divided against itself cannot stand."* Mark 3:25. Our communities need to see us "The Body of Christ" come together as one and work together.

Many Pastors agree we need to work together and this is a tremendous opportunity to do so. I believe we need to seek out opportunities to work together more often as opposed to looking for excuses to be divided and separated. May God help us to lay our

personal preferences aside and allow our communities to be transformed by the power of the Gospel. Anyone who looks around can see we desperately need God's Power as we watch the effects of Drugs and Alcohol destroy our very own families and communities!

This is only one of many opportunities we are planning to bring our communities together. We are praying about having a community Revival service featuring a different local pastor and his choir each night as we come together to worship and pray and seek God's face for Revival.

If you need further information, please call me at 828-850-3346 and I'll do my best to answer any question you may have.

In closing, I ask all believers to fervently pray that Christ will remove the spirit of division from our area that we take back our communities and families from the clutches of Satan and Sin! We need Revival, but revival will never Truly come until God's people are truly one in Christ! An old Moravian preacher from yesteryear has well said *"In Essentials Unity in Nonessentials Liberty, but in All things Charity."* It is my prayer we can see this happen for the Glory of God and for the sake of our families.

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



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We hope that this is a useful resource for our partners, friends and family in our community. I know that there are many people who I do not have email addresses for. Please share with your colleagues, networks, churches, and anyone who might find it useful.

**Shoal Creek Baptist Church.** We are planning an event called "Messtival" at Shoal Creek Baptist Church August 26, 2018 @ 5:00 PM. "Life is Messy; God is Good!" What is a messtival you say? Anything, sticky, slimy, gooey, or gross--we've got it. Messy games all evening long for kids, youth, and young at heart. Join us for a fun-filled evening. Bring a change of clothes, for you will get messy!!! Shoal Creek Baptist Church, 1867 US Hwy 19E, Burnsville, NC Contact Mochelle: (205) 217-6350

August 19, 2018 Homecoming celebration at Shoal Creek Special music program at 9:45 AM featuring Calvary's Touch (love offering to be received) Homecoming worship service with guest speaker- Rev. Grey Fisher. Pot luck lunch at the church following worship service

**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 26-29, 2018, at the Omni Grove Park Inn. Daphne Miller, M.D., author of Farmacology, will give a keynote address on the intersection of farming, food, and health.

**New Community Outreach** Benefits Haywood County Families with Children B.E.A.R. Closet (Baby Equipment and Resource Closet)

Beginning Wednesday, March 21, 2018 the Haywood Parish Baby Equipment and Resource Closet (B.E.A.R.) located at Francis Cove United Methodist Church 2530 Crymes Cove Road, Waynesville, will begin a new outreach ministry in the local community. This is a shared ministry between five local United Methodist churches: Beaverdam, Elizabeth Chapel, Faith, Maple Grove, and Francis Cove that are reaching out to serve low income families and expectant parents struggling to care for their babies and children. The B.E.A.R. Closet will provide free gently used clothing (sizes preemies to 4 toddler), shoes, baby equipment such as strollers, high chairs, swings, pack n' plays, bouncy seats, bathing and hygiene products, bedding items, as well as loving encouragement to expecting moms and parents. The outreach will be open the first and third Thursdays of every month 2:30 to 5:30 p.m. Please call (828) 476-8502 and leave a detailed message, and a B.E.A.R. Closet representative will return your call within 24 hours.

**Mayland Community College** - Allen Cook Director, Mayland Small Business Center (828) 766-1295 [acook@mayland.edu](mailto:acook@mayland.edu)

## IN HIS HANDS

By Mel Wood

*He knows the number  
of hairs on our head  
He knows the number and  
names of all the stars above  
He can count every grain of sand  
But most importantly  
He has me in His hands.*



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right now, I've got you. I have made you altogether beautiful. I long for this version of you, the one you feel is a mess. The one I've made you to be. Connect with me. Trust me. Love me. Be present with me. I'm here, inviting you to come reside with me. The I AM."

Man, I just picture it. Can you just imagine? I get chills thinking about the party where Jesus invites me to come and sit in a cozy Holy corner booth with him. It's certainly a party to celebrate.

I'm slowly learning that as my yearning to be invited by Jesus is more and more. I yearn for my feet to be where Jesus is, and then to be most present there. To snuggle up in a cozy corner booth just as I am where I am invited to simply be me with the one who covers all. I think about the times that I've been broken and alone and I felt his invitation as he called me to just come and spend a little time with him. The times where I was a little unsure where life was going to go, what my next step was, where my feet were going to reside. But here's the thing,

When you spend time with Jesus... there is no place for fear.

Because in the name of Jesus, there is no room for fear.

In Jesus, there is no need to fear.

He simply is, was, and will always be and his plans for your life is so so so much better than what you can imagine. So, hold tight and just run to Jesus. In the mess, in the heart-break and the fear, just seek Jesus.

I agree, it's hard to trust. It's hard to have unwavering faith. But, it is always worth it to spend a little time with Jesus in a cozy corner booth as he whispers strength into you and calms your fears. HE IS, in fact, all you need.

Run to him and give your heart to him.

The I AM is inviting you....

Don't be afraid anymore.

I promise, he is gonna open doors in your life, beautiful and perfect in his time.

So, dance a little on the Holy ground God has given you as he invites you to come spend a little time with him, would ya?

Fears are shut down at the mere mention of his name as he wraps you up and blows a cool calmness over your fears, imperfections, and doubts. So, let yourself be covered in the overwhelming love and grace of God and through every worry or fear, he will give you rest.

Jesus, help me to always be where you are and to always have my feet planted in you. Thank you for your eternal invitation to come be in your presence.

To be held, loved, and directed by you Jesus, is a Holy invitation that I will always accept.



Chelsea Blevins lives in Burnsville, attended Mountain Heritage High School and South College.

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# Penland School of Crafts

## Contemporary Glass at Penland Gallery

By Robin Dreyer  
Mitchell County

Alchemy was an early science famous for its attempts to turn lead into gold. Today, it's used to describe miraculous transformations. This makes Alchemy a fitting title for the current Penland Gallery exhibition of work by artists using glass in remarkable ways. The exhibition runs through September 16 with an opening reception on Saturday, August 4 from 4:30-6:30 PM.

Glass is a material with almost limitless artistic possibilities. The twelve artists in this exhibition create objects of mystery and complexity by working with the material's chemical makeup, its optical properties, its ability to hold incredible detail, and the possibilities of layering and combining multiple processes.

Mark Peiser, who lives near Penland School, is represented in the show by two cast forms. They are made from glass that separates light into different colors, so the apparent color of the pieces can change depending on how they are lit. Nickolaus Fruin's vessels, by contrast, are completely clear but have visible patterns created by combining different formulations of clear glass that each refract light a bit differently.

Penland resident artist Dean Allison has several three-dimensional portraits included in the show. His complex process begins with a rubber impression of his model's head. After many intermediate steps, the end result is a detailed bust cast from colored glass. Nearby is Amber Cowan's piece: an intricate assembly of glass leaves and flowers sculpted from recycled commercial glass waste and incorporating several vintage glass objects. Also, on display are several pieces by Kit Paulson, one of which is a flexible snake made from hundreds of linked glass rings. These are just some of the wonders that are waiting for visitors to Alchemy, which is part of the regional Summer of Glass. For information about all of the glass activities in the area, visit [exploreasheville.com/summer-of-glass](http://exploreasheville.com/summer-of-glass).

Running concurrently with this exhibition is a smaller show of contemporary jewelry titled Wear that includes work by artists who use materials in new ways to create exceptional wearable pieces. The Visitors Center Gallery has an ongoing display of objects that illuminate the history of Penland School, and the Lucy Morgan Gallery presents a selection of work by dozens of Penland-affiliated artists. On view outside the Penland Gallery are large sculptures in stone and steel by Daniel T. Beck, Hoss Haley, and Carl Peverall, plus a structure designed by artist Meredith Brickell that invites visitors to stop for a few minutes and observe the clouds.

The Penland Gallery and Visitors Center is located at Penland School of Crafts on Conley Ridge Road, just off Penland Road in Mitchell County (near the town of Spruce Pine). It is the first building on the right as you enter the Penland campus. The gallery is open Tuesday through Saturday, 10:00 AM-5:00 PM and Sunday, Noon-5:00 PM; it is closed on Mondays. For more information call 828-765-6211 or visit [penland.org/gallery](http://penland.org/gallery).

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

Robin Dreyer is the communications manager and staff photographer at Penland School of Crafts.



Dean Allison, *Girl with a Hat*, cast glass, resin, oil paint, 16 x 12 x 20 inches

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# BIBLE GAMZ

## ALPHA & OMEGA

Each answer begins and ends with the same letter.

- |            |  |
|------------|--|
| 1. _ _ _ _ | Put confidence in (Proverbs 3:5)                 |
| 2. _ _ _ _ | Paul addressed them often (Ephesians 1:1)        |
| 3. _ _ _ _ | Permanent resident of Jerusalem                  |
| 4. _ _ _ _ | Disciple or Herod's brother (Matthew 10:3, 14:3) |
| 5. _ _ _   | Firstborn among many sisters?                    |
| 6. _ _ _ _ | Her gift impressed Jesus (Mark 12:42)            |
| 7. _ _ _ _ | Aaron's prophetic sibling (Exodus 15:20)         |
| 8. _ _ _ _ | Dead church locale (Revelation 3:1)              |
| 9. _ _ _ _ | Job knew his lived (Job 19:25)                   |
| 10. _ _ _  | Hostile nation (Ezekiel 38:16)                   |

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Solution: 1. Trust 2. Saints 3. Israeli 4. Philip 5. Eve 6. Widow 7. Miriam  
8. Sardis 9. Redeemer 10. Gog



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# BIBLE GAMZ

## ACRONYM GAME

Solve using the clue and acronym provided

Example: Carved on high (TTC)

The Ten Commandments

1. **FOM** - The Jesus way of angling? (Mark 1:17)

2. **COMC** - Joe's jacket? (Genesis 37:23)

3. **FOTS** - Patience, for one (Galatians 5:22-23)

4. **QEW** - Isaiah 40:31 inspired song

5. **ATTP** - Not time to uproot (Ecclesiastes 3:2)

6. **POMS** - God's last-days promise (Acts 2:17)

7. **EYE** - Jesus' hardest command? (Luke 6:27)

8. **WIYF** - Stormy question (Luke 8:25)

9. **YPMP** - Ruth's vow to Naomi (abbr.) (Ruth 1:16)

10. **LMFG** - Divine Egyptian Command (Exodus 8:1)

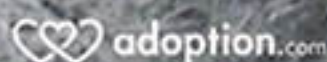
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without  
families are  
the most  
vulnerable  
people in  
the world.

Brooke Randolph



Being a foster family is not easy and often times can be challenging. Foster families open up their homes and their hearts to love a child. They are the ones that wipe away the tears and comfort the children letting them know it will be okay. Being a foster family means helping children heal and learn life skills that will last a life time. Many times, families are discouraged from becoming foster families, because they may be afraid of getting their hearts broken. Anytime you open up your home and experience life with a child there are struggles. Despite the difficulties that fostering can bring, many families continue to foster. Children need families to love them, nurture them and give them the guidance they need. Every child in foster care deserves to have a family to love them. Make a difference foster/adopt a child. Contact McDowell County DSS 828-652-3355.

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## What You Will Never See

By Jerry Lewis  
McDowell County



Psalm 106 is a retelling of the history of Israel. In summary, the Psalmist confesses both his sin and the sin of his fathers (vs. 6). They rebelled at the Red Sea, "yet He saved them for his name's sake." Once they crossed the Red Sea "they believed his words; they sang his praise." They had to see God work and then trust Him.

However, verse 13 gives the sad reality: "They soon forgot his works; they did not wait for his counsel." Sin was followed by sin, disobedience multiplied by disobedience. Things got so bad that God was ready to kill them. "Therefore he said he would destroy them—had not Moses, his chosen one, stood in the breach before him, to turn away his wrath from destroying them." (vs. 23)

It didn't get any better.

"Then they despised, murmured, did not obey, yoked themselves to Baal, ate sacrifices offered to the dead." A plague broke out among them. "Then Phinehas stood up and intervened, and the plague was stayed." (vs. 30)

Two times they were near extinction—two times someone stood in the gap for them. Someone interceded. But it wasn't enough. Moses and Phinehas died. Israel sinned even more.

Until Jesus. He came as the ultimate intercessor. On the cross, he stayed the wrath of God, interceding not only for Israel but for anyone who will trust Him. "For our sake, God made Him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of Christ." (2 Corinthians 5:21)

And Jesus' work didn't stop there. Three days later he resurrected. Then he ascended. Now he intercedes.

Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us. (Romans 8:34, ESV)

Consequently, he is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them. (Hebrews 7:25, ESV)

My little children I am writing these things to you that you may not sin. But if anyone sins, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, the righteous. (1 John 2:1-2, ESV)

Moses' intercession was limited to a certain event and time. Phinehas interceded and died. Jesus died to intercede! Now he lives to intercede! What you will never know is what he has intercepted in your life today. You will never know the pending danger, the looming temptation, the "almost" catastrophe that he stayed away by interceding. He saved you then and he's saving you now—to the uttermost! Thank God today for what you don't know.

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



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# Mountain Community Health Partnership

## To Receive Grant Funds

By Amber Dillinger  
Mitchell and Yancey Counties

Mountain Community Health Partnership (MCHP) is pleased to announce they are one of twelve organizations to receive one-time grant funding to combat the opioid crisis. Governor Cooper has announced that a total of \$1.5 million in grant awards will be given to the twelve organizations. The purpose of these funds is to advance the goals of the NC Opioid Action Plan. It will enable MCHP to implement activities in our community that improve access to harm reduction, treatment, and recovery supports. "Community efforts to turn the tide on the opioid crisis deserve our support," Governor Cooper said. "These grants are another example of the collaborative effort we need to fight overdoses, save lives, and connect people to treatment statewide."

Mountain Community Health Partnership is a Federally Qualified Health Center serving Mitchell, Yancey, and surrounding counties. MCHP will use this funding to establish a network of peer support specialists and post overdose response teams who can meet with people who are struggling with addiction where they are. Our residents are in desperate need of assistance in fighting the opioid epidemic. It has become increasingly clear that if we are to make an impact on this problem, we must move beyond the walls of our clinics and into the community to engage our neighbors.

"I am thrilled to begin collaborating with community agencies in order to develop a post overdose team. This effort is fueled by the needs of our communities, which like many others have been hard hit by chronic stress and overwhelm. MCHP is dedicated to helping our communities address the opioid crisis and this is the next step in a natural progression as we build and create programs to support families and treat individuals who are struggling with this medical, chronic, relapsing disease. People who are using drugs are surrounded by other people who are using drugs. Even when the person has a desire to quit using, treatment can be difficult to access and restoration of health seems unattainable. The team at MCHP already includes medical and behavioral health providers who work collaboratively to treat patients with substance use disorders. This grant will enable MCHP to add Peer Support Specialists to our team. While working together with community agencies, we will strive to support and link folks with treatment and community resources, create opportunities for change, transform life threatening events and enhance community resilience." -Amy Earnheart, LCSW, LCAS

For more information, or to learn more about our health center please contact: Amber Dillinger, Outreach and Enrollment 828-688-6621 [adillinger@mchp.care](mailto:adillinger@mchp.care)  
Amber Dillinger is the Outreach and Enrollment/Certified Application Counselor at Bakersville Community Health Center



Amy Earnheart



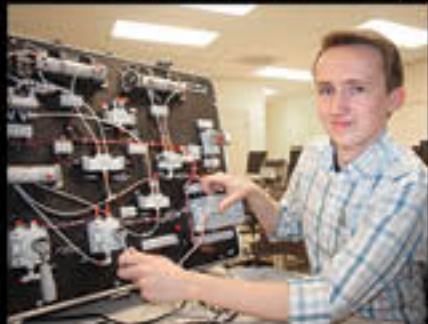
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*"Faces you trust."*

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

~ Anne Richardson

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The Truth

By Tim Tron  
Burke County

*"I've always thought that the most powerful weapon in the world was the bomb and that's why I gave it to my people, but I've come to the conclusion that the most powerful weapon in the world is not the bomb but it's the truth."*  
- Andrei Sakharov

Every day, we are confronted with a multitude of information that puts us at odds with our ability to focus on the word of God; the truth. This comes in one of two variations. First and probably the most obvious, are those of distractions which are in the form of outside influences. They can come from a variety of sources; devices, media, radio, podcasts, and etc. The other, and sometimes not as obvious are the things of this world, the very objects we use to serve Him become so tremendously immense in nature that they overpower our Spirit-led intentions. We become consumed by the weight of their responsibilities. Under the load of this forbearance we find ourselves struggling to keep God in our minds, let alone to hinder that departure from our hearts where we have placed Him; our last bastion of safety within; sheltered from all else.

In an effort to maintain our sanity, we must filter the cloud of noise; purging the false, or more popularly referred to as, "fake news," from the truth. In my grandfather's milk barn, there was the room where he kept the Separator, as it was known. In my mind, I can still picture the stainless-steel piece of equipment that stood about chest high. Grandpa Tron would pour in the whole milk, that which was straight from the cow, and it would spin the cream away from the milk, where it could then be collected and used to make the other by-products of the dairy; cheese, butter, and etc... It was obvious when the Separator was done. Unfortunately, cleansing the input into our mental pallet is not as easy.

In a documentary in the early 1990's Bill Moyer, an ordained minister in 1954, and a reporter for CBS and NBC News, presented a vision of the future as part of a special documentary, "A World of Ideas," whereby he predicted we would soon be living in the "Age of Information." However prophetic his words were at that time, albeit too soon for what was really to come in 1990; we now live in that time. From the traditional nightly news to the other end of the spectrum where anyone with a keyboard and access to social media can output information, be it true or false, we face a world of a constant barrage of data. More and more, unlike in what now seems ancient times, there is little to no references given, no facts to back up said purported info. There are sound-bytes thrown like frisbees, tossed into the mix sometimes simply to cause a sensation; their aim is to go viral, another operative of many that dwell in this spectrum.

What say you then of what Christ would say to those Jews who were on the fence of becoming believers, "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." -John 8:32



To know the truth is to be the truth. "If it were only that simple," you might respond.  
Winston Churchill, "Truth is the most valuable thing in the world, often it is protected by a bodyguard of lies."

Today, we struggle to resolve fact from fiction, not only in the obvious manner in which we often think, but also what is relevant to our purpose in Christ.

Churches and denominations across the globe face an attack from a force not of this world, trying to sway their leaders and congregations into softening their stand for the truth. Giving into the world was not an option in the Apostle Paul's time. As he spoke to the church in Corinth, he was brutally honest when he told them, "For I think that God hath set forth us the apostles last, as it were appointed to death: for we are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men. We are fools for Christ's sake, but ye are wise in Christ; we are weak, but ye are strong; ye are honorable, but we are despised. Even unto this present hour we both hunger, and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwelling place; And labor, working with our own hands: being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it: Being defamed, we entreat: we are made as the filth of the world, and are the offscouring of all things unto this day."

Paul was making an ironic statement about the apostle's sake. These words are something which could be taken totally out of context in today's world and often are literally used against unknowing Christians, being misquoted to advance other ideologies. The lies once more surrounding the truth. Paul and the apostles were anything but fools in Christ although, they were despised and hated by the Jews of their time. They were always under attack of defamation of character and literal persecution. Yet, as they would leave a town, either after a miraculous healing or near-death torture, they would, as my new-found friend Jimmy Clark would say, "Rejoice in their labors of the Holy Spirit." Jimmy had been part of a mission team to South Africa a few years back. There, they were scheduled to visit a prison where the mission team was to speak to some of the prisoners as part of their mission work. On their walk to the prison facility, Jimmy said he was overcome with a message that God had given to him; so much so, that he asked the others if he might be able to share his vision when they arrived, to which they agreed. He described walking back to the hotel from the prison after his sermon as it being one of the greatest feelings in his life, his rejoicing in the Spirit had begun.

Our path isn't always lit with the best of lighting.  
As we strive to walk down the pathway which we feel God hath set before us, we must feel like the psalmist when he wrote the words to the 23rd Psalm, "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." No matter where you are in the world, no matter where you are in your walk of faith, if you have begun, you still encounter the world in which you live. Through this manner of perspective, we must give insight as to the physical and emotional challenges that being of the flesh entails.

Although your journey may be obvious, there will be at times where you will face avalanches of problems and trials. Nothing ever comes easy when you finally find yourself walking in faith. As one of my good friends and missionary Jeffrey Canada said to me once, "You know you are going in the right direction, with regard to faith, when you feel that significant headwind in your face." Just as Paul wrote to the church in Corinth, we are buffeted, and nothing is for certain. Sometimes it feels as if you can barely hang on, when another wave crashes over the bow of your ship, swamping you once more. Slowly, your grab on to the railing and pull yourself up. Taking a deep breathe you stand to your feet and take another step forward.

Do we give up?  
Do we quit?  
No, for we must not be vanquished. "For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us. We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body." -2 Corinthians 4:6-10

He, Jesus Christ, is the way, the truth, the light.  
Yet, in all the struggles and tests of our faith, we must not forget that once we come to know Him and truly serve, we can put our trust in Him. In this hope, for it is not simply a mystery, we have a guarantee of life eternal, that of which we cannot begin to comprehend in our earthly realm of consciousness. "But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." -1 Corinthians 2:9

To know Christ is to know Truth.  
Confess your sins to Him, seek Him, knock and the door shall be opened. "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." -Romans 10:9

Finally, when we are left with little hope, when we have been knocked to our knees for what seems the last time, remember the words of Christ, shortly before leaving this earthly realm, when he spoke these words to his disciples, "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth."

Know that through all we face, all the trials, persecutions and adversarial relations, there is one thing we can count on; the Word of God, for it, is the ultimatum of truths, and for this, we shall ever be thankful.  
Thanks be to God.

Timothy W. Tron lives in Collettsville, NC. with his family. He is the former Director of the Trail of Faith in Valdese, where he still volunteers and helps with tours. He now teaches Math full time at Watauga High School in Boone. He is the author of a new Christian series, "Children of the Light," with the first book being, "Bruecke to Heaven," and his recent book, being the second, "The Light in the Darkness." He is an active blogger, artist, and musician. Timothy also has a BSEE from UF, and is a Lay Speaker. He can be reached at [twtron@live.com](mailto:twtron@live.com)

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# Enjoying Everyday Life

## Get Radical Results by Changing Your Mind

By Joyce Meyer



For many years I went to church faithfully, week after week, but I wasn't living a victorious Christian life. I read my Bible every day, served on the evangelism board and went door-to-door telling people about Jesus because I really wanted to serve God. But even though I was doing those things, I was still miserable most of the time.

While I learned a good foundation about salvation through God's grace at my church, I wasn't learning how to change and be transformed into the image of Christ by renewing my mind, according to God's Word.

It caused me to live in a frustrating cycle that went like this: Go to church on Sunday, fight with my husband during the week, get frustrated with my kids a lot and feel miserable, depressed, angry—like a mess—and then go back to church on Sunday to get "right" with God again. I felt like I didn't know how to act like a sane human being.

Ephesians 4:23-24 (AMPC) says to "be constantly renewed in the spirit of your mind [having a fresh mental and spiritual attitude], and put on the new nature (the regenerate self) created in God's image...."

This is so important, because it's impossible to have a positive, peaceful life and at the same time have a negative mind.

But when we take time to renew our minds with God's Word, we learn how to think like God thinks, say what God says, and act like He wants us to act. Then we can have what He wants us to have—abundant life in Christ, filled with His righteousness, peace and joy. (See John 10:10 and Romans 14:17.)

### How Are You Supposed to Think?

The first thing we need to understand is that when we become new creations in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17), what is normal for the world is no longer normal for us. There's a way we're supposed to live that reflects the image of Christ in the world.

For example, many people think it's normal to worry, but as a Christian, worrying is not a normal way of thinking.

Philippians 4:6 says we are to "be anxious for nothing" (NKJV). This doesn't mean we won't ever feel worried, but when we do, we can pray and give it to God so we can have His peace while we go through the challenges of life.

First Corinthians 2:16 (AMPC) says "we have the mind of Christ." This means no matter what our circumstances may be, we can have God's wisdom, discernment and peace to guide our decisions in the midst of them.

### We can live with these mind-sets:

- The Made-Up Mind: Colossians 3:2 says to "set your minds and keep them set on what is above...not on the things that are on the earth" (AMPC). The only way we can accomplish what we really want to do in life is by determining what God has put in our hearts to do and then setting our minds to do it. With the help of the Holy Spirit, you can make up your mind and stop over-thinking your decisions.
- The Humble Mind: Philippians 2:5 says, "Let this same attitude and purpose and [humble] mind be in you which was in Christ Jesus..." (AMPC). A person with a humble mind is peaceful because they can wait on God's timing and follow His direction; they don't constantly struggle with wondering why or when. And they aren't judgmental or critical of others.
- The Focused Mind: We live in an age of distraction! It's amazing how much information is coming at us most of the time through technology, the media and the busyness of the world around us. I've decided that the world probably isn't going to change, so I have to change. I'm learning how to keep my mind on what I'm doing, rather than thinking about several things at once or what I want to do next.

### You Can Choose

There is a way to have righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit—to have victory in our circumstances and not live based on what the world views as "normal." And it all begins with renewing our minds. The choice is up to us.

Make the decision to spend time each day reading and meditating on the Word. Pray and ask God to help you understand how to apply the wisdom you discover to your everyday life. As you do your part to renew your mind, God will do His. And you'll love the transformation that comes with having a "normal" mind—the mind of Christ!

For more on this topic, order Joyce's Battlefield of the Mind Action Plan. You can also contact us to receive our free magazine, Enjoying Everyday Life, by calling (800) 727-9673 or visiting [www.joycemeyer.org](http://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 (Hachette). She hosts the Enjoying Everyday Life radio and TV programs, which air on hundreds of stations worldwide. For more information, visit [www.joycemeyer.org](http://www.joycemeyer.org).

But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Romans 5:8

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



## Avery County

### Avery County Events:

August 10-12 Fine Art and Master Crafts Festival, Downtown Banner Elk  
Linville Falls Community Church August 16-17, 2018, the Linville Falls Community Church is holding "Linville Falls Vintage Market Days." a 2-day tag/estate type sale with proceeds to benefit the building fund for the Bond Fellowship Hall. How do I post the event on the calendar?

## Burke County

The Foothills Tent Crusade will be held at Caldwell County Fair Grounds located at 2461 Fairground Road, Lenoir, NC 28645 August 6th - 17th (Monday - Friday). Service starts at 7:00 PM. Choir Practice starts at 6:30 PM. "Revive Us Again"! This Crusade is being led by Dr. Ralph Sexton, Jr. and there will be preaching nightly! Youth Night will be held on Friday, August 17th at 7:00 PM

**Burke County Chamber** - Dementia Resource Summit—September 21, 2018 at 9am-10am Registration 10am -3pm Presentations Grace Ridge Retirement Community in Ervin Community Room. For more info call Caron Tucker at 828-466-1466 or Charity Elliott at 828-580-8327

**Catawba River Baptist Association** - We have an exciting mission opportunity for folks in our Association. There are many people in the eastern part of our state who are still recovering from the devastation of hurricane Matthew. We are taking a group of workers August 6-10, 2018 to do clean-up and some construction in Lumberton, NC. This trip will not cost you anything as all supplies, lodging, and food will be provided free of charge.

If interested please call our CRBA office for more information and to register. If your church is doing VBS this year and you are looking for a great place to send the offerings collected, we may have the place for you. We are happy to be partnering with Pastor Pandu Maddala of Victory Baptist Association as he works with pastors in India to reach communities for Jesus. Most pastors in India pastor more than one church and they walk wherever they go. They are in need of 100 bicycles to help 100 pastors take the Word of God from village to village. The Catawba River Association is working to meet this need through the gifts of churches and individuals. If you, your Church, or Sunday School class would like to donate a bike (pedals for pastors) please send a check for \$80 to CRBA and put on the memo line "Pedals for Pastors". Every dollar collected will be sent to India and will be used to purchase bicycles. Please send all donations to 1812 US 70 E., Morganton, NC.

**East Valdese Baptist Church**-July 29-August 1, 6:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. Family night with free dinner August 1.

**Gilead Baptist Church**-August 12-15, 6:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. Family cookout on Wednesday night.

**Pleasant Hill Baptist Church**-August 5-10, 5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. Classes for Pre K through 6th grade.

**Walker Road Baptist Church**-August 12-16, 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Dinner to be served nightly. Classes for all ages through adult.

**Zion Baptist Church**-August 4, 1:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. @ Burke United Christian Ministries This will be a joint Bible School and volunteers are needed please contact Lori Matthews @ zionbc.secretary@gmail.com or call 828-437-3080 for more information. School supplies will be collected to hand out to the children in attendance.

Please bring donations to the CRBA office.

**Great Hope Seventh Day Adventist Church** "Eating You Alive—one bite at a time" is a movie with a comprehensive look into why we are so sick, who is profiting and who is taking the "hit." It brings together evidence-based science, expert testimony and inspirational stories of people who have reversed disease and discovered the truth about how a whole food plant based lifestyle can address and solve some of our world's most current crisis. Showing, Thursday, August 9, 7:00 pm in the Old Rock School, Waldensian Room. This movie has been shown in theaters across America this year. Love gift will be taken.

Open House will be Sunday, August 5, 2:00-4:00 pm at the Great Hope Seventh-day Adventist Church, 2907 US Hwy 70 in Drexel (across from the Foothills Thrift Store). Inviting our friends and community to come for a brief tour of our expanded church facility to see how God has poured out His blessings. Refreshments, gifts, and balloons for the kids.

Is diabetes controlling your life? There is scientific research for reversing it. Are you ready to learn how and also to prevent such? REVERSING DIABETES SEMINAR meets Thursdays, August 16-September 20, 6:00 pm. You will love feeling healthier! Great Hope Seventh-day Adventist Church, 2907 US Hwy 70 in Drexel (across from the Foothills Thrift Store). Invite your family and friends to join you. FREE but must pre-register for reserved seat at 828-334-0084.

"The Waldensian Story, Why It Matters Today!" is a must hear! Will be presented at the Trail of Faith by Barry Mahorney, retired pastor and historian, Saturday, August 18, 7:00 pm. This is free.

**Morganton Seventh-day Adventist**-Burke County - Looking for a place to volunteer and make a difference in your community? God's Closet-Morganton needs volunteers to help set up for our next FREE shopping event. If you can help with

set up and clothes sorting on Sunday, July 29th., for at least 2 hours between 9 a.m. and 2 p.m., please call Janet Hardin at 828-244-3876 or you can show up to volunteer that day at 2187 Jamestown Road, Morganton, N.C.

The next God's Closet-Morganton FREE children's clothes shopping event will be held at the Morganton Seventh-day Adventist Church located at 2187 Jamestown Rd, Morganton, N.C. on August 3rd-Friday from 9:00 a.m. - 12 noon. Entry fee is only \$1, and we provide the shopping bags for you! FREE childcare while you shop. Each family will receive a pair of free brand new pajamas and brand new uniform polo shirt while supplies last. Please visit, Like and Share our Facebook page: God's Closet-Morganton

**Town of Valdese Community Affairs & Tourism** - August 3- Carson Hill- Country/Rock/Folk The Rock School

**The Valdese Farmers Market** has opened at its new location at the Old Rock School. Vendors will set up and be ready to sell at 11am and will stay open until 4pm on Fridays.

"We are excited to bring the Farmers Market to the Old Rock School front lawn, shared Morrisa Angi Community Affairs Director for the Town of Valdese. "We hope to increase visibility of the market and create a stronger number of regular shoppers with the new location."

Farmers are invited to setup their produce underneath the large tree on the front lawn beginning at 10:30am on Market Fridays. Farmers that are interested in participating can download the vendor application at [valdesemarket.com](http://valdesemarket.com).

The Town of Valdese—The Waldensian Festival August 10th and 11th

## McDowell County

**CarePartners:** Want to make a difference, touch lives, and impact your community? If so, several Volunteer opportunities are available in the following positions! Administrative Office Volunteer, Patient/Family Support Volunteer, Bereavement Support Volunteer, We Honor Veterans Volunteer, Special Events Volunteer, and a newly added position, Pastoral Care Volunteer! For more information about these positions, please contact CarePartners Hospice and Palliative Care McDowell Volunteer Services Department at 828-652-1318 ext.303. You can make an everlasting impact with just a few hours of your time a week! Call today to learn more!

**Cross United Methodist Church** - New Community Outreach Benefits McDowell Families with Children

Teens for Christ B.E.A.R. Closet

(Baby Equipment and Resource Closet)

Beginning Wednesday, August 1st, 2018 the youth group at Cross United Methodist Church located at 85 West Cross Street in Marion will launch a new outreach ministry benefiting families with children. This is the first youth led outreach program of its kind serving the Marion community. With oversight and direction from the Youth Director and church leadership, the Teens for Christ Baby Equipment and Resource Closet (B.E.A.R. Closet) will be reaching out to serve low income families, foster parents, expectant parents, grandparents raising grandchildren, and any family struggling to care for their babies and children. "Our church recognized the need in our community and our youth were eager to reach out and somehow meet the need," states Philista Gossett, Cross UMC Youth Director. "The B.E.A.R. Closet can provide families with a few basic necessities like clothing, diapers, and baby equipment which give them a few extra dollars in their pocket that can be re-directed to other needs like food, gas, or medicines," states Philista Gossett, Cross UMC Youth Director. "The outreach is also a very simple, practical way to reach out to our neighbors in need and share the love of Christ." The B.E.A.R. Closet will provide free gently used clothing (sizes preemies to 4 toddler), shoes, baby equipment such as strollers, high chairs, swings, pack n' plays, bouncy seats, bathing and hygiene products, bedding items, baby food items, as well as loving encouragement to each family. The outreach will be open the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of the month 4:00 to 6:30 p.m. and the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays 9:00 to 11:00 a.m. For more information or if you are interested in volunteer opportunities call (828) 803-8790 or email [TeensforChristBEARcloset@yahoo.com](mailto:TeensforChristBEARcloset@yahoo.com).

Come join us at the 3rd annual McDowell County From Farm to Table Event. Your evening will be one of fine dining, locally sourced food prepared by experienced McDowell Local chefs, and served with a smile. This four course dinner and the beautiful decorations will be improved by your presence - attendance is limited to 60 attendees.

Funds raised will be used to provide fresh locally sourced food to be distributed to the food insecure of McDowell County. Sponsorships are available.

Where? McDowell Local, 84 South Main Street, Marion, NC 28752. Parking available in the Public Parking lots in downtown Marion.

When? Saturday, August 11, 6:30 pm

Tickets are \$50. Call 828-652-8104 or come by 60 East Court Street, Marion, 2nd floor for tickets or follow this link <https://mcdowellcsa.com/mcdowell-farm-to-table>

Also accepting sponsors.

## Mitchell County

**Earl Horton American Legion Post 122**, Inc. Telephone: (828)675-0290

Cell: (828)208-2675 AMERICAN LEGION ANNOUNCES NURSING

Robin Dreyer is the communications manager and staff photographer at Penland School of Crafts. SCHOLARSHIP

American Legion Post 122 encourages any legal resident who has been accepted to or is enrolled in a 1 year Licensed Practical Nurse program, or who is enrolled in a 2, 3 or 4 year program leading to certification as a Registered Nurse, contact Post



122 representative Les Heavner about applying for the American Legion Department of North Carolina Colon Furr Memorial Nursing Scholarship.

The \$600.00 scholarship is available to 5 nursing students who reside in North Carolina and are enrolled in a qualifying program in a North Carolina school. American Legion Post 122 may endorse ONLY 1 applicant each year. The applicant will be interviewed by the Post officers. The most qualified applicant's application will be endorsed by the Post Commander or Adjutant and forwarded to the American Legion, Department of North Carolina, where the selection process will occur in October. All nominees will be contacted by mail, by the Department Headquarters staff, with the results of the selection process by the end of November. The notification will include a form the winner must complete, providing the address of the college to which the check is to be mailed.

Applications must be received at the Department Headquarters no later than September 25, 2018. Complete details about the scholarship and the application form can be found online at American Legion, Department of North Carolina – Colon Furr Memorial Nursing Scholarship. Individuals requiring assistance may contact Les Heavner - (828) 675-0290 or (828) 208-2675. The application and supporting documentation, including "end-of-year" nursing curriculum grades not received/letter of acceptance from the educational institution (if applicable) must be received at American Legion Post 122, P.O. Box 761, Burnsville, NC 28714 no later than August 15, 2018 for review and the scheduling of an interview with Post 122 officers.

**Bear Creek Baptist Church** - Women's Prayer Breakfast July 13th, 8:00am at DT's.

**Celebrate Recovery**

This is a Christ and Biblical Based Program, giving hip and help for men, women and families suffering from addiction. Any questions contact Josh Wise@ 385-0061

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

**Main Street Spruce Pine** - Aug 2-5 Grassy Creek --First Friday Concert, Aug. 3, --Central Park Empty Bowls Fundraiser, Aug. 20,-- First Baptist Church First Friday Concert, Sept. 7, --Central Park Fall Clean Up, Sept. 15, --Downtown Spruce Pine Greenlee Mapping Day, Oct. TBD, --Downtown Spruce Pine Antique Festival, Oct. 13,-- Downtown Spruce Pine Potter's Market, Oct. 13-14,-- Cross Street Building Merchant Trick or Treat, Oct. 31, --Downtown Spruce Pine Small Business Saturday, Nov. 24,-- Downtown Spruce Pine Kiwanis Christmas Parade, Nov. 24,-- Downtown Spruce Pine TRAC Studio Tour, Nov. 30-Dec. 2, Mitchell-Yancey counties

For more information about any of these events, call SPMS at 828-765-3008.

**First Baptist Church:** VBS July 29th thru August 2nd. Come sail away ---5:30 begins the Fun. New friends, Creative Games, Surprising Adventures, Amazing Experiments, Fantastic Meals, Incredible Music. Over at 8:30 For more info call 828-765-9411.

**Grassy Creek Baptist Church** in Spruce Pine will celebrate its 200th anniversary on August 5th with Homecoming and Decoration of the cemeteries. We have invited all previous living pastors and a lot of previous music leaders, pianists and other staff to be present for this special occasion. Loren Harris of the Kingdom Heirs will provide special music that day. Rev. Nathan Silver and the congregation invite you to join us to celebrate this milestone. The worship service will begin at 10:30am followed by a covered dish dinner on the grounds. For more information call the church office at 765-4620.

**Historical Society** --August 20th Talented local musician Will Ritter will present a program on traditional mountain music. In 2015, Will thrilled the MCHS audience by playing several instruments and singing Appalachian music.

**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 volunteers is: Aug. 4th Burke and McDowell -Glenwood Baptist Church 9-3 Aug. 18th-Avery and Yancey County location to be announced 9-3.

**Mitchell Baptist Association** 170th Annual Meeting, Monday Aug.27th at Grassy Creek Baptist Church in Spruce Pine, First Session 3:30-5:30, Break for a meal and then Second Session 7:00. Tuesday, August 28th at Ledger Baptist Church in Bakersville 7:00pm. Speakers: Monday-Rev. Bruce Cannon Tuesday Rev. Brandon Pitman

**Back to School Bash** Aug. 11th Begins at 10:00am On the hill behind Spruce Pine Chevrolet Sponsored by the Faith Based Community Hamburger, hot dogs, inflatables, and school supplies. ALL FREE For more info contact Rev. Marcus Benfield 828-850-3346 Rain date: Aug. 18.

**Mitchell County Chamber** - 2018 Grassy Creek Gem Show!

The 34th Annual Grassy Creek Mineral and Gem Show is put on by the Parkway Fire and Rescue to raise money for new equipment.

Over 60 US and International dealers with almost any kind of jewelry, gemstone and mineral specimens, fossil, lapidary equipment and more you might want.

Each booth is 20 feet by 40 feet so there are LOTS of items for sale.

Parking and admission are free.

Food is available.

Dates: July 28th to August 5th.

Hours: 10 to 6 daily with many vendors open earlier and later because they are staying with their booth.

Address: 136 Majestic View, Spruce Pine, NC 28777. This location is on the hill above the previous location on Hwy 226 South.

Contact: Donna Collis collisdonna@yahoo.com  
828-765-5519. <http://www.grassycreekgemshow.org>

**Mountain Community Health Partnership** cordially invites you to attend our Patient Appreciation Day. Friday August 17th 9am-3pm.  
Our locations are:

Bakersville Health Center 86 N. Mitchell Ave. Bakersville, NC 28705

Celo Health Center 116 Seven Mile Ridge Rd. Burnsville, NC 28714

Spruce Pine Health Center 36 Hospital Drive Spruce Pine NC 28777

We will be having snacks and giveaways. The theme will be "Celebrating Our Health Care Heroes." Our staff will be wearing our best superhero shirts. We will also be celebrating our staff nominated "Superhero."

If you have questions please call 828-688-6621 to reach me.

**NC Mineral and Gem Festival** ---Runs through Aug 5th.

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 every year! And it takes our great sponsors too!

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

**THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING RELAY OF THE BLUE RIDGE!**

**Mountain View CI's NCLETR** Come one, Come All! Saturday, August 18 a COLOR FUN RUN will be hosted by Mountain View CI's NCLETR at City-Drive-In in Spruce Pine, NC. This COLOR FUN RUN is to benefit the North Carolina Law Enforcement Torch Run for Special Olympics.

Registration includes a 2018 NCLETR Blue Cotton T-shirt for \$25. Registration without a t-shirt is \$15. All children under 10 years of age and all Special Needs participants are FREE! Be sure to wear a white t-shirt you don't mind getting colored, as the color will be thrown from various points along the route, as well as the finish-line. This is an un-timed fun run.

Not running but still want to participate or contribute to the event? Small cups of powder will be available for purchase to be thrown at runners during and at the end of the race. All proceeds benefit the North Carolina Law Enforcement Torch Run for Special Olympics.

Registration is available now until the morning of the run, with packet pick-up Saturday morning 7:00 – 8:30 am. The race will begin at 8:30 am, starting at City-Drive-In with a route through downtown and ending at City-Drive-In, the finish-line. For more information on registration, participation and/or sponsorship, please contact Peggy Dale, 828-385-2551 or [peggy.dale@ncdps.gov](mailto:peggy.dale@ncdps.gov), or Sam Greene, 828-284-2486 or [samanatha.greene@ncdps.gov](mailto:samanatha.greene@ncdps.gov)

**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.

**Toe River Arts Glass Tour** Fridays in August-- 3rd, 10th 17th and 24th. Call 828-682-7215 for more info.

**Women's Prayer Breakfast:** If you would like to join a group of women who are dedicated to praying, learning about God's will, and fellowshiping, come join us for breakfast at DT's in Spruce Pine. We will be ending by 10:00am. Open to all- for more information call Barbara Harrell at 828-467-3644 or email at [barbarah@brcnews.com](mailto:barbarah@brcnews.com). July meeting is 13th, at 8:00am.

## Yancey County

**Parkway Playhouse Parkway Playhouse** is pleased to present Godspell from July 28th - August 11th.

A small group of people help Jesus Christ (Allen Law) tell different parables by using a wide variety of games, storytelling techniques and a hefty dose of comic timing. An eclectic blend of songs.

**Higgins Memorial Kairos Training.** - Training for the Kairos Walk at Mountain View Correctional facility starts August 18th. There are three training Saturdays and participants must do two of the three. This is a desperate plea to have more people from our church sign up to participate. Without more help we will have to severely limit the number of inmates that we can bring the love of Jesus Christ to. The walk will be October 18-21. For more information contact Jim Swaim at 284-0299 or Peirce Bingham at 208-0299..

**Partners Aligned Toward Health** - The Mitchell Yancey Substance Abuse Task Force has completed an update of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Resource Guide - attached to this email, and also available online at [pathwnc.org/resources](http://pathwnc.org/resources). The Resource Guide contains as many Mitchell and Yancey resources as we have been able to locate, and also includes regional resources for services that are not available within our two counties.

*continued on page 19*



## Gofigure Guild Brings New Works To Toe River Arts

By Kate Groff, Mktg/Prog Manager  
Mitchell and Yancey Counties

Beginning August 25, the Toe River Arts Gallery in Spruce Pine will be transformed into a room of dolls—not the kind we all played with when we were young, not Ken and Barbie or GI Joe, or even Chatty Cathy—but those works of art that take viewer to a realm of understanding how each figurative piece was conceived and created. The exhibit, “Not to be Toyed With: Exploring the Art of the Doll” will run through September 22. A reception will be held on Saturday, September 1 from 5 to 7 pm on the gallery floor. For the exhibit, 30 members of the GoFigure Guild were challenged to expand their own visions, creating up to 100 original works plus historical art dolls and several “Storybook Characters on Parade,” sculptures created by Guild members.

During the course of the show, the public will have several opportunities to learn more through the many educational components of the exhibit. There will be three educational presentations in the main gallery and one and two-day workshops in the second-floor classroom. The education presentations are free and open to the public. Each workshop has a fee and requires pre-registration.

GoFigure was founded in 2009. Since then the group has grown to include mixed media and contemporary soft sculpture. Members with skill levels from each end of the spectrum come from as far away as Greenville, South Carolina and Knoxville, Tennessee and from closer to home in Mitchell and Yancey counties and several places in between. The Toe River Gallery is open Tuesday-Saturday from 10:30 am to 5:00 pm. Please visit the website, [www.toeriverarts.org](http://www.toeriverarts.org) for more information about dates, times, description and fees of the educational presentations and workshops.

Toe River Arts is a non-profit arts organization whose mission is to connect the arts with the community to enhance living in the two-county region and serve as an economic driver for all residents and visitors. For more information about Toe River Arts, please visit [www.toeriverarts.org](http://www.toeriverarts.org) or call 828-682-7215.

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



Lesley Keeble



Louise Grenell



## Need help paying for prescriptions?

Is your combined savings, investments, and real estate worth less than **\$28,150** if married, or **\$14,100** if single?

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Call Social Security at 1-800-772-1213 (toll free)

Call SHIP Counselor in Avery County at **828-733-8220**  
Mitchell County at 828-688-4811  
Yancey County at 828-682-6186



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

## Fastest Land Animal in the World

By Christy Lowman  
Burke County



Did you know that God created an animal that can run up to 75mph? That is faster than the speed limit for cars on the interstate. This animal is known as the fastest land animal in the world. Do you know what animal I am talking about? The cheetah! Can you imagine seeing a large yellow/tan cat with black spots pass you while you are riding in the back seat of your parents' car? If you were having a race that is exactly what would happen! The cheetah can reach 75 mph in about 4 seconds. However, they can only hold this top speed for a few hundred yards.

Cheetahs live mainly in Africa and a few parts of Iran. They eat hooved animals like gazelle or wildebeest calves and sometimes rabbits and birds. Since they are only really fast for a short period of time, timing is everything when it comes to catching their dinner. For this reason, these cats will sneak up on their prey in the tall savannah grass. Their long tails are very important to the cheetah. The tail is used to quickly steer the cat which way it wants to go while running at top speed. Cheetahs do not roar like other big cats. They “chirp” instead. Chirping is done mostly when cheetahs are reunited with family members, when they are in trouble, or when the females are looking for a mate. They also purr, bark, and hiss. No two cheetahs look the same. Their spot pattern is unique. Just like people's fingerprints are different and unique from each other.

God equipped the cheetahs with special paw pads on the bottom of their feet for traction. They also have semi retractable claws that help grip while they are running on the hard ground. Even though they don't wear visible shoes they could not be the fastest animal on land without their special feet! Just like we must wear the Shoes of Peace every-day as well as all the other pieces of God's armor.

Peace, is such a sweet word. Having peace is one of the best things you can experience in life. The only way you can have it is if you give all your worries, cares, and wants over to God. God is the only one who can grant us true peace. Once you have experienced it you only want it more and more because life is nothing but chaos without it!

Now, I will tell you that it is hard to give all our worries and problems over to Him! As human beings, we want to fix problems ourselves, we don't want to wait for God to help us. Once you decide that you can't handle things or fix things without God you will experience peace and it is the best thing ever! Go ahead and try it! Tell God about your worries and problems you are facing. Ask Him to fix them for you, and trust that He will! Once you trust Him to fix your problems you will feel the best feeling ever, peace!

Our most, kind, heavenly father, I ask that you will help each one of us give all our problems over to you. Help us trust you whole heartedly to fix our problems, and to take our fears and worries away. Only through you can we experience true peace. I pray that you will help each child here to experience it. Most of all I thank you for the gift of peace, it is a breath of fresh air that we all need to make it through our journey here on earth. Thank you for taking care of us and for loving us! In Jesus's name I pray AMEN.

and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace.  
Ephesians 6:15 NIV

Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you. 1Peter 5:7 KJV

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Christy Lowman is a Christian author and illustrator that lives in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains with her husband and two children. She enjoys writing and illustrating books for all ages. Some of her short stories are published with Guideposts and HCI. Christy gives all the glory to God in everything she does. A portion of every book sold from the Small Bible Character Series will be donated to battle human trafficking. If you enjoy her books, “like” her author page on Facebook and let her know! You can buy her books at [https://www.amazon.com/s/ref=dp\\_byline\\_sr\\_book\\_1?ie=UTF8&field-author=Christy+Lowman&search-alias=books&text=Christy+Lowman&sort=rel-evancerank](https://www.amazon.com/s/ref=dp_byline_sr_book_1?ie=UTF8&field-author=Christy+Lowman&search-alias=books&text=Christy+Lowman&sort=rel-evancerank). You can reach her at <https://www.facebook.com/authorChristyLowman/> or [christysoaps@yahoo.com](mailto:christysoaps@yahoo.com).



Interruptions

By Dr. Tracy Jessup  
Boiling Springs, NC

*"The apostles gathered around Jesus, and told him all that they had done and taught. He said to them, 'Come away to a deserted place all by yourselves and rest a while'...And they went away in the boat to a deserted place by themselves. Now many saw them going and recognized them, and they hurried there on foot from all the towns and arrived ahead of them. As he went ashore, he saw a great crowd; and he had compassion for them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd; and he began to teach them many things." — Mark 6:30-34*



Think about the last time you were interrupted. Perhaps your sleep was interrupted when you forgot to turn off your alarm on a Saturday you didn't have to work. Maybe a news anchor appeared on the screen during your favorite television program and recited the words, "We interrupt this program for a special news bulletin." One of the most frequent causes of interruptions is technology as our train of thought often is broken by a text, email, or phone call. Even the most carefully planned calendar can dissolve quickly as one thing after another invades our schedule.

Since interruptions are a part of life, the key is learning to handle interruptions gracefully. In the book *Out of Solitude: Three Meditations on the Christian Life*, Henri Nouwen writes, "A few years ago I met an old professor at the University of Notre Dame. Looking back on his long life of teaching, he said with a funny wrinkle in his eyes: 'I have always been complaining that my work was constantly interrupted, until I slowly discovered that my interruptions were my work'".

No one was more familiar with interruptions than Jesus, and his handling of life's interruptions with grace and compassion is unmatched. In today's passage, the disciples have returned from their mission, having been sent out by Jesus, two by two (Mark 6:7). No doubt, they are excited to debrief with Jesus and tell him about the wonderful things they have accomplished by his power and authority. Sensing their need for rest due to the crowds and realizing that there had been no time even to eat, Jesus says to them, "Come away to a deserted place." (v. 31). However, the crowds are not deterred by the boat ride taken by Jesus and the disciples. They "hurried there on foot from all the towns and arrived ahead of them" (v. 33). Jesus could have dismissed the crowds and continued with his plans for rest and relaxation, but the Bible says, "As he went ashore, he saw a great crowd; and he had compassion for them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd; and he began to teach them many things" (v. 34).



Jesus' compassion for those who interrupt his plan takes priority over his concern for a carefully followed calendar. Later in this same chapter, he will dismiss the crowds and go up on a mountain to pray (vv. 45-46), but not before being a shepherd to wandering and desperate sheep. Charles Cousar writes, "It may be better to read this story not from the perspective of Jesus but from the perspective of the crowd, one of those whose frantic and often unfocused life desperately seeks an answer. Jesus seems never put off by our interruptions, by our constant need of his compassion and teaching."

In further addressing the issue of interruptions, Nouwen calls this the great conversion in our life: "to recognize and believe that the many unexpected events are not just disturbing interruptions of our projects, but the way in which God molds our hearts and prepares us for his return... [W]hen we believe that patience can make our expectations grow, then 'fate' can be converted into a vocation, wounds into a call for deeper understanding, and sadness into a birthplace for joy".

Prayer: Lord, give us discernment to see interruptions not as moments of frustration, but as opportunities to be open to your hand at work.

*Dr. Tracy Jessup serves as vice president for Christian Life and Service and senior minister to the University. He is a graduate of Gardner-Webb with a B.A. in Music and earned his M. Div. degree at Samford University's Beeson Divinity School. He completed his Ph.D. at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. He also teaches in the undergraduate department of religious studies and enjoys the opportunity to serve the local church through interim pastorates, pulpit supply, and preaching revival services. He and his wife, Teresa, have two children, Christian and Anna.*

*Located in the North Carolina foothills, Gardner-Webb University is a private, Christian, liberal arts university that prepares students to become critical thinkers, effective leaders and compassionate servants in the global community. Emphasizing a strong student-centered experience and rigorous academics, Gardner-Webb ignites learning and service opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students. Ignite your future at Gardner-Webb.edu.*



*When they now shoot forth, ye see and know of your own selves that summer is now nigh at hand. Luke 21:30*



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### Sample Day Trip



Tour the Waldensian Museum  
Lunch & Downtown Shopping  
Tour the Trail of Faith  
Tour Waldensian Heritage Winery

Tours also available of the  
P&W Railroad Museum • Village Park Mural  
Art Galleries • Old Rock School



# Historic VALDESE

*North Carolina's Friendly Town*



### Upcoming Events in Valdese

**Family Friday Nights**  
Free concerts every Friday Night May-September.  
7pm at the Wells Fargo Parking Lot

**Valdese Farmers Market**  
May 18-September 28 Fridays 11-4pm  
Old Rock School Front Lawn

**43rd Annual Waldensian Festival**  
August 10-7pm: Music by Little Johnny Trailer Trash  
opening for The Artimus Pyle Band Honoring the music of  
Ronnie Van Zant's Lynyrd Skynyrd  
August 11-9AM-9PM: Over 150 craft, art, and food  
vendors. Live music and performances all day.  
Closing with The Band of Oz at 7PM.

**From This Day Forward Outdoor Drama**  
Fridays & Saturdays from July 13-August 11.  
Call 828-522-1150 for tickets and more information.

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# YOUR GOVERNMENT PAGES

## US House of Representatives NC District 11



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

### My Resolution to Force Transparency

Rep. Jim Jordan (R-OH) and I recently brought our resolution to the House floor—the resolution that will compel the Department of Justice to turn over all remaining relevant documents owed to Congressional investigators within 7 days. The House voted, and the resolution passed. We are incredibly grateful to our colleagues for their support.

Many of you who have been following this story are probably aware by now—this has been an ongoing fight to allow Congress to do its constitutional duty of oversight. For nearly 8 months, the Department of Justice has been given the opportunity, yet refused, to be transparent and answer questions about their conduct—even rising to the level of ignoring subpoena deadlines from Judiciary Committee Chairman Bob Goodlatte and Intelligence Committee Chairman Devin Nunes. If Rod Rosenstein and the Department of Justice have nothing to hide, they certainly aren't acting like it.

We are tired of this Department of Justice giving us the runaround. It is clear they no interest in cooperating, and we are done talking. I'm glad my colleagues joined with us to put this to a vote.

I want to thank my colleagues for their support. One way or the other, Americans will find out what truly occurred at their Department of Justice on their taxpayer dime.

### Major Supreme Court News

We have had huge news coming out of the Supreme Court recently. As you may know, the Court upheld a pro-life organization's First Amendment rights and prevented government from forcing them to advertise abortion services; they upheld the President's constitutional right to protect the American people and enforce limited travel restrictions for security concerns; and they ruled that public sector employees cannot be forced to subsidize political opinions they disagree with through union dues, which is a textbook First Amendment issue. All of these rulings were absolutely critical and major victories for originalism.

Perhaps most critical, though, was the news that the Court will now have another vacancy this summer with the retirement of Justice Anthony Kennedy. This means President Trump now has an opportunity to nominate yet another originalist Justice—one who will respect the rule of law and not legislate from the bench. President Trump is expected to announce his selection next week.

This was a successful week for a Supreme Court that is hopefully returning to respecting our founding principles of limited government and constitutional order.

## NC Senate District 47



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

This November when voters go to the polls, they will decide on whether six proposed constitutional amendments will become part of our North Carolina Constitution. Two of those proposed are a constitutional amendment to expand victims' rights, and a constitutional amendment to protect the right to hunt and fish.

In bipartisan votes, both the North Carolina Senate and House passed legislation to place on the November 2018 ballot a constitutional amendment for voters to consider that would provide better protections and safeguards to victims of crime and their families. A victims' rights amendment was added to North Carolina's Constitution in 1996, which gave some crime victims basic rights to participate in the justice system, but House Bill 551 – Strengthening Victims' Rights further advances those rights by:

- Expanding the scope of crimes under which protections to victims are extended.
- Requiring that victims receive effective and timely notice of all court proceedings.
- Expanding victims' rights to those victimized by juveniles.
- Giving victims a greater voice in the process by allowing them to be heard at plea, conviction, sentencing, or adjudication hearings.
- Creating an enforcement mechanism to allow a victim to file a motion with the court if they are being deprived of their rights.

While protecting the rights of victims, the bill makes sure that those rights do not infringe upon the rights of the accused. In addition to North Carolina, this constitutional amendment will also be on the ballot in five other states.

Both the North Carolina Senate and House of Representatives passed bipartisan legislation that will let voters choose whether to amend the North Carolina Constitution to safeguard citizens' right to hunt, fish, and harvest wildlife. Senate Bill 677 – Protect Right to Hunt and Fish had bipartisan support in both chambers, and voters will now consider the constitutional amendment on the November 2018 ballot. Of the southeastern states, only North Carolina and Florida have not written the right to fish, hunt, and harvest wildlife into their constitutions. Twenty-one other states already guarantee this right in their constitutions, and in all states that have placed this constitutional amendment on the ballot, voters have approved it.

I plan to vote for these two amendments to our state constitution and hope you will also. As always, please share your thoughts with me on issues related to state government by emailing me at [ralph.hise@ncleg.net](mailto:ralph.hise@ncleg.net) or calling me at 919-733-3460.



On Monday, President Trump nominated Judge Brett Kavanaugh to replace retiring Justice Anthony Kennedy on the Supreme Court. Judge Kavanaugh, of the D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals, deserves the serious, thoughtful consideration of the U.S. Senate, as mandated under the Constitution to give "advice and consent" to the President. As the Senate prepares to do this important work, I look forward to further reviewing this highly respected nominee's life and legal experiences, and how they've prepared him for the nation's highest bench.

Judge Kavanaugh's credentials indicate he is prepared and ready for the task ahead. A graduate of Yale College and Yale Law School, he has clerked for several distinguished judges, including Justice Kennedy. He has authored more than 300 opinions as a judge on the D.C. Circuit Court and found time to teach at Harvard Law School. Judge Kavanaugh also gives back to his community. He's active in his church and faith, coaches his daughter's basketball team, and volunteers at local schools and homeless shelters. When accepting President Trump's nomination this week, Judge Kavanaugh focused first and foremost on his gratitude toward his family, and spoke as a proud father to two young girls.

Yet before his name was even released, certain members of Congress and special interest groups began attacking Judge Kavanaugh's record, saying he would threaten "the destruction of the Constitution." Democrat Leader Chuck Schumer went so far as to say he "will oppose him with everything [he's] got." I believe most Americans are turned off by these knee-jerk reactions, and believe the life and work experiences of a nominee deserve thoughtful and considered study by their elected leaders. They want us to ensure that the next Supreme Court Justice is qualified, and can be trusted to uphold the Constitution and our rule of law. I intend to do just that as the Senate carries out its duty. I hope my fellow Senators will also treat the confirmation process for our nation's highest court with the respect the American people deserve and expect.

# GOD BLESS AMERICA



# YOUR GOVERNMENT PAGES

## NC House District 118



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

The House and Senate held their last sessions of the legislative Short Session on Friday, and the bodies are now adjourned until later this year.

I would like to thank the citizens of House District 118 for the opportunity to serve them. For everyone who has contacted me this session to discuss policy and to request help with state government, thank you for providing invaluable input.

### Legislature overrides Farm Act veto

The House and Senate voted this week to override Gov. Roy Cooper's veto of Senate Bill 711 — NC Farm Act of 2018.

Frivolous lawsuits against farms of all sizes are putting farmers and their families at risk. The Farm Act simply defines very clearly the types of nuisance suits that may be brought against farms in North Carolina.

People have been buying property around hog farms that were established well before they bought the property, then suing the farmers for nuisance — sometimes from many miles away. That's just not fair. The farm was there first, and the Farm Act limits these suits to properties that lie within one half-mile of an operation, and to within one year after a farm is started or a farm makes major changes.

Attorneys in other states, particularly in Iowa, have brought numerous suits against farming operations. In North Carolina, attorneys are showing up at the front doors of people who have lived near farms their entire lives and saying, effectively, "If you sign this piece of paper, I'll win you millions of dollars in court."

We are bombarded with fake news about farming operations. We are told by the media and special interest groups that farmers have no regard for people who live nearby.

An example of fake news about farming operations has been the media's and special interest groups' portrayals of the recent Smithfield Foods lawsuit. In court, the judge in the case did not allow photos. A plaintiff in the case said a hog farming operation was spraying her home with manure from eight feet away, but an aerial photo of the area plainly showed the farming operation was a mile-and-a-half away.

There is false information everywhere meant to build a narrative that puts money in the pockets of out-of-state attorneys. How else could a farming operation a mile-and-a-half from a home be portrayed in court and in the media as being eight feet away from a home? Despite deeply erroneous and slanted characterizations of lawsuits, the Farm Act does not affect any pending lawsuits in any way. The target today is hog farms. Once a handful of parasitic attorneys have juiced that industry for as much money in frivolous court damages as they can, chicken operations, cattle operations and others will be next.

Agriculture is our state's number one industry. As of 2017, there were 47,800 farms in our state operating on 8.1 million acres with a total annual economic output of more than \$80 billion. I will not stand idly by as attorneys try to skim off the backs of hardworking farmers and literally take food off of people's tables.

Legal practices seeking to win frivolous nuisance suits are playing the media and special interest groups like fiddles. The media and special interest groups then turn and play the people of our state like fiddles as they seek advertising dollars and donations.

Reports in the media and from special interest groups are simply not true. If you want to see for yourself, I would encourage you to visit some farming operations in North Carolina.

Agritourism is an up-and-coming industry across our state, and personally witnessing the dedication of farmers to their trade may be a good excuse to visit a farm.

North Carolinians have a right to participate in agricultural activities without a pervasive, real fear that their assets will be taken by frivolous, unjustified lawsuits. People who are truly negatively impacted by agricultural activity would still have recourse in court with the passage of Senate Bill 711.

Most people eat three times a day, and the food they eat does not originate at Ingles — that food is grown and harvested on a farm. Senate Bill 711 strikes a balance between farmers and property owners who live nearby, and, therefore, I voted to override the governor's veto of the bill.

The bill is now law.

### Legislature puts constitutional amendments on ballot

North Carolina voters will have an opportunity to vote on several constitutional amendments this November.

Constitutional amendment bills were passed by the House and Senate by a three-fifths majority this week. In accordance with our state constitution, the governor cannot veto them.

- House Bill 1092 Const. Amendment — Require Photo ID to Vote
- Would amend the Constitution of North Carolina to require that every person offering to vote in person present photo ID before voting in the manner prescribed by law
- Senate Bill 75 Const. Amd. — Max. Income Tax Rate of 7%
- Would lower the maximum income tax rate for families and businesses allowed by the state constitution from 10% to 7%
- Senate Bill 814 Judicial Vacancy Sunshine Amendment
- Would not change the process for regular judicial elections, but only reforms the process for filling vacancies in the state courts system
- Establishes a Nonpartisan Judicial Merit Commission and local merit selection committees appointed by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, the Governor, and the General Assembly
- None of the three branches appointing authorities could be granted a majority of appointments to the commissions
- Senate Bill 677 Protect Right to Hunt and Fish
- Proposes a state constitutional amendment to voters providing that the people of North Carolina have a right to use traditional methods to hunt, fish, and harvest wildlife, subject only to certain limitations promoting wildlife conservation and resource management



Rep. Rena Turner (R — Iredell), Rep. Beverly Boswell (R — Dare), Rep. Debra Conrad (R — Forsyth) and I at the Rally for Ag in Raleigh on Monday.



continued on page 34



# YOUR GOVERNMENT PAGES

## NC Senate District 46



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

As the legislative short session winds down, the Senate turned our attention this week to looking at constitutional amendments to be put on the ballot this November for North Carolina voters to consider.

**Senate Passes Bill to Put Constitutional Amendment Protecting Right to Hunt and Fish on Ballot This Fall**

In a 44-4 vote, a bipartisan Senate passed legislation Wednesday that will let voters choose whether to amend the North Carolina Constitution to safeguard citizens' right to hunt, fish and harvest wildlife.

If Senate Bill 677<<https://www2.ncleg.net/BillLookup/2017/S677>> passes the House of Representatives, voters will consider the constitutional amendment on the November 2018 ballot. Twenty-one other states already guarantee this right in their constitutions. Hunting and fishing are integral parts of North Carolina's heritage, economy and conservation efforts. I believe that North Carolinians deserve to have their voices heard when it comes to protecting these rights and I am confident voters will be eager to ensure that North Carolina remains a sportsman's paradise for future generations.

**Voters Could Choose Merit System to Fill Judicial Vacancies Between Elections Under Proposed Constitutional Amendment**

Voters would have an opportunity to amend North Carolina's Constitution this fall to implement a non-partisan, merit-based system to fill judicial vacancies between elections, under a constitutional amendment proposed Wednesday.

If Senate Bill 814, the Judicial Vacancy Sunshine Amendment,<<https://www2.ncleg.net/BillLookup/2017/s814>> becomes law, voters will consider a constitutional amendment on the November 2018 ballot that would:

Empower the people of the state to nominate candidates to fill judicial vacancies.

Authorize a non-partisan merit commission, appointed by the Chief Justice, the governor and the General Assembly, to evaluate those nominees and rate them based on their professional qualifications and merit.

Direct the General Assembly to review the qualified nominees submitted by the nonpartisan commission and forward at least two nominees to the governor for consideration.

Provide that the governor will appoint the nominee he or she considers most qualified to serve a provisional judicial term.

Require the appointed judge to stand for election following the governor's appointment in order to continue holding the judicial office.

The Judicial Vacancy Sunshine Amendment would not change the process for regular judicial elections. But it would end the practice of patronage judicial appointments like WRAL's report of former Gov. Bev Perdue's appointment of three of her employees to judgeships on her last day in office<<https://www.wral.com/outgoing-nc-governor-appoints-4-new-judges/11929263/>>.

After various House and Senate committees spent months - including dozens of hours of public hearings - considering the issue of how North Carolina selects its judges, it was clear to us that North Carolinians want to elect their judges, and that they want a transparent and accountable process for selecting judges. The current process of filling judicial vacancies has no transparency or accountability whatsoever, with governors placing whomever they want on the bench. This amendment fixes that broken system and ensures that vacancies are filled based on candidates' qualifications, rather than their political connections.

**Senate Overrides Governor's Vetoes**

The General Assembly this week voted to override Gov. Roy Cooper's politically motivated vetoes of two bills - Senate Bill 486<<https://www.ncleg.net/Sessions/2017/Bills/Senate/PDF/S486v4.pdf>>, which tightens election security measures to protect against the threat of outside influence and Senate Bill 757<<https://www.ncleg.net/Sessions/2017/Bills/Senate/PDF/S757v6.pdf>>, which makes changes to judicial districts in four counties.

Senate Bill 486 protects the state's elections from outside interference by implementing a number of security measures. It requires criminal record checks for election officials with access to sensitive materials and forbids any voting system used in an election to be connected to a network, both of which were suggested by the bipartisan NC State Board of Elections and Ethics Enforcement.<<http://www.newsobserver.com/opinion/op-ed/article201289749.html>> Additionally, it prohibits a new party from selecting a candidate who was on a primary ballot in that year for another party and lost.

Although we shouldn't be surprised at this point by Gov. Cooper's continued willingness to put his personal political interests over the interests of the citizens of our state, I was still disappointed that he was willing to jeopardize the security of elections in our state by vetoing Senate Bill 486. Making sure that our elections are secure, so the public can have confidence in the outcome is of the utmost importance and I am happy that we were able to override his vetoes and strengthen the integrity of our elections.

As always, if I may be of assistance to you, please contact my Raleigh office via phone or email. It is a pleasure to serve you in the state Senate.

## NC House District 86



Rep. Hugh Blackwell  
919-733-5805

Hugh.Blackwell@ncleg.net

### NCSSM Morganton Update

A new second campus of the North Carolina School of Science and Math (NCSSM) is being built in western North Carolina. Although located in Morganton in western North Carolina, and perhaps having heightened appeal to students and families from the region, it will serve junior and senior high school students from the entire state. Once the school opens in fall of 2021, each student applying can specify his or her first and second preference as to either the new Morganton or older, existing Durham campus. Students accepted will be residents on campus for their last two years of high school. Each school will operate under the control of the University of North Carolina Board of Governors.

The new Morganton campus is now in the planning phase with two steering committees whose primary focus is to actively engage communities and individuals from across the greater western part of the state. These committees include representatives from UNC, community colleges and K-12 education as well as from state and local governments, business and industry.

The External Engagement Steering Team is tasked with raising \$5 million for a 1:3 match with a \$15 million appropriation which we in the legislature approved in June. The additional \$20 million, along with funds approved by state voters in the statewide NC Connect Bond issue, will go towards building the full Morganton campus as laid out in the approved master plan. With funding needs met, the project should be completed in 2021 and a first class of 150 students admitted in August 2021.

A second team is Campus Operations. It has two main charges. First is to advise on "nuts and bolts" issues- such as schematic designs, business procedures and school infrastructure. The second focus is another form of community outreach and engagement. This involves building partnerships with businesses and industries that may provide internships or lab experiences for students. It will also include promoting collaboration and campus recognition for the new Morganton campus with other educational institutions in our region of the state.

Currently, things are ahead of schedule. When the campus is operational, I am confident it will be a great asset. More of our best students will access a rigorous education to prepare for the "high tech" careers of the future and without having to move to Durham.





# Burke United Christian Ministries

## Bless the Pantry

By David Burleson  
Burke County

The Burke United Christian Ministries (BUCM) held a "Bless the Pantry" event on Sunday, June 24 to dedicate the area and to show our thanks for being able to expand the food pantry. The Rev. Kevin Frederick said the blessing and Jessica Epley shared comments from the BUCM Board's perspective on how the larger pantry will provide greater services to those who come to our ministry. Burke United Christian Ministries is very thankful for the following foundations that made this project possible: the Burke Community Foundation, the Rostan Family Foundation and the Cannon Foundation. A huge thank you goes to Roofing Brothers for the outstanding work they did.

The pantry renovation is a perfect example of what can be accomplished when a community works together. BUCM continues to be blessed with wonderful supporters and volunteers. Because of our community's support, BUCM has been able to meet the needs of our Burke County Neighbors in the following areas:

- A total of 48,330 individuals representing 22,210 households received services, Soup Kitchen served 66,489 meals (Adult - 61,910, Children - 4,57, Food Pantry distributed 809,801 pounds of food to 19,612 individuals, Clothing Closet provided 4,320 individuals with clothing valued at \$64,226.76, Senior Santa brought cheer to 192 individuals, Wood Ministry provided loads of wood to 107 individuals, Baby Bucks Ministry provided 1,483 young children with diapers and wipes valued at \$1,828, Volunteers gave 42,112 hours valued at \$989,923.00, Homeless Assistance Provided
- Homeless Supplies - 527 Individuals received material valued at \$6,934.50
- Laundry Vouchers - 77
- Rain Hill Shower Kits - 489
- Showers - 1,501
- Crisis Financial Assistance Provided
- Cooling - \$24,185.44
- Heating - \$46,490.66
- Rent - \$28,534.19
- Utilities - \$28,318.95
- Fuel - \$1,106.08
- Total - \$128,635.32

As evidenced by the statistics above, Burke County is a caring and supportive place to live and work.

On June 30, BUCM held our first ever golf tournament, Chipping for Change, at Silver Creek Plantation. The tournament would not have been possible without the work of Ms. Haven Worley who put this very successful tournament together for BUCM. A big thank you also to Terry Rogers and his staff at Silver Creek Plantation for all their help and support. Without our sponsors, the tournament could not have been the success it was. We are greatly appreciative of the following full sponsors:

Wendy B's, Food Lion, Chic-fil-a, Jake's Wayback Burgers, Chip Saunders, Pepsi, Grey & Betty Carswell, Visual Perfection, Carbon City Body Shop, Rostan Foundation, Carolina Health Care, Boggs, Crump & Brown PA, Larry McMahon & Rob Denton, Toni Powers, Mobile Services, AJ's Steak House, Small & Martin

Our half hole sponsors were: Randy Morgan, Nationwide (Kelly Messenhiemer & Keith Bowers), Athletic Performance Lab, Burke Bedding

A big thanks to our hole in one sponsors: Case Farms, Ricky Bristol, Mark Buff

With the high summer demand for additional food, the funds raised from the golf tournament will be used to meet this summer's demands in the soup kitchen and food pantry.

I want to invite our community to attend our major fundraiser event, Picnic on the Parkway, to be held on Saturday, August 18 at the Morganton Elks Lodge beginning at 6 p.m. Tickets are \$50 and sponsorship opportunities are available. Come out and enjoy an evening of good food, music and fellowship. Great items will also be available in a silent auction. For additional information call us at (828)433-8075 or email me at bucmdirector@gmail.com.

Remember that our ministry is here to assist those in Burke County who need a hand up and we ask that you consider being part of what we do for others. Your prayers are greatly appreciated.

David Burleson is Director of Burke United Christian Ministries





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# Mitchell County Farm Bureau Women's Committee

## Cow Pattie Bingo

By Gloria Huskins  
Mitchell County

For the last 4 years the Farm Bureau Women's Committee has awarded a scholarship to a local student pursuing a degree in an agriculturally related field. This year the Women's Committee set out to fundraise for their scholarships with their 2nd annual Cow Pattie Bingo event. The committee teamed up with Mitchell County 4-H Livestock Club to help this youth organization also raise funds for their upcoming livestock events. Cow Patty Bingo is played by letting a cow out into an area marked off into a grid. Whichever square the first cow patty lands in is the winner of the event. Names associated with a numbered square were drawn by Mitchell County 4-H'ers the morning of Cow Patty Bingo. The event was held at the Rhododendron Festival in Bakersville on Saturday June 16th. A large crowd gathered as the first dairy calf, owned by Charlotte Hubbard, was released into the pen. After 51 minutes they had their first winner Rebecca Street receiving \$500 in prize money. The second dairy calf, owned by Luke Silver, was then released and left a cow patty in a square less than a minute into the second event. Shane Mickey was the lucky winner of \$500 during this round. Everyone truly enjoyed watching the calves mill around chewing on grass and enjoying their time at the Rhododendron Festival. Thanks to our major sponsor of this year's event, Unimin Energy Solutions. Gratitude as well to our other sponsors Young's Fuel Service, Farm Bureau Insurance, and Griffiths Merchandise General Store. Special thanks to the members of the Farm Bureau Women's Committee, Mitchell County 4-H, and countless volunteers for their hard work in putting on this event. The money raised will go towards youth with a passion for agriculture in Mitchell County and continue to grow agricultural leaders for the future. Remember to mark your calendars for next year's Cow Pattie Bingo, where you just might be the lucky winner!



Winner, Rebecca Street and Kaley Brown



Evan Mickey, Kaley Brown and Winner, Shane Mickey

Gloria Huskins is County Liaison/Licensed CSR at Mitchell County Farm Bureau and attends Altapass Baptist Church.

## The Inspiring Word

### Faith

By Pastor Terry Cheek Th.D.  
McDowell County



If you read last month's column, you will recall we looked at Faith, specifically the definition and 6 expressions of Faith. If you missed that column, I suggest reading July and August together for a deeper look at Faith. This month I want to turn your attention to the practical application of Faith. In other words, how Faith plays out in your everyday life. A verse we should all be familiar with is Hebrews 11:1-3 where we read; "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. For by it the elders obtained a good report. Through faith we understand that the worlds were formed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear." In the verses, which follow Chapter 11:1-3 we find that many people call them the roll call of faith? Take some time and read them, slowly and thoughtfully. You will find the testimony of God's people who have endured trials, tribulation, persecution, hatred, false accusations, and many other things. Faith could have but did not protect them from the attack of Satan. Faith did bring them through this attack, yes, they were scarred and battered but they were also full of praise to their Lord and Savior! Faith does not place an expectation on God for our comfort and coziness, Faith prepares us in the present for what God knows is coming in the future. We trust, submit and obey.

Talking about faith brings my heart to focus on men like Elijah. God called Elijah into His service as a prophet. He preached the word of God as it was to the King and nation of Israel, King Ahab, our Bible tells us did more to provoke God than any of Israel's previous kings. God could have simply struck down Ahab and placed a godly king on Israel's throne. However, God chose another route. He wanted to work through Elijah. Elijah did not follow God because of the power he had been given. No, Elijah lived and served by faith and God wanted it put on display for the world to see. Elijah faced his own drought. Elijah depended on ravens to feed him. Elijah traded being thirsty for being hungry when he went to the widow woman and her son. Elijah met everyone of these struggles with Faith! Faith prevailed and brought Elijah with it. This same Faith can bring you through the deepest and darkest valleys of life. Faith may not be cozy but it is powerful when approached God's way.

You may be thinking; I am not Elijah, I fail God. Elijah had his weak moments too. After Elijah by faith defeated the prophets of Baal and God consumed them by fire from heaven, Jezebel, Ahab's wife sought the life of Elijah. Elijah was frightened, ran, and hid in a cave. He could not hide from God. God called Elijah out and asked him what was going on? Elijah told God that Jezebel had killed all the prophets except him and now he was going to die. Elijah failed his faith. God gave Elijah some very specific orders, for example go to Damascus and after

anointing two leaders, he was to find Elisha and begin preparing him to be a prophet. God also told Elijah He had seven thousand prophets like him in Israel. No matter how bad it looked, God was always one-step ahead of the problem and God always used the problem to reveal His strength even through Elijah's weakness.

Friend that is the same role God wants to play through our life. You may not live in Israel but you do live in the presence of evil and wickedness. The born again Christian has been issued the Armor of God and part of this armor is the shield of Faith; 1Ephesians 6:16 "Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked."

It is with this armor God will strengthen you and prepare you with the courage needed for the issues that lay in front of you. It may not be a wicked government. It may be an illness, an addiction, a past others will not forgive I am sure there are countless circumstances God can allow in our lives. Just understand this Faith will bring you through them. When it does your testimony for the Lord will encourage someone else to do the same. That is how God uses us to bring glory to Himself. Through our weakness, His strength shines forth. Do not run to a cave and try to hide from God. He knows where to find you and He knows who to put in your life to help you along. It may even be someone you have to train for the duty. That's just God, praise His name! Friends until next time I pray Gods' blessing upon your life and family. Remember when you share Jesus you share hope!

1Nelson, Thomas. *The Holy Bible, King James Study Bible (KJV)* (Kindle Locations 157886-157887). Thomas Nelson. Kindle Edition.

Terry Cheek is pastor of Calvary Missionary Baptist Church in Marion NC. You can contact Terry by email at [terrycheek63@gmail.com](mailto:terrycheek63@gmail.com) or by phone at (828) 460-6120.



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# Pleasant Ridge Baptist Church

## So They Say You're "Judging"?

By Shawn Thomas  
Burke County

*"But they said, 'Stand aside.' Furthermore, they said, 'This one came in as an alien, and already he is acting like a judge; now we will treat you worse than them.' So they pressed hard against Lot and came near to break down the door." (Genesis 19:9)*

The response of the people of Sodom to Lot when he attempted to protect his guests from the immorality of the



city is very revealing — and unfortunately very typical of our own age.

The residents of Sodom said about Lot: "already he is acting like a judge." Perhaps you have heard this kind of response before? Perhaps you have uttered it? It is so often the response of the worldly person to any-

one who confronts them

about their sin: they claim that the person is "judging"! But think about WHO is saying it here: people who were clearly sinning, and who very shortly, in fact, experienced the fiery judgment of the Almighty! In light of this passage:

— If someone accuses you of "judging", don't take it to heart. Know that was exactly what SODOM said about a righteous person too.

— Don't be quick to pull out the "you're judging!" card yourself, lest you be found responding just as the sinners of Sodom did! It is self-condemning!

— And don't be so afraid of others saying it about you, that you back down and start compromising with the standards of the world around you. You don't have to be a very discerning judge to see that it's becoming a lot more like Sodom every day.

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



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# Crossword

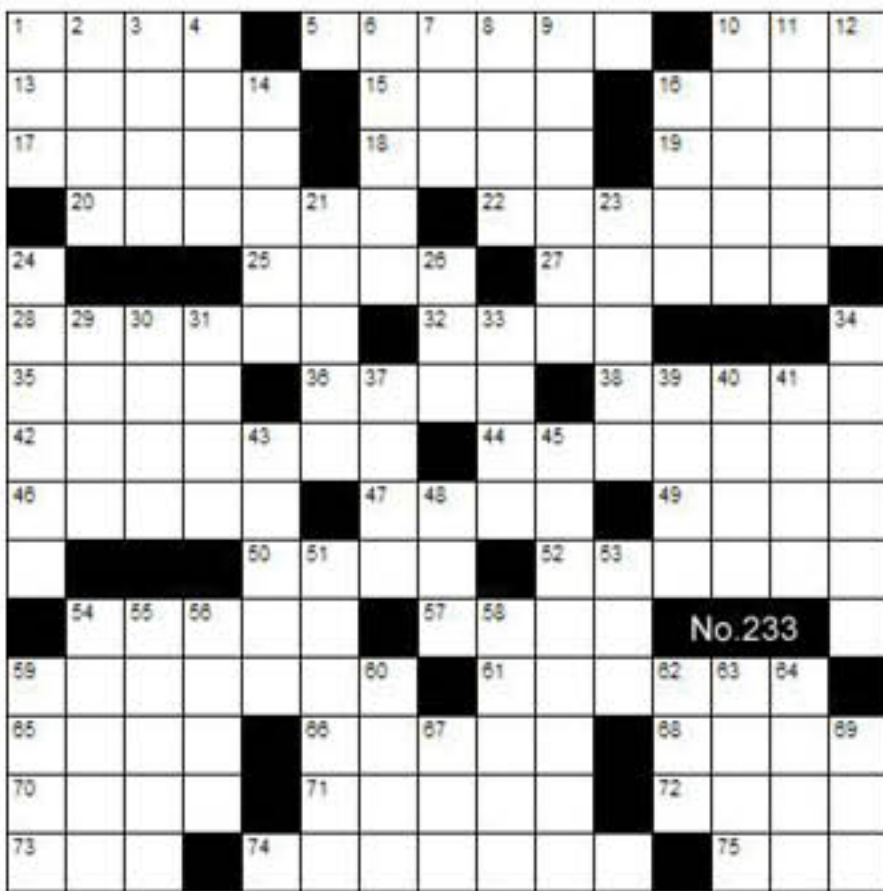
## ACROSS

1 Jesus cried out in a loud voice, "Eloi, Eloi, \_\_\_\_ sabachthani?" (Mark 15:34)  
 5 Esau's grandson (Gen 36:12)  
 10 when I \_\_\_\_ on sackcloth, people make sport of me. (Ps 69:11)  
 13 they gathered twice as much, two \_\_\_\_ for each person (Ex 16:22)  
 15 the words of \_\_\_\_, who was among the herdmen of Tekoa (Amos 1:1)  
 16 They left \_\_\_\_ Jaakan and camped at Hor (Num 33:32)  
 17 its total length will be 25,000 cubits and its \_\_\_\_ 10,000 cubits (Ezek 48:13)  
 18 this is the \_\_\_\_ of David's mighty men: Jashobeam (1 Chr 11:11)  
 19 the \_\_\_\_ was upon the earth forty days and forty nights (Gen 7:12)  
 20 \_\_\_\_ creatures and hyenas will live there (Jer 50:39)  
 22 but he \_\_\_\_ the craving of the wicked (Prov 10:3)  
 25 Tear down your father's altar to \_\_\_\_ (Judg 6:25)  
 27 soar like the \_\_\_\_ and make your nest among the stars (Obad 1:4)  
 28 Father of Samson, (Judg 13:2)  
 32 Speak now in the \_\_\_\_ of the people (Exodus 11:2)  
 35 appeal, request (2 Chr 6:19)  
 36 there before me was a man riding \_\_\_\_ horse (1,3) (Zech 1:8)  
 38 Remember the former things, \_\_\_\_ of long ago (Isa 46:9)  
 42 \_\_\_\_ to the LORD the glory due his name (Ps 96:8)  
 44 Nebuchadnezzar called the astrologers to tell him what he had \_\_\_\_ (Dan 2:1-2)  
 46 the screech owl will \_\_\_\_ on her columns (Zeph 2:14)  
 47 now therefore \_\_\_\_ thou somewhat the grievous servitude (2 Chr 10:4) KJV  
 49 son of man, take thee a \_\_\_\_, and lay it before thee (Ezek 4:1) KJV  
 50 all the \_\_\_\_ of the earth will fear him (Ps 67:7)  
 52 grinding him like grain with a \_\_\_\_ (Prov 27:22)  
 54 The body of a human being (Isa 58:11)  
 57 earneth wages to put it into \_\_\_\_ with holes (1,3) (Hag 1:6) KJV  
 59 The \_\_\_\_, and the fine linen, and the hoods (Isa 3:23) KJV  
 61 judge fairly; defend the \_\_\_\_ of the poor (Prov 31:9)  
 65 rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, \_\_\_\_, malice (Col 3:8)  
 66 King David had him brought from Lo \_\_\_\_ (2 Sam 9:5)  
 68 left handed judge (Judg 3:21) KJV  
 70 Which \_\_\_\_ shadow of things to come (3,1) (Col 2:17)  
 71 Do not \_\_\_\_ Jerusalem, but wait

for the gift my Father promised (Acts 1:4)  
 72 Hagar \_\_\_\_ Abram a son (Gen 16:15)  
 73 she answered and said unto him, \_\_\_\_, Lord (Mark 7:28)  
 74 Your \_\_\_\_ boundary will be the coast of the Great Sea (Num 34:6)  
 75 "Were not all \_\_\_\_ cleansed? Where are the other nine? (Luke 17:17)

## DOWN

1 Both \_\_\_\_ and high, rich and poor, together (Ps. 49:2)  
 2 God has ascended \_\_\_\_ shouts of joy (Ps 47:5)  
 3 Darius the \_\_\_\_ took over the kingdom (Dan 5:31)  
 4 those who practice magic \_\_\_\_, the idolaters and all liars (Rev 21:8)  
 6 we found out that the island was called \_\_\_\_ (Acts 28:1)  
 7 Who \_\_\_\_, O LORD God, and what is my family (2,1) (1 Chr 17:16)  
 8 is alive again; and was \_\_\_\_, and is found (Luke 15:32)  
 9 When he saw Queen \_\_\_\_ standing in the court, he was pleased (Est 5:2)  
 10 each gate made of a single \_\_\_\_ (Rev 21:21)  
 11 I will walk in thy truth: \_\_\_\_ my heart to fear thy name (Ps 86:11)  
 12 will increase by thousands, by \_\_\_\_ of thousands in our fields (Ps 144:13)  
 14 When the queen of \_\_\_\_ heard about the fame of Solomon (1 King 10:1)  
 16 you rely on the law and \_\_\_\_ about your relationship to God (Rom 2:18)  
 21 Joshua spared \_\_\_\_ the prostitute, with her family (Josh 6:25)  
 23 like the garden of Eden, behind them, a desert \_\_\_\_ (Joel 2:3)  
 24 so that I may \_\_\_\_ to you some spiritual gift (Rom 1:11)  
 26 we sailed to the \_\_\_\_ of Crete, opposite Salmone (Acts 27:7)  
 29 Know \_\_\_\_ that wisdom is sweet to your soul (Prov 24:14)  
 30 Josiah fought against Pharaoh \_\_\_\_ king of Egypt, (Jer 46:2)  
 31 Of the oaks of Bashan have they made thine \_\_\_\_ (Ezek 27:6) KJV  
 33 The fear of the LORD \_\_\_\_ length to life (Prov 10:27)  
 34 To \_\_\_\_ them that were under the law (Gal 4:5)  
 37 LORD shall smite Israel, as a \_\_\_\_ is shaken (1 King 14:15)  
 39 were bound in their coats, their hosen, and their \_\_\_\_



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(Dan 3:21) KJV  
 40 Tell them everything I command you; do not \_\_\_\_ a word (Jer 26:2)  
 41 Go, \_\_\_\_ everything you have and give to the poor (Mark 10:21)  
 43 you shall assign by name the \_\_\_\_ he is to carry (Num 4:32) (NAS)  
 45 \_\_\_\_ of Broken Walls, restorer of Streets (Isa 58:12)  
 48 If ye have faith \_\_\_\_ grain of mustard seed (2,1) (Matt 17:20) KJV  
 51 for a camel to go through the eye of a \_\_\_\_ than for a rich man (Matt 19:24)  
 53 is there any taste in the white of an \_\_\_\_? (Job 6:6)  
 54 for his wrath can \_\_\_\_ up in a moment. (Ps 2:12)  
 55 a fire devours before him, and around him a tempest \_\_\_\_ (Ps 50:3)  
 56 there was what looked like \_\_\_\_ of glass (1,3) (Rev 4:6)

58 Have not I given you this order? Be strong and \_\_\_\_ (2 Sam 13:28)  
 59 you will bring my \_\_\_\_ head down to the grave in sorrow (Gen 42:38)  
 60 His eyes are on the ways of men; he \_\_\_\_ their every step (Job 34:21)  
 62 abbr. for the nineteenth book of the New Testament  
 63 let them also \_\_\_\_ love thy name be joyful in thee (Ps 5:11) KJV  
 64 we have as an anchor of the soul, both \_\_\_\_ and steadfast (Heb 6:19)  
 67 the stork, any kind of heron, the hoopoe and the \_\_\_\_ (Deut 14:18)  
 69 animal house (Dan 6:19)

Solution on page 14







*Late Registration  
Continues Through:*  
**August 13th**  
*Classes Begin:*  
**August 15th**

- Accounting
- Advertising and Graphic Design
- Air Conditioning, Heating and Refrigeration Technology
- Associate in Arts
- Associate in Science
- Basic Law Enforcement Training

**Business Administration:**

- Business Administration
- Business Administration: Marketing and Retailing
- Business Administration: Operations Management

- Carpentry
- Computer Integrated Machining
- Cosmetology
- Early Childhood Education
- Electrical Systems Technology
- Emergency Management
- Engineering
- Esthetics Technology
- General Education
- General Occupational Technology
- Health Information Technology
- Industrial Systems Technology

**Information Systems:**

- Information Technology
- Information Technology: Network Management
- Information Technology: Software and Web Development
- Information Technology: Web Administration

- Landscape Gardening

**Nursing:**

- Associate Degree Nursing
- Nurse Aide
- Practical Nursing Education

**Office Administration:**

- General Office Administration
- Office Administration
- Office Finance
- Office Software

- Photographic Technology
- School-Age Education
- Surgical Technology

**Transportation:**

- Transportation: Automotive Systems Technology

- Welding Technology

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### Welcome to the Front Porch

By Ken and Jan Merop  
Avery County



I loved our expansive front porch that wrapped around one side of the house.

The stairway leading up to it was wide, too, like welcoming arms saying, "Come on up and sit awhile."

Ours was a quiet block yet had enough activity to visit with neighbors or just bask in the serene setting.

As I got into my teen years and went out to school functions, my Mom always warned me about not leaving myself vulnerable.

"Have your keys in your hand. You don't want to be fumbling in the dark looking for your key."

She would always be up and waiting for me. Sometimes leaves or dirt clung to my shoes and I'd hear her say, "Wipe your feet," just as I had already dragged some mess into the house. But, I was home and safe. We could deal with messes later.

Have you ever thought of God's grace like that front porch? When I was recently reminded to consider that, my childhood home came to mind.

Spiritually speaking, that front porch depicts God's grace. The wide stairway beckons us to come and just be. His gift of grace (or undeserved favor) is like an open, spacious porch that is wrapping around the house like giant arms to envelop and protect.

On this spiritual porch, I'm out of the elements. Here is a place I can't earn... it's a gift from our holy God who made himself known to us by his advent at Christmas. His grace is not only welcoming, it is saving. Somehow, we know we can't just bask in the grace offered, we must receive it; and, it's available through that front door. But, we don't have the key.

Referring to being our Shepherd, Jesus said in John 10:9, NKJV *"I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture."*

By grace and through his sacrifice at Calvary, Jesus became our door to salvation and eternal life. Our faith in him is the key that unlocks the door.

And even though we may track in some dirt from past habits, fears or immaturity, the Holy Spirit within us acts as a cleansing agent, ever teaching and guiding... just like parents who helped clean up messes I might have tracked in.

The calendar page has turned to August and summer is getting ready to pass the baton to autumn. A new season full of potential and front porch grace awaits. As you step up to the Door, have the key of faith in your hand. Selah

### THE DOOR

*A solid door forbidding entrance? That depends.*

*It's rugged sturdiness keeps intruders out and families safe inside.*

*But those who hold a key in their hands gain entrance with ease.*

*Our faith is that key that unlocks salvation's door. Jesus knocks at the door of our hearts. Will we let Him in?*

*"Behold, I stand at the door and knock.*

*If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me.*

*Revelation 3: 20, NKJV*



Ken and Jan love residing in the mountains of Avery County. Visit Jan's new blog @ [pauseandconsider.net](http://pauseandconsider.net), Journeying with Jan; and Ken's photos at [kenmerophotography.com](http://kenmerophotography.com).



## About Gale

By Beth Davis  
Mitchell County

For over 20 years, Gale was the victim of unspeakable abuse by her partner.

Almost immediately he isolated her from everyone. He was charming at first, but all the while he was grooming her to "be his." She soon realized that he was possessive, domineering, controlling.....not to mention mentally and physically abusive.

Early in their relationship, the first abuse was at a bonfire. He was ready to leave, but he was drunk, and Gale wouldn't give him the car keys. He punched her in the face, knocked her to the ground, and wrestled the keys from her. Afterwards, his father told him: Boy, you've sure got one now!

Don't get me wrong: Gale was no shrinking violet who just "took it." She fought back, but when she did, there was hell, hell, hell to pay. The abuse was even worse.

Not too long afterwards, he shoved her down the hall so hard that her arm went through the window, which resulted in stitches in three places.....all because he was in a foul mood. Gale lied to the hospital, telling them she tripped over her dog. Let me explain, he used threats against her beloved, loyal dog, Sparkplug, to manipulate and control her.

Once, they were at a family Thanksgiving dinner/reunion. She was surrounded by his family when he came from the kitchen, walked straight to her.....in front of everyone.....and slapped her so hard that her face snapped to the side, and she heard a loud pop in her neck. Gale asked his aunt to please drive her home. The entire side of her face was bruised.....which was highlighted by his hand print. Since then, she's been hard of hearing in that ear and has had ongoing neck problems.

Another gruesome time, Gale was too late coming home from work for his liking. He beat her with a Mag Flashlight, which busted her eyebrow open. When she finally wrestled the flashlight from him, he shoved her through the window. The glass cut her leg in two places deep enough to actually see the bone. He wouldn't let her go to the hospital or seek medical treatment, and he callously told her he didn't care if she bled to death. All she could do was elevate her leg, pour peroxide on her wounds, and wrap her knee in toilet paper, then put duct tape around her knee to pull those her deep gashes back together. She still has the scars.

Fast forward to a camping trip to Pisgah National Forest. He thought they could make a new start in the mountains, and things between them would be much better. He quickly reverted to his typical abusive self; he immediately forbade her to make friends, let alone even talk to other campers. She endured this for nearly three months.....cooking on a dirt fire pit, washing clothes in a creek, and living in an old small tent. He gathered old, almost rotten fruit from a dumpster behind a grocery store for food. He was too lazy to get a job. They filled jugs of water from faucets in the public restrooms.

Having grown tired of the camping life, he wanted to go back home.....BUT! They had no money for gas. He forced her to call her elderly mother for gas money. Money in hand, he told Gale he planned to kill her, cut her up in little pieces, then throw her over the ridge. He told her nobody would care, nobody would even look for her. His plan was to drive her car almost home, then ditch it somewhere, and tell everyone she left him in the mountains.

Then he tried to kill her with a steel pipe, splitting her eye open. Gale ran around the car, trying to avoid his wrath. Just by happenstance, a Park Ranger drove up and witnessed him brutalizing her with the steel pipe. Upon Gale's statement, plus the Ranger's eyewitness, her abuser was promptly arrested and taken to jail in Asheville. That was the very last time Gale and her faithful companion, Sparkplug, had any form of contact with her monster.

Thankfully, because this happened on Federal Land, he was sentenced and served 6 years in a Federal Penitentiary. Otherwise, had it happened somewhere else, because of NC State law, he would have maybe been locked up for maybe 90 days - maximum.

Having nowhere to go, Gale and Sparkplug made their way to Mitchell County SafePlace.....one of the only four shelters in North Carolina to accept pets.

Years later, Gale found herself in yet another abusive situation while trying to help her daughter. As things worsened and became unbearable, Gale reached out to Associate Director and Advocate Extraordinaire, Tracy Black. Gale had to sneak text messages to Tracy, lest they find out.

Below is an excerpt of some of her desperate texts, and how SafePlace and Tracy got her to safety:

Gale: Hey Tracy, So glad you still love & care about me. I am really alone & hopeless now. I'm very isolated & in need of help. I can't often use this phone, even tho it is mine.....They are going to the beach this coming wkend. I'm gonna try to call or write to fill you in. Please Tracy, you are the only one I feel I can trust or turn to.....I'll try to keep this phone if I can. Please let me call you. They can't know I'm telling you anything. I'll pay dearly if they know I'm trying to get help. I'll call you.

Tracy: Write me at PO Box 544 Spruce Pine NC 28777. Of course I still love you. Time and distance doesn't change that!!! Call me anytime!

Gale: PS I Love you too.

Tracy: You let me know what you need to do and I'll try to make it happen!

Gale: I've cried & hurt sooo much thinking of how much you & everyone there helped me. And how I just left & feel I let you all down. I'm crying now, Tracy, I'm so sorry & I love all of y'all. You were closer to me than my own family & it hurts me so much when I think of how I let you down. Please forgive me. I've regretted leaving so very much. Spruce Pine was home to me more than anywhere I've ever been. I've been abused now in ways I didn't realize could happen. I



lost my sobriety, my license & my car. I really gave up on life for awhile. I did pay my fines & have 4 years sobriety again. I'm in a situation now. A desperate one. I'm really afraid too. I can text you now, they aren't here. I've been slapped, pushed, & forced into a lot of crap in the last 2 to 3 yrs. My daughter has a man friend.

He's a control freak, a hateful one. Hates me when I take up for her. I'm clean & sober. No probation now. But they use drugs, cocaine, pills, whatever. He has friends and family in law enforcement here. They have the same probation officer. They're all tight close. He gets away with a lot. So does she. He says if I call the law out here on him he'll say I pushed him & stole from him. Hence I get locked up. Nobody here to set bail for me. He wants to get rid of me and take over this trailer. She sides with him. He supplies her habit. My heart has been shattered by my daughter. She does what he says. Steals from me, abuses me as does he. I've tried everything. She's on the lease agreement. He's her guest. Legally there's nothing I can do. He's done so much to ruin me mentally physically and financially. I pay all the bills & get all the pain. I stay in my room to keep from arguing. They tried to move me to the shed outside 2 months ago. I have no rights here without a fight. I can't even keep my food in the kitchen.

Tracy: Stop your crying there's time for that later. Right now we need to figure out what to do next. Do you want to come home?

Gale: I have never felt so unloved. I truly want to leave here. Before I really get hurt bad.

Gale: Thank you Tracy. Thank you so much. I've got to wait until this weekend while they are gone. If they find out their meal & house tickets are leaving there will be a fight. I have to find a way to Fayetteville too. 30 miles away from here. I'm coming home tho, if I have to walk. At least I'll be with those I love & love me. I do love you.

Tracy: You let me know what day you want to leave there and I'll have a ticket waiting for you at the bus station. Love you too honey!

Gale: Tracy, Can you get me a bus ticket for tomorrow out of Fayetteville? I would be ever so grateful & I will not let you down ever again. Love, Gale

Tracy: I'll go into the office in a bit and see what I can do. I'll text you back around 11. Okay?

Gale: Alright, see if everyone is still mad with me too if you can. I'll do all I can to make it up to them. I'm truly sorry for the wrong I've done. I'll be waiting for your answer. Thank you my friend.

Tracy: No one is mad at you, just worried.

Gale: I'm sorry anyway.

Tracy: Your ticket is purchased. You leave Fayetteville on Sunday at 12:45 and get to Asheville at 8:30. Pick up ticket at station in your name, password is sparkplug. Love you!

Tracy: Shoot me a text when you get on the bus. Call me when it's safe to do so!

Gale: OK I will. Just confirmed my ride to the station.

Tracy: I am unable to meet the bus this evening. I have booked and paid for a room for you at the Mountaineer Inn on Tunnel Rd. Take a cab at the bus station and the motel will pay the bill, I've already paid for it. Connie and I will be there to pick you up at 4PM. Your room is covered until then.

The wonderful folks at Mountaineer Inn in Asheville put Gale in a room right beside their office. Realizing Gale would be hungry, the office manager stocked her room with fruit. Tracy ordered Pizza Hut delivery for her, and the manager covered the Pizza.....and never charged us for it.

The long road to a happy ending -

When Gale got to our shelter, she weighed 97 lbs., was gaunt, pale, and both traumatized and relieved. After several weeks of recovery and nurturing care and encouragement by our advocates, Gale was finally ready to branch out. She found an adorable apartment within walking distance of everything. We found her a sewing machine at our thrift store so she could use her seamstress talents and make a little money. She's gained weight, her face has filled out and finally has her color back.....and she's anxious to share her story in hopes of giving others hope. And, she's a regular fixture at SafePlace. All in all, Gale's finally in a good place.....and that's a good thing!



Gale and her beloved Sparkplug in happier times.



Sparkplug, a gentle giant.

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

Check out our new Website-[www.brcnews.com](http://www.brcnews.com)  
And find us on Facebook



## The Courts of Life We Will Face

By Pastor Steve Williams  
Mitchell County



We hear so much about our court systems today. The courts through out all the land are making decisions about people, their actions, their words, and the deals that they make. There are three courts of life which all will face. There is the Court of Public Opinion, all of us have an opinion. There is the Court of Conscience, we all have a conscience. And lastly the Court of God, and we will all stand before God one day. So, none of these judgments should be taken lightly. The Bible says in 1 Corinthians 4:1-5 *1 Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. 2 Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful. 3 But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment: yea, I judge not mine own self. 4 For I know nothing by myself; yet am I not hereby justified: but he that judgeth me is the Lord. 5 Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God.*

The court of public opinion assembles daily in every city in the world. Sometimes they take up in the restaurant, street corner, telephone, barber shop, or beauty shop. There people will discuss us, judge us, condemn us or maybe even acquit us. This is a judgment that no one can escape. But while public opinion is important, don't let it control you. It is not the Supreme Court or the final court you will stand before.



Next is the Court of conscience, this court never takes a recess, except perhaps when you and I are asleep. It is always in session. It condemns us, acquits us continually for our actions. A little boy asked his father "What is a conscience?" The father answered, "I don't know, but when the phone rings, you pick it up." A conscience is an emergency call from God, we best not neglect it.

Lastly there is the court of God This is the supreme court of life. What God thinks of us is substantially more important than what others think of us or even what we think about ourselves. His judgement will be final and without error. Understand Christ is gathering material for His final judgement now. We must seek His favor and approval above all else. It is His opinion of us that will matter eternally.

### Words of Wisdom:

- Judgement comes from experience, and experience comes from bad judgement. Simon Bolivar
- You can't judge an album by a single song; it's like judging a book by only reading a single chapter. Trevor Rabin
- I know of no way of judging the future but by the past. Patrick Henry
- People in grief need someone to walk with them without judging them. Gail Sheehy

### Something to Think About: Why I Never Go to Church

I never go to church," boasted a wandering member. "Perhaps you have noticed that pastor?"

"Yes, I have noticed that," said the pastor.

"Well, the reason I don't go is because there are so many hypocrites there."

"Oh, don't let that keep you away," replied the pastor with a smile. "There's always room for one more."

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

# Neuropathy



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Marlene's Meditations

Please Stop Laughing So I Can Worry!

By Marlene Houk  
Burke County

Icy. Packed ice. Coasting the gorge section of the interstate for miles. We crept along in the warm van, six miles an hour. For 3 hours. The five of us spread out over the ten-passenger van that had begun the six-hour journey so happily in the sunshine of Kentucky. Now, we crept along, cocooned companions on the bleak December day with my husband and son in the little Escort in front of us.

My Southern bones protested at this danger. My DNA had not a molecule of grappling with icy roads and keeping a cool demeanor. The farthest north I had ever traveled was to Philadelphia, PA in the heat of summer. I couldn't even claim an expertise with dangerous winter roads within 5 generations. But, here I was, on the snail trail of a major Interstate with lots of other cars who had the bright idea of traveling on this bitterly cold gray day. Fear-incarnate gripped my mind and I longed for the sweltering humid Southern heat and the glare of brilliant midday sunshine. My voice was frozen, and I could only utter monosyllables to any questions or remarks.

Relentless giggles from my daughter and twelve-year-old great-niece and an occasional chuckle by the driver, my niece, finally roused me from my icy attitude. Absolute silence reigned from the farthest back seat from my thirteen-year-old great nephew. I was baffled. Could they not see the treacherous scene? Were they immune to the dozens of silent cars resting in the snowy ditches and snuggled next to the guard rails? Did they not understand the incredible dilemma before us? Why weren't they on their knees praying?

And, yet, they sang merrily, composing goofy lyrics and bubbling with laughter at their silliness. My daughter and great-niece have enjoyed years of this close relationship, and today was no different. They did not hesitate to revel in each other's company, inventing all sorts of reasons to snicker at their own skills and jest with the driver who incited them to more guffaws. Eventually their words penetrated my numbness, and I actually smiled at first. As they continued, my chortles joined theirs in a cheery chorus of crazy antics.

Finally, we made it to the end of the ice and packed snow. What began as absolute terror for me, ended with the suggestion to create tee-shirts with "I survived the gorge on December 31, 2009" and lyrics to their new songs.

That was four years ago, and I still remember my giggles. Even though the winter day was clouded with ominous fear, I eventually enjoyed my daughter, niece, and great-niece's absurdities. They totally ignored the ghastly weather and, instead, totally immersed themselves in the frivolity within their cozy van. My niece skillfully drove. The Lord blessed, and we emerged from the gorge, ready to continue our conversations in the sunshine.

Jesus says in John 14:27 *Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.*

I think about that scene when I can't control my world, when it seems a slippery slope, and when monsters slink around the corners of my mind. And, I occasionally break and run from their absurd control over my mind. I take the key of peace, unlock my prison cell of worry, and run into the sweet arms of Jesus, enjoying His security and love. I need to do that more often.

Oh yes, of course, not forgetting my great-nephew. He was in the land of video games, totally oblivious to the outside world which he couldn't control in the least. Hmm... That reminds me of John 14:6 which says, *"Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me."* Could I, like my great-nephew, practice total oblivion to the world's sway? Could I be so immersed in the Scriptures that I am unaware of the world's storms or at least unaffected by them? What a powerful thought!

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



Mitchell Yancey Substance Abuse Task Force

Dealing Effectively with Addictions

By Schell McCall, PATH Executive Director  
Mitchell and Yancey Counties

At the July 10th meeting of the Mitchell Yancey Substance Abuse Task Force at the Mauzy Phillips Center in Spruce Pine, members were treated to a special presentation by Dr. Michael Newberry, MD. Dr. Newberry is a practicing Psychiatrist known especially for his research and work in the area of addictions. Among several insights were his contention that addictions must be treated as diseases that individuals develop, rather than as choices that they make. Helping to prevent addiction diseases, especially with mental health interventions is critical. He pointed out that, since at least 90% of addicted individuals relapse, detoxification must be considered a first step, followed by other immediate treatments.

The Task Force was congratulated by Elizabeth Flemming, Program Director of the Rural Pain Management and Substance Use Disorders Initiative of MAHEC (Mountain Area Health Education Center) as being a model for other communities with its demonstrated successes and inclusive membership which includes two counties, government leaders, law enforcement, education, health professionals, community citizens, business people, and faith community representatives.

The Mitchell Yancey Substance Abuse Task Force is a program of Partners Aligned Toward Health. To learn more, support our work, or get involved as a volunteer, contact PATH staff at (828) 682-7899, info@pathwnc.org, or www.pathwnc.org/programs/prevention. Follow the efforts of the MYSATF at www.facebook.com/MitchellYanceySubstanceAbuseTaskForce.

Jessica Farley, Health Educator/Health Promotion, Toe River Health District and Chair of the MY Substance Abuse Task Force.  
Mary Quaille, MedServe Fellowship Program Member serving with the Mountain Community Health Partnership.  
Claire Mellott, MAHEC Rural Works Intern  
Elizabeth Flemming, MAHEC Program Director  
Dr. Michael Newberry, MAHEC Psychiatrist  
Schell McCall, PATH Executive Director

Schell McCall is Program Associate for Yancey County 4-H.



Sudoku

Solution on page 14

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

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# Lees-McRae College

## Lees-McRae Summer Theatre

By Nina Mastandrea  
Avery County

Vibrant and full of rhythm, Lees-McRae Summer Theatre's *In The Heights* wraps up 2018 season starting July 31

**BANNER ELK, N.C.** — Enjoy the energetic Latin rhythm and colorful stories of love, troubles, and living in the "heights" in the final show of the Lees-McRae Summer Theatre season, *In The Heights*.

Written by Hamilton composer, Lin-Manuel Miranda, *In The Heights* spans three generations of music representing the inhabitants of Washington Heights, New York. Following a dream, the people share memories of home, fall in love, worry about the changes in the neighborhood, and dance to Latin music from their countries, mixed with the rhythms of the streets.

*In The Heights* will perform in Hayes Auditorium and Broyhill Theatre July 31, August 2, and August 4 at 7 p.m. and August 1, 3, 4, and 5 at 2 p.m.

Winner of the 2008 Tonys for Best Musical, Best Orchestration, and Best Score, this show not only tells an engaging story, but also "offers a unique look into Latin communities in New York," said Director Janet Barton Speer.

Before choosing the lineup for this year's Summer Theatre, Speer visited the communities in Washington Heights.

"I climbed the steps out of the 175 St. station to an explosion of color," she said. "The language, the music, the bodegas with their fruit and flower displays, the piragua carts and the spray-painted murals all danced and harmonized within a few blocks."

Speer said Summer Theatre has "worked diligently to come as close as possible to that color through sets, costumes, props, and Latin-American actors and musicians."

For those who visited Hayes Auditorium and Broyhill Theatre earlier this summer for performances of *The Wiz*, some may notice parallel themes.

"Like *The Wiz*, *In The Heights* ends with a song about home," Speer explained. "Dorothy looks for urbanism and excitement, whereas the characters of *In The Heights* look for opportunity and safety. Both musicals show us the important journey and identifies us—the journey to satisfying definition of home."

Individual show tickets range in price, per person, from \$38–43 for adults, to \$18–20 for students and/or children. *In The Heights* is rated PG-13.

Tickets can be purchased online at [lmc.edu/summertheatre](http://lmc.edu/summertheatre), by mail request and at the box office.

Box office hours are Tuesdays through Fridays from 10 a.m. until 3 p.m. Please check online for show day hours. For group sales, call the box office at 828.898.8709.

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

Nina Mastandrea is the content manager of Lees-McRae College



Allison Gomez in *In The Heights*



# Morganton Seventh-Day Adventists Church

## Tell Yourself the Truth

By Rick and Cindy Mercer  
Burke County

Mark was conducting a series of Bible seminars in São Paulo, Brazil when he met a woman named Anna who believed her life was worthless. She was attractive, intelligent, and outgoing, but extremely depressed.

On her twenty-third birthday she decided to take her own life. Before ending it all, she wrote letters to her family and her close friends, and she even wrote a letter to God.

Miraculously, at the very time she was writing these letters, the telephone rang. The person calling had dialed a wrong number, but he immediately sensed Anna's distress. He began to gently encourage her and present her with hope. Then he invited her to some evangelistic meetings that Mark was holding close by her home. Anna came desiring a new life and longing to be healed from her brokenness. She came longing for the pain and hurt within to go away.

Anna sat spellbound as Mark talked about how, in Christ, we're valuable; in Christ we're loved; in Christ we're accepted; in Christ we can be made whole. Anna confronted her self-talk. She confronted the lies swirling around in her head. She accepted the truth that in Christ's eyes she was valuable. The lie that had imprisoned her unraveled.

As Mark shared the story about Anna, he said, "The truth, of course, was obvious enough. But it had to sink in. The Holy Spirit impressed her with reality. God made that impression real in her mind, and His light shone in her heart." This was the beginning of healing for Anna.

Here is the thought that changed her thinking: "He [Christ] made us accepted in the Beloved" (Eph. 1:6). If we are accepted, we are not rejected. If the Father accepts me through Jesus, then I can accept myself. When we accept Jesus by faith we reside in His righteousness. The Father accepts us as He does His own Son. All of Christ's good works and His righteous living are credited to our account.

"There is therefore no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 8:1)

Mark continued to remind Anna as he does many others that the Father will not condemn His own Son. Through Christ we are as truly accepted by the Father as if we were His own Son. He welcomes us. He embraces us. He reassures us. He accepts us. He loves us. Eternal life is ours! Heaven is our home.

Through Christ our future is bright. He accepts us, so we can accept ourselves now and through all eternity. If He values us that much, we can value ourselves now and through all eternity. If He values us that much we can value ourselves. When negative self-talk floods your mind tell yourself the truth. You are accepted and valued by God! In the end that's what really matters.



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

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# Allen's Offerings

**One Focus**  
By Allen Buchanan  
Mitchell County

The first time I met Elizabeth (Libby) Shrier, Geddes of the singing trio One Focus, was in June 1979. She was the first born child of Greg and Susan Shrier. Susan is my sister in law. Later in 1982, Libby was the flower girl in my wedding. My wife and I don't have children and like many of you, we claim those of our siblings or close friends. Since then, I've grown close to Libby as though she is my own daughter.

As time went by Libby got two new sisters, identical twins Valerie and Vanessa plus a brother, Phillip. When the twins turned 4, their mother began teaching them three-part harmony. It rarely took them more than 3 weeks to learn a song. These young ladies were quick learners and enjoyed singing so much that their self-titled debut album was released in 1993, "DAYSTAR".

The girls chose this name based on 2 Peter 1:19: *We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts.*

After singing at various churches in MD, DE and NC, Libby, Valerie, and Vanessa got the opportunity to sing at the National Quarter Convention in Louisville, KY. Daystar sang as a group until they went to college.

It was in college that Libby met Brian Geddes. He and his sister, Chrystal also sang together in the 90's for four years, they were known as "CALLED TO SERVE". They also released on a self-titled album.

Today, Brian Geddes, his wife Libby and his sister, Chrystal Dorrell are best known as "ONE FOCUS". This group has been singing together for eighteen years and they, along with their families seek to honor and glorify their Savior, Jesus through music. Their music style is that of praise and worship/contemporary, although they have covered a wide range of genre's in the last eighteen years. Through every opportunity that they are given to sing, One Focus has a central goal, and that is that the name of Jesus will be uplifted. Their desire is to see the Spirit move in hearts in every service and their prayer is that the Lord will use them to further His kingdom. If you would like to hear a sample of One Focus' music, you can find them on YouTube and iTunes, as well as reach them on their Facebook page. If you prefer to speak to them by phone, please call (864) 497-2216.



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



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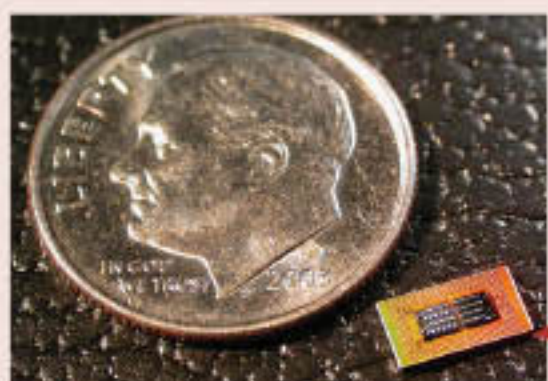
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