BLUE RIDGE CHRISTIAN NEWS

We Have A Drug Problem. We Are Doing Something About It!



Donna Bruce, Prevention Specialist - RHA, Basil Savitsky, Prevention Specialist - RHA, Dr. Bruce Fagen - MAHEC, Dr. Steve North - Local Family Doctor
Dr. Dwight Willett - Bakersville Clinic, Dr. Gabriel Cade - Director of ER Blue Ridge Regional, Rev. Jeremy Troxler - Spruce Pine Methodist, Rev. Tom Anglin - The
Bridge Church Spruce Pine, Nancy Hinshaw - First Baptist Spruce Pine, Rector Richard Biega - Trinity Episcopal Spruce Pine

By Jeff Spargo, Program Coordinator Mitchell-Yancey Substance Abuse Task Force A program of Partners Aligned Toward Health

According to the Centers for Disease Control, North Carolina has risen to second in the nation for the highest increase in opioid-related deaths. Recent federal statistics show a 23%

increase in opioid-related deaths from 2016 to 2017. The opioid crisis truly is as serious and as dangerous in our local community as we are led to believe. This problem is destroying families, harming our economy, costing millions in public funds, and literally killing people on a daily basis. This is a national issue, not just a local issue; however, if local folks do not take care of the issue at home it will continue to grow like an ugly cancer.

But! The good news! We can do something about it and people in our area are. The Mitchell-Yancey Substance Abuse Task Force has been serving our community since 2009. The Task Force was established by a group of doctors and healthcare providers concerned about prescription drug abuse in our area. It is made up of key community leaders from across twelve community sectors, from doctors and faith leaders to education and law enforcement. Since its inception, the Task Force has grown to address all substance use/abuse issues affecting our community through a multitude of partnerships and programs.

This past school year, the Task Force began Appalachian Youth to Youth — an afterschool initiative that builds teen knowledge and skills to not only live substance free lives but to also influence the lives of others in the community to do the same. Another recent initiative begun through the Task Force is Home Remedies: Community Options Addressing Pain and Stress, where community members can attend weekly sessions at the Mauzy-Phillips Center in Spruce Pine to learn about and take part in free complementary/alternative medicine sessions focusing on pain relief and stress management such as Mindfulness, Chiropractic, Yoga, and Acupuncture.

The Task Force has also recently begun a new initiative called the Opioid Prevention Ecumenical Network (OPEN) made up of local faith community leaders and medical providers. Through this initiative, faith leaders are learning more about the medical methods of treating addiction and the medical community is learning more about the faith based approaches to addiction treatment. These conversations are vital as those who are struggling with addiction need support physically, emotionally and spiritually to overcome the powerful grasp of addiction. While we can point to successful programs in our counties, there is much work yet to be done.

Dr. Michael Newberry, MD and practicing Psychiatrist, known especially for his research and work in the area of addictions, spoke to the Mitchell-Yancey Substance Abuse Task Force this summer. His research supports other medical findings that addiction is a disease, with significant medical and neurological implications, and is not a choice that a person makes or can control after the first experiences with a substance - whether it is tobacco, alcohol, or other drugs. Dr. Newberry points out that treating a person with an addiction initially requires detoxification. There are medications and devices which help suppress withdrawal symptoms during detoxification, but this is only the first step in treatment. The majority of patients who do not take part in other treatments and/or services following detoxification resume their drug use.

After detox, a person must find an avenue of treatment – whether through counseling, medication, community support, or a combination of all of these to achieve recovery. Research shows that community is one of the most important keys to beating addiction, and this is a vital role that the church plays. Mitchell County is blessed to have faith-based resources like Celebrate Recovery at Bear Creek Baptist and Hope 4 Mitchell County through First Baptist Spruce Pine. Currently, the United Methodist Church in Burnsville provides support groups for both alcohol and drug addiction and are in the planning stages for a Celebrate Recovery program. These community initiatives offer genuine love and compassion, brothers and sisters who will walk beside people on their journey to recovery, and a pathway to spiritual renewal and healing.

And while all churches do not have the resources to put on such structured programming, all churches can love those individuals and families struggling with addiction, all churches can walk alongside without judgement, all churches can open the door for spiritual healing.

An important thought to keep in mind for all churches was raised recently by Amy Earnheart who is coordinating the Mountain Community Health Partnership (MCHP) grant to advance the goals of the NC Opioid Action Plan funded by the Governor. "As part of recovery, patients are constantly expressing a strong desire to have a church home; however, their fear of rejection and personal shame often prevents these connections from taking place. When patients are trying to change or maintain lasting shifts towards restoration of health and address recovery management needs, they often envision church attendance as a way to strengthen their lives and the families. I would like to learn about churches, who might welcome new members and their families striving for change. I would like to help make those connections and would like to know about the churches, who have open and accepting congregations, and consider themselves able to welcome our commu-

continued on page 10



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BLUE RIDGE CHRISTIAN NEWS

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"How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace: that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation: that saith unto Zion. Thy God reigneth!" Isaiah 52:7 KJV



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Church Directory



The Bridge Church of WNC

207 Pinebridge Avenue Spruce Pine, NC 28777 www.bridgewnc.org

Pastors - Tom & Tammy Anglin

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

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

Morganton Seventh-day Adventist Church

2187 Jamestown Road Morganton, NC 828-584-8212

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

Berry Chapel **Baptist Church**

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

Pastor - Steve Williams

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

Where Everybody is Somebody And Jesus Christ is Lord!

Faith Fellowship Church

Champ Ray Rd. Micaville, NC 28755 (828)-675-9284 www.ffcn.org www.ffcnradio.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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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 possionate followers and servants of Jesus Christ while ministering to the spiritual and hysical 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. Luke A. Lane

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

Plumtree Presbyterian Church

4527 Hwy 19E Plumbree, NC 28664 828-765-6919 www.plumbreechurch.com

Pastor Ryan Bridgeo pastor@plumfreechurch.com

Sunday School 9:45 am Worship Service 11:00 am Life Groups Tuesday-Thursday evenings, 7:00 pm Fusion Youth Wednesday's, 6:30 pm eding 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 finit-finit 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

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

A Bible-believing Fellowship Loving God and Loving People

St. Lucien's Catholic Church

695 Summit Street Spruce Pine, NC 28777 Phone (828) 765-2224

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

First Baptist Church of Spruce Pine

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

> Dr. Rocky Branch Senior Pastor

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

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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 Education, and Nurturing Service

First Advent Christian Church

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

Pastor Patrick Bradshaw Associate Pastor Javier

Guzman pbradshawfaccmorganton@gmail.com

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

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Snow Hill Baptist Church

No Regrets -Nothing Short Of Miraculous.

By Pastor Dean Honeycutt Mitchell County

Psalm 105:1 (KJV 1900)

O give thanks unto the LORD; call upon his name.

Make known his deeds among the people.

Psaim 106:1 (KJV 1900)

Praise ye the LORD.

O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good:

For his mercy endureth forever.

Psalm 119:62 (KJV 1900)

At midnight I will rise to give thanks unto thee Because of thy righteous judgments.

Psalm 136:2 (KJV 1900)

O give thanks unto the God of gods:

For his mercy endureth forever. Psalm 136:26 (KJV 1900)

O give thanks unto the God of heaven:

For his mercy endureth forever.

I want to thank the Lord for His goodness to my family. God is always good and right. At all times God is acting in a way that benefits His children. Even when God is acting in judgement, He is still acting in love and benefit to all who belong to Him. Romans 8:28 (KJV 1900) 28 And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

The past 6 months has been a test of faith as our family had to trust God to provide and see us through some difficult times. I will not go into a lot of detail about our challenges because I am sure you have had your share of hard times as well. God is amazing as it humbles me to think of all the problems and concerns in the world that my God would look down from His glory and consider us. Like the Psalmist said, "what is man, that you are mindful of him?" (Psalm 8:4) But God is good and faithful; even when we suffer God is good. God however does not like to see us suffer or even go through difficult times. James 1:2-4 (KJV 1900) 2 My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; 3 Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. 4 But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing. 1 Peter 1:7 (KJV 1900)

7 That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:

As we go through difficult times we must have patience as God completes that perfect work in our life for His glory. That God would even consider using us in this way is a miracle of love and grace. I must trust Him when I do not see the

So, God in providence provided and accomplished some amazing things in our life that I praise Him for and wanted to share with you. God has acted in this way before many times, but the events of the past six months have been nothing short of miraculous. When you have no means of providing like the widow woman of Zarephath with only a handful of meal and a little oil, and God provides a way that "the barrel of meal shall not waste, and the curse of oil not fail", you must look up and give God all the glory. I want you to notice the widow woman had to do something; she had to feed Elijah first, and she had to continue to prepare food. But the resources to fix a meal would be there. (1 Kings 17) James said "faith, if it has not works, is dead, being alone." (2:17) God did not drop the resources out of the sky for us; however, God worked in the lives of others to provide a way for us that was amazing. God has been so good to Pam and I and I wanted to praise Him and thank Him for His goodness and faithfulness and share it with you.

Thankfulness and gratitude take our focus of our self and our circumstances and places them on God and Hid goodness.

God is faithful. God bless you as you live a life of "no regrets".

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





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Bear Creek Baptist Church

Mitchell County State of the Child Conference By Bruce Cannon

By Bruce Cannon Mitchell County

Please note that on Saturday morning, October 27th, the first Annual Mitchell County State Of The Child Conference will be held. The location will be Bear Creek Baptist Church, 327 Bear Creek Church Road, Bakersville. The event will begin at 8:30am with light refresh-

ments. The actual Conference will begin at 9:00am and will conclude with a lunch at Noon for all attendees.

The purpose of the Conference is to provide very important information about what children and youth in Mitchell County are being exposed to and having to deal with on a regular basis. Agencies such as the Health Department, Social Services, Board of Education, Sheriff's Department along with many others will conduct breakout sessions. A few of the topics which will be discussed include:

- . How to spot drug use and what to do if drugs are being used.
- Health Issues and Concerns what to be aware of and how to protect our children.
 - · Criminal Activities what to be aware of and how to avoid them.
 - · Education Needs
- how to help students obtain the best education possible.

During the last thirty minutes of the Conference attendees will be able to visit booths which will provide materials for further information.

Those needing to attend this Conference include parents, church youth and



children's leaders, educators, daycare workers and those interested in being a part of the solution in helping protect and care for our greatest resource: youth and children.

For more information please feel free to call 828-688-4331.

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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Celebrate Recovery

This Is Why Life Is Worth Living

By Jessica Williams Mitchell County

Living in the drug life is so hard. I know what it's like to feel so alone, scared, afraid, useless, helpless, angry and unwanted. Just wanting to run and hide from all you're feeling and thinking, Oh if I smoke just a little more or snort a little more it will all go away, but it just stays. All that you are trying to run from just becomes



your demon. At first you can just pretend the demon isn't there, but then he starts to slowly show his face. It doesn't bother you too much at first. You try to blow him off, but then the drug (demon) starts to take over. You feel like there's no way out, so you keep doing more and more drugs until this demon has taken everything you have, your kids, your family, your car, your happiness, your joy, your self-respect and your hope. After your demons have this it's time for the demons to continue to take even more until you have turned into someone you swore you would never become. You now feel like a demon yourself, so now that you are no longer a part of your family, you have a new family. This new family takes from those who really love

you and you hurt them, yet, you believe they are the ones that hurt you and don't care for you anymore. So, you just start to become angrier, have more self-pity, hatred toward everyone. Then you become your own demon, because now your demon is fighting with you and all your other demons. Everywhere you go you never feel safe, you're always thinking that there is someone out to get you and now the only thing you want is to be loved. You think it's too late or you ask yourself, "Do I even know how to love and if I try to fix things will it even matter?" Everywhere I go everyone is always looking down



on me and you feel LOST like there's no way out, like you can never be a better person, like you can never be that loving, caring mom you once were, the daughter that once would do anything for her family, the daughter that loved her family. The one who loved her church family and loved being around them. So, you sit and cry and you keep being partaking with your new demon family only to make things worse. Now you're at the point where living doesn't matter." So, what if I die, I'll be better off and so will my family." Look at what all I have done to them. I have lied, stole, cussed and cheated them in so many ways. Death then starts to look like your only way out. You and your demon family are friends again. You go as hard as you can for days, praying to God that He will take you. "But wait; what did I just say?" PRAYING TO GOD? Not to my demon. If these demons really had full control of me then why was I praying to God? He's all forgiven, all loving, all caring and I'm his child, forgiven by the blood of Jesus Christ! Why would be answer my prayer to die? He said look at these demons, I can make them go away. Just have faith and trust in me not those demons. The road ahead of you will not be easy, but just know I will never leave you. I will be right beside you and yes I have already walked in front of you. Just keep all your trust and faith in me Jessica and I promise you that we will beat this thing together. So here I am clean two years, six months and no it's not been easy at all, but I am the happiest I have been in seventeen years. All my demons are gone, and I no longer share my life with them! My God Is Good All The Time and All The Time My God is Good. I have my life, my kids, and family back and there more love now than ever before. So never give up or give in because remember your heavenly father, He's your King and you are his child. "Feeding Faith & Starving Fear".

> You're praying to the one who Created you in his image, who has Great plans for your life and most Of all the one who died for you. Yes You!

You are loved, Romans 5:8 You are chosen, I Peter 2:9

You redeemed, Ephesians 1:7 You are healed, I Peter 2:24

You have a purpose and amazing destiny, Jeremiah 29:11 And if you don't know my God and you're not saved well YOU CAN BE SAVED, Roman 10:9

Jessica attends First Baptist Church in Spruce Pine. She is a member and worker of Celebrate Recovery.





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Provision of God

By Jody Griffin

Avery and Mitchell Counties

To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven... (Ecclesiastes 3:1, KJV)

Last month as I shared about the miraculous Provision of God that made possible the One Day With God Camp here at AMCI, I implied there would be more said about the events of the Camp itself. While really there are too many experiences to count, the fact remains that the lives of everyone who prayed, who gave, who served and especially who participated were so



very blessed by the experience! And it remains true that God was faithful indeed!

A few days after our Camp, one of the fathers who had been selected to experience this with his children came into my office. I asked him what his opinion was of the opportunity he had been given by God and by so many generous volunteers and givers who had sacrificed to make the day possible. His reply struck me as something every person should consider.

He said, "Chaplain, honestly...it was probably the best day of my life." Perhaps he saw my response before it ever came. "No, really Chaplain. You see, the last time I saw my children was almost two years ago, as I was being handcuffed and taken away in a police car. I'll never forget the pain on their faces as I looked at

them crying. What this day did for me and for my kids was it gave us a chance to replace that terrible memory with a day full of wonderful memories. I'll be going home in a few years, and now they know that I'm not the same man as the one that left them that day. Now they know that their Daddy



loves them and they know that we all have a Heavenly Father who loves us and never leaves us."

Later that week I saw another one of the participant fathers who had been granted the privilege to participate with his son. This father had signed up and screened through to have this special day last year, only to have circumstances beyond his control prevent his son's attendance. Oh what a day this father and son spent together this year! Words just cannot express adequately the blessings of forgiveness that were shared father to son AND son to father. This dad said, "I think missing out on the chance last year just helped us BOTH appreciate the gift of this day THAT MUCH MORE! Last year, it probably would not have had as big of an impact on either one of us."

We spoke of the truth of these words of wisdom from the Scriptures, how God's timing is perfect and can be trusted and he said, "If I didn't know that before, I certainly know it now!"

Here are a few facts regarding the Camp that you helped make possible...

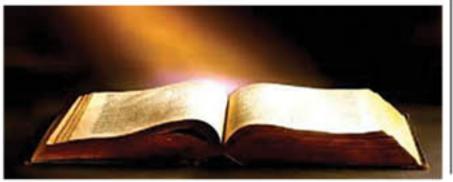
9 Fathers and 9 children indicated that they had received Jesus as their Savior at some point during the event!

- Two of the children's caregivers who enjoyed a day of care and blessing through Forgiven Ministry volunteers indicated that they had also been saved by grace in Jesus Christ during this time!
- 66 Volunteers served at the institution with the men and their children, OR at the Church where the children's caregivers were being invited to experience some of the same blessings as those being experienced at the prison.
- 3. Churches provided vans to be used in transporting the children from the "gathering place" to the institution.
- 4. Other churches were represented through the volunteers who served by caring!

As you can see, God used Forgiven Ministry to bring life changing gifts to some incarcerated fathers and their children!

And God Bless You for praying and for supporting the ministry of High Country Prison Ministry, the wonderful organization that makes it possible for me to serve as Chaplain at Avery Mitchell Correctional Institution! By God's grace, the work continues!

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



Christian Action League

The Rest of the Story: Control v. Privatization

By Rev. Mark Creech

One of America's favorite radio and television commentators, the late Paul Harvey, once told the story of a city that burned down, October 8, 1871. The city from "the late winter time, all through that long, torrid summer" had been "virtually bone-dry," said Harvey. "A forgotten line from a newspaper editorial said, 'Unless we have rain, only God knows how soon a conflagration may sweep this town."" Indeed, the predicted tragedy struck.



"The mighty roar of flames in the dead of night was most terrible to hear, said those who lived to recall. A heat so intense the very earth seemed to melt like butter. Beneath the towering crimson, pale yellow and white, men ran like ants for the river." said Harvey.

Harvey insisted that most people had never heard about the fire he was talking about, the Great Peshtigo Fire in Peshtigo, Wisconsin. With his classic ending, he revealed the startling story behind the story, saying: "For while fifteen hundred lost their lives in Peshtigo, publicity favored another fire on that very same night,

in which three hundred died. The other fire, in a city to the south, you know a great deal about. The Great Chicago Fire. And now you know the rest of the story."

The Great Peshtigo Fire demonstrates the way some events covered by the media can eclipse something similar taking place at the same time, which is bigger, but hardly mentioned.



One poignant example is North Carolina's current Opioid Crisis. No one can deny the situation is critical. The Center for Disease Control reports that 2,323 deaths resulted from opioid overdoses in 2017. The economic cost to the state is estimated to be over \$1.5 billion in 2015.

Still, as bad as this is, the Opioid Crisis pales in comparison to the statistics concerning alcohol abuse and its related harms. Alcohol abuse is the state's third leading cause of preventable death. According to the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services, there were 3,143 deaths due to alcohol in 2014. The economic cost to the state for alcohol abuse was approximately \$7 billion in 2010.

This is not to minimize the tragedy of opioid overdoses. Figuratively speaking, the Opioid Crisis is a fire in itself burning out of control. One might say it's the Chicago Fire. The Peshtigo Fire, however, the much larger one, represents the state's problems with alcohol.

The media in North Carolina has extensively covered the opioid epidemic, calling on state officials to help end the suffering. However, when the state's auditor made allegations of mismanagement by the Alcoholic Beverage Control agency, certain media outlets immediately capitalized on that news to make a pitch for privatization, and, thereby marginalized miseries of mammoth proportions related to excessive drinking. Paramount in their thinking were lesser issues of purported

government inefficiencies, free markets, cheaper liquor, and more accessibility to strong booze – not the well-being of their fellow citizens.

These media outlets lifted-up Rep. Chuck Mc-Grady (R-Henderson) to hero status. They hailed him for his promise to introduce legislation that would supplant what they contend is an antiquated approach to alcohol sales. I've carefully considered these arguments before; they're snake oil. Sadly, if proponents are confronted with the incontrovertible scientific data that demonstrates a privatized system exacerbates alcohol-related harms as compared to North Carolina's current



system, they seemingly respond with the same indifference as Cain, who asked concerning his brother, "Am I my brother's keeper?" (Gen. 4:9).

Admittedly, attitudes about drinking have changed through the years. Something that hasn't changed, except to worsen, are alcohol-related problems. What hasn't changed is the need for a system that can effectively balance the public's desire to have access to liquor, while also driving down dangerous consumption rates. Government most definitely has an interest and responsibility in that endeavor.

When a full and robust debate ensues on the question of which is better, a privatized system of alcohol sales or the state's current control system, I am confident North Carolinians will see that our state's ABC is superior in every way.

And that will be the rest of the story.

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

Neither say they in their heart, Let us now fear the LORD our God, that giveth rain, both the former and the latter, in his season: he reserveth unto us the appointed weeks of the harvest. Jeremiah 5:24

Life Lessons

By Doug Harrell

As I write this I just happen to be celebrating my 75th birthday and it is a little sobering to say the least. None of us know the number of days that we will live or what our struggles will be along the road of life, we do not have a crystal ball that shows the future and we are probably lucky that we do not. Having faith and patience along the way is critical if we are to face the day with grace and peace in our hearts,



as the years pass I understand that more and more. We really live in a world of instant gratification today, point and click and it is done. God does not work like this and his timetable is often much different from ours. Learning to wait upon his timetable is one of the hardest lessons we learn, if we ever truly learn it, in life. "But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint." Isaiah 40:31 KJV

Learning to wait takes a degree of faith and patience that many of us, myself definitely included, find lacking at times. I have found through the trials and struggles of life that delving into the Word is the only true way to develop the faith we need. "So, then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." Romans 10:17 KJV It takes a commitment on our part to spend time each

day to have some message time between ourselves and God. Quiet time that is not interrupted with all the pressures of the world around us. I can assure you that if you are fortunate to live long enough, you will have challenges, maybe mental, maybe physical or maybe both, we don't know but they will come. Being able to face the day with certainty only comes with the true understanding that we are children of the King and that we are his handiwork. Without this faith, life is nothing but a dead end road that ends in a dust heap. "Now faith is



the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." Hebrews 11:1
KIV

Learning to face daily challenges with joy in our hearts is key to a happy and fulfilled life. So many people lose that joy to the circumstances that come their way and I don't want to sound glib about it, but we pretty much make the decision about our attitude ourselves. We can choose to accentuate the negative or the positive, there will always be an ample supply of each to go around. We need to always remember the little song, "eliminate the negative, accentuate the positive and don't mess with mister in-between". We cannot control the cards that we are dealt in life, but we can control how we play the deck and this needs to always be on our minds. I have found that when I start having a pity party, if I take the time to just look around, I have a world full of things to be thankful for and I would suggest that that would be true for most of us. "Know ye that the Lord he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture. Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name." Psalms 100:3-4 KJV

In life, a large percentage of our happiness will depend on our attitude, work on controlling what you can, accept what you can't and give thanks to the Lord daily for the many blessings that come your way each and every day.

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



Marlene's Meditations

What Does a Cabasa and Hebrews 11:32-33 Have in Common?

By Marlene Houk Burke County

Hebrews 11:32-33 And what shall I more say? for the time would fail me to tell of Gedeon, and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephthae; of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets: Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions.



Has your attention ever been completely caught by something? My mouth drops open, hanging in mid-air. My body freezes, not moving a muscle. And my brain brings thoughts to a laser point.

That happened to me recently with this discovery. I had known the person for 31 years who showed this to me, and it was my daughter. But she never mentioned it. Do you know the definition of a cabasa and can you recognize it? Is it the ancient section of a North African city, a winter melon, or a musical instrument?

This little story reminds me of the Bible's ability to capture our complete attention with its rich and colorful content. Our familiarity with the story blinds us to the fact that we sometimes are unaware of its depth and intricate nature.

For years I thought I knew Psalm 23, the happy place for Christians, the retreat for weary soldiers in God's army, and the promise of eternal life. But when my husband's sermon spoke of a journey, it dawned on me that this is a new way to focus on perhaps the most famous Psalm of all. He described the ruts in a journey, the different kinds of travels, and the types of



scenery along the way. Mesmerized, I drank it all in, realizing that my earthly life was, indeed, a planned-by-God adventure filled with lavish spiritual jewels and vibrant experiences of faith.

The Bible is filled to the brim with astonishing insights into human nature. The Word flows through the pages, intricately weaving the 66 books into one magnificent glorious tapestry that reveals Jesus, a loving Savior. And the ancient pages spring to life within our daily walk with the Lord.

As we discover its messages, the Bible becomes a powerful tool, able to crush our enemy much better than we could ever hope. And yet, soothing verses reach down into the darkness and gently rescue us from the pit of despair and hopelessness. Even better, the stunning heights to which it lifts us reveals the Son shining brightly above our storms. But, more than that, when we read, study, and meditate on the unknown tucked within the 788,280 words, the Lord honors His Word, and we are enriched, made wiser, and prepared for life.

Read the Bible constantly. Compare Scripture with Scripture. Look through many lenses until you find your own nuggets of golden truth. Study your career in the chapters. Read about people with the same personality, gifts, and skills as yourself. Search verses for patterns and the relationships between people. Plumb the extent of unique and unusual stories that are filled with majesty and wisdom. You will never be the same!

Like learning about the cabasa did for me, let the Bible bring you to a sharp focus of concentrated study. Marvel at the Author and His boundless desire to share Himself in a deep and satisfying relationship with you. Allow the wonder of His love to wrap you in soft velvety blankets of peace and anticipate His challenges to bring brisk courage to your life.

What is a cabasa? Here is the answer:

- Casaba: a winter melon of a variety with a wrinkled yellow rind and sweet flesh
- Casbah: the area surrounding a North African citadel, typically in the old part of a city.
- Cabasa: a modern-day Latin percussion musical instrument invented in the 1950s. The ones today look like a metal serrated cannister surrounded by metal beads on a necklace. It has a handle and the player shakes it, rubs the metal beads against the serrated part with the hand and uses combinations of these movements to create an unusual rhythm. To hear how it sounds, go to www.MarleneHouk. com

Be totally immersed in the Bible as I was with the cabasa. His Word can satisfy your soul and absorb your attention for life!

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







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nity members with substance use disorders and those in recovery."

Addiction must be treated as a chronic disease which is defined by Dr. Newberry as one "which cannot be prevented by vaccines or cured by medication, nor do they just disappear." (Whose quote is this?) It's up to us to come together as a community to truly address substance use disorder. Together, we can prevent substance use/abuse and we can help those struggling with addiction move to a better tomorrow!

Not a resident of Mitchell or Yancey Counties? Your county also has a substance use/abuse coalition doing similar work where your voice is needed! Find yours online at: https://www.ncparentresourcecenter.org/resources/nc-coalitions/ For more information:

- Mitchell Yancey Substance Abuse Task Force, www.pathwnc.org or contact the Program Coordinator Jeff Spargo at jeff@pathwnc.org 828-682-7899
- Celebrate Recovery, Bear Creek Baptist Church, http://www.bearcreekbaptist.com/, or contact Josh Wise 828-385-0061
- Higgins United Methodist Church, Burnsville, http://www.higgins-umc.com/, or call Peirce Bingham at 828-208-0299
- Appalachian Youth to Youth, please contact Terri Leiser at terri@pathwnc.org or 303-547-7368
- Mountain Community Health Partnership Post Overdose Support Team, contact Amy Earnheart 828-688-6621
- HOPE, Spruce Pine First Baptist Church, https://www.sprucepinefbc.com/, contact Rocky Branch, 828-765-9411

Jeff Spargo is the Director of the Mitchell / Yancey Drug Abuse Task Force.

Toe River Arts

Sam Maren

By Kate Groff Yancey County

Toe River Arts instructor and musician, Sam Maren held two concerts this past week to introduce 7th and 8th grade students at both East Yancey and Cane River middle schools to Traditional Arts Program for Students (TAPS) classes. For almost a decade, TAPS has been offered in the middle schools in both counties. Participants



learn about the region's musical heritage while learning how to play the guitar. Classes are free as are the loaned instruments that kids take home during the school year to practice.

And as part of the program, the instructors and some students will take the stage at the 33rd Annual Music in the Mountains Folk Festival on September 22 in the Town Center. For more information about TAPS, the Music Festival, or Toe River Arts, please call 828-682-7215 or visit the website, toeriverarts.org.



Cane River



East Yancey

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

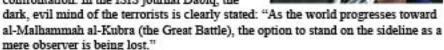
Billy Graham Evangelistic Association

What Franklin Graham Wants Followers of Islam to Know

By Franklin Graham

At the core of the Islamic State doctrine is the belief that their adherents are waging warfare against unbelievers—infidels—in order to usher in an apocalyptic end-time battle in which Islam will finally and ultimately triumph.

Many Muslims believe that the Syrian town of Dabiq—near Aleppo—is the location predicted by the prophet Muhammad for this confrontation. In the ISIS journal Dabiq, the



Of course, the Bible speaks of a great conflict at the end of the age that will be waged at a place called Armageddon. The location is often interpreted as the mountain of Megiddo, located on the north side of the plain of Jezreel and frequently identified in the Old Testament as a military stronghold.

Described by the Apostle John as the "battle on the great day of God the Almighty" (Revelation 16:14), it will be the Lord Jesus Christ who returns in glory to vanquish every foe: Satan, his demonic legions, and all who are allied with the prince of darkness and have refused to bow their knee to the Savior. Here's the true, biblical apocalyptic vision:

"I saw heaven standing open and there before me was a white horse, whose rider is called Faithful and True. With justice, he judges and wages war. His eyes are like blazing fire, and on his head are many crowns. He has a name written on him that no one knows but he himself. He is dressed in a robe dipped in blood, and his name is the Word of God. ... He treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God Almighty. On his robe and on his thigh he has this name written: King of kings and Lord of lords" (Revelation 19:11-16).

The deluded, false theology of Islam motivates and compels radical Islamic terrorists to murder, rape, pillage, plunder, and wreak havoc and destruction in the name of their god.

Led on by the destroyer—the devil himself—they blindly march on in their fateful journey to ultimate doom and destruction in the lake of fire where, along with the devil and all who reject Christ, they will be eternally punished for their unbelief and rebellion.

This is why I want the followers of Islam to know there is a God who loves

them, cares for them and sent His Son to die for them on the cross for the forgiveness of their sins.

They don't have to die in a holy war or jihad to please God. They don't have to strap bombs to their chests to enter into Heaven. All they need to do is repent of their sins



and place their faith in the Risen Christ, and they can receive the gift of everlasting life.

The Apostle Paul was a man bent on the destruction of the church, eager to persecute believers wherever they lived. He even participated in the death of the first martyr of the early church, Stephen. But God arrested him on the road to Damascus, saved him, and he became the foremost apostle for the sake of the Gospel.

Writing to his young protégé years later, Paul vividly described that experience: "Even though I was once a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent man, I was shown mercy because I acted in ignorance and unbelief" (1 Timothy 1:13). He even called himself the worst or chief of sinners (1 Timothy 1:16).

The only cure for corrupt ideologies and false religions is a personal encounter with the living God, who "wants all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth" (1 Timothy 2:4). Only God can transform a murderous terrorist into a servant who is willing to die for the sake of His Name.

In the end, the one universal grievance that must be addressed by every person of every age is our own sin and rebellion against God. The only solution is a transformed heart. ©2015 BGEA

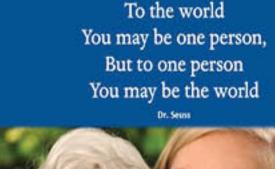
Scripture quotations are taken from The Holy Bible, New International Version.

Everyone needs a transformed heart. Find out how you can be changed today.

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



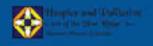






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Gardner-Webb College

Baseball Hats and Wisdom

By Tracy Jessup

"At Gibeon the Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream by night; and God said, 'Ask what I should give you.' And Solomon said, ... 'Give your servant therefore an understanding mind to govern your people, able to discern between good and evil; for who can govern this your great people?"" --- 1 Kings 3:5-6a, 9



In April of 2015, I ran in a one-mile run/walk event on campus honoring the memory of Mike Roebuck, long-time assistant athletic director for academic services at Gardner-Webb University. It was a sunny day and I had neglected to bring a hat from home. Since I am in an ongoing combat with actinic keratosis (AK) caused by damage from exposure to UV rays, I knew it was in my best interest to find a baseball hat.

Those who know me well know that I am very frugal (some might say cheap, but I prefer frugal). I have plenty of hats at home, and I was not about to go the GWU campus shop and purchase another hat. So, I called my dear friend and colleague, Rusty Stroupe. I figured that if anyone could get me a baseball hat, it would be the head coach of the GWU baseball team.

Rusty told me that he was sure he could find something that would work. As I

walked into his office, he apologized for not having a new hat, but kindly offered one of his old hats and said that I could keep it. I was thrilled! Not only would my head be protected, but I also got a free hat!

As I looked at the hat before placing it on my head, I noticed that on the underside of the bill Rusty had written his uniform number (7) and the biblical reference, 1 Kings 3:9. I asked Rusty about it, and he told me that it was his prayer as a husband, father, and coach. Rusty realized that in his own strength and wisdom, he



was incapable of providing the leadership needed for his family, assistant coaches, and student-athletes. Only God could provide the understanding and discernment to lead the people entrusted to his care.

Solomon is presented in 1 Kings 3 as someone who prefers relationships over things. The first relationship mentioned is with the Lord. "Solomon loved the Lord, walking in the statutes of his father David..." and he trusted in God's "great and steadfast love" (vv. 3, 6). A second relationship important to Solomon was the people over whom he ruled as king. Both relationships seem to inform the request Solomon makes of God.

Relationships make Gardner-Webb University special. When I think about Gardner-Webb, I think about the relationships that are nurtured between students, faculty, staff and administrators. Our brand pillars (Christian community, partners, and student-centered) all point to the emphasis we place on relationships. At the heart of this emphasis is our mutual desire to love God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength and to love our neighbor as ourselves.

As a new academic year begins and we strive to be true to our purpose to advance the Kingdom of God through Christian higher education, we recognize that we are incapable of accomplishing this purpose on our own. We acknowledge the importance of our relationships with God and with one another. We give thanks for God's great and steadfast love demonstrated in our lives both individually and corporately. And we pray that God will give us the ability to listen to one another and to discern what is right and good.

Prayer: Lord, give us a God-listening heart so we can lead your people well, discerning the difference between good and evil. For who on their own is capable of leading your glorious people? (adapted from The Message, 1 Kings 3:9)

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.

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Mine Creek Baptist Church

"I Have Found My Sheep Which Was Lost!"

By Preacher Chris Rathbone Mitchell County

Several years ago my family decided to travel to the Linville Falls picnic area for an evening of grilling out and hiking to the overlooks to see the falls. My boys loved going to places where they can run, jump, and explore the woods. The evening had been wet with a strong storm which had passed through that afternoon but was gradually clearing. We were able to grill our hot dogs and enjoy our evening



together in spite of rain dripping off of the trees. The weather cleared and we left the picnic area and traveled across the Blue Ridge Parkway to the visitors' center to park and then began walking the trail to the overlooks.

There were only a couple of other vehicles in the parking lot. I guess the earlier rain had kept most people away that evening. There was a small group of people that walked passed us as we were getting ready to start across the bridge and continue out the trail. We had only been walking for a minute or two when we heard someone franticly calling out a name. Being parents, I and Michelle both knew by the way the woman was screaming out the name what was going on. A mother had been separated from her child and was searching desperately for him. We immediately turned back and started toward the voice and saw her running across the bridge toward us.

She told us that she thought the boy had gone to the restroom and had been waiting for him but he never came out. You can imagine what must have been going through her mind. Here was a ten year old boy in the woods by himself

close to a river and high cliffs all around, not to mention thinking that there could have been someone who took him. As a parent, I could tell by the look on her face with the tears flowing down her cheeks how distraught and helpless she felt. I asked the boy's name, age, and a descrip-



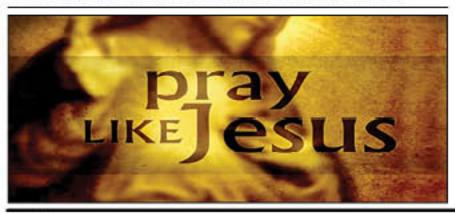
tion of what he was wearing. I told her to go back where he was supposed to be and we would search along the trail. While we were searching, we could hear the mother's voice screaming and calling out in anguish the boy's name, hoping and praying for a response. I whispered a prayer, "Lord, please help us find this boy!"

We walked out the trail, keeping my own boys close, and I began to call out the child's name. Thankfully, in just a few minutes, I saw a young boy peering around a bush beside the trail that matched the description the mother had given. Though I knew his name, he was a little reluctant to respond to a stranger's voice. I introduced myself and my family and told him his mom was searching for him. A look of relief came across his face. As we came across the top of a hill where I thought his mom could hear me, I cried out loudly, "We found him!" She immediately came running and the boy ran to his mom and what a wonderful reunion we witnessed. It was such a blessing to see them both together, both with tears flowing down their faces, so relieved to be together. My wife was holding back tears and I was holding back from shouting! The boy had simply taken the wrong trail.

Through this experience, the Lord reminded me of a parable that He gave in the scriptures. In Luke 15:1-7, Jesus spoke of a how that if anyone had a hundred sheep and one is lost, that man would leave the 99 and search in the wilderness until he finds the lost sheep. When he finds that lost sheep, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing. When he returns home, he even calls his neighbors together and says, "Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost". Jesus teaches in verse 7, "I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance."

Friend, if you are lost without Jesus, if you are on the wrong trail in life, I want you to know that He is searching for you. Unlike that child who was reluctant to respond to a stranger's voice, when you hear Jesus calling, you will immediately recognize Him. My plea is that you will respond to Jesus, repent of your sin, place your faith in what He has done on the cross, and follow Him as a sheep follows a shepherd. He is waiting for you to answer Him back in faith so that there will be joy in heaven when that announcement is made, "Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost!"

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







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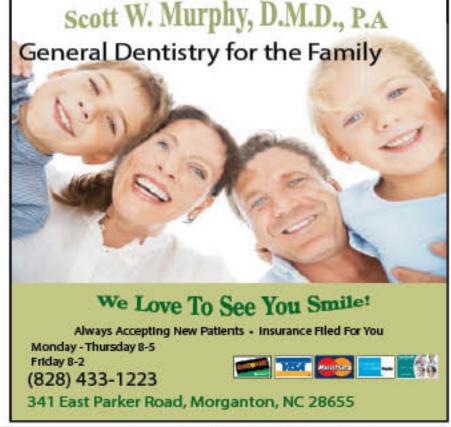
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-Inquire in Person-

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Crossword Solution

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Sudoku Solution

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Bible Study Fellowship International

Studies Beginning for Fall

By Angie Duncan

Mitchell and Yancey Counties

All Ladies and Men Are Invited to BSF! Join over 70 ladies or 30 men from various churches and counties who come together once a week locally to study the Bible, the inspired Word of God. In this year's study, entitled "People of the Promised Land", men, ladies and children will hear and learn factual and applicable information from the lives



of people from the books of the Bible including those from Joshua to Solomon. Weekly classes begin on Thursday, September 13th in 3 local settings: Thursdays in Spruce Pine from 10-11:30 AM at first Baptist Church; 6-7:30PM at Grassy Creek Baptist Church; and on Tuesdays in Burnsville 6:55PM-8:25 at Higgins Methodist Church. However, Bible Study Fellowship International or "BSF" is a multi or nondenominational international organization based in San Antonio with Bible studies in over 200 countries around the world, which has an effective method of studying the Bible in small groups. Participants prepare an assigned portion of Scripture to discuss in small groups for 40 minutes, then the groups come together for a time of worship where they hear a trained Teaching Leader give a live 30 minute lecture or a recorded lecture on the same Scripture just discussed in the small group. The "Satellite" classes in smaller communities most often have a recorded lecture, but our Teaching Leaders from Asheville visit the classes and give live lectures on occasion. There are also on-line classes available to anyone. You may go on-line to www. bsfinternational. org to check it out. Many churches of various denominations open their doors to these weekly classes and welcome BSF groups. BSF participants are very appreciative of hospitality extended by local churches so that these Bible classes may be made available. During the school year BSF has breaks closely aligned to the time of school schedules; i.e. Fall Break, Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Spring/Easter, etc. There are also evening Men's classes and local men meet in Burnsville on Tuesday evenings at 6:55 at Higgins Methodist Church. Come to the first class to sign up; Thursday for ladies, Tuesday evening for men, or attend as soon as you can so as not to miss out on any of this wonderful opportunity to learn more about real people who lived on this earth and how they related to God in their daily lives. For further information re: Day Women's BSF contact Angie Duncan at daleandangieduncan@gmail.com or 828-467-1091, Evening Women contact Angie Woody at 828-467-3830, or for the Men's Evening Class in Burnsville contact John Bingham at 828-208-0299 or go to Higgins Methodist Church in Burnsville on Tuesday evenings at 6:55 starting Sept. 11th. Please join us in praying for 4 Children's' Leaders to be called from those ladies enrolled in BSF Classes who will be willing to train so that we may begin a wonderful Children's Program of studying the Bible at a child's level through songs, activities, and stories in Spruce Pine Day Women's BSF class where we have 6 groups of ladies meeting in the daytime. BSF does weekly training for leaders in Asheville at the base classes. Women Leaders train on Tuesday mornings and men leaders train on Monday evenings. All are welcome!

Ecclesiastes Chapter 3

1 To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven:

2 A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted;

that writen is planted;

3 A time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up;

4 A time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance;

5 A time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing;

6 A time to get, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to cast away;

7 A time to rend, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;

8 A time to love, and a time to hate; a time of war, and a time of peace.

9 What profit hath he that worketh in that wherein he laboureth?

10 I have seen the travail, which God hath given to the sons of men to be exercised in it.

11 He hath made every thing beautiful in his time: also he hath set the world in their heart, so that no man can find out the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end.

12 I know that there is no good in them, but for a man to rejoice, and to do good in his life.

13 And also that every man should eat and drink, and enjoy the good of all his labour, it is the gift of God.

14 I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever: nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it: and God doeth it, that men should fear before

15 That which hath been is now; and that which is to be hath already been; and God requireth that which is past.

16 And moreover I saw under the sun the place of judgment, that wickedness was there; and the place of righteousness, that iniquity was there.

17 I said in mine heart, God shall judge the righteous and the wicked: for there

is a time there for every purpose and for every work.

18 I said in mine heart concerning the estate of the sons of men, that God might

manifest them, and that they might see that they themselves are beasts.

19 For that which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts; even one thing befalleth them: as the one dieth, so dieth the other; yea, they have all one breath;

so that a man hath no preeminence above a beast: for all is vanity. 20 All go unto one place; all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again.

21 Who knoweth the spirit of man that goeth upward, and the spirit of the beast that goeth downward to the earth?

22 Wherefore I perceive that there is nothing better, than that a man should rejoice in his own works; for that is his portion: for who shall bring him to see what shall be after him?

Clint's Chronicles on the Funny Farm

The Rest of the Story Doug Harrell

Clint's first day on the farm! It does not seem possible that that day was almost nine years ago, how time flies. The story is still as good as it was the day he wrote it and even funnier than it was watching it unfold before my eyes! The old Jeep is still on the farm, but I have not started it in a couple of years. No doubt it would still run, but the bed probably would fall off for sure this time around. I guess it will just have to stay in retirement to remind me of days of joy, glee and misery on the farm during Clint's time there.

Funny Farm A Cornucopia of Catastrophes A Hodge Podge of Hilarity A Diary of Dangers

I now know that you don't care how I title these little missives, your interest runs no deeper than to guffaw at my misdeeds and near-misses with meltdown. Wherever I go people approach, stare at me, shake their heads, smile and say..."Can't wait to hear what you did next!" Just last week a lady "liked" one of my Facebook posts and asked, "Aren't



you the 'crazy farmer' from the Funny Farm?" Well yes ma'am, I am one and the

Day 1 On The Farm

It was late March, 2010, when I arrived at Harrell Hill Farms. I hailed from the Big City of Hendersonville, NC, a mere 1 1/2 hours away but it might as well be another planet. Imagining myself a "country boy" all my life, try to picture my surprise when I truly arrived in the real country; thinking I was from "the mountains" in Hendersonville, consider my shock as my eyes beheld the hills of Yancey and Mitchell County. Holy smokes!

I figured my buddy Doug Harrell would have mercy on my first-ever Farmer Clint day. You know, maybe I could carry a stick of firewood, possibly feed the cows, do whatever it is that greenhorns do when they first set out to be farm hands. But nooooooooooooooooooooooo, not Doug...no mercy had he!

The first clue that life was about to change for City Slicker Clint was hearing Doug bellow up the stairs..."Pollard, are you up? We're burning daylight!" Mind you, I've always been an early to bed, early to rise sort of fellow...I'm talking in the rack by 10:00 pm and up at 6:00 am; seems like a civilized schedule, don't you think? The notion of arising at 4:30 am was never a part of my thinking...

I must confess that the serenity of an awakening farm is something very special...the unfiltered sunlight peering over the mountains, critters and their morning sounds, the total lack of traffic noise and city sounds, 'twas somewhat heavenly. Plus, Doug prepared buckwheat pancakes with homemade syrup...oh yeah, and I had my first-ever taste of pure sorghum molasses, man alive that was fine stuff! Although partially asleep I still liked the way my new life was develop-

Unsafe At Any Speed

In previous tales I made mention of "Blackie", my assigned mode of transportation and a vehicle I came to honor and adore. It is an ancient, let's say 1965 model Jeep truck (I'm not sure that is correct but I am the one telling the story!) Anyway, Doug escorted me into the frigid morning air and introduced me to the ugliest, scariest, most decrepit looking vehicle you can imagine. Admiring my new ride I asked, "What am I supposed to do with that?"



My Jeep "Blackie" looks pretty snazzy in

With that slight, mischievous, crooked grin I've come to love, Doug explained that this would be my farm truck for the day. I made every effort to be impressed. and grateful, trying not to barf.

There were a few things I should know about "Blackie"... first, never turn the ignition totally off when stopped – it freezes the switch preventing you from being able to start the vehicle again; the brakes were a bit dicey, so it was wise to keep a hand on the emergency brake; the door handle on the driver's side tends to 'want to fall off' (how does an inanimate object 'want to do something'???) leaving you trapped like a rat inside; the window on the passenger side needs to be left rolled up....OOOPS, too late! (If you begin rolling it down, like I did, it falls inside the door and you need the jaws of life to retrieve it); ya gotta put the sucker in 1st gear when parked, otherwise it has a tendency to roll downhill since the emergency brake kinda sorta doesn't work; notice that the truck bed is being held intact with baling wire so don't make sharp turns; blah blah blah! Keep in mind, I arrived at this Funny Farm in my 2004 F150 Ford truck as my "ride of choice"... Doug would later chastise me for driving a "city truck".

Fat Farmer "Wannabe" Fetches Fertilizer

My assigned task was to "side-dress" Christmas trees with fertilizer...using a foreign object which Doug called a backpack (more on that in a moment). I drove the short distance from the farmhouse to the barn on Harrell Hill Road to fetch

a gazillion bags of fertilizer. Remember, if you can, that I was not the svelte, fit Farmer Clint you know today...no, I was a rotund 300+ lbs. of pure blubber. Well, by the time I finished loading TONS of fertilizer on this death-trap of a Jeep I felt as though I had done a week's work - and it was only 6:30 am.

Slip Sliding Away

I was dispatched to the home of Larry Harrell, Doug's brother, HIGH on a hill off Hwy 226. When I saw the driveway I was reminded of the Tower of Babel, you remember - men trying to build a tower to heaven? This doggone driveway disappeared into the clouds...the steepest climb I could imagine, not forgetting that I was in Blackie! I motored up the first leg of this death driveway finally arriving at the top. Knowing that I would



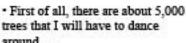
The GLANT HOLE in "Blackie's" floorboard could come in handy if the doors wouldn't open and the windows were stuck!

have to carry the 400 gazillion pounds of fertilizer bags I decided to drive the Jeep into the Christmas tree patch...bad idea!

FIRST LESSON for Farmer Clint...a 50 year old Jeep with questionable brakes, heading downhill on wet grass/weeds, is likely to slither right off the edge of the cliff...as I maneuvered this bucket of bolts, or better said as it maneuvered me, my life flashed before me... I was sliding uncontrollably toward the precipice on grass slick as glass, soon I would be toast...and this my very first day! When what to my wondering eyes should appear but a tiny dogwood tree protruding from the cliff's edge...putting Blackie into a power-slide, okay so it put its own self into a power slide, the Jeep came to rest precariously on the very lip of the cliff, held in place by the twig. I quickly dismounted, dropping the erratic door handle in the grass (more on that later), and knelt in the wet grass, happy to be alive. Immediately I phoned a friend in Hendersonville, recounting my first hours on the farm, and warned him that he may need to rescue me from this madness!

Flubber On The Mountain

I was encouraged by the way Doug described the backpack thingy..."You don't have to carry the bags of fertilizer; you just pour them into the backpack and use this little hose to drop the pellets around each tree." Yeah, yadda yadda yadda...



around... Second, the 5,000 trees are

planted on the side of a MOUNTAIN...a BIGGG MOUNTAIN...

Third, I am FAT, VERY FAT, and I have to walk my chubby self sideways on this mountain...

moment!

Fourth, when you dump the fertilizer into the little backpack thingy it weighs

 Fifth, when you add 60 lbs to the backpack thingy, and then add that to 300+ lb. Farmer Clint...you now have 350-360 lbs. of Farmer Clint walking sideways on a HUGE MOUNTAIN...

 Sixth, did I tell you that my right ankle is fused? Well it is...that means it is more like a hockey stick than an ankle, it does not bend and has no flex...

 Seventh, when a FAT man with a fused ankle tries to walk sideways on wet grass on a BIG MOUNTAIN and his foot doesn't bend he is very prone to FALL

 Eighth, when a FAT man – with a fused ankle – carrying 350lbs falls down the BIG MOUNTAIN, he doesn't just fall, he ROLLS a long way...

 Ninth, it is very hard to get back up when a FAT man is lying on wet grass, on the side of a BIG MOUNTAIN, with 350-360 lbs. attached!

But get up I did! Over and over and over again, I fell my chubby cherubic self down that BIG MOUNTAIN, spilling fertilizer as I barrel rolled down the hillside...but I always arose and climbed back to my last position.

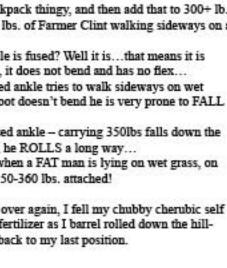
As the sun set behind the beautiful mountains of Mitchell County I heard the roar of a diesel approaching my Christmas tree patch...at last I was to be rescued...it was Doug on the Kioti @ tractor. That ever present smile on his handsome mug, he joined me alongside Blackie, hooked a BIG chain to it and pulled me to safety. Back at the barn, arm in arm, Doug asked, "Well, Pollard, how was your first day?" Not to be outdone by this Paul Bunyan of

Harrell Hill, I replied, "It was great Doug. Can't wait for tomorrow!" Praise the Lord, for the very first time - BUT NOT THE

LAST - I had cheated death on the Funny Farm!

Farmer Clint

Still humbled in the hills,



Oops, "Blackie's" bed could come off at any

Mitchell County's



State Of The Child Conference 2018

"Partnering Together For The Sake Of Our Children"

Date: Saturday, October 27th Time: 9:00am to Noon

Location: Bear Creek Baptist Church 327 Bear Creek Church Road, Bakersville

Mountain Community Health Partnership

Employees Receive Scholarship

By Amber Dillinger Mitchell and Yancey Counties

Mountain Community Health Partnership (MCHP) is proud to announce that two of our staff members are the recipients of the Bernstein Scholarship. Awarded annually, these scholarships help to relieve some of the financial burden on health center employees by helping to pay for both the clinical education of rural clinic staff members



and the college education of their dependent in any area of interest. Scholarship recipients are selected by the Jim Bernstein Health Leadership Committee, a committee made up of members of Foundation's Board of Directors and friends and family of Jim Bernstein. Since its inception in 2006, more than \$75,000 has been awarded among 52 scholars representing 9 health centers.

Casey Griggs, CMA is the Quality Improvement Manager for MCHP and she has been working at the Celo Health Center for 5 years. Casey attends ETSU and is working towards a Bachelor of Science. Her long term goal is to become a Physician's Assistant. Casey said, "I am honored to be one of the recipients of the Jim and Sue Bernstein Scholarship. This scholarship will help pay for my tuition

as I pursue a Bachelor of Science at East Tennessee State University."

Santana Wright, CMA is the Site Manager for our Celo Location. She has been working at Celo Health Center for 6 years. She is working toward her Associates in Business at Mayland Community College and plans to continue for a Bachelors in Health Care Management. Santana says that "she is honored to be one



of the recipients for the Bernstein Scholarship for 2018!"

Mountain Community Health Partnership is a collaboration of 3 local health centers (Bakersville Community Health Center, Celo Health Center, and Spruce Pine Health Center.) As a Federally Qualified Health Center, our goal is to provide high quality care to Mitchell, Yancey, and surrounding counties. For more information, or to learn more about our health center please contact: Amber Dillinger, Outreach Manager 828-688-6621 adillinger@mchp.care

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



-Go to Church

Women's Conference

6th Annual Women Seeking God Freedom Retreat

By Shelly Grindstaff Mitchell County

October 5th-6th at High Pastures Retreat Center

"Inviting ladies of all ages, to join us for our 6th annual Freedom Retreat at High Pastures Retreat Center in Burnsville, NC on October 5th-6th. Our theme this year is "Women in Waiting." Have you found yourself in a

season of waiting on God? Waiting on His timing, His will, His direction. Waiting on answers to prayers that never seem to come? Or maybe the answer that comes is not what you are waiting for. What does God want us to do as His daughters in waiting? Join us for a time of worship, fellowship and renewed strength from testimonies of women who are learning to wait on God.

You will hear testimonies from local women Ashley Clark, Haley Johnson, Jamie Pate and Shelley Grindstaff. Worship will be led by Wendy Ellis. This is a non-denominational event lead by Shelley Grindstaff. She has a heart to see the body of Christ joined together in unity through worship and broken women find the freedom that is only found in Jesus Christ and the Truth of His Word.

It begins at 5:30 on Friday October 5th with dinner at High Pastures followed

by worship, speaker and testimonies from 6:45-9. Saturday it begins at 8 am with breakfast followed by worship and speakers from 9am -2pm with lunch being served at 12. Cost is \$60 for retreat, room and 3 meals. Staying is encouraged to have focused time with the Lord, away from distractions but there is option of conference only for \$10 if you can not stay for whole conference. Meals can be purchased separately as well. Registration and deposit for room and meals are needed by Sept. 21st. Space is limited. Registrations can be picked up and dropped off at



Higgins UMC church office in Burnsville, The Bridge Church in Spruce Pine or contact Shelley Grindstaff @ ssgrindstaff70@gmail.com or Haley Johnson at 828 284-8289. Also, you can follow us at Women Seeking God on facebook and print

are fearning to wait on God.

Shelley has been serving in ministry for 25 years. She has led women's ministry called Mary Ministries for 16 years at the various churches she has served at but has been in a waiting season herself the past 2 years. She felt led by the Spirit to begin the Freedom retreat 7 years ago to bring women together for encouragement and to see captives set free. She currently attends The Bridge Church in Spruce Pine. She also works as a nurse in the Yancey Student Health Centers.

Berry Chapel Baptist Church

Facing, Crisis, Battling Giants By Pastor Steve Williams

Mitchell County

The day of small problems seem to be a thing of the past. It's seems that every problem we find ourselves up against

becomes a Giant. And most people today would tell you unless they receive a miracle, the problem they are up against is going to defeat them. Are you in need of a Miracle? Most people would respond with a YES. And to some of you that are read-

ing this article a miracle may be your only hope, and there is nothing wrong asking for a miracle. But before we should ever ask God for a miracle we must be sure our lives illustrate a life of righteousness, and holiness that would invite the power of God into our situation. God will perform miracles when they meet His purpose, but more regularly we will see miracles when we have met His conditions. We should not ask God to do more for us in a time of crisis if we are presently doing less than He has asked of us in our daily walk with Him.

We all know this story of David battling Goliath. And we also know anything less than a miracle would not help David in this situation. And what God did in David's life is still considered one of the greatest miracles in history. The stones David picked up that

day and put in his pouch did not appear to be enough to overcome his giant, but God has proven many times that he can take the smallest things and use them to perform the greatest miracles. David only had a sling and he, with God directing the stone, was able to defeat Goliath. the giant. Samson picked up the jawbone of an ass and was able to kill a 1000 Philistines with it. Moses only had a rod, but God used Moses and his rod to do many miracles. In Joshua 24:12 God used homets to drive out the Amorites who were going to try to defeat the children of Israel. All these miracles remind me of an old song:



"Little Is Much When God Is In It." Chorus: Little is much when God is in it, Labor not for wealth or fame; There's a crown, and you can win it, If you go in Jesus' name.

This just proves God can use whatever we have, no matter how small, to defeat our enemies providing we have the right heart. Little Faith Moves Mountains. The Bible says in Matthew 17:20 And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you. So, whenever you are going up against something bigger then you don't worry, God can take care of you and your problem. So, remember sometimes "God puts Goliath's in our lives to bring out the David in us" N/A.

Words of Wisdom:

- Each life is made up of mistakes and learning, waiting and growing, practicing patience and being persistent. Billy Graham
- Courage is contagious. When a brave man takes a stand, the spines of others are often. stiffened. Billy Graham
- The greatest legacy one can pass on to one's children and grandchildren is not money or other material things accumulated in one's life, but rather a legacy of character and faith, Billy Graham
- When wealth is lost, nothing is lost; when health is lost, something is lost; when character is lost, all is lost. Billy Graham
- Something To Think About:
- What do Christians and airplanes have in common? If they back up they both will fall.

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



SafePlace

Walk A Mile In Her Shoes is Baaaaack!

By Beth Davis Mitchell County

Yes, folks, Walk a Mile In Her Shoes for Mitchell County SafePlace is back this year......Saturday, October 6 at 10:00 on Locust (Lower) Street at Central Park. Mitchell County's finest and fiercest men will take to the streets in their fabulous red high-heeled pumps to raise money and awareness in our fight to combat Domestic Violence.



This year Sheriff Donald Street and his deputies have challenged Spruce Pine Assistant Chief Mike Clougherty and his fellow firefighters to go toe-to-toe to see who can raise the most money. We welcome you to donate online at mitchellcountysafe-place.org, then follow the links to #TeamLawEnforcement or #TeamFirefighters. No amount is too small or too large!

We also have our usual suspects joining in: County Commissioner Chair, Matthew Vern Grindstaff, the ubiquitous Dr Dan Barron (of course), Mitchell News-Journal Editor Brandon Roberts, as well as the Bakersville Clinic Doctors....not to mention the Mitchell High School Wrestling Team, who doesn't just walk a mile in red stilettos....they run the mile!

We'll also have a few new faces: District 47 candidate, David Wheeler, County Commissioner candidate Bruce Koran, and NC State Representative 85th District candidate Howard Larsen.

All of these brave, determined men will be assembling teams of 5 to raise the most money, and compete for the coveted Clint Pollard Red Pump Trophy. Safe-Place welcomes and encourages children to participate, and, yes, we have children's red shoes, too!

Participants will receive special commemorative T-Shirts, and treated to free, delicious BBQ Sandwiches courtesy of Pig & Grits in Burnsville. And we'll treat them to fabulous door prizes, thanks to our local, generous potters and craftsmen. And don't forget the perfect strutting tunes provided by our very own Bruce Ikard! We'll also have T-shirts for sale to the public.

We are so proud and so grateful to the good men of Mitchell County for making this bold statement in unison to show their support for the victims of Domestic and Sexual Violence which continues to plague our county. Most important, you'll remember Gale's Story in the August issue of the Blue Ridge Christian News. Well, Gale will also be there as our special guest.

We're counting on you and your family and friends to come out and support Walk

A Mile In Her Shoes this year. As always, it'll be a fantastic, free, family-fun event!

For more information, contact our Walk A Mile Coordinator, Beth Davis, at 828-765-4015 or bethbdavis60@gmail.com.

Let's raise some money and awareness while having a great time on October 6!



Sheriff Donald Street and Assistant Fire Chief Mike Clougherty.



Mitchell County SafePlace

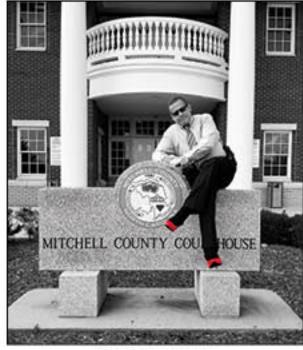
Walk a Mile in Her Shoes

Saturday October 6, 2018
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continued on page 25

New Writers Corner

Rebekah and Rebecca

By Kiesa Kay Yancey County

In the Bible, Rebekah offered water to a thirsty stranger, and as he drank his fill, she offered refreshing water to his camels, too. She worked hard, and she gave freely to others in need.

Rebecca Boone, wife of Daniel Boone, shared the courage and work ethic of her namesake. Just as Rebekah in the Bible

left her homeland and all her family in Haran to be with her new husband, so did Rebecca Boone leave the grandparents and father who raised her in North Carolina, to go with her wild, exploring husband. Neither of these women knew if ever they would see the ones she loved best, ever again.

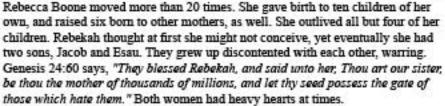
When the Biblical Rebekah gave water to the camels, she let them drink their fill. She didn't shirk, even though the thirsty man in front of her was a stranger to her. She did not know that he was the servant of Isaac, who would inherit all the holdings of Abraham and Sarah. She only knew that he was thirsty. Like her

namesake, Rebecca Boone helped where

help was needed.

In Genesis 24:58, Rebekah agreed to leave her family and go to her new husband, traveling far away. "And they called Rebekah, and said unto her, Wilt thou go with this man? And she said, I will go.

Both Rebekah and Rebecca sacrificed mightily for their husbands and families. Neither of the women had easy lives.



From these two women of the same name but such different lives and times, we can learn that hard work, steady commitment, and strong faith belong in everyday life. We have not been promised ease or the absence of suffering, but as women, we shoulder our burdens and do all we can to ease the pain in the hearts of our loved ones, never giving up.

And we must not expect perfection from ourselves, even as we do our best. These women weren't free from fault. Rebekah deceived her husband, and Rebecca Boone had some secrets, too. Their flaws remind us that we are humans on this earth, and not always perfect. We can be forgiven.

Love Makes a Home: The Life of Rebecca Boone will be performed at 3 pm on Saturday, September 29, at the Thomas Wolfe Center for Narrative, 36 Montford Avenue, Asheville. The play contains 15 old time fiddle tunes, played by Bruce Greene, a Boone family descendant. The actress who plays Rebecca Boone has worked hard all her life, and helped her husband build their farmhouse with their own hands. As Proverbs 31:31 says, "Give her of the fruit of her hands, and let her own works praise her at the gates."

The Biblical Rebekah and Rebecca Boone both did

their best. They kept their faith strong through troubled times. When they got torn from their homes, they found refuge in faith. Both of them had to learn to endure the consequences of their mistakes even as they kept loving and living, day by

Kiesa Kay is a poet and playwright living in Yancey County, NC, with her faithful companion and longtime friend, Rosa, a Lab mix.

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Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. Matthew 11:29-30

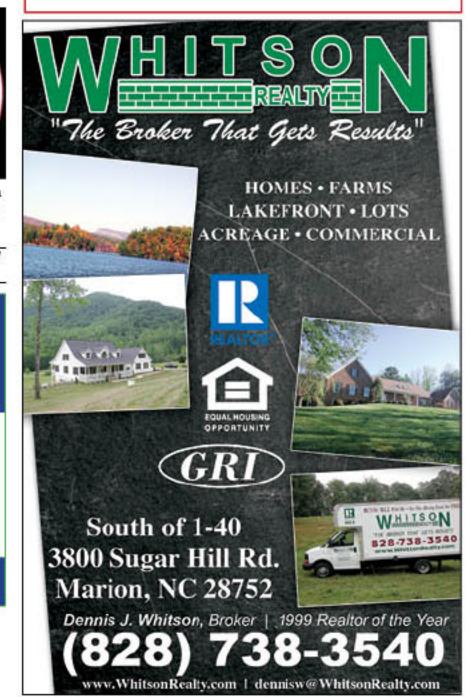


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EVERYTHING'S ALRIGHT By: Joyce (Joy) Harwood Baldwin

At times when all the house is quiet, So peaceful, hushed and still. I settle in my favorite spot Against the windowsill.

When all the rain has ceased to fall And all the earth looks green, The birds begin their singing And playing once again.

It seems that they are praising God For all that He has done. Then the highest cloud above Peeps out the shining sun.

Now all of God's creation
While glistening in its light,
With sparkling drops from heaven
Whispers... EVERYTHING'S ALRIGHT.





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 Ly 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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Lana's Lines

Letters From Prison

By Lana Ellis Kingsport, Tennessee

Paul's Prison Letters written to Timothy, Philemon and the Ephesian, Philippian and Colossian Christians contain some of the most quoted scriptures in the New Testament. Paul's words are just as relevant today as they were then. Allow me to take the liberty to put some of those words into the form of a Letter from Prison to Us, the Church of 2018.



Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ to the faithful in Christ Jesus,

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who has blessed us with all spiritual blessings. May the eyes of your understanding be enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, the richest of His glory and the exceeding greatness of His power to us who believe. God who is rich in mercy, even when we were dead in sins, has made us alive together with Christ and seated with Him in heavenly places. Church of 2018 it's by His grace you are saved through faith and that not of yourselves. It is the gift of God, not of works lest anyone should boast. I pray to the Father that He would grant you to be strengthened with might by His Spirit and that you would be able to comprehend the love of Christ which passes all knowledge.

Every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. When He ascended up on high He gave gifts to all for the perfecting of the saints, the working of the ministry and the edifying of the body of Christ that we not be tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine. Church of 2018 put off concerning the former old self and be renewed in the spirit of your mind. Let all bitterness and anger be put away rather be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another as God for Christ's sake has forgiven you. Knowing that we wrestle not with flesh and blood but with powers of darkness in the world put on the armor of God that you may stand against the wiles of the devil.

God has highly exalted Christ Jesus, giving Him a name that is above all names, that at His name every knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess that He is Lord. I pray that you, Church of 2018, will be filled with the knowledge of His will, walking worthy of the Lord, being fruitful in every good work, increasing in knowledge of God, strengthened according to His power, with patience and longsuffering with joyfulness. In everything by prayer with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God and He will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus. Set your affections on things above not on things on the earth.

God has not given us the spirit of fear but of power and of love and of a sound mind so Church of 2018 study to show yourself approved unto God, a workman that needs not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. Remember that all scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction and for instruction in righteousness. Know that in the last days people will be lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God. The time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine but after their own lust having itching ears will seek teachers of fables, turning away from the truth.

Now I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness which the Lord shall give me but not me only but to all of you who love His appearing.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you, Church of 2018.

Paul, a prisoner in Rome

Just as I am inspired and encouraged by Paul's Prison Letters I have also been inspired and encouraged by Letters from Prison written to me by a young man named Anthony. Having given his life to Jesus he has become a "workman that is not ashamed, rightly dividing the word of God" with fellow prisoners. Following are excerpts from one of his letters.

Greetings!

My name is Anthony. I am an immate in the North Carolina Department of Public Safety. I read your article "The Book" that was published in the January edition of the Blue Ridge Christian News. Your article increased my appreciation for having a copy of the Word of God. We have hundreds of Bibles available to us and all day to read and study but sadly many choose not to. We need God's strength and direction if we are to live the Christian life by meeting the needs of others and lending a listening ear to the many men who are broken and are longing to have that empty void in their lives filled with something that is real and lasting. Of course that is Jesus Christ. It is our duty to share the gospel not only with our lips but with our lives. Studying the scripture is how we can equip ourselves. We tend to neglect the Word and then wonder why we don't have joy and peace and are curious why our lives are falling apart.

As a teenager I made a terrible decision. I regret that decision every day. It took a long time before I believed that God would come into my life and save me

but He did. Today I am a child of God and He has entrusted me with the responsibility to minister to others. Incarceration allowed me to slow down enough to hear and take heed to the voice of God. He says if we draw near to Him He will draw near to us. We must be doers of the Word.

God has been good to me over the years in which I have received three associate degrees, a Bachelor's and currently working on my Master's degree. God has instilled in me the ability to write and direct drama plays for the inmates creating an atmosphere where the guys can take a mental vacation for an hour or so and laugh



while being exposed to the gospel. All my plays have a prison theme and speak about hope and deliverance in Christ.

Thank you for sharing your article with the readers of the Blue Ridge Christian News. May the Lord continue to bless you and your ministry. I would appreciate your prayers.

In Christ, Anthony

Anthony has a renewed hope of freedom from prison due to the Supreme Court ruling in 2012 which changed the law concerning crimes committed by juveniles. It's now possible that he could be paroled. As a means of getting the necessary funds to hire an attorney to represent him a Prison Portraits project has been set up. On behalf of Anthony an artist is offering a one of a kind drawn portrait of you or a loved one. Upon receiving your portrait and are 100% satisfied you can make a contribution of any amount to Anthony's legal fund. I can personally vouch for the quality of these portraits. For more information email me at celt1963@gmail.com. I encourage you to read Anthony's story online. Go to www.mdpi.com/journal/laws. Type in his name, Anthony Willis, and download the PDF full text.

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



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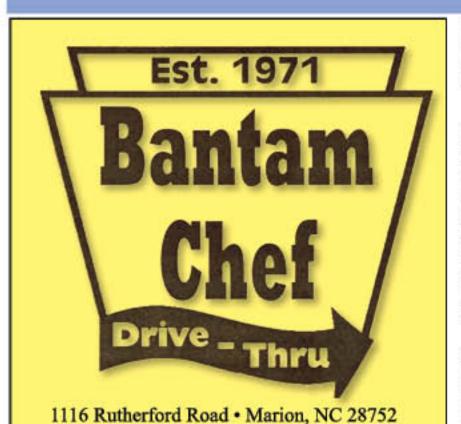
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Toe River Arts

33rd Annual Music In The Mountains Folk Festival

By Kate Groff Yancey County

The Annual Music in the Mountains Folk Festival is coming to the Burnsville Town Center on Saturday, September 22 from 5:30 to 8:30pm. The Annual Festival, sponsored by Toe River Arts and now in its 33rd year, includes storytellers, ballad singers, dancers, bluegrass and traditional music on instruments ranging from bass to dulcimer to guitar. This year Toe River



Arts honors Betty Smith. Betty was born in Rowan County, grew up in Guilford, and now resides in Madison County and is recognized as one of their best-known musicians. She learned her skill on the fiddle, guitar, autoharp, psaltery (similar to the dulcimer) and mountain dulcimer by practicing and playing by ear since she was in grade school. Also, a highly respected ballad singer, she has performed widely at festivals and more recently has taken on the role as an award-winning author and performer.

This year's line-up is a definite winner. Emcee and station manager at WECR in Avery County, Phillip Greene, will do introductions. Also performing are well-known Marina and Doug Trivette who will join with favorite ballad singer and storyteller Bobby McMillon; bass player and member of the



band Amantha Mill, Judge Rebecca Eggers-Gryder, banjo and story teller, Brett Riggs with his musical partner and guitarist Pan. And not missing an opportunity to kick up the heels or toes on the wood stage, Madison and McKenzie Casteel and Collin and Mollie Eten will accompany in dance throughout the night. The evening begins with the great mountain sounds of the Toe River Arts Traditional Arts Program for Students instructors (TAPS) with Sam Maren and a couple of their "star" students. This is an evening not to miss!

It will be music, music, music. You'll find a rare evening of entertainment resonating to the old and the new from our traditional performers. You won't want to miss one hand-clapping minute of this evening's fun! The show begins on Saturday, September 22 at the Burnsville Town Center (6 S. Main Street) at 5:30pm and will continue to echo through the hall until around 8:30pm.

Tickets are \$14 adults, \$12 for students and seniors 65+. Buy your tickets through Friday, September 21 and save \$2. Tickets will be available at either Toe River Arts Gallery (Burnsville at 102 W. Main St. or Spruce Pine at 269 Oak Ave.) by the end of August. Children 5 and under are admitted FREE.

In conjunction with the Music in the Mountains Folk Festival and running September 15 through October 20, Toe River Arts will display the photographs of Cecil Sharp who, 100 years ago, documented the variants and versions of English and Scottish folk songs as sung by descendants of immigrants from the British Isles. The Burnsville Gallery exhibit of 24 of Sharp's rare photographs will offer a stunning window into the life of Appalachian people. Betty Smith wrote and performed in the one-act, one-woman production of "A Mountain Riddle," based on the life of singer Jane Hicks Gentry, who shared many songs with Cecil Sharp in 1916. "A Mountain Riddle" won the North Carolina Society of Historians' Paul Green Multimedia Award.

The Music in the Mountains Folk Music Festival is funded in part by a Grassroots Art Grant from the North Carolina Arts Council, a division of the Natural and Cultural Resources Department. For more information contact the Toe River Arts offices at 828-682-7215 or visit the website, www.toeriverarts.org.

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



Pleasant Ridge Baptist Church

"Culture-blind" — or Cowardly?
By Shawn Thomas
Burke County

In Washington Irving's delightful The Sketch Book of Geoffrey Crayon, the author journals about his attendance at a venerable English country church: "The congregation was composed of the neighboring people of rank, who sat in pews sumptuously lined and cushioned, furnished with richly gilded prayer-books, and decorated with their arms upon the



pew doors; of the villagers and peasantry, who filled the back seats and a small gallery beside the organ; and of the poor of the parish, who were ranged on benches in the aisles." (The Sketch Book of Geoffrey Crayon, "The Country Church," Washington Irving, p. 104)

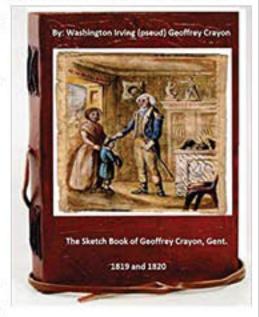
One is immediately struck by the incongruity of the church seating arrangement: the wealthy enjoying lavishly decorated pews, but the poor unceremoniously inhabiting the back seats, and benches on the aisles. It is such a flagrant violation of the command of James 2:

"My brethren, do not hold your faith in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ with an attitude of personal favoritism. For if a man comes into your assembly with a gold ring and dressed in fine clothes ... and you pay special attention ... and say, 'You sit here in a good place,' and you to say to the poor man, 'You stand over there, or sit down by my footstool,' have you not made distinctions among yourselves, and become judges with evil motives?" (James 2:1-4)

Surely anyone attending that church who possessed both a Bible and a con-

science could have discerned that this scenario was wrong — couldn't they? There are at least two explanations for this kind of blatant aberration:

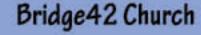
1. They may have been "cultureblind." Believers in any setting can find it difficult to "escape" the cultural presuppositions they were nurtured in, and to detect contradictions between their culture and scripture. After all, those things seem to them to be "normal;" they were brought up that way. This is one of reasons why C.S. Lewis recommended reading books and sermons from other ages, and why Lesslie Newbigin encouraged Christian interaction with churches in other parts of the world -- these members of other times and places



are not bound by our cultural limitations, and they can help correct our "cultureblindness" with the light of God's truth.

2. But a second explanation exists. There is the distinct possibility that the wrong was indeed noticed even by some of those inhabiting that culture — but that those who detected it were not courageous enough to speak up about it. Irving's account ought to cause Christians today to examine our own practices: what blatant compromises with scripture do we tolerate in our churches week after week, to which we ourselves are just as "culture-blind" as the ancient English were to theirs? And are there those of which we ARE indeed aware — as perhaps some of them were — but we are just too cowardly to speak up against them?

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



Four Things the World Needs to See from the Church (Part 1) By Jason Koon Burke County

Why doesn't anybody want to go to Church anymore? I hear this question with increasing frequency. In fact, it's even the title of a recent book by Thom Schultz. We all know Church attendance is down, and we should know by now that it's not just the Millen-

nd and

nials who are skipping out. And now it's becoming increasingly clear that those who have managed to hang on are doing less and are more burned out. So, what gives? Why are American Churchgoers dropping like flies?

A recent study from the Barna Group attempted to answer this question. First, they asked people why they went to Church, and overwhelmingly, American's responded "to be closer to God" or "to learn about God." This is encouraging; 71% of Americans are not looking for a big show, a cool rock band, a hip pastor, or a place to network, they're looking for something Spiritual. So why are they abandoning Church? The answer is that while most Americans are looking for something spiritual, they're not finding it at Church. Only 44% of people who attend Church every week say they regularly experience God, and these are the ones who have stayed.

This means two things. First, about 56% of the people you currently worship with are probably hanging on by a thread. And secondly, something has gone drastically wrong. I think there are several reasons for these troubling statistics and the following are four characteristics I believe the world needs to see from the Church that might help us to begin to turn these trends around. These are characteristics we saw in generations past, characteristics that are essential if we are going to see the Church impact the world with the Gospel.

Integrity

Seventy-three percent of Americans identify as Christian, but only 35% attend Church regularly. Even more troubling, only 7% affirm seven basic teachings of the Christian faith, teachings like "Satan is real," "Salvation is through grace, not works," and "Jesus lived a sinless life." This isn't academic, systematic theology, this is funda-



mental biblical teaching, beliefs that Scripture says are necessary for salvation. In other words, chances are, when you go to Church this weekend, four out of every five people you worship with may spend eternity in hell.

As a result, the Church can't practice what it believes anymore, because most of us don't even know what we believe. This is causing a breakdown in integrity. The Bible speaks often about integrity. I Timothy 4:16 says, "Keep a close watch on yourself and on the teaching. Persist in this, for by so doing you will save both yourself and your hearers." Although, the original context was directed to Paul's apostolic liaison, Timothy, the implications of this verse are the same for us. Watch your life, be careful what you do and what you don't do. And Guard your mind against false teaching and lazy doctrine because your soul and the souls of those you love may depend on it.

There is also a promise in this verse. Paul writes that when we have integrity, when our minds, hearts, and actions line up like this then we will be a saving agent to the people around us. We wonder why nobody comes to Church? We wonder why we don't see people saved like we did in years past? Paul has our answer. Our lives and doctrine have gotten away from us. If we're going to see the Church impact the world for the gospel, we're going to have to understand and live out the faith we profess.

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



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.

Jenny Millsaps McDowell DSS Foster Home Licensing SW

Financial Straight-Talk www.davesays.org by Dave Ramsey

My wife and I are following your plan, and we just paid off all our debt except for the house. Since we work for the same company, do you think we should have an emergency fund that is larger than you normally recommend? Don

Dear Don.

That's great news! You've finished Baby Step 2, and now you're ready for Baby Step which is fully-funding your emergency fund.

I don't see a reason to set aside more than six months of expenses. My recommended range for an emergency fund is three to six months of expenses. If your employment situation is one where there's more risk of something going wrong, you should lean toward saving six months' worth. If your employment outlook is really stable, you can go with setting aside three or four months of expenses in an emergency fund.

I look at your situation as being more high-risk. You each have jobs, so that's the good news. But if the company went down, or experienced layoffs, you could find yourselves unemployed at the same time. My advice would be to save up six months of expenses for your emergency fund. With that kind of cash just sitting there, you should be able to make an easier and less stressful transition in almost any kind of unemployment scenario or other emergency.-Dave

Dear Dave.

What exactly is unsecured debt, and how is it different from secured debt? Rich

"Unsecured" debt generally means someone loaned you money, but they don't have a lien on anything. Credit cards and student loans are examples of unsecured debt, because there's nothing they can directly repossess if the borrower doesn't pay. However, they can sue you if you don't pay, and get a lien against something after they sue you. In some cases, this is done against your income by gamishing your wages.

Some examples of "secured" debt would be things like a home mortgage or car loan. A home mortgage loan is secured by the home. If you don't pay, they can foreclose and take the house. The same is true with a car loan. If you don't make the payments, they can take the car.

Typically, unsecured debts will be the last debts you pay if you're in financial trouble. You'd make the car payment before paying on your student loan, and you'd make your house payment before paying on a credit card.

Hope this helps, Rich!-Dave

Dave Ramsey is CEO of Ramsey Solutions. He has authored seven best-selling books, including The Total Money Makeover. The Dave Ramsey Show is heard by more than 14 million listeners each week on 600 radio stations and multiple digital platforms. Follow Dave on the web at daveramsey.com and on Twitter at @DaveRamsey.

Lees-McRae College

Historical inauguration of 16th President, Dr. Herbert L. King Jr.

By Nina Mastradrea Avery County

BANNER ELK, N.C. - Lees-McRae College will host the inauguration of its 16th President, Dr. Herbert L. King Jr., Friday, Oct. 5 on the campus in Banner Elk. The celebration will conclude a series of events honoring the institution's location and its motto, "In the Mountains, Of the Mountains, For the Mountains."



The 2 p.m. installation ceremony will be held in the Historic Commons and is open to the public. The ceremony will bring together college stakeholders—students, faculty, staff, alumni, parents, community, friends and donors—and provide an opportunity to celebrate shared values and a commitment to the future. Lees-McRae will commemorate King's inauguration throughout the week: Wednesday, Oct. 3

Mountain Day of Service, 9 a.m.

Students, faculty, staff, and friends of the college will give back and work together on service projects in the community. All participating volunteers are invited to

close the day with a celebration at Wildcat Lake.

Thursday, Oct. 4

Founder's Day, 4:30 p.m.

Lees-McRae and the Town of Banner Elk will cohost a celebration of their beginnings in Tate-Evans Park in Banner Elk, with a twin-tree planting and presentation of shared history.

Family Picnic and Concert, 5 p.m.

The college and local communities will continue festivities with a picnic and concert in Tate-Evans Park. The event will feature live entertainment, food trucks, inflatable games, and interactive novelties.

Friday, Oct. 5

begins his tenure.

Prayer Service, 10 a.m.

Dr. Herbert L. King Jr. An interfaith prayer service at the Banner Elk Presbyterian Church will surround President King with blessings and prayer as he

Inauguration Ceremony, 2 p.m.

Representatives from the students, faculty, staff, alumni, and the community will provide greetings before President King is sworn in and bestowed with the symbols of office. A reception will follow in Swank Park.

Annual homecoming events, including alumni awards brunch, tailgating, and athletic events will continue Saturday, Oct. 6. Events are open to the public. Updates and additional information can be found at lmc.edu/inauguration.

King assumed the role of president on June 1, 2018. He holds a Doctor of Education in educational leadership from The University of Virginia, a Master of Education in educational administration from Lynchburg College and a Bachelor of Arts in English and history from Hampden-Sydney College.

Before coming to Lees-McRae, King served as Vice President for Institutional Advancement at Hampden-Sydney College in Hampden Sydney, Virginia.

Nestled in the Blue Ridge Mountains of western North Carolina, Lees-McRae College is a private, four-year college offering diverse baccalaureate degrees, strong athletic programs and outstanding faculty. Field-specific career preparation and hands-on learning enhance the broad core curriculum. For more information, please visit www.lmc.edu or call 828,898,5241.

Nina Mastandrea is the content manager of Lees-McRae College



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"INSURANCE is the most IMPORTANT thing a person has because it protects him against the loss of everything he has in the world." -H.O. Hirt, ERIE Founder



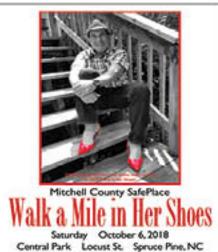
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Dr. Daniel Barron



Gordon Shurtleff walking like a pro!



Loren Grano – Mitchell County Safe-Place Board Chair.

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



Local Kids need Local Homes

The Foster Care program is looking for individuals who are willing to share their home with a child.

REQUIREMENTS ARE:

- Must be 21
- · High School Diploma or GED
- 40 hours of-preservice training and complete various additional trainings
- Valid NC driver's license
- · Pass a background check
- Physical—physician approval to provide care
- Sustainable form of income
- Compassionate heart

For more information please contact Mitchell County Foster and Adoptive Program at 828-688-2175



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

~ Anne Richardson



"Your only nonprofit, local, community Hospice" 856 Georges Fork Road, Burnsville, NC 28714

828.682-9675

ronnieg@hospiceofyancey.org

Grace Community Church

Shutting Down the Factory

by Jerry Lewis McDowell County

John Calvin said that man's nature is a "perpetual factory of idols." Almost unnoticed idols can creep onto the throne of our hearts and before we know it, we're worshiping at their altar. Work. Sports. Money. Accomplishments. Alcohol. Someone. Idols come in all shapes and sizes. So how do you shut down the factory? Here are a few steps:



1. Identify your idols. What allures you may not even interest your friends. The common way of referring to this is, "he has his own demons." But this terminology deflects the blame from the real source. We all have sinful natures that produce customized idols. How do you know when something has become an idol? Tim Keller says, "When anything in life is an absolute requirement for your happiness and self-worth, it is essentially an 'idol,' something you are actually worshiping." (Counterfeit Gods)

Put away your idols. Once you know what they are, take the next step to get rid of them. If you're a workaholic, adjust your work hours. If you're an alcoholic,

quit drinking—completely. If you're addicted to gambling, don't carry indiscriminate cash.

 Get help. You will not successfully fight idols alone. You're not equipped to battle alone. Scripture is replete with examples of people who, when left alone, self-destructed. (See Samson, King David, Esau...to name a few).
 Join a Life Group (email



james@graceforall.org). Get counseling (Chuck Tripp is a great resource: 828-803-7281).

4. Worship God. If the worship of God doesn't replace whatever else you were worshiping, you will return to your idols. You are created to worship. You will trust in someone or something. Will it be God? Take 3 minutes to let the words of Lauren Daigle's song sink in.

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



Hospice of Yancey County

"Changes"

By Jacob Willis Yancey County

It is the thing most of us dread, CHANGE. Change means that sometimes everything is going along smoothly and, all of a sudden, things change. Sometimes changes in whatever area, whether it be a career change, relationship change, or changes in health, can make us cringe. Even when the changes are considered a good thing, it can still be scary. Sometimes doing what is best may require a change in mindset, circum-



stance, or lifestyle, and we can be paralyzed by fear. It is at these times we must ask ourselves some hard questions.

First of all, is this God's plan? Some changes are totally out of our control. If they are out of our control, God may not have willed it, but He certainly allowed it. If He allowed it, then there is some divine sense of providence in the best and worst of changes. If we have been following our Lord's guidance and submitting to His will, then we can be assured of His divine providence in change. Fear is the opposite of faith. Fear says change will be unbearable, faith says change will be tolerable. Fear says change is to destroy and cripple, faith says change is about resurrection. Isaiah 43:19 Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert

Second of all, is this a challenge from God? Sometimes receiving the best God has for us in life requires us to make tough choices. It requires us not just to talk the faith talk, but to walk the faith walk. It requires us to make choices that lead to changes and growth. Change is never comfortable, but it is necessary in the faith life. God challenges us that in order to receive His best we must choose to forsake some things that give us security. That may be good things, but if we want God's blessing, then we must choose the best thing. This requires changing priorities, plans, and, sometimes, people in our lives. God wants his very best for His children, but we have to be willing to adjust and change our minds. Repentance literally means to change your mindset. When God asks us to actively make a change it is always for our best. All sin begins with a lack of trust in the love of God for us. Psalm 34:8 Oh, taste and see that the LORD is good! Blessed is the man who takes refuge in him!

Finally, change boils down to a test of faith. Change is uncomfortable, unknown, and unpredictable. When Abraham is tested by God telling him to offer up his only son Isaac, he responds as the father of faith. It was a test of Abraham's hope. All the promises of God rested in this young man Isaac. He was the seed from which all the nations of the earth would be blessed. For God to ask Abraham to kill the one who was given to him miraculously must have seemed cruel. Sara gave birth to the boy when she was 100 years old. She had tried repeatedly and failed. Abraham and Sara had prayed, sinned (with Hagar and Ishmael), and sacrificed to God hoping for this son. Now he is here and God wants you to sacrifice him. Sometimes change challenges us to kill what we initially placed our hope in. Really the question was where Abraham's hope lies. In God or his son?

It was a test of Abraham's love. The first time "unconditional love" is used in the Bible is when describing Abraham's love for Isaac. Sometimes change means letting go of things we love. Isaac was old enough to carry the wood for the sacrifice, so he knew that he might be laying down his life. He asks his father the tough question, "Where is the Lamb?" Abraham then proves as strong as anyone in scripture saying, "The Lord will provide Himself a sacrifice." He loved his son, but he loved God more.

It was a test of Abraham's faith. Abraham was acquainted with the character and nature of God. He knew that God had promised Isaac to be the heir of the promises of God. He knew if Isaac died that God had lied. He

knew that God couldn't lie, so what was his faith in?

Hebrews 11:17-19 By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises was in the act of offering up his only son, of whom it was said, "Through Isaac shall your offspring be named." He considered that God was able even to raise him from the dead, from which, figuratively speaking, he did receive him back.

Abraham believed that if he killed his son, God would raise him from the dead. What did God do? He presented Abraham a ram, caught by its horns in a thicket, to sacrifice instead of his son. A ram caught by its horns denotes power. This happened on Mt. Moriah, where Jesus would be crucified. God would provide Himself a sacrifice for our sins, and the sins of the whole world. God wants a personal relationship with you. If you are being tested by change, will you trust the God who died for you? Will you allow him the privilege to guide your steps? If you do, this change will definitely lead to resurrection. Maybe you need to trust him as your personal Savior. Maybe you need to follow him where you don't want to go. Maybe your life has been changed and it is out of your hand to control. Take heart that God will make a way, and God will change your life for the better. At the end of the road, the last change we will make, God will change us forever into his image. There will be no more pain, sickness or death. We will receive a body like His and will live forevermore.

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

Evergreen Church

Salvation Begins With God

By John McCoury Roan Mountain, Tennessee

"Since local churches are made up of human beings, saved by God's grace, no church is perfect. But some churches are closer to the New Testament ideal than others. The church at Thessalonica was in that category. At least three times in this letter, Paul gave thanks for the church and the way it responded to his ministry. Not every pastor can be that



thankful. What characteristics of this church made it so ideal and such a joy to Paul's heart? AN ELECT PEOPLE (1:1-4) The word church in 1 Thessalonians 1:1 means "a called-out people." Whenever you read about a call in the Bible, it indicates divine election—God is calling out a people from this world (Acts 15:13-18). Seven times in John 17, our Lord referred to believers as those whom the Father gave to him out of the world (John 17:2, 6, 9, 11-12, 24). Paul stated that he knew the Thessalonians had been chosen by God (1 Thess. 1:4). The doctrine of divine election confuses some people and frightens others, yet neither response is justified. A seminary professor once told me, "Try to explain election, and you may lose your mind. But explain it away—and you may lose your soul!" We will never understand the total concept of election this side of heaven. But we should not ignore this important doctrine that is taught throughout the Bible. Let's notice some obvious facts about divine election. Salvation begins with God. "God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation" (2 Thess. 2:13). "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you" (John 15:16). "He [the Father] hath chosen us in him [Christ] before the foundation of the world" (Eph. 1:4). The entire plan of salvation was born in the heart of God long before man was created, or the universe formed. Salvation involves God's love. Paul called these saints "brethren beloved"-not only beloved by Paul (see 1 Thess. 2:17), but also beloved by God. God's love made Calvary possible (Rom. 5:8), and there Jesus Christ died for our sins. But it is not God's love that saves the sinner; it is God's grace. God in His grace gives us what we do not deserve, and God in His mercy does not give us what we do deserve. This explains why Paul often opened his letters with "Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Thess. 1:1). Salvation involves faith. "For by grace are ye saved through faith" (Eph. 2:8). Paul, Silas, and Timothy brought the gospel to Thessalonica and preached in the power of God (1 Thess. 1:5). Some people who heard the message believed and turned from their vain idols to the true and living God (v. 9). The Spirit of God used the Word of God to generate faith (Rom. 10:17). Paul called this "sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth" (2 Thess. 2:13). Salvation involves the Trinity. As you read this letter, you discover the doctrine of the Trinity. Christians believe in one God existing in three Persons: God the Father, and God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Keep in mind that all three Persons are involved in our salvation. This will help you escape dangerous extremes that either deny human responsibility or dilute divine sovereignty-for both are taught in the Bible. As far as God the Father is concerned, I was saved when He chose me in Christ before the world began. As far as God the Son is concerned, I was saved when He died for me on the cross. As far as God the Holy Spirit is concerned, I was saved , when I heard the Word and trusted Jesus Christ. At that moment, the entire plan fell together, and I became a child of God. If you had asked me at that time if I was one of the elect, I would have been speechless. At that time I knew nothing about election. But the Holy Spirit witnessed in my heart that I was a child of God. Salvation changes the life. How did Paul know that these Thessalonians were elected of God? He saw a change in their lives. If you put 1 Thessalonians 1:3 next to 1 Thessalonians 1:9-10, You will get the picture: your work of faith you turned to God from idols your labor of love to serve the living and true God and patience of hope to wait for His Son from heaven The person who claims to be one of God's elect, but whose life has not changed, is only fooling himself. Those whom God chooses, He changes. This does not mean they are perfect, but they are possessors of a new life that cannot be hidden. Faith, hope, and love are the three cardinal virtues of the Christian life, and the three greatest evidences of salvation. Faith must always lead to works (James 2:14-26). It has been said, "We are not saved by faith plus works, but by a faith that works." If the Thessalonians had continued to worship their dead idols while professing faith in the living God, it would have proved that they were not among God's elect. Love is also an evidence of salvation: "The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us" (Rom. 5:5). We are "taught by God to love one another" (1 Thess. 4:9). We serve Christ because we love Him; this is the "labor of love" that Paul mentioned. "If ye love me, keep my commandments" (John 14:15). The third evidence of salvation is hope, waiting for Jesus Christ to return. (1 Thess. 1:10). The return of Jesus Christ is the dominant theme of both of these Thessalonian letters. Unsaved people are not eagerly awaiting the Lord's return. In fact, when our Lord catches His church up into the air, unsaved people will be totally surprised (5:1-11). Faith, hope, and love are evidences of election. These spiritual qualities are bound together and can come only from God. For further evidence, see these passages: 1 Corinthians 13:13; Romans 5:1-5; Galatians 5:5-6; Colossians 1:4-5; Hebrews 6:10-12; 10:22-24; 1 Peter 1:21-22. A local church must be composed of elect people, those who have been saved by the grace of God. One problem today is the presence, in the church family, of unbelievers whose names may be on the church roll but not written in the Lamb's Book of Life. Every church member should examine his heart to determine whether he has truly been born again and belongs to God's elect."

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

Judge not, and ye shall not be judged: condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: forgive, and ye shall be forgiven: Luke 6:37

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Tipton Hill, NC 4301 NC 197 North Green Mountain, NC 28740 Jerry & David Griffith davidgriffith58@frontier.com griffith25@frontier.com

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

Bits 'n Pieces

Avery County

Avery County Events: October 20-21, 2018 --- 41st Annual Woolly Worm Festival in downtown Banner Elk.

The Linville Falls Community Church will celebrate Homecoming on Sunday, September 9, 2018, with a church service at 10:30 a.m., followed by a covered dish dinner in the church fellowship hall. All are invited to attend. Please bring a dish to share. Founded, in 1918, the church is non-denominational with the mission statement, "We believe that Christ's work on earth continues in us and through us. Guided by Christ's teachings, we will serve and love others; cherish our heritage; nourish gifts of the spirit; worship God together in grace; create belonging, and, welcome all who pass through our doors and hearts." The church is located on N.C. Hwy. 183 in Linville Falls.

Burke County

Brown Mountain Baptist Church in Morganton NC-Fall Festival on Saturday, Oct 20th starting at 4:00pm. We will have games, crafts, food, singing, trunk or treat and a hayride For more info call 828-4487254 or 828-234-2677.

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

Southern Expo & Marketplace Thursday, November 15, 2018—3:30-5:30 member to member networking then 5:30 -7:30 Open to the Public the Waldensian Mill, Valdese, NC

NCSD Foundation-Bears Classic Golf Tournament Oct 5th, Captain Choice Scramble Check in at 11 am---12:30 pm Shotgun Star Silver Creek Plantation. \$75.00 per person includes lunch, dinner, green fees, gifts, range balls and cart. For more info contact Heath Huggins at 828-475-0718.

Catawba River Baptist Association - 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.

We will be collecting coats this year to be distributed to those in need in New York City. Please bring new or gently used coats (no holes, tears or stains) to our CRBA office in Morganton. We will collect coats during the months of September and October and will deliver them to a drop off location in North Carolina (Fruitland Baptist Bible College) who will then deliver (and distribute) them in New York. Again, if you bring used coats please make sure they are in great

Great Hope Seventh Day Adventist Church - 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 Seventhday 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 preregister for reserved seat at 828-334-0084.

Morganton Seventh-day Adventist-Burke County

FREE Car and Truck Show October 7th-Sunday from 1-4 p.m.

Show Location: Morganton Seventh-day Adventist Church, 2187 Jamestown Road, Morganton, N.C. 28655

Hosted by ARC

www.adventistroddersclub.com

John Earnhardt's personal micro midget will be on display, built in 1956 and worked on by Ralph Earnhardt.

Awards for "who drove the farthest" Six Trophy Classes - You Choose:

Old Style Car & Truck New Style Car & Truck

Unique Style Car & Truck

Participant Voting Only

Free Door Prizes Fun for the whole family!

All are welcome!

For more information, please call John Root at 904-654-2885

If it rolls...it shows!

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. 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.

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!

Clinchfield Baptist Church will be having their homecoming celebration on Sunday, September 16th. There will be a concert from Purpose Quartet beginning at 11:00. There will also be a covered dish meal following the service.

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 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.

First Baptist of Marion - Belize Mission Trip February 5-12, 2019 FBC's relationship with the Baptists of Belize will continue this winter by sending a mission team to work in the western region of the country. Our construction crew will continue work on the Santa Elena Baptist Primary School, helping complete a second story addition. The medical team will provide free medical clinics to underserved communities near the Guatemalan Border, where there is a large immigrant population. Our team will stay in Santa Elena at the Aguada Hotel. The week will end with two nights at San Pedro on the coast. Funds to cover our ministry costs are already raised. However, each team member provides their own travel costs, which is estimated at \$1,100 per person, covering airfare, ground transportation, lodging, international travel insurance, T-shirt, and most meals. For more detailed information, promotional flyers are available near the Chapel or see Scott Hagaman. A minimum of 10 persons are needed to launch this mission trip with a maximum number of 25. A valid passport is required, which should not expire within 6 months of travel. Registration Form and \$100

McDowell Chamber of Commerce—Lake House Luau at Marion Lake Golf Clubhouse at 2030 NC 126 in Nebo, NC.

September 15, 2018 at 5:30-10:30pm For more info call 828-652-4240.

Mitchell County

Bear Creek Baptist Church - Nathan and Tonya Horton from Asheville will be the 5th Sunday night guest musicians at BCBC on September 30 at 6 PM. Everyone is welcome for an evening of worship in song.

Women's Prayer Breakfast Sept. 14th ,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 - 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. High Country Caregiver Foundation—Charity Golf Tournament on Saturday, September 22nd, 2018. 1:00pm at Grassy Creek Golf Club. \$280.00 per team or 75.00 per person entry fee. Includes: Greens and Cart Fees, Mulligans, Dinner and Auction. For more info contact Jacob Willis at 828-385-3025.

Historical Society - September 17th---the final regular program of 2018 will find us in Spruce Pine, at the historic English Inn to explore the story of Union Col. James M Gere, who first came to Mitchell County during the Civil War as an escaped POW and later participated in the early Mica industry here.

Mitchell County Baptist Association - From Liberty Hill Baptist Church: A Day To Remember---Marriage Retreat featuring Stan and Tammy Budd presenting the Art of Marriage by Family Life. Saturday Oct 6, 2018 8:30am-4:30pm Catered

Bits 'n Pieces

breakfast and lunch provided. At the Cross Street Commerce Center at 31 Cross St, Spruce Pine, NC Registration is \$35.00 per couple Contact Meg Dale at 828-467-4002.

Mitchell County Chamber - We are also adding local and regional events to the Airbnb site so that visitors seeking a place to stay here in our area can also see the great events happening that they can take part in! If you are an Airbnb host, you can also add events!

Taste of the Blue Ridge. We're hearing a lot of excitement in the community about the upcoming Taste of the Blue Ridge, to be held at beautiful Linville Falls Winery on Monday, September 17th!

With our theme An Evening in Tuscany, the party will feature a savory Italianthemed meal catered by Reid's Café out of Banner Elk, plus lots of fun and games, with both live and silent benefit auctions.

Please pass the ticket link along to friends, family and colleagues who might be interested in attending this fun party with a purpose. Tickets are \$50 each, or you can sponsor a table for \$300, which reserves a table for your group of 4, and is perfect for businesses and groups that want to sit together at the event, and have their organization recognized for supporting services for young children and families.

We look forward to everyone coming out to the lovely Linville Falls Winery on Monday, September 17, and joining us for an awesome night out with a delicious meal, wine and beer tastings, and a festive night of fundraising games and auctions. Bring your credit card or check book, and don't forget – all the money raised here, stays here, to support families and young children in our community!

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

TIPTON HILL JAMBOREE: It's coming! Mark your calendar for SATUR-DAY, SEPTEMBER 29, 6:30 p.m., for a family night filled with music, fun, food, and laughter at the TIPTON HILL COMMUNITY CENTER across from Griffith's Store (known as Jerry's) in the Tipton Hill Community. Featuring local performers, it will be an evening of gospel, country, bluegrass, rock and roll, and some "oldies but goodies" music. Admission is FREE, and a concession stand will be open. Put on your dancing shoes, and feel free to sing along. Y'all come! For more information, call 828-688-2524 and leave a message.

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 fellowshipping, 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. Sept meeting is 14th, at 8:00am.

Walk A Mile In Her Shoes Returns! - Spruce Pine Assistant Fire, Chief Mike Clougherty, and Mitchell County Sheriff, Donald Street, square off to see who can raise the most money for Walk A Mile In Her Shoes!

Saturday October 6, 2018 in Central Park on Locust St Spruce Pine, NC For more info contact Beth Davis at 828-765-4015.

Holiday Studio Tour Accepting Applications - The deadline to apply for the Toe River Arts Holiday Studio Tour is Wednesday, August 29 at 5pm. The tour is held the first weekend in June and December and this tour's dates are November 30-December 2. Applications may be completed online and emailed, downloaded and filled out and sent in, or brought in to either of the galleries (102 West Main Street in Burnsville or 269 Oak Avenue in Spruce Pine) before the deadline.

Artists must show in a studio in either Mitchell or Yancey county (their own or as a guest in another participant's studio) and be a current member of Toe River Arts at the promotional level.

For complete information, guidelines, and fees or to download an application, please visit toeriverarts.org/for-artists/artist-opps-and-apps or call 828-682-7215.

Yancey County

Parkway Playhouse BURNSVILLE, NC: Dial M for Murder is a play that will begin showing at Parkway Playhouse on August 25th-September 8th. Directed by Michael Lilly, Parkway Playhouse's production features Andie Morganlander, Strother Stingley, Luke Haynes, Mike Yow, and Alesa Bryant Laws. Performances are on Fridays and Saturdays at 7:30pm and Sundays at 3pm through September 8th.

Tony Wendice has married his wife, Margot, for her money and now plans to murder her for the same reason. He arranges the perfect murder. He blackmails an old acquaintance into carrying out the murder, but the carefully-orchestrated set-up goes awry, and Margot stays alive. Now Wendice must frantically scheme to outwit the police and avoid having his plot detected.

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 - available online at 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.

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.

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

Bubba's is back at Mayland! - Bubba's will be back open at Mayland starting, Wednesday August 15.

If someone wants to order online and come by and pick up lunch, they are open 11am-1pm Monday thru Thursday.

Here are the ways you can order:

- 1. On our Facebook page Bubba's at Mayland
- On our website www.bubbasgoodeats.com
- Text BUBBAS2GO to 33733 and download our mobile app
- 4. Just stop by the cafeteria and place your order Stop by and Support Bubba's!

Burnsville Toe River Arts

Appalachia History On The Walls Of The Burnsville Gallery

By Kate Groff Yancey County

On September 15, Burnsville Toe River Arts will unveil 24 rare photographs taken by music folklorist, Cecil Sharp and his assistant, Maud Karpeles. These images will take viewers back to a time when folks worked from sunrise to sunset, kids went to one-room school houses or not at all,



ate meals by lamplight, and sang songs passed down from generation to generation on their porches at twilight. The exhibit continues through October 20 with a reception on September 21 from 5 to 7pm at which Donald Hughes will speak about these black and white glances of Appalachia in the early 20th century. Hughes initiated the Appalachia Project to commemorate the centennial of Cecil Sharp's visit to North Carolina and serves as its coordinator.

In 1916, English music teacher and ballad collector, Sharp and Karpeles, travelled the Appalachian region to document the songs and singers of their music. What they

also collected were photographs of these peoples, in their homes, at work, in their best finery, posed, but perhaps not as comfortable in front of a camera. A fascinating glimpse into the rural life—the rural life of this region's ancestors. They braved challenging terrain to visit singers and record the notes and words of the songs. By the end of their 46-week travels through North Carolina, Virginia, West Virginia, Kentucky and Tennessee, the pair had collected more than 1,600 variants of English ballads from 281 singers. Out of their work came the English Folk Dance and Song Society based in



The Mitchell family was visited often by Sharp and Karpeles during their time in Burnsville and Marion, and Sharp took numerous photos of family members.

Cecil Sharp House in London, the U.S.-based Country Dance and Song Society, and a remarkable collection of centuries-old songs still sung today. A three-year celebration of the people and the songs has begun both in the U.S. and abroad. In celebration of the centennial of his journeys and his collection of hundreds of songs, stories, and photographs, the Cecil Sharp, the photographic exhibit, exhibition is traveling around the region.

As part of the Cecil Sharp in Appalachia Project, organizers are looking for descendants of the Burnsville and Marion singers who may have information about their ancestors' interaction with Sharp in 1918. Although the exhibit includes only the families for whom photographs exist (Many of the pictures Sharp took were mailed back to the families as a way of thanking them for their time and voices and as a remembrance.), they are interested in speaking with descendants of all the singers included in his diary. If you are a descendant of someone who is included in Sharp's diaries, please contact descendant@cecilsharpinappalachia.org and/or attend the Burnsville Gallery reception on September 21 and speak with Donald Hughes.

The exhibit runs concurrent with the 33rd Annual Music in the Mountains Folk Festival on Saturday, September 22, from 5:30 to 8:30pm at the Burnsville Town Center (106 South Main Street). Please call the Burnsville office, 828-682-7215 for tickets and more information.

For more information about the exhibit or other Toe River Arts programs and events, please visit toeriverarts.org. For the last over four decades, Toe River Arts worked to connect the community with the arts to enhance and improve the quality of life of it residents, and improve the vitality of its towns.

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

👀 BIBLE GAMZ

ai daiaid

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

L	Quail (L.E.) (Exodus 16:8 - NIV)
۷	Top of the ark (Exodus 25:17)
1	Sheep talk (1 Samuel 15:14)
4	Mountainside blessings (Matthew 5
	Subjected to frustration (Romans 8:2
6	Peace agreement (Joshua 9:6 - NIV)
1	Sown and harvested (Matthew 13:30)
B	Dealt with unfairly (Luke 6:28 - NIV
1	Eagle part (Psalm 91:4)
10	Satan's destiny (Revelation 19:11-20)

Solutions are:

1. Meat 2. Mercy Seat 3. Bleating 4. Beatitudes 5. Creation/Creature 6. Treaty 7. Wheat 8. Mistreated 9. Feather 10. Defeat

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alpha & omega

Each answer begins and ends with the same letter.

1	Crowd or throng (Luke 8:4 - NIV)	
L	Bod, affectionately (Galatians 4%)	
1	Numberless time? (Psalm 55:1F)	
4	Gift or knack (Exodus 37:24)	
11	Spur or inspire (Hebrews 3:13 - NTV)	
6	Baseball shape? Geremiah 17:1 - KJV)	
1	Psychic (Leviticus 19:31 - NIV)	
£	Sovereign or straight edge? (Luke 18:18)	
1	Demolished by our weapons (2 Corinthians 10:4	
10	Before places or priest (1 Kings 3:3)	
222		

Solutions are:

 Gathering 2. Abba 3. Noon 4. Talent 5. Encourage 6. Diamond 7. Medium 8. Ruler 9. Strongholds 10. High

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Kid's Corner

A Solid Piece of Protection

By Christy Lowman Burke County

Did you know that there is an animal that has a piece of armor attached to their body that they can actually curl themselves inside of it and snap it closed? The mud turtle's armor is its oval shell. The shell is attached to the turtle's lower ribcage and spine and is a permanent piece of protective ar-



mor, like a breastplate. Its shell is bone and covered by scutes. Scutes are the hard plates on top of its shell. The top part of a turtle's shell is called a carapace while the bottom is known as the plastron. Unlike other turtles, mud turtles have one or two hinges on their plastron. This turtle is able to draw all of their body inside their shell unlike most turtles. The hinge allows them the ability to bring the bottom shell up to meet the top shell making it a solid piece of protection.

Mud turtles have one other defense mechanism besides their shell. They have glands on the side of their bodies that secrete a stinky liquid when they feel threatened. This and their hinged shell make it hard for predators to eat this turtle.

Mud turtles grow between 3-5 inches, with the males being larger than the females. They can live up to 50 years! Mud turtles are semi-aquatic reptiles, who prefer to spend most of their time on land instead of in water. They are omnivores, snacking on snails, insects, fish, tadpoles, worms, seeds and dark leafy greens found in ponds. They will burrow a few inches in the mud in the winter to hibernate during the cold weather. There are four subspecies of mud turtles: Eastern, yellow, Mississippi, and striped. You can find the Eastern mud turtle here in North

Did you know that you have your very own protective shell? It is called the breastplate of righteousness. It is the last piece of the armor of God that we need to discuss. Do you know how to be righteous? Righteous means to be just. Righteousness means to be morally right or justifiable. In other words, we are to put on the breastplate of righteousness to help us live correctly, the way God wants us to. We are to stand up for what is right in God's eyes when someone is doing something wrong. When we follow God's laws, and are righteous, we are blameless. We have the duty to tell others when they are wrong and assist them in doing what is right as well. When people see that we are living a godly life, they will notice that we are different than the rest of the world. They will be curious about why we act this way, leading to an opportunity for you to tell them about Jesus. So, put on your breastplate of righteousness and live differently in the world for Jesus! Let people know you belong to God not only by what you say but by how you act. Most importantly, tell everyone you see about Jesus!

Dear Lord, please guide us as Christians to speak boldly about you. Help us tell everyone we see about You and Your miracles. Assist us as we lead others to Christ, and protect us as we stand up for You as we live differently and justly in this sinful world. Help us to choose to do right instead of wrong. Equip us each day with all of the armor of God while guiding us be brave and courageous! In Jesus's name we pray. AMEN

Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place. Ephesians 6:14 NIV

And then He told them, "Go into all the world and preach the Good News to everyone. Mark 16:15 NLT

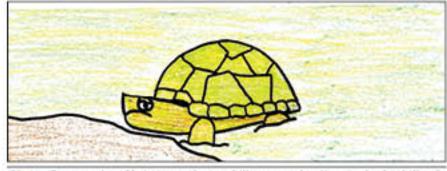
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Christy Lowman is a Christian author and illustrator that lives in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains with her husband and two children. She enjoys writing and illustrating books for all ages. Some of her short stories are published with Guideposts 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 wil 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-ali as=books&text=Christy+Lowman&sort=relevancerank

You can reach her at https://www.facebook.com/authorChristyLowman/ or christyssoaps@yahoo.com,

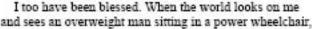


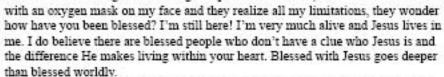
Allen's Offerings

I Have Been Blessed

By Allen Buchanan Mitchell County

Does the name Mike Compton mean anything to you? What about the song, "I HAVE BEEN BLESSED"? On Wednesday, November 25, 2015, Mike released this song and today many Christians cling to each and every word as their testimony.





I haven't always been described as my second paragraph states. At age 3, doctors told my parents that I had Muscular Dystrophy and twelve years would be my lifetime. Doctors don't know everything. One thing for certain, my parents knew Jesus and they trusted in Him and not the doctors. Once my parents learned of my fate, the opportunities of blessings began. Throughout my life, they have lovingly encouraged me. Life didn't stop at age 12 as doctors predicted. I'm 60 and still going...yes, I have been blessed!

In the Bible we read 2 Samuel 9:13 — So Mephibosheth dwelt in Jerusalem: for he did eat continually at the king's table; and was lame on both his feet. Throughout God's word, the lame are mentioned many times. In the gospels, many of them are healed. I walked for 35 years. As my strength began to weaken I would rent a wheelchair for weekend trips. Slowly I became more dependent on a wheelchair. Twenty-two years ago, I went to a wheelchair full-time. I prayed that if God wanted to use me for his glory in a wheelchair instead of on my feet, I accepted it. Amazingly, my writings do not require my feet to work. "I have been blessed!"

When I hear missionaries speak of their work in
foreign lands, I'm anxious to
know about people with limited mobility. Too often they
are tragically excluded from
daily life because they have
no way of moving around.
In America, if you have a
disability, you are blessed
with equipment to allow you
to live independently.



Having rented standard wheelchairs for years, I didn't have a clue how technical ordering my own could be. I got my first wheelchair in 1994. Since I was going to be sitting everywhere I went, the chair had to be comfortable and easy to maneuver. Therefore, it was fitted just for me by the Seating and Mobility Clinic Specialist at CarePartners Health Services in Asheville, NC. Imagine the job she encountered with a man 6'6" tall?

One ministry which I took part in was founded by Joni Eareckson Tada. Joni is an evangelical Christian author, radio host, and founder of Joni and Friends, an organization "accelerating Christian ministry in the disability community." To learn more about Joni, visit joniandfriends.org. Another ministry of Joni's is Wheels for the World. It provides the gift of mobility and while sharing Jesus with those

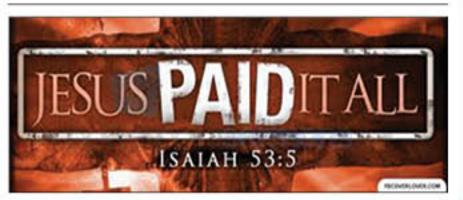
affected by disability worldwide.

After moving on to my second wheelchair, I wanted to offer my first one to someone in need. After contacting Wheels for the World, my wife and I delivered that chair to a drop-off point in Morganton, NC. Today, I have my 5th chair which is a powerchair. Unfortunately, I have yet to locate a ministry for donating powerchairs. Many countries don't have the necessary electricity needed to maintain these chairs.

If you have been blessed with a used manual wheelchair or medical equipment such as walkers, crutches, or canes and would like to put them to good use, I encourage you to contact Joni's Wheels for the World.

Joni and Friends
Call or Text: 818-707-5664
Fax: 818-707-2391
International Disability Center
PO Box 3333 Agoura Hills, CA 91376-3333
joniandfriends.org
Look Joni up on Facebook too!

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





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YOUR GOVERNMENT PAGES

US House of Representatives NC District 11



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

Pray for Pastor Andrew Brunson

As Christians, we are told in the Bible that one of the greatest joys and privileges as a believer in Christ is to suffer for our faith. The Bible is full of passages commending Christians who suffer in this way and offers various words of encouragement to those undergoing persecution. Paul writes in Philippians 1:29, "For it has been granted to you on behalf of Christ not only to believe in him, but also to suffer for him." These words ring true for our brother Pastor Andrew Brunson and his family.

Many of you may have heard about Pastor Andrew Brunson on the news. Pastor Brunson was born in Black Mountain, NC and has been a Pastor in Turkey for over twenty years. His church, Izmir Dirilis (Resurrection) Church, is located in the city of Izmir. Brunson went to renew his Turkish visa in 2016 when he was taken into custody. Turkey claimed false charges against Brunson, claiming he is guilty of terrorism, spying, and attempting to overthrow the Turkish government.

The Turkish government refuses to release Brunson despite demands made from all levels of U.S. Government. President Trump levied recently sanctions against Turkey as retaliation for their wrongful imprisonment of a U.S. citizen, promising to continue these measures until Brunson is released.

As a member of Congress, I believe it is important to raise awareness for Pastor Brunson, not only as a U.S. citizen, but also as a brother in Christ. As citizens here in the United States, we have a duty to speak out and advocate for his release.

1 Peter 5:10, reminds us: "And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast." We pray for Pastor Brunson, knowing that he can claim this promise as his own. Join with me and raise your voice in support of our brother in Christ, Pastor Andrew Brunson.

NC Senate District 47

Last month, I told you about two proposed constitutional amendments that will be on the ballot for voters this November – Victims' Bill of Rights and Right to Hunt and Fish. Two other proposed constitutional amendments that will be on the ballot are Maximum Income Tax Rate of 7.0% and Require Photo ID to Vote.

If approved by voters, the proposed Maximum Income Tax Rate of 7.0% amendment would reduce the maximum allowable income tax rate in our state from ten percent (10%) to seven percent (7%). This amendment allows voters to reject a return to the days of out-of-control spending, high taxes, and multi-billion dollar deficits. A Civitas Poll earlier this summer found that 66 percent of voters approve an income tax rate cap. In 2019 our state's income tax rate will drop to 5.25%. In the event of an emergency or a recession, should the \$2 billion Republicans have placed in our state's rainy day fund be insufficient, lawmakers would have the ability to bring in additional revenue, other than resorting to a sales tax increase. Since assuming leadership of the General Assembly in 2011, legislative Republicans have overhauled the state's tax code, lowering rates and eliminating dozens of loopholes – resulting in the vast majority of North Carolinians keeping more of their own tax dollars. The changes have also helped create hundreds of thousands of new jobs and consecutive budget surpluses. If voters approve, the Maximum Income Tax Rate of 7.0% amendment will help ensure the state does not reverse course on those reforms and return to burdening North Carolinians with some of the highest taxes in the Southeast, as it did when Democrats last controlled state government in 2010.

Require Photo ID to Vote is another important, common sense proposed amendment that voters will have the opportunity to approve in November. Voters will choose whether to make North Carolina the 34th state to require citizens to show a photo ID in order to cast their vote in person. Currently, North Carolina is the last state in the Southeast not to have some form of voter ID at the polls. Voter ID would help safeguard citizens' votes at a time when uncertainty exists around the security of the electronic elections process. Voter ID would put to rest questions of voter fraud by folks of all political parties. Voter ID was upheld by the United States Supreme Court in 2008. Not surprisingly, because it is common sense, polls have shown voter ID is hugely popular in North Carolina and across the country. A June Civitas Poll found that 69 percent of all respondents support this proposed Require Photo ID to Vote amendment.

I hope you will join me in voting "For" both of these amendments on Election Day. As always, please share your thoughts with me on issues related to state government by emailing me at ralph.hise@ncleg.net or calling me at 919-733-3460.



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



This week, the Senate Intelligence Committee heard from third-party experts on about foreign influence operations' continued use of social media platforms to sow discord and divide Americans. These assaults on the democratic foundation of this republic cannot stand, and our Committee, in a bipartisan fashion, is addressing the issue head-on.

Russia continues its aggressive and pervasive influence campaign against the United States to create chaos in the virtual domain and create potential dangerous physical confrontations between unwitting Americans. The Russian-affiliated cyber actors want to spread disinformation, provoke societal conflict and undermine public faith in our democratic institutions. Yesterday's experts confirmed that these operations were never about elections, they were meant to exploit divisive issues like race and religion to sow discord. These actors want to weaken America.

As I told our panelists this week, some feel that we as a society are sitting in a burning room, calmly drinking a cup of coffee, telling ourselves this is fine. That's not fine, and that's not the case. The challenge we face – preserving our American rights while defending them against a hostile foreign power – is a difficult one, but the Senate Intelligence Committee is uniquely positioned to foster this critical conversation. We are now entering the 20th month of our investigation into Russia's meddling in the 2016 U.S. elections. In recent months, we have released a series of initial findings, provided recommendations to help improve election security, and unanimously passed out of Committee an Intelligence Authorization Act that will ensure the United States Intelligence Community has the tools, resources, and authorities needed to defend our nation.

We're fighting for nothing less than the integrity of our society, and we need to enlist every person we can. What happened in 2016 is just one look at Russia's attempts to erode the world's faith in democracy by weakening history's greatest example of it. We cannot and will not let them succeed.



YOUR GOVERNMENT PAGES

NC House District 118

Mob brings down statue at UNC Chapel Hill

A group of "protestors" — more accurately, a mob — brought down and damaged the Silent Sam statue on the UNC Chapel Hill campus on Monday.

A video can be found on you tube.

After watching the video, try this as an interesting exercise: listen to the sound in the video, but do not watch. If you support the events that took place last night at UNC Chapel Hill, just imagine these sounds in our community as a group destroys something that is important to you.

Violence and the destruction of public property will not be abided in the state of North Carolina. Mob actions pose an immediate



threat to the safety and well-being of not only our college campuses, but to the community at large.

Everyone involved in the destruction of the Silent Sam statue should be arrested and charged immediately.

House Speaker's response

Speaker of the House Tim Moore (R.— Cleveland) released the following statement regarding Monday's events at UNC Chapel Hill:

"There is no place for the destruction of property on our college campuses or in any North Carolina community; the perpetrators should be arrested and prosecuted by public safety officials to make clear that mob rule and acts of violence will not be tolerated in our state."



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

NC Senate District 46

Summer is coming to a close, school bells are ringing across western North Carolina, marching bands are tuning up and high school football fans are anxious for their favorite teams to take the field. As another school year is beginning, I wanted to share some of the notable good news from the NC General Assembly regarding K-12 education.

Since 2011 Republican lawmakers in Raleigh have shown a strong commitment to public education by doubling the share of new state spending for public schools as compared to the eight previous years (2003-2010) under Democratic leadership.

From 2011 through 2018, based on figures provided by our nonpartisan Fiscal Research Division, the Republican-led General Assembly has appropriated twice as much from state budget growth to public schools when compared to 2003-2010.

Over the past 8 years, fifty percent (1/2) of new state spending (budget increases) in North Carolina have gone to K-12 classrooms, while just twenty-five percent (1/4) of state budget growth was appropriated to public schools from 2003 to 2010.

Our K-12 Education system's increased share of state spending has been driven by FTVE consecutive teacher salary increases that produced the third fastest rising teacher pay in the United States and provided nearly half of North Carolina teachers at least a \$10,000 raise since 2014. Average teacher pay in North Carolina is now over \$53,000.00.

But not only has K-12 budget growth increased under Republican leadership, total annual spending on public schools has as well. In total, Republican lawmakers have increased annual K-12 spending in North Carolina by over \$2.5 billion this decade, growing the total yearly appropriation for public schools from \$7 billion per year under Democrat leadership in 2010, to \$9.54 billion per year in 2018.

By contrast, last decade, from 2003 to 2008, Democrat lawmakers raised annual spending on public schools by about \$1.7 billion, increasing the K-12 appropriation from \$6 billion in 2003 to \$7.8 billion in 2008. However, between 2009 and 2011, Democrats drastically cut education spending by over \$700 million because their tax-and-spend approach and lack of a sufficient Rainy Day Fund left North Carolina drastically unprepared for an economic recession. As a result, when Republicans took majorities in 2011, the state was facing a \$2.5 billion deficit, and on top of that, owed more than \$2 billion to the federal government.

During the period of 2000 to 2010, what conservatives have called "The Lost Decade", previous democrat administrations raised taxes four times, hiking taxes by \$729 million in 2003, \$879 million in 2005, \$543 million in 2007, and \$1.8 billion in 2009, while putting less than a quarter of that new spending towards public schools.

Contrast this with state budgets enacted from 2011 through 2018 under Republican leadership, where we have lowered the state's sales tax rate, personal income tax rate, and corporate tax rate, saving taxpayers nearly \$20 billion over the past eight years.

But even while cutting taxes, our state has enjoyed annual budget surpluses averaging \$400 million, through conservative budgeting and growing our economy. How have Republicans accomplished this? By consistently committing to sustainable budget growth that is in line with both inflation and population growth. By doing that, we have never increased our state's total General Fund spending by more than 3.85% per year.

In closing, since 2011, my Republican colleagues and I have enacted long-term fiscally responsible budget policies to ensure that our state can maintain its rapid growth in education spending and prevent drastic cuts in an economic emergency. Today we have a record \$2 billion in our Rainy Day Fund, the largest in state history, and approximately 10 times what it was in 2010 under Democrat leadership.

Now that the federal government has finally followed North Carolina's lead and enacted historic tax cuts with President Trump's leadership, our economy continues to strengthen, and for the first time that I recall in my lifetime, there are more jobs available than there are people on unemployment. This is great news for college graduates who only a few short years ago had little opportunity for employment after graduation.

So, as a new school year begins, I wish all of the teachers, parents and students across western North Carolina a successful and enjoyable year.

And as always, if my office can ever assist you with state government, please don't hesitate to contact me.



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

God Bless America

Tim's Treasures

Let Us Hear With an Ear for God

By Timothy W. Tron. Burke County

As we gathered at 8 AM to begin work this past Saturday on the Spiritual Retreat, we began with prayer. We asked God to protect us and to give us strength, guidance, and wisdom as we worked. We also asked that this building be used to serve Him in whatever capacity so that in our work we would be serving God.

The overcast skies were constantly looming ever closer. The weatherman had predicted 100% chance of rain, so

when I found myself barely able to make out the markings on the saw before the dawn's first light, I was even more thankful that it had not yet begun to rain. Each night this past week, after a full day at school, I would drive home, change clothes, and dash out to the work site to continue building as long as the last vestiges of light would allow. Even so, the necessary pieces of framing were still not fully in place by the time the work crew showed up for the first group effort. Once we were all assembled, there was Jim Pate, a neighbor and Airline Pilot; Leroy Mayne, my neighbor, mentor, and retired Scout Executive; John "Fletch" Church, another friend and Paralegal, and lastly my son, Jonathan; all brothers in Christ. Our intended focus that day was to try to get the plywood sheathing on the roof. However, it was not to be.

In all things, my focus is to always give thanks. Even when things don't go as planned, there is a certain level of gratitude which must be appreciated. Looking back, the things we accomplished Saturday were things that would have been nearly impossible for one person to do alone; at least not easily and in a timely manner. This group of men had been the answer to the unforeseen problems that would arise, but God knew.

In all we do, there is always a purpose.

And in the work, there was learning.

One of the many things that had yet to be done was to put up the rafter collar ties. Since we had the manpower, three of us stood on the second-floor working; Leroy on the ladder and Fletch and I holding up the two ends of the collar while I nailed them. Leroy was carefully balancing himself on the ladder while hold-

ing a four-foot level as we carefully put each rough cut 2x6 in place. At one point, the ladder shifted, and he became unsteady. Shifting his footing, the level slipped out of his hand and came crashing down onto the left side of my head. Most of the impact was to my ear. My initial reaction was, "Well, now that felt good."

The bells were still ringing in my head when Leroy asked, "Did that hurt?"

"Just a little," was my reply.

We both laughed. In truth, it stung pretty good, "But hey," I thought to myself,

However, as I looked up at Leroy, the look on his face was that of concern. Leroy had been like a father figure to me since we had met. The first day we walked into his home, which is now ours, there had been a feeling; something special that I could recognize but didn't know what it was. The realtor lady, who would later become a sister in Christ to us, Melonie Reid-Murphy, was showing us Leroy and his wife Annette's home for the first time. Like in the movie, "War Room," there was something baked into that home. Later, we would learn that when they were building the house, Leroy and Annette went around and wrote scriptures on the 2x4's. When we would meet for our most unusual, pre-purchase interview, we instantly felt like we had known each other for years. It was then Leroy became my mentor in many avenues of life, but most importantly, was the one of faith. So, as Leroy looked down at me from the top of the ladder with that look, I knew there was something more.

"Your cut," he said, somberly, "Your ear is bleeding," he continued. Instantly, I could sense his feeling of responsibility wash over me. Trying to abate any of his self-imposed guilt, I replied, "Ok, it's just another one to go with all the others," and laughed it off.

"Maybe we could get Jesus to touch it and heal it," Fletch chimed in about that

Instantly, my mind raced to the scriptures. Amongst the ringing still dissipating, like echoes off the distant mountainside, there was no recollection of such an act that I could recall. "Had Jesus healed the servant," I asked out loud. Both Leroy and John shook their heads yes. The scene in the Garden of Gethsemane was playing out in my head, but for some reason, the healing had slipped through my comprehension all these years. "Later I will have to look that up," I thought to myself as we carried on.

Since everyone had other commitments, as is normal for a Saturday, we finished around noon and parted our ways, myself being thankful not only for the help but the fellowship as well.

However, as if it were confirmation of God's presence that morning, Fletch messaged me the scripture later in the afternoon to which my thoughts had been silently seeking that morning, Luke 22:50-51, "And one of them smote the servant of the high priest, and cut off his right ear. And Jesus answered and said, Suffer ye thus far. And he touched his ear, and healed him."

As my eyes read, and then reread the passage, the scene began to play out before me. Jesus, standing in the long shadows of the early morning, long before



dawn watched as the light of their torches approached. Judas would lead the mob as they approached. The disciples would suddenly jump awake, a bitter irony from their unnatural drowsiness of the night which had forsaken Christ. Yet, now, they were ready to take up arms to protect him, lest they should lose him forever. In his haste, one of them, as the gospel of Luke recalls, would draw his sword and cut off the ear of the High Priest's servant. We know from other accounts that it was likely Peter who wielded the sword.

At this point, the servant's assumptions of all that had been said were confirmed. The searing pain of any injury to the ear seems to be magnified, as I had recently known. Although mine was a small scratch, this was an entire ear sliced from his scalp. One can only imagine the thoughts that thundered through the victim's head as blood began to flow down his face. In that moment, Jesus responded in true Christ fashion, "Suffer ye thus far," and reached out and touched where the ear had been.

In an instant, the pain stopped. All those watching stood stunned. The torchlight danced around them as everyone was surely silent at that moment.

The servant, who now stood looking down at his former ear, still lying covered in blood upon the ground, felt a tremor of the Holy Spirit ripple through his body. With his right hand, he reached up and felt another ear in the former's place. All the accusations had in one moment been confirmed by the act of Peter, but before the soldiers could retaliate, Jesus had altered the course of yet another soul. The servant had heard of the rumors of healings and miracles that the man they had come to arrest had performed, but he had never witnessed one in person. Now, he was one who had been healed.

As the servant stood stunned and confused, the scene played on before him. The conflict of what was had now been forever changed, but did it reach his heart? Did he accept Jesus as his Savior?

Paul tells us in the book of Acts, the account to the chief of the Jews in Rome how those who have their minds set against believing we forever be trapped in that prison of anguish, " Saying, Go unto this people, and say, Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive: For the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.

As the soldiers and priests escorted Jesus away in restraints, the servant continued to stand immobile, frozen in place as a witness to a crime. The remaining disciples would sneak off into the remaining shadows of the morning to hide. His heart sank at the realization as the error of his ways became known. As he awakened to the reality before him, tears began to fill his eyes.

I asked our preacher this morning what he thought of the servant's reaction might have been. He agreed that as the rest of the mob would have been set upon arresting Jesus, and like them, the servant's mind couldn't have been changed. The thought rumbled through my head like the thunder through the valley as we sat in the sanctuary during this morning's service.

As the last words of the sermon ended, God whispered into my ear the answer I

With the ears of which he had been born, the servant of the High Priest would have never known or heard the truth. As Paul said, "Their ears were dull of hearing," meaning, they had their minds set on only believing one story and nothing else. To the Jews, Jesus was just another troublemaker, another Zealot to deal with. When Peter cut off the servant's ear, he was stripped of his former self. Jesus Christ simply touched him and made him whole, and when he did, the servant of the High Priest was able to receive the truth, and in so, found Christ.

Yes, with a new ear, he could hear, and in the end, found salvation in Christ. Like the High Priest's servant, we too can find Him if we only listen with open ears and minds, and open our hearts.

The ringing had finally stopped in my ear and in my heart, I was thankful for a minor slip of a level the day before.

God had answered prayers this past Saturday in many more ways than one. There was no serious injury and, in the end,, we served Him in all that we did.

They say iron sharpens iron, and true fellowship is a gift in and of itself. Most importantly, let us not forget, "lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them."

Let Jesus touch you today, and in the end, you will be healed. 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



The Inspiring Word

Psalm 104

By Pastor Terry Cheek Th.D. McDowell County

September begins a new year with many local churches and with it new and revived opportunities for reaching people with the gospel and encouraging the Church with their daily Christian walk. September 2018



is no different concerning this column. There are many men and women around us who want to be in church at least every Sunday morning, however their health or living arrangements prevent it. Many of these folks are hungry to learn more of God's Word. Beginning this month, I will begin posting a simple Bible study as my monthly column. Maybe you know someone hungry for God's Word yet unable to attend Church? If so pass this along to them, feel free to use it to evangelize and encourage. Let's begin our journey through Gods Word with a study of creation.

We will study from Psalm 104, take your Bible and join me there. As we begin let's think about things that come first. You probably know the first book of your Bible is "Genesis" and it begins with "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth" (1:1). From this verse it's obvious the main character of the Bible is God! As such it is impossible for anyone or anything to imitate God. Isiah 44:6 reminds us "Thus saith the Lord the King of Israel, and his redeemer of the Lord of hosts: I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God." The only individual to make a similar claim with truth and wisdom is Jesus Christ, see John 1:1.

From Psalm 104:5-9 we are given a picture of Gods Sovereign Power. Let's begin with creation of earth. From verse 5 we see God as an architect. The Psalmist is telling us that no human being or power other than God Himself can remove or move the earth from its established position. It stands to reason, the one responsible for laying the foundations of the earth possess the only authority to move or remove it as He commands. I have a question for you to seriously consider. Often our world seems out of control, when your world is out of control does it affect the way you pray? Why or why not?

Let's move our study from creating earth to commanding the waters in Psalm 104:6-9. From our Psalm in verses 1&2 we understand that God is portrayed as clothing Himself with honor and majesty, covering Himself with light. We understand from verses 6-9 that He now covers the earth with deep waters, and

at one time these waters stoop above the mountain tops. These particular verses seem to add clarity to Genesis 1:2. The Psalmist almost characterizes the water as a rebellious child, receiving rebuke, and fleeing to their assigned places.



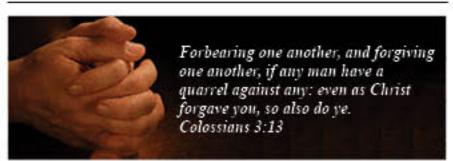
From the Old Testament we understand quite clearly that God has sovereign power over His creation, God is powerful, personal and sovereign in all things. God is to be trusted and faithfully served by those made in His image, and my friend that includes all of us. It's time again for another question. During times of frustration and discouragement when you feel life is out of control; how can you use the passage to remind yourself, God is in control?

Let's skip down to verses 24-30 and spend time considering Gods sustaining care. We can also refer to this as God's providential care. From our reading we quickly realize God's care for His creation. Yes, judgment will one day cause God to destroy and recreate His earth but until sin and fallen man have pushed Him to do this God will continue to reveal life through the wonders of our seasons and beauty of His creation. Thinking about Gods providential care and His sovereignty gives me another question for you. What situations other than Sunday church services will prompt you to praise God? Why? As we continue to think about providential or sustaining care we cannot forget about the small things of life. Verse 25 talks about the small and great beasts. The earth is full of wonders and discoveries. They are all, big and small part of God's creation. When there are modern discoveries how do they affect your view of God and His creation?

God's love and authority is found in His creation, His command, and His care. These are not limited to the earth and water, the moon and sun, these include you and I as made in His image.

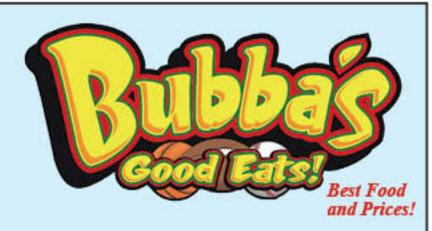
I hope you find blessing, hope and encouragement in this column --my prayer is for it to strengthen your relationship with God through His son Jesus Christ.

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









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Walnut Grove Church

Feeling Burned Out?

By Pastor Kurt Bomar Avery County

It happens. We all go through some version of burnout. The question is, is it unavoidable or is there a way to be vaccinated from it? To get a clue, lets look at the first case of burnout recorded in the Bible.

Lev. 10:1 Aaron's sons Nadab and Abihu took their censers, put fire in them and added incense; and they offered

unauthorized (or strange) fire before the LORD, contrary to his command. 2 So fire came out from the presence of the LORD and consumed them, and they died before the LORD.

While this burnout is a more literal than what we experience, I think there is a lesson we can learn from it.

Nadab and Abihu were supposed to take over the priesthood position from Aaron. I'm sure they were excited at the prospect of entering this coveted position. In fact, they were so excited that they broke a major rule. They were only supposed to get the fire for their censers from the Holy fire that was on the Altar.

This "strange fire" in their censers came from their own source—not from God. The result is that their careers were short-lived.

I believe the continually burning fire on the Altar is a picture of the continual fire of the Holy Spirit. That is where we are to get our energy—not from our own resources or energy.

Examples of strange fire in our lives are: ministry for ministry's sake, ministry for our own fulfillment's sake, or ministry for other's sake. These all may be very warming to us for a while, but in the end they will cause burnout.

The only fire that will never burn out is the fire from the altar of Calvary. Those who, like

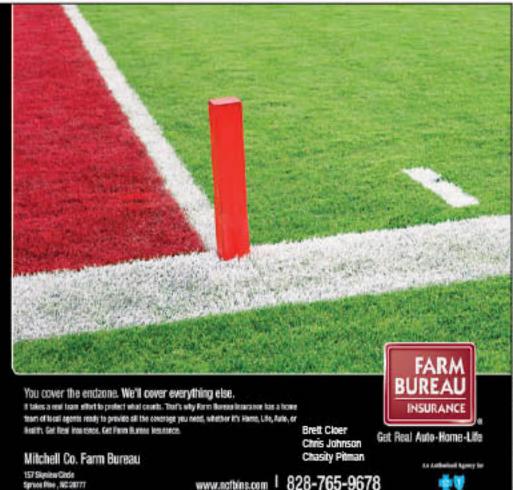
Paul, are constrained, motivated, and compelled by the love Christ demonstrated on Calvary will be serving Him with passion, effectiveness, and intensity when they draw their last breath this side of eternity.

So, if you're feeling a bit burned out, I suggest you go back to the Altar, the Alter of Communion. There you can re-align your motivations and get an emotional re-set because the love of Christ is a fire that never burns out.

Selah, (think about it)

Kurt Bomar is pastor of Walnut Grove Church.

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Burke United Christian Ministries

Many Thank-You's By David Burleson Burke County

God has richly blessed Burke United Christian Ministries (BUCM) over the summer with the opportunity to serve those in our community who need a hand up. During just the months of June, July and part of August, BUCM was able to supply the following to our community:

- Assisted 12,335 individuals with some type of support
- Fed 16,053 individuals in the soup kitchen
- Provided 4,559 individuals with over 175,000 lbs. of food from the BUCM Food Pantry
- Assisted 1,042 individuals with clothing
- Provided laundry vouchers for 117 individuals
- Provided 69 families with diaper vouchers to be used at St. Matthews Methodist Church
- Provided 33 individuals with fans for cooling
- Provided 145 with \$28,695.53 worth of financial crisis assistance
- Assisted over 75 individuals in our new LIFE enrichment center with educational and job skills opportunities

Every other year, BUCM does a picnic themed fundraiser. This year BUCM sponsored Picnic on the Parkway on Saturday, August 18 at the Morganton Elks Lodge. A big THANK YOU goes to everyone who assisted and supported our Picnic on the Parkway. There are not enough "Thank You's" to go around, but here goes. To Mary Ellen Weise for her determination, commitment, and tireless efforts. To Terre Colabella for her tirelessness, persistence, and energetic spirit. To Wendy Mull for her creativity, decorating skills, and culinary expertise. To Nick Roberto for his culinary and packing skills. To Ted Carothers, Glen Reep, Al Bormuth, David Weise, Sidney Mull, Marla and Matt Kirby for being willing to do anything that was asked of them. To Diane and Billy Bradshaw for their willingness to stay late and clean up after the event. To Jeremy Smart for his technology skills to have our updated video set up and running. To Elizabeth Norris for her ability to coordinate, organize, and collect tickets and money. To Brandi Belki for helping make our silent auction a big success. To Chew and Massy for all their help. To Arianne Colabella for her ability to create personalized ornaments and crafts. Do Jarrod Bailey for being an excellent decorator. To Mr. Jimmy Allen for being the best possible DJ. To the Elks Lodge for allowing us to use the facility and to Cathleen Braughn and her staff for the great food. Most importantly, thank you to all those who attended and supported the picnic. By all indication, everyone in attendance had a great time.

Thank You to Our Sponsors

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BUCM has been blessed to partner with the Burke County Schools, Burke United Way and the Outreach Center to support our students by providing their back to school needs. BUCM will continue to honor the vouchers distributed at the August 18 Build a Backpack program until October 1. On Saturday, BUCM served over 60 students in our clothing closet by providing clothes, socks, underwear and shoes. Thanks to Diane Bradshaw, Ayla Rutherford, Audrey Little, Chew Phang, Martha and David Simpson and Mia Davis along with several student volunteers who manned the closet on that day. Last year we supported over 600 students with back to school clothes.

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

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

David Burleson is Director of Burke United Christian Ministries

Morganton Seventh-Day Adventist Church

Spiritual Mile Markers

By Rick and Cindy Mercer Burke County

Many years ago, a good friend asked me if I had documented my "spiritual markers." I honestly didn't understand her question at the time, but it wasn't long before I realized the importance of her inquiry. She had encouraged me to think back on my spiritual memory. As I began to reflect on the beginning of my spiritual journey, I found great encouragement of the many "miles" I had been traveling with Jesus. Many years have



passed since our conversation and of course, the journey has morphed from individual spiritual markers to the blessing of spiritual markers with friends, family and church members along the way. It became apparent that spiritual memory is crucial in the Christian life.

If we neglect to leave spiritual markers at the key crossroads of our life...we have the tendency to lose our spiritual bearings. These "markers" are important. They remind us of where we have been and where we are going. Remember the Israelites? They experienced a tumultuous pilgrimage. Forty years of wandering in the wilderness was the cost of doubting God's power to give them victory. We

know the rest of the story. God showed up with an awesome miracle when the waters of the Jordan were parted so they could pass over and continue their conquest. Just like God knew that at times, the Israelites would face intimidating enemies and would need a reminder that He was powerful enough to protect them...God knew that we would need that too. And like the Israelites upon entering Canaan, have you been tempted to think that you made a few mistakes in your journey? Interestingly, God instructed them to build a monument on the banks of the Jordan River. Whenever they returned to that spot, they would see the monument and be reminded of God's awesome power! The marker's significance was to give them confidence to meet the new challenges they faced.

So, it is with our "spiritual markers" that we take inventory

of the moments we make decisions that define a particular time in our life when we can clearly see how God was and is guiding us.



Remember the times when God called out to you to embrace principles and precepts in His word? Those are spiritual markers that we need to remember. These markers have defined who we are spiritually. And they provide focus and encouragement for the days ahead. So many times, when God has spoken powerfully in regards to a commitment that should be made, I have written those moments down in a journal. Reflecting on spiritual markers help us to make sense of what God is doing in our life. And when it comes time for spiritual discernment and direction ...we do not have to fret, for we know God has been with us and will continue to be with us on our journey.

Our family put a spiritual marker on the map almost four years ago when God directed us to serve God's people in the beautiful town of Morganton, NC. We made the journey from NE Oklahoma and have been abundantly blessed serving as the pastoral family for the Morganton Seventh-day Adventist Church. The friendships and memories we have made in this community have placed special marks on our hearts...never to be forgotten. But, we are on a journey and God has called us to serve now in Northwest Arkansas and experience new spiritual markers. God sees the big picture and by faith we trust His plan is good, very good.

Thank you for the opportunity to love you and grow with you for the time God allowed our paths to cross. We look forward to spending eternity with each of you!

"And the children of Israel did so, just as Joshua commanded and took up twelve stones from the midst of the Jordan, as the Lord had spoken to Joshua." ----Joshua 4:8

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

And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity: 1 Corinthians 13:13

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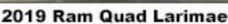






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Crossword
ACROSS
1 To make known to the sons of
men his mighty (Ps 145:12) 5 Jesus Christ, who has blessed us
in the heavenly (Eph 1:3)
10 he warmeth himself, and saith,
, I am warm (Isaiah 44:16) 13 "What then is this of sheep
in my ears? (1 Sam 15:14)
14 They were swifter than
they were stronger than lions (2 Sam 1:23)
15 the wicked their bows;
they set their arrows (Ps 11:2)
16 attractive (Jer 46:20) NKJV 17 The trees of the LORD are full
of (Ps 104:16)
18 back end of Peter's boat
19 the noise of the, the noise of their waves (Ps 65:7)
20 you had made for yourselves
an cast in the shape of a calf
(Deut 9:16) 22 chariots and wagons and with
a of people (Ezek 23:24)
24 a prophetess, , the daughter
of Phanuel, (Luke 2:36) 28 Salvation is found in no one
, for there is no other name
(Acts 4:12)
29 the Spirit of Christ which was in them did (1 Peter 1:11)
KJV
32 They upon me with their mouths (Ps 22:13) KJV
35 The night on, and I toss
35 The night on, and I toss till dawn (Job 7:4)
37 the borders of Manasseh were Beth Shan, Megiddo and (1
Chr 7:29)
38 they have stolen, they have
(Josh 7:11) 40 Eli sat upon a by the way-
side watching (1 Sam 4:13)
41 Why make ye this, and
weep? (Mark 5:39) 42 in short supply (Micah 6:10)
(KJV)
45 go out and leap like calves
released from the (Mal 4:2) 46 blind, or has any flaw, you
must not sacrifice it (Deut 15:2)
48 there was what looked like of glass (1,3) (Rev 4:6)
50 for this up the Law and
the Prophets (Matt 7:12)
51 with some of the elders and a named Tertullus (Acts 24:1)
54 Bring my sons from and
my daughters (Isa 43:6)
56 Come, kill him and take his inheritance (Matt 21:38)
57 gathered thereof wild gourds
his full (2 King 4:39) 59 Lying lips abomination to the LORD (Prov 12:22)
to the LORD (Prov. 12-22)
60 we traveled to Philippi, a
Roman and the leading city (Acts 16:12)
TAUS 10.121

little in our bondage (Ezra 9:8)
64 their enemies, and they that seek their lives, shall them
(Jer 19:9) KJV 65 "I tell you, get up, take your
and go home (Mark 2:11) 66 And I want you to these
things (Titus 3:8) 67 The animals take cover;
they remain in their (Job 37:8)

DOWN
1 by king one " Eastern
1 by him we cry, ", Father
(Rom 8:15)
2 I will put you in a in the rock and cover you (Ex 33:22)
rock and cover you (Ex 33:22)
3 You give a of your spices
(Matt 23:23)
4 Why is thy countenance
, seeing thou art not sick? (Neh 2:2) KJV
5 I will take away my grain
when it (Hos 2:9)
6 the dragon was at the
woman (Rev 12:17)
7 the church by Christ Jesus
throughout all (Eph 3:21)
8 ten men who had leprosy
him (Luke 17:12)
9 when Jesus had finished these
, he departed (Matt 19:1)
KJV
10 Know that wisdom is
sweet to your soul (Prov 24:14)
11 Is it lawful to on the
sabbath day? (Luke 14:3)
12 the sucking child shall play
on the hole of the (Isa
11:8) KJV
19 merchants who these
things and gained their wealth
(Rev 18:15)
21 One of the twelve tribes of
Israel (Josh 21:5)
23 I was given a like a
measuring rod (Rev 11:1)
24 bitter as gall, sharp
double-edged sword (2,1)
(Prov 5:4)
25 Surely his salvation is
them that fear him (Ps 85:9)
(KJV)
26 the cedar and the acacia, the
and the olive (Isa 41:19)
27 For now we see through
, darkly (1,5) (1 Cor 13:12)
KJV
30 The man who was healed
bed and who was neared

had no ____ who it was (John

31 on a colt, the ___ of a don-

33 Joshua son of Nun, who had

been Moses' (Num 11:28)

34 Israel joined in worshiping

the Baal of ___ (Num 25:3) 36 But Jonah ___ away from

the LORD and headed for

Tarshish (Jonah 1:3)

5:13)

key (Zech 9:9)

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70			+		71	-	+	1			72	1	+	
73		+		74			+	+			•	75	-	+

39 You have made us and

refuse among the nations (Lam 3:45)

40 And ____ ye not, but pursue after your enemies (Joshua 10:19) 42 Do its cool waters from distant ____ ever cease to flow? (Jer 18:14)

43 Biblical transportation vehicle 44 To one he gave five money, to another two (Matt 25:15)

45 No one a patch of unshrunk cloth on an old garment (Matt 9:16)

47 For the LORD your God consuming fire (2.1) (Deut 4:24)49 owls shall dwell there, and

shall dance there (Isa 13:21) (KJV)

52 She gave herself as a prostitute to all the of the Assyrians (Ezek 23:7)

53 he sent forth a _____, which

went forth to and fro (Gen 8:7) 54 Which shadow of things to come (3,1) (Col 2:17) 55 He was crying, and she sorry for him (Exod 2:6) 56 the Lord's discipline, and do not ___ heart when he rebukes you (Heb 12:5) 58 a bull from your stall or of goats from your (Ps 50:9) 59 Then let mine from my shoulder blade (Job 31:22) 61 How did they provoke him in the wilderness (Ps 78:40) KJV 62 every open container withfastened on it will be out a

Solution on page 14

(Num 19:15)



(Acts 16:12)

(Luke 4:4)

62 man shall not by bread alone, but by every word of God.

63 od gives light to our eyes and a

Mitchell County 4-H'ers

Attend NC 4-H Congress:

By Kayley Brown Mitchell County

This year's 4-H Congress, held in Raleigh, NC, July 21st -July 24th, attracted more than 500 young people and their adult leaders for activities including presentations on a variety of subjects, leadership and citizenship training, service opportunities, officer elections and more.

Mitchell County 4-H'ers received honors during the State 4-H Presentation Competition. Claudia Chandler received Gold in the Health and Fitness category, 14-18 age division. Jessy-Kate Glenn, honorably placed 4th in the

State Horse Presentation category, 14-18 age division. David Harrison received Silver in Fisheries and Aquatic Resources category, 9-10 age division. Charlotte Hubbard was an honored state presentation participant in the Poultry Production and/or Preparation category, 11-13 age division. Jesse Silver received Silver in the Bugs and Bees category, 11-13 age division. Also receiving honors was Josh Silver in the Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Category, receiving Bronze in the 11-13 age division. Mitchell county 4-H is proud to have such talented youth participate in state presentations this year.

On Saturday evening after state presentations 4-H'ers eligible to attend 4-H Congress (13 years and older) enjoyed opening assembly activities. Over the next few days 4-H Congress attendees from Mitchell County enjoyed leadership and learning workshops, 4-H dances, a county cultural experience, Clover Gala, 4-H officer elections, and the Hands to Service Project. Those in attendance included Claudia Chandler, Emily Jordan, Reece Ramsey, and Luke Silver.

This year at the 4-H Donor Luncheon, held on Monday July 23rd, Mitchell County 4-H'ers were honored for their hard work in their academics through scholarship. Congratulations to the following 4-H Scholarship recipients. Their accomplishments in 4-H combined with great academic success will surely serve them well as they further their education. Journee Glenn, Daughter of Darrin and Susan Glenn of Spruce Pine received the Robert and Helen Runion 4-H Scholarship in the amount of \$1,000. Daniel Silver, son of Jonathan and Amanda Silver of Spruce Pine received the Mitchell County 4-H Discovery Scholarship in the amount of \$500.

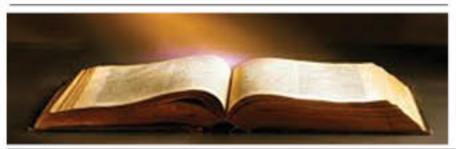
Mitchell County's very own Jessy-Kate Glenn was an AIRE participant and had her interview during 4-H Congress. We would like to congratulate her on her success. Jessy-Kate Glenn, daughter of Darrin and Susan Glenn of Spruce Pine was a selected winner in the AIRE competition. AIRE -- Application, Interview, Resume and Essay competition -- is a four-step process by which youth are chosen to attend national 4-H events including National Congress, National Conference and International Leadership Conference. As an honored recipient Jessy-Kate will be attending National Congress in Atlanta Georgia later this year.

During this year's Clover Gala, the 2017-2018 4-H district officers were recognized as well as 2018-2019 4-H district officers. Jessy-Kate Glenn was recognized as the retiring 4-H West District President, while Luke Silver was recognized as the incoming 4-H West District President. Congratulations to both Mitchell County 4-H'ers as they have served and continue to serve the West District in such an important role.

The final day of 4-H Congress was bittersweet as the Mitchell County Delegation loaded up the van and headed over to the NC State Fairgrounds for the closing events of 4-H Congress. The closing event this year was our NC 4-H Hands to Service project, which is a conference wide community service event. In total NC 4-H packaged over 50,000 meals for those in need. It's no wonder how this goal was accomplished as 4-H is North Carolina's largest youth development organization, equipping more than 247,000 young people each year with the skills to succeed and improve the world around them. Please see the Mitchell County 4-H Facebook page for all 4-H Congress pictures at http://www.facebook.com/Mitchell-County-4H-226821009309/

Mitchell County 4-H Delegation Attends Annual Electric Congress
A delegation from Mitchell attended the 71st annual 4-H Electric Congress July
10-12 at the University of North Carolina Wilmington. 170 4-H'ers, adult leaders
and N.C. Cooperative Extension agents from 47 counties attended the three-day
event. Since 1947, Duke Energy and Dominion Energy have sponsored the annual
congress to emphasize electrical energy concepts, energy conservation and safety
working with electricity. The 4-H electric program is one of the most popular
activities among Tar Heel 4-H'ers. The 4-H program is the youth education program of North Carolina Cooperative Extension, based at North Carolina State and
North Carolina A&T State universities. More than 232,000 young people between
the ages of 5 and 19 participate in North Carolina 4-H activities each year with the
help of 20,563 adult and youth volunteers.

My name is Kaley Brown, I am most recently from North Carolina State University, where I attended college and graduated with a degree in Animal Science. I grew up in a small town called Robbins in Moore County North Carolina. I grew up showing horses, raising livestock, and working on my family farm. I am very excited to call Mitchell County my new home, and I look forward to being a part of this wonderful community.





David Harrison, Charlotte Hubbard, Josh Silver, Jesse Silver.



Journee Glenn, Sharon Runion Rowland, Daniel Silver



Claudia Chandler, Emily Jordan, Jessy-Kate Glenn, Luke Silver, Reece Ramsey, Kaley Brown 4-H Agent, Mikayla Hughes 4-H Intern



Mitchell County 4-H enjoyed their county cultural experience by Kayaking on Lake Johnson in Raleigh, NC.



Kaley Brown, 4-H Agent Mitchell County, Joshua Silver, Jesse Silver, and Luke Silver, sons of Jonathan and Amanda Silver of Spruce Pine. Also, Wayne Huddleston, account manager with Duke Energy

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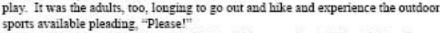
Pause...and Consider

Rain, Rain...Please Go Away!

By Ken and Jan Merop Avery County

Do you remember that little children's chorus that went something like this, "Rain, rain, go away, come again another day? Little children want to play. Rain, rain, go away."

Here in the mountains, that refrain was resounding through valleys and mountain tops. And it wasn't just the children who wanted to



Many other states felt the same effects of this unusual rainfall...echoing the song near and far.

We purposely bought flowers for our planters after May 15 to avoid springtime snow or frost. We created the outdoor beauty we had longed for with a hanging Fuchsia, hoping to attract humming birds. To our delight, a variety of Petunias, a Penta, a colorful array of Zinnias, and Rose Glow Lantana graced the porches.

Then the rains started and never let up. Occasionally, a bright bit of sunshine gave me false hope only to have the rain return even more fiercely. I bemoaned the soaking and harsh treatment the flowers were taking ... bringing in a few for reprieve. But, the flower boxes, screwed tightly to our porch railing, couldn't be moved.

However, the sadness I felt for these flowers couldn't compare to the ache in my heart for those who experienced flooding in their homes. Or friends who lost their home, car, and other belongings to a massive fire when everything had been so drenched. And there is the loss of visitors to outdoor recreational areas that depend on tourism for their livelihood.

Some wondered if it was time to build an ark!

In fact, friends of ours were traveling to visit the enormous ark in Kentucky and asked us to go along. Looking outside at the pouring rain, my husband quipped, "Maybe we should all head for the ark."

The rains we've had serve as a reminder of another childhood song that teaches us to build our spiritual houses on Christ, our solid Rock.

"Though the rain comes in torrents and the floodwaters rise and the winds beat against that house," says Matthew 7: 25, NLT, "it won't collapse because it is built on bedrock." Jesus admonished his listeners with this parable to listen and wisely follow his teaching.

Those who don't are "like a person who builds a house on sand...when the rains and floods come...it will collapse with a mighty crash." (vs. 26 & 27)

Rain or shine, let's establish our lives on Jesus who is dependable, trustworthy and faithful. Selah

CONSIDER THE LILIES

Look! Jesus says to us.

Look at the lilies and see their beauty.

They don't worry about too much or too little rain.

They receive what is sent and are dressed so artfully.

Be like them.

"If God cares so wonderfully for wildflowers...he will certainly care for you." Matthew 6:30, NLT



Ken and Jan love residing in the mountains of Avery County. Visit Jan's new blog

a pauseandconsider.net, Journeying with Jan; and Ken's photos at kenmeropphotography.com.

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

Billy Graham Evangelistic Association

The Love of God

By Billy Graham

The following is adapted from the message Billy Graham preached June 3, 1973, to some 1.1 million at Yoido Plaza in Seoul, South Korea.

In 1952, I was here in Korea. It was at Christmastime, and it was very cold. I've never been so cold in all my life, and I toured along what is now the DMZ. I was at Heartbreak Ridge, and on Heartbreak Ridge there were 12 soldiers who were huddled together. An enemy sneaked through the line. He threw a hand



grenade into the middle of them. It was going to go off in three seconds.

A soldier saw it and jumped on top of it. He grabbed it, held it to his heart, and it exploded. He died, but his buddies were saved. They took what remained of his body back to the United States, and when they held the memorial service for that soldier, the source of the sermon was the same text that I want to use today: John 15:13.

It says, "Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends." Jesus said this just before He was going to go to the cross to die for the sins of the world. He was having His last meeting with His disciples. And He said, "I have one commandment to leave with you. Love one another" (Cf. John 15:12).

A big tornado hit not far from where I live. It destroyed many houses. One man was in the basement of his house, and he had two little boys. He heard the storm coming. He heard the house falling down. He grabbed his two little boys and put himself on top of them. People found them later. He was



Billy Graham preaches to troops during the Korean War in 1952.

dead, but his two sons were alive. He had given his life for his sons.

The Bible says that God loves you. I want us to think about God for a moment. Do you believe in God? The Bible tells us what kind of a God He is. He is the creator of the whole universe. "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth" (Genesis 1:1), the Bible says. God is not only the creator, but God is a spirit, the Bible says. God does not have a body like yours. And because God is a spirit, He can be everywhere at the same time. When I am here in Seoul, I cannot be in New York at the same time because I am limited by a body. But God is a spirit.

The Bible also tells us that God never changes. The Bible says, "I am the Lord, I do not change" (Malachi 3:6). The Bible teaches that God is a holy God. And because God is righteous and holy, He is also a God of judgment. There is a Judgment Day coming.

Jesus said, "Every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the day of judgment" (Matthew 12:36). The Apostle Paul said God has appointed a day on which He will judge the world (see Acts 17:31). You will have to give an account of every word you ever said, everything you ever did, every thought that you ever had.

But the Bible also teaches that God is a God of love.

The reason God created the human race in the first place was because He loved. He wanted some other creatures in the universe to love. So, He created man and woman and put them in a beautiful garden. God said, "You can have all the fruit in the garden except one tree. There is one tree in the garden that you're not to touch. If you touch it you will die" (see Genesis 3:2-3). And Eve looked at it, and then the devil came and whispered in her ear, "Take some of it. It will make you very wise, and it will make you like God, and when God said you would die if you eat it, He didn't mean it."

Eve could stand the temptation no longer. She picked up the fruit and started eating. She got sick. Then the man ate it, too, and he got sick. And every person since then has been sick with a disease called sin. It wasn't the fruit that made them sick. It was the fact that they had disobeyed God and broken God's law. And the whole human race has that disease. We read the newspapers. We watch the television. We know that something is wrong with the human race. What is it?

The Bible says, "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23), and "The wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23).

The Bible teaches that there are three kinds of death. There is the death of your body. All of you are going to die. We know that, but you can also be alive and your soul dead. Today there are many people whose body is alive but whose soul is dead toward God. And you don't have peace, you don't have joy, you don't have happiness, you don't have assurance that you're going to Heaven. It is your soul that's dead, and your soul needs God.

The third kind of death is when your body dies but your soul lives on, separated from God. And the Bible says for that soul, the future life becomes one of weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth. The Bible has many words to describe the future of the lost soul. The Bible uses the word perish. The Bible uses the word condemn. The Bible uses the word punishment. The Bible uses the words everlasting fire. The Bible uses the word hell.



Billy Graham in 1970 at Shea Stadium in Flushing, Queens, N.Y.

Whatever word is used, this death is a terrible thing: "For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul?" (Mark 8:36). But the Bible tells us that God sent His Son to rescue the world in spite of our rebellion, in spite of our sins. God said, "I love you. I love the human race; I want to forgive them of their sins."

But how could He do it? He said, "If you rebel against Me, you're going to die." He had to keep His word, or He would have been a liar. So, what did He do? His Son, Jesus Christ, volunteered to come and live among us.

"But the Bible tells us that God sent His Son to rescue the world in spite of our rebellion, in spite of our sins. God said, 'I love you. I love the human race; I want to forgive them of their sins."

–Billy Graham

He made the blind to see and the deaf to hear. But the real reason He came was not to heal. The real reason that He came was not to teach. He came to die. Because on the cross, He took your sins, your death, your judgment, your hell. They took his clothes off Him. They took long leather whips with steel pellets on the end and beat Him until his back was bleeding. They put a crown of thorns on His brow until His face was bleeding. They put spikes in His hands and hung Him between Heaven and earth. And while on that cross Jesus prayed, "Forgive them, for they do not know what they do" (Luke 23:34).

He loves you so much that if you had been the only person in the world, He would have died for you. "Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends" (John 15:13). You're a friend of Jesus. He laid down His life for you.

And then something else happened. On the third day, He rose again. He is alive! And some day, the Bible says, He is coming back. Someday we will look up, and riding on a white horse will be the King of kings and Lord of lords, our Lord Jesus Christ. And those of you who know Christ, those of you who have given your life to Him, you are going to reign with Him. What a glorious future we have, those of us who love Jesus Christ!

Now, what does He want you to do?

First, He wants you to repent of your sins. The Scripture says, "God ... now commands all men everywhere to repent" (Acts 17:30). If we are to be saved, if our sins are to be forgiven, we have to repent. Repentance means that you confess you are a sinner and are willing to turn from your sins.

Second, receive Christ into your heart by faith. The Bible says, "Without faith it is impossible to please him." You come by faith. You cannot buy your way. You cannot work your way. You come by simple, childlike faith—like a little child would come to his or her father.

Third, openly confess Christ. All the people Jesus called, He called publicly. You must be willing to take a public stand for Christ. Would you do that today?

Let Him come and change your life. He will give you a new love for everyone. You will be concerned about your neighbor. It will make you a new father, a new mother, a new boy or a new girl. I am going to ask you today to receive Christ. Say today, "I am willing to turn from my sins; I want Jesus in my heart." ©1973 BGEA

Scripture quotations are taken from The Holy Bible, New King James Version. Give your life to the One who loves perfectly.



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Burke County Schools

Smart Helmets Alert Staff To Hard Hits On The Gridiron

By Cheryl Shuffler Burke County

As Burke County high school football teams prepare for the upcoming season, coaches and trainers are using new technology to get inside players' heads — or at least their helmets. All four football squads have received new Riddell helmets equipped with Riddell's InSite Training Tool. The technology inside the helmets monitors hits to the head and alerts coaches and trainers to possible concussions.



"These smart helmets have sensors that are wirelessly connected to sideline devices that let coaches and trainers know when a player takes a hard hit," explained Burke County Public Schools Superintendent Dr. Larry Putnam. "The player can come to the sidelines and get checked out before going back into the game. But, if it's an extremely hard hit that the helmet measures, the player can get more attention on the sidelines and go through the concussion protocol procedures."

The web-based, impact monitoring technology records nearly every head impact that occurs and builds data on players and the hits they take. The helmets are equipped with sensors on the front, top, sides and rear and record exactly where and how hard a player takes a hit to the head. That information goes to a national database to assist with studies on concussions but also gives local coaches an extra tool to help players with prevention techniques. Coaches can use the information to influence player behavior by helping correct the way they hold their heads. The technology also provides an extra set of eyes for when a coach or trainer may miss a hit.

Myron N. Stephens, Sports Medicine Manager for Carolinas HealthCare System Blue Ridge said, "We are excited that Burke County Public Schools is

invested in the health and safety of our student-athletes. The new InSite technology sensors located within the football helmets give our team of athletic trainers another tool to use. The sensors detect the collisions, not that a player has sustained a concussion, that occurs during practices and games. If the collision is of the



95 percent of that players position (i.e. QB, Linebacker, etc.) it notifies our team of athletic trainers with an alert. This can be helpful, especially if we were not able to witness the collision. We look forward to the upcoming football season and seeing what this information may give us in regard to the health and safety of our student-athletes."

Here's what the head coaches are saying about the new helmets:

- Draughn High football coach Chris Powell:
- "Overall, the kids love them. They love how they fit and that they are light weight. We do use our monitors in practice and as a coach I love it. I can evaluate the impacts after practices and then use that to teach kids better ways to tackle, block, etc. It is a great teaching tool."
- East Burke High football coach Mark Buffamoyer:
- "East Burke started preparing this summer for impact monitoring. Our trainer, Sara Woods, has done a tremendous job in implementing the technology. Our trainer had our players set up in July and did a trial run. East Burke monitors our players every day we wear a helmet. I think that anything we can do to make our players safe in a contact sport will only help enhance the game. Players continue to play as they always have. We tell them the commitment that East Burke High School and Burke County Public Schools have toward their safety. I think the game is as safe as it has ever been helmets, coaching methods, not using head as a lead point to contact, etc. We as coaches need to educate our players' parents more about the safety measures that are in place. The preservation of our game depends on it."
- Freedom High football coach Luke Little:
- "I think they are a great asset to have and will keep the kids safer. If we had enough training staff, they would be used a lot more effectively. It is hard for one person to deal with injuries, keep up with the heat and humidity and monitor a sensor device. To be used to the fullest, we need more training staff."
- Patton High football coach Jonathan Browning:
- "I think it is a good thing to have another tool to evaluate the amount of contact our players have from day to day and on any particular play. I'm anxious to see the monitoring system in action this week during our scrimmages. All the feedback I have heard from parents has been positive. I think it is reassuring to them to have a system that alerts coaches and trainers to high impact collisions."

Putnam said, "Because of this innovative technology, our players can practice and play smarter. The overall goal is to reduce blows to the head and in turn lower the risk of concussions and brain damage. This will not eliminate concussions but will help us better manage them. I would like to thank our school board for their insight and willingness to allow our teams to take advantage of this latest technology."

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

The Classroom of God's Instruction

By Pastor Dan Quollo Burke County

Recently, people of all ages began another school year. Some students began their education career, while others began their final year of classes. Students battled a wide array of emotions as some were anxious, others were excited, and some were nonchalant. They are embarking on a new school year in which they will be challenged and taught new concepts. Some assignments will be more difficult than others, but they are all designed to further educate those in the classroom.



As believers, we are enrolled in God's classroom of instruction, a classroom unlike any other. It is a classroom that is designed to further our spiritual growth and the advancement of His kingdom. Its lessons are difficult at times, but we must remember the overall purpose of God: the well-being of His children. Romans 8:28 assures believers, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." The individual willing to submit to His divine instruction will learn many lessons along the road.

All throughout the Word of God, we find individuals who learned such lessons, often through difficult and trying times. The heartbreaking trials that Job endured led to a vision in which he saw God as never before (Job 42:1-6). In spite of passing the years of childbearing, Abraham "staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; 21 And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform" (Romans 4:20-21). Years of mistreatment allowed Joseph to see God's guiding hand every step of the way (Genesis 50:20). Moses was faced with the challenge of leading a vast number of Israelites out of the bondage of Egypt to the Promised Land. How did he do so? Hebrews 11:27 teaches, "he endured, as seeing him who is invis-ible." The disciples were personally instructed by Jesus Himself throughout His earthly ministry. They learned the importance of faith, the necessity of obedience,

and the trap of self-confidence. Of all the things they observed Jesus do, I have always been intrigued they asked, "Lord, teach us to pray" (Luke 11:1). At times, they seemed to repeat lessons, a truth that is quite encouraging to us today. But even when they were being retaught things, Jesus still lovingly corrected and instructed them, patiently realizing their human weaknesses.

The Word of God provides us with instruction today. Paul told Timothy, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: 17 That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (2 Timothy 3:16-17). When its content is studied, and its truths applied, the Word of God will produce a godly individual. It is

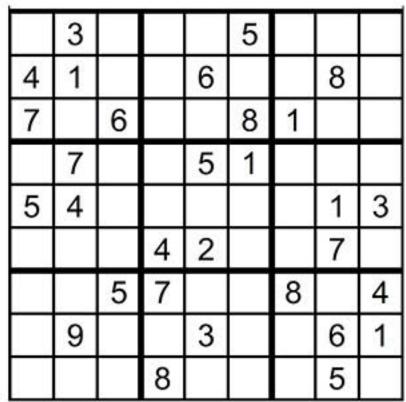
here that we find God's primary method of instruction.

Every student eagerly anticipates graduation day. For the believer, this graduation will not occur this side of eternity. But graduation for the believer will be unlike anything he has ever experienced, for he will then receive his glorified body following the rapture. John wrote, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it dath yet yet appears what we shall be; but yet began that when he shall appear.

doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. 3 And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure" (1 John 3:2-3). John teaches that, while we look forward to being like Him and seeing Him as He is, we have the daily responsibility now to purify ourselves into the very image of Christ. Ask God to create a sensitive heart that is eager to receive His instruction and learn all

the lessons you can. The reward is truly out of this world.

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



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Enjoying Everyday Life

Managing Anger So It Doesn't Manage You

By Joyce Meyer

When we attended the 10-year anniversary celebration of Mercy Multiplied in the St. Louis, Missouri area, one of the young ladies who graduated from the program shared an eye-opening testimony. She said that her father committed suicide when she was a teenager and the pain of that

situation led her to start drinking and taking drugs. When she realized her life was falling apart, she went to Mercy Multiplied for help.

The thing that really struck me was when she shared that as she went through the program, she came to realize that her problem started at the time her father committed suicide because it made her angry that he took his life and left their family. She couldn't get well and overcome her addiction to drugs and alcohol until she got over being angry with him.

Many times we have issues in our lives because we're angry about something but we don't know it. I believe that for many people, the root of their problem is due to the fact that they are angry at God because their lives haven't turned out

right, or they are angry with someone who has hurt them. They may even be angry at themselves for some reason.

The word "anger" is one letter away from "danger." Benjamin Franklin is quoted as saying, "Whatever is begun in anger ends in shame," and "Anger is never without a reason, but it seldom has a good one."1 It's so important for us to be aware of any anger issues we have because they can become dangerous and create damage in our lives.



Our Anger Epidemic

We live in an angry society, and we see the effects of it in problems like road rage, which has surged over the last few years. I recently researched statistics on anger and discovered that an estimated 1 out of 5 Americans has an anger management problem.2 According to an article I read in Newsweek, people are coming out in droves asking for help with anger management. Enrollment in anger management classes is booming and the demand for counselors is at an all-time

The Holy Spirit is the ultimate anger management Counselor! Jesus says in John 14:26 (AMP), "But the Helper (Comforter, Advocate, Intercessor-Counselor, Strengthener, Standby), the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name...He will teach you all things." We can be confident that when we go to God, He will give us the help we need to face the truth about ourselves and overcome our problems.

What Anger Looks Like

Dallas Willard, who was a professor of philosophy at the University of Southem California for 47 years and a best-selling Christian author, defines anger as "a feeling that seizes us in our body and immediately impels us toward interfering with, and possibly even harming, those who have thwarted our will and interfered with our life."3 He also says, "Anger will evoke anger on the other side."4 In other words, one person's anger feeds another person's anger.

We all get opportunities to be angry. You may not be the kind of person who gets road rage, but you may still get angry over what the Bible calls "triffing (ill-informed, unedifying, stupid) controversies over ignorant questionings" that "foster strife and breed quarrels" (2 Timothy 2:23 AMPC).

I wasted so many years of my life being angry about things that didn't really matter and trying to control people I was never going to be able to control. The truth is, there is nothing better than peace! And God's peace in our soul equals power in our lives.

So, if you want more power and energy in your life, you can't be angry all the

Find Freedom from Anger

In order to be free from anything, we have to face truth and take responsibility for our behavior. Blaming other people or circumstances and making excuses never changes anything.

John 8:31-32 teaches us that if we abide in Christ, continually obeying His teachings, we will know the truth and the truth will set us free! I want to encourage you to go to God first when you are angry. Tell Him honestly how you feel and make a determined decision to forgive. There is no sense wasting your life being angry about something that happened years ago - or even something that happened earlier today.

Take a few moments and pray something like this: "I need Your help, Lord, to deal with my anger. I thank You that because of Your love, grace, mercy and the power of the Holy Spirit in my life, I don't have to act on those foolish feelings that can cause problems in my life and hurt me and others."

Spend time quietly waiting on God with an open heart to hear what He has to say to you. Study what His Word says about anger and being angry. And trust Him to help you make some positive, healthy changes that will bring more of His peace and power into your life.

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- http://www.ucdmc.ucdavis.edu/hr/hrdepts/asap/Documents/Anger_Management.pdf, accessed June 30, 2016.
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For more on this topic, order Joyce's four-CD resource Unplug, Unwind & Destress! You can also contact us to receive our free magazine, Enjoying Everyday Life, by calling (800) 727-9673 or visiting www.joycemeyer.org.

Please note: The views and opinions expressed throughout this publication and/or website are those of the respective authors and do not necessarily reflect those of Joyce Meyer Ministries.

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.

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Will YOU Walk for Life? News Release

McDowell County

McDowell County residents plan to step up and show their support of life at the 7th annual Walk for Life. The event is scheduled for Saturday, September 22, 2018 at the YMCA outdoor walking track.

"We are planning for another

great turnout", says Amy Dowdle, event coordinator. "In past years, we've had a crowd of about 400 people, and we hope for the same show of support this year."

The Walk for Life offers something for everyone... live music, free refreshments, face painting and balloons for the kids, and loads of door prizes. Participants may take home tickets to area attractions such as Chimney Rock Park, Tweetsie Railroad, or Wilderness at the Smokies. They may also win gift certificates to local restaurants such as FATZ, Countryside BBQ, or Holly's Deli. Local

businesses have also stepped up to donate prizes such as an Amish rocking chair, beautiful handmade wreaths, photography packages, salon gift certificates, and much more. New this year is a Kid's Door Prize Table with special prizes just for young participants.

"This once-a-year fundraising event is how we raise money to help keep our doors open, says Dowdle. "Our Center is a busy place and we help a lot of local families." This year's Walk for Life goal is \$30,000.

For anyone interested in participating in the walk, early registration is only \$15 and guarantees a shirt in your size on event day. Folks can register online at www.mpccnc.org, or can download forms from the website. Preregistration is not required before the event,

but doing so by the September 13th deadline will guarantee the registrant a free Walk for Life t-shirt.

Registration begins at 9:00 am, and the walk starts at 9:30 am. The morning wraps up with awards and door prizes at 11:00 am.

Seven-year old Pierce Hollified has participated in the walk since he was a baby. His grandmother, Denise McCormick, is the Director at the McDowell Pregnancy Center. In his sweet, childlike voice, he has issued this challenge... "Will YOU come walk with me? Will YOU help babies and kids like me?"





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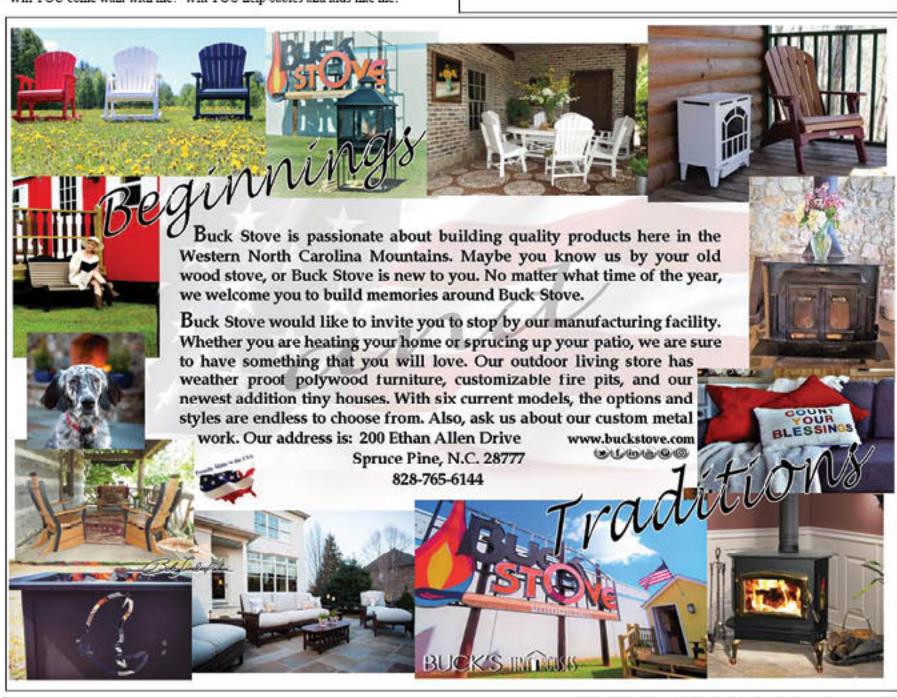
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MCC PSA

Dream Home Tour

By Beth Morris Yancey County

The Mayland Community College Foundation will host the 2018 Yancey County Dream Home Tour on October 5 from 10 am-4 pm. This fundraising event benefits student scholarships. Tickets are available at www.mayland.edu or by calling 828.766. 1233. MCC Practical Nurse graduate and scholarship recipient Jennifer Sampson shares her educational journey, achieving life goals, and expressing

gratitude for those who helped her reach her dreams along the way.

By: Jennifer Sampson

"Once upon a time, when I was a little girl, I dreamed of being a nurse. My mother worked at the city hospital and would sometimes take me to work with her. I would wander the halls staring at the nurses in amazement. As I matured, so did my compassion and desire to help others - specifically the elderly. My plan was to obtain a nursing degree immediately after high school, but a series of unfortunate circumstances prevented me from graduating on time. It wasn't until 9 years later that I faced my personal giants, returned to school, and earned my High School Equivalency. Afterwards, I worked up the courage to pursue my dream. After a decade of setbacks and successes, I was awarded with a Diploma in Practical Nursing from Mayland Community College on December 15, 2017.

I am a Staff Nurse who cares for elderly patients at the Foley Center at Chestnut Ridge in Blowing Rock, NC which is part of the Appalachian Re-

gional Healthcare System. I am also taking additional classes here at Mayland so that I can become a Registered Nurse. Moreover, I am working toward satisfying the requirements that are necessary to become a Nationally Credentialed Geriatric Nurse. Finally, if all goes as planned, my professional goals will culminate with me becoming a nurse educator.

There are absolutely no words to describe how walking in your dream feels. All I can say is that this feeling was made possible by the many scholarship donors in our community who are consistently making a difference in the lives of others. Scholarships provide help for students like me pay for tuition, fees, supplies, and gas to commute to our classes and labs or clinical rotations. Because of those who



MCC Practical Nursing graduate and scholarship recipient Jennifer Sampson.

give, I have been given an equal and unfettered change to be an active participant in the economy and enjoy the subsequent peace and prosperity that comes to successful individuals.

I now have a new sense of contentment and purpose. I walk with my head held up a little higher, not in pride, but in the knowledge that I am maximizing my fullest potential within. My basic needs are being met and I am beginning to experience an increased sense of personal peace and prosperity. Thank you all for investing in me! This is my story: a tale of victory, restoration, progression, and fulfilled dreams.

I would like to leave you with two thoughts. The first is that education is the key to a life without poverty. The second is that philanthropy still works and is vital to a healthy community and nation. With these two elements, many can break free from the cycle of financial insufficiency and become productive members of society. In the words of the religious philosopher St. Paul of Tarsus - "Be ye steadfast and unmovable, always abounding in good works, knowing that your labor is not in vain."

Beth Morris is Director of Marketing at Mayland Community College.

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