The State of the Child

By Bruce Cannon

A famous line from “The Wizard of Oz” fits well to describe the terribly uncomfortable feeling I felt while listening to the various presentations at the Mitchell County State of the Child Conference. That line said by Dorothy, “Toto, I’ve got a feeling we’re not in Kansas anymore,” is based upon the concerns that her environment had greatly changed and that she was seeing things she could not believe.

As I listened to presenters after presenters at the Conference my heart broke that the children of Mitchell County, and those all across our nation, live in a very different world from the one I grew up in. Leonard Sweet, an American theologian, church historian, pastor, and author stated in a Church growth conference some years ago, “If you were born before the year 1960 the world you were born into no longer exists.”

He was referring to the principles that were once held dear in America being let go by the wayside. The principles of common decency, a strong work ethic, respect for authority and so forth are quickly vanishing from American life and our children are growing up in this new belief system. Our streets, schools and homes were much safer then than now.

At the State of the Child Conference those who attended heard about the availability and use of illegal drugs, electronic devices being used to disseminate compromising pictures of youth, the beginnings of gang activity in Mitchell County, and surrounding counties, and that sexually transmitted diseases are present and being contracted by some of our youth. These and other startling bits of information were shared passionately by professional groups who have a huge burden for the state of our children.

What is the answer? Senator Ralph Hise, keynote speaker, did a masterful job in laying out the problem and also posing the best solution possible: the Lord. Senator Hise called on the Church to be involved through prayer, teaching of the seeds of the children in Mitchell and of volunteering to mentor and tutor youth and children.

I want to express a personal thank you to the ones who led breakout sessions, to Deer Creek Church for hosting and to those who attended. A special thank you to Senator Hise for being willing to spend the morning with us. The following groups made presentations at the Conference: Mitchell County Board of Education, Mitchell County Sheriff’s Department, Mitchell County Health Department, Mitchell County Department of Social Services, Mayland Community College, Mitchell County Faith Community, Mitchell County Recovery Ministries, Inc., Children’s Developmental Services (CDSA), TRACES, Healthy Families, Community Care for Children (CCCF), Mitchell County Preschool Services and Family Support Network.

From the Conference I pray you will seek ways to be involved. How? By first making sure our own children and grandchildren are safe. We must pay attention to the warning signs that something may be wrong. Are our children involved in drugs? Are they victims of compromising pictures of themselves sent out electronically? Do we suspect something may not be right?

Second, we must be involved in the solution. We must educate our youth and children of the dangers present. We must have opportunities available for them to feel they can come to us, as parents or guardians, with any problem they are experiencing and know we will not judge them, but believe them and act in their best interests.

Finally, we must seek out help if we suspect things to not be well. The Sheriff’s Department’s door is always open. Clergy are always willing to lend an ear, to pray and to offer help. Professional groups, such as those who spoke at the State of the Child Conference are very willing to help in any way possible.

This year’s State of the Child Conference was great! But we need more Mitchell Countians to be in attendance. Our prayer is that next year’s attendance is much better as we “partner together for the sake of our children.”
Thanksgiving

Thanksgiving, or Thanksgiving Day, is a private holiday celebrated on the fourth Thursday of November[1] in the United States. It originated as a harvest festival. Thanksgiving has been celebrated nationally on and off since 1789, after Congress requested a proclamation by George Washington. It has been celebrated as a federal holiday every year since 1863, when, during the American Civil War, President Abraham Lincoln proclaimed a national day of "Thanksgiving and Praise to our beneficent Father who is the Heavens," to be celebrated on the last Thursday in November.[2][3] Together with Christmas and the New Year, Thanksgiving is a part of the broader fall–winter holiday season in the U.S.

The event that Americans commonly call the "First Thanksgiving" was celebrated by the Pilgrims after their first harvest in the New World in October 1621. This feast lasted three days, and—as accounted by attendee Edward Winslow[5]—it was attended by 90 Native Americans and 53 Pilgrims. The New England colonists were accustomed to regularly celebrating "thanksgivings"—days of prayer thanking God for blessings such as military victory or the end of a drought.

The Revolutionary War to Nationalism

During the American Revolutionary War, the Continental Congress appointed one or more thanksgiving days each year, each time recommending the executive of the various states the observance of these days in their states.

The First National Proclamation of Thanksgiving was given by the Continental Congress in 1777 from its temporary location in York, Pennsylvania, while the British occupied the national capital at Philadelphia. Delegate Samuel Adams created the first draft. Congress then adapted the final version.

For as much as it is the indispensable Duty of all Men to adore the superintending Providence of Almighty God; to acknowledge with Gratitude their Obligation to him for Benefits received, and to implore such further Blessings as they stand in Need of. And it having pleased him in his abundant Mercy, not only to continue to us the innumerable Benefits of his common Providence; but also to smile upon us in the Prosecution of a just and necessary War, for the Defense and Establishment of our inalienable Rights and Liberties; particularly in that he hath been pleased, in so great a Measure, to prosper the Means used for the Support of our Troops, and to crown our Arms with most signal Success.

It is therefore recommended to the Legislative and Executive Powers of these United States to set apart Thursday, the eighteenth Day of December next, for Solemn Thanksgiving and Praise. That at one Time and with one Voice, the good People may express the grateful Feelings of their Hearts, and consecrate themselves to the Service of their Divine Benefactor, and that, together with their sincere Acknowledgments and Offerings, they may join the pious Confession of their manifold Sins, whereby they had forfeited every Favor, and their humble and earnest Supplication that it may please God through the Means of Jesus Christ, mercy to forgive and blot them out of Remembrance; That it may please him graciously to afford his Blessings on the Governments of these States respectively, and prosper the public Council of the whole. To inspire our Commanders, both by Land and Sea, and all under them, with that Wisdom and Fortitude which may render them Instrumental under the Providence of Almighty God, to secure for these United States, the greatest of all human Blessings, Independence and Peace. That it may please him, to prosper the Trade and Manufactures of the People, and the Labor of the Husbandman, that our Land may yield its Increase. To take Schools and Seminaries of Education, so necessary for cultivating the Principles of true Liberty, Virtue and Piety, under his nurturing Hand, and to prosper the Means of Religion, for the promotion and enlargement of that Kingdom, which consisteth "in Righteousness, Peace and Joy in the Holy Ghost."

And it is further recommended, That sermons on, and such Recreation, as, though at other Times innocent, may be unbecoming the Purpose of this Appointment, be omitted on so solemn an Occasion.

George Washington, leader of the revolutionary forces in the American Revolutionary War, proclaimed a Thanksgiving in December 1777 as a victory celebration honoring the defeat of the British at Saratoga.

In the middle of the American Civil War, President Abraham Lincoln, prompted...

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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, They God reigneth!”

Isaiah 52:7 KJV

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Lana’s Lines

What Would Peter Say?

By Lana Ellis
Kingsport, Tennessee

According to bbc.com as of five years ago there were over 1.2 billion Roman Catholics in the world, 58 million of them in North America, who believe that their church was built on the man Peter, making him the first Pope in the line of Popes to follow to this day. The Catechism of the Catholic Church (882 and 883) says this concerning the Pope “by reason of his office as Vicar of Christ, and as pastor of the entire Church full of God’s life, of the supreme, and universal power over the whole Church, a power which he can always exercise unhindered. The college or body of bishops has no authority unless united with the Roman Pontiff, Peter’s successor, as its head.”

If Peter were Pope he would be addressed as “His Holiness”, “Most Holy Father” and/or “Supreme Pontiff” which is Latin means “Greatest Priest.” Upon approaching him people would bow before him and kiss the gold ring on his right hand. The ring would be embossed with Peter’s name and could be made of thirty-five grams of pure gold like Pope Benedict XVI’s. If dressed like Pope Benedict XVI Peter would wear an ankle length white garment overlaid with a blue tunic and shiny red shoes on his feet. Draped over his shoulders would be a floor length gold cape and on his head a crown, the gold papal tiara, adorned with sapphires, rubies, emeralds and other gem.

What would Peter say about this? What would the grumpy fishermen say as he climbed out of a boat reeking from the odor of murky sea water and fish when told that as Pope his wardrobe would consist of the most elaborate and ornate vestments? What would “Pope” Peter say to his fellow apostles and disciples of Jesus while wearing a gem studded crown and a gold floor length cape? Can you imagine him extending his hand for them to kiss his gold ring? It’s even hard to imagine the ring of thirty-five grams of gold on the calloused hand of the rugged fisherman, the hand that had tugged and pulled wet heavy fish-filled nets day after day. How in the world would he explain the bright red shoes to his brother Andrew, Matthew, John and the others while they were wearing well-worn crudely made sandals? And speaking of doing some explaining, if popes are not allowed to marry what would “Pope” Peter say to his mother-in-law?

As Vicar of Christ, Peter would hold the prestigious position of “Head of the Church” with supreme and full authority over the universal Church. That would correlate what Paul said in Ephesians 1:22 that Jesus is “head of all things to the church” or in Ephesians 5:24 that “the church is subject to Christ.” When elders were appointed in the newly established churches Paul and Barnabas “commended them to the Lord” not to Peter. (Acts 14:21) If Peter were “Head of the Church” he would have the final say-so when questions arose in the Jerusalem Council concerning Gentile believers but instead it was James the Elder. (Acts 15:19) What would Peter say if someone bowed before him? Surely he would say the same thing he said when Cornelius “fell down and worshiped him”, “Stand up. I too am a man.”

Nowhere in Scripture is there evidence that the office of Pope was established. In the New Testament there are only two offices in the Church, Elder-Bishop and Deacon. In John 21 Jesus told Peter what his mission on earth would be - “Feed My lambs” (verse 15), “Feed My sheep” (verse 16), and “Feed My sheep.” (verse 17) The Greek meaning for the word “feed” in verses 15 and 17 has to do with giving food. The meaning of the word “feed” in verse 16 means to watch over and tend as a shepherd. These words describe the responsibilities of the Elder-Bishop, “teaching and shepherding.” On several occasions Peter was referred to as an Elder and in his letters he identified himself as an Elder. Never was it said that Peter would have authority over the other elders. On the Day of Pentecost when he stood before a multitude gathered in Jerusalem Peter began the mission assigned to him by Jesus. There, empowered by the Holy Spirit, he preached a dynamic sermon that resulted in about three thousand new believers. This was the beginning of the Word of God being “Fed” to Jesus’ flock of lambs (new believers) and sheep (nurturing believers).

So what would Peter say? To New Believers he would say, “As newborn babes, desires the sincere milk of the word that you may grow thereby. (1 Peter 2:2) and to the Elders he would say, “I exhort the elders among you, as your fellow elder... shepherded the flock of God among you, exercising oversight... according to the will of God; not for sordid gain... nor as lording it over those alloted to your charge, but proving to be examples to the flock. (1 Peter 5:1-3). Most importantly what would Peter say to the unfed? “Baptize and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.” (Acts 2:38) Nothing less and by all means nothing more and that includes “teaching for doctrines the precepts of men.” (Matthew 15:9) It is possible that 1.2 billion people are being misled.” What would Peter say?

(For the preface to this article see the October issue “A Rock is a Rock... or is It?”)

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

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TABLE OF GOD
By Joyce (Joy) Harwood Baldwin

Oh the table of our God has wide golden threads
A large bowl of fruit there is placed at the head
Pure wine is more lovely than man’s sweetest dream
It’s cup running over with colors unseen.

The table’s fine cover as white as the snow
With draping rich clusters of grapes on pure gold
Luscious fine manna in all golden platters
Gold ware He serves with the table now flatters.

Aroma of ecstasy filling the air
By Jesus own hands flowers touched with his care
Silver and diamonds clear rivers that flow
Warm light from His presence make God’s table glow.

Saints dressed in new garments now sing in God’s chair
The music breath aking God’s eyes look fire
Beautiful angels on golden streets trod
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Allen’ Offerings

Set Your Mind On Things Above
By Allen Buchanan
Mitchell County

To be thankful is to be conscious of a benefit received, or a benefit you are looking forward to receiving in your future. The first pilgrims to America celebrated thanksgiving for their new religious freedom. As a Christian, I am thankful for what will come to pass eventually. The more I think of being thankful or the season of Thanksgiving, it seems out of place. I would have had Thanksgiving Day or days at more places on our calendar. One day would have followed Christmas because I’m thankful that God sent His only son to save us from our sins. The next day would follow Easter. Every aspect of what Jesus was, is and will be to me as a Christian took place one Easter mom. HIE AROSE! Sadly, people just like you and me seemed thankful to meet Him, yet in this sinful world turned our back to Him and showed, ‘Crucify Him!’ Only to learn that on that old rugged cross, He bore EVERY sin of mankind so that one day we’d be in heaven for eternity with Him. I am thankful.

The older I get the more my mind is on things above. Many of you have flown in a plane and know what it’s like above the clouds. We’ve seen our solar system through the eyes of NASA. I’ve spent many a day looking up and wondering about heaven. What does heaven mean to you? I recently posted this question on social media. The most common answers were to see Jesus and express gratitude for saving them. Not just another day, but THE day of Thanksgiving! People are excited to see their loved ones and close friends. No more sin, sickness or pain. We will be rid of Satan forever!

One lady stated that aside from meeting her Savior, for the first time ever, she could sit down and have a conversation with her son who has Autism. Another lady is looking forward to walking hand-in-hand, side-by-side with Jesus and again with her husband of 35 years. He’s been wheelchair bound for 25 years. Some will see, speak, walk, hear, run, jump, sing or sit up for the first time. If we think of it on a world level, we know it has beautiful places, we haven’t seen anything yet.

God’s word tells us that is heaven we will know all He knows. Here we think of questions to ask Him. I will know why I was born with Muscular Dystrophy and never experienced life without a disease. I will understand why I accepted Jesus so young at age 7 and why He allowed me to live so long. I will know how I was placed in mom and dad’s life along with a younger brother who also has MD. I will understand how He prepared the way for Sharron and me to meet and marry. Even with this knowledge, the ultimate Thanksgiving will definitely occur on heaven’s shore. We will be praising and worshiping our Lord and Savior. Jesus Christ. It’s my prayer that I’ll meet you there!

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

While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease. Genesis 8:22

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• Tuesday, November 20th- Asheville Outlets and Harbor Inn
• Friday, November 29th – Gingerbread Houses @ the Grove Park

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

Bells of Peace
By Rhonda Gunter
Mitchell County

The Mitchell County Historical Society in collaboration with the North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resources is participating in the national program "Bells of Peace." This is a call to citizens and organizations across the nation to toll bells in their communities 21 times at 11 a.m. local time on Nov. 11, as a solemn reminder of the sacrifice and service of veterans of the WWI as well as all veterans. The way ended by an armistice agreement between the warring countries at 11 a.m. on Nov. 11, 1918.

Chair of the Board, Rhonda Gunter says, "We will be sure that the Historic Courthouse bell will be ringing and we hope that every church in the county will set aside time to participate. Not just to ring their bells, but also consider special prayers for the 116,516 who died in WWI, all veterans, and those currently serving in our armed forces."

The event originated by The World War One Centennial Commission and has been joined by the Primer Military Museum & Library, the Society of the Honor Guard of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, the National Cathedral, The American Legion, and Veterans of Foreign Wars.

In Washington, D.C., bells will toll in the National Cathedral at an interfaith service, marking the centennial of the Armistice that brought an end to hostilities in what Americans fervently hoped had been "the war to end all wars," World War I. The Bell of Peace will also toll in Washington on April 6, 2012, a day of national observance. The day marked the 11th anniversary of the 2003 invasion of Iraq and is among the most contentious days in world history. The United States officially entered the war on April 6, 1917. Some 4.7 million Americans stepped forward to serve in uniform, of whom 2 million were deployed overseas to fight.

World War I was also part of the centennial celebrations in 2016, and the event organized by the National World War I Memorial Commission in 2013 to provide education programs, public outreach and commemorative events regarding U.S. involvement in the war. The commission is authorized to create a new national memorial in Washington, D.C., to honor the men and women who served. Information on the new National World War I Memorial can be found here.

For additional information and resources: go to: https://www.worldwar1centennial.org or contact the Mitchell County Historical Society at 828-588-4371, michellis@blue游戏装备.com or http://mitchellcountyhistory.org.

100th Anniversary

Over There & Over Here
World War I in the Mountains

Sunday, November 11
11:00 a.m. - Bell Service
2:00 p.m. Program
Mitchell County
Historic Courthouse
FREE ADMISSION
SPECIAL VETERANS' DAY PROGRAM
www.mitchellcountyhistory.org

Rhonda Gunter, Chairman of the Mitchell County Historical Society.

Giving Thanks
By Jody Griffin
Avery and Mitchell Counties

Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power and the glory, forever Amen.

For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses. (Matthew 6:11-15)

Most people reading this article and this newspaper will likely be passing one day this month to place special emphasis on the giving of thanks to God for the provisions that sustain our lives every day. Many of us will not do this as part of our prayers of thanksgiving to our own willingness to forgive.

It's kind of important, given what Jesus said about it immediately after the lesson He delivered to His followers on how to pray. Because He followed those pleas for recasting sustenance (Give us this day) with the challenges of temptation and evil, then clarifying the significant role of forgiveness in our own lives. Jesus knew (and knows!) that our willingness to forgive others directly impacts our own understanding of what God offers us in Jesus Christ. Again, to be clear, what God offers all people in Jesus Christ is forgiveness.

Ministry to the incarcerated includes relating to those who because of their decisions to act in ways outside the laws' boundaries often believe that they are unworthy of forgiveness and love. NOTHING and I do mean NOTHING could be further from the Truth of the Good News (Gospel) of Jesus. Rather, many people WHILE INCARCERATED finally have an opportunity to hear about God's grace, to turn away from evil and to embrace the Truth that it is found in Romans 5:8, "But God demonstrates his love toward us in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

Because forgiveness is a decision God made on our behalf, we now must make that same decision on behalf of others. See how that works? (I know, I know...it isn't a decision we always find easy!) But it is a decision that shapes our worldview and takes from us the heavy weight of responsibility for judging others and places the even heavier burden on our personal response to those who have done us wrong...FORGIVING THEM!

To be clear, this is not a suggestion that those who do wrong should not be corrected. Correction is necessary and helpful. (Hence the term, "Correctional Institutions"). If we get off course, course correction is CRUCIAL to arriving at our destination! But this is an appeal to everyone to seek a spirit of forgiveness towards those who have done us wrong.

Because in the kingdom of God, we will be forgiven in direct correlation to our forgiveness of others.

I meet with men every week who admit that they have no one to blame but themselves for their current circumstances and who voice regret over the pain the decisions they have made have caused others. When I suggest to them that forgiveness is God's Will, many struggle to believe it and to receive it.

God knows that I am guilty of breaking government laws at times and God knows that I am guilty of breaking God's Laws at times. I am thankful God has taught me to pray for forgiveness. And I am even more thankful that I am directly accountable for the forgiveness I have received from God and am called to extend to others!

Thank you so much for the privilege given to me through your generosity! I serve as Community Funded Chaplain in the North Carolina Department of Public Safety which means that without your prayers and gifts to High Country Prison Ministry the ministry within the walls of AMC would not be possible!

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I pledge to work to bring God's forgiveness to bear in the lives of all people I have the honor to serve in the Name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Thanks be to God.

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

By Doug Harell

Relationships are the basis of our everyday lives here on this earth. They are the things that make all the difference in all areas of our lives. We start with the relationship with our parents and siblings at birth and then, as our world expands with age, this scope broadens into many facets. I want to spend a few minutes on several of these today, parents, siblings, friends, mates and last, but most importantly, with our Savior Jesus Christ.

At birth our relationship is with our parents and the environment that is created by them in the home. I was blessed with parents that were loving, hard-working, strict but fair, and that had a strong belief in attending church and teaching the importance of having a relationship with the Lord. As I was growing up I was blessed to have chores to do and was totally expected to get them done. One of the biggest challenges with our urban culture is the lack of WORK for the children to do around the house! Now I am not suggesting that everyone move to the country, even though I do truly believe that there is a different culture when the child is reared where outdoor chores are a possibility. The family unit is so important in the overall plan of life, and there is a biblical structure that is fundamental to this unit. The father is to be the head of the house and must be willing to lead in discipline and training of Christian principles. To do this he must first practice these principles and lead by example, not just talk. Now I know some of you women may take issue with this but if so, argue with the Bible, not me, because I am writing about the biblical principles that are taught in the Bible. Barbara and I have been married fifty-four years now, not every day has been perfect, but most days, and I always tried to follow the written instructions. Let me be very clear, Barbara is not a weak woman and has never been, and she sure speaks her piece and states her thoughts clearly and plainly! I have learned over the years, sometimes I am still learning, to listen and really evaluate the words and ideas. Most of the time, thank goodness, we are on the same page, but when we aren’t, I make the decision to go against what she thinks, she does support me. Now I do admit, when I go against her and it goes wrong, at times she will remind me that she didn’t want me to do that in the first place. Our children need to see us united and pulling together as a couple with a visible concern for each other. As parents we must be clear in our expectations of conduct for our children, this is an area that has really changed over the years. I was told once to do something, not given 2, 3, 4 or five times to do something. I cannot count the times I was sent to the trees our front to bring back a switch and had my legs and little but switched! You would have thought that I would have been a raving rascal. Today you can get into punching your child in public! Now I am not advocating abuse, but I guarantee that a good whipping is not going to do permanent damage, but it will instill respect for authority and following rules and laws.

Proverbs 13:24 Be that sparest his rod hath his son: but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes.

As we grow up and mature, the tide changes and we children of often times because cretakens of the parents. Even before that time we are instructed to honor our father and our mother. This is one of the ten commandments that carries a promise for several days may be many. I see and hear so many children today speaking very disrespectfully to and of their parents, folks this is totally wrong! I remember one morning dad and I were at the milk house milking and dad said something and I really smart mouthed him. I don’t remember what it was all about, but I do remember, and always will, what happened. The next thing I knew I was laying on the front porch outside the milk house where dad hadliterally kicked my behind with his foot. He was standing over me and said, ‘Son, don’t you ever speak to me like that again,’ and I never did. That might be a little drastic, but it sure taught me a lesson and always respected him because I truly got what I deserved. In the years that followed I moved home and told her mother and my mother and dad that we were home and would be there to take care of them, that we would not leave. Now again, I know that this is not always possible, but I also know that it was one of the biggest blessings Barbara or I either ever had.

Relationships with our mate are so critical in our lives and those of our children. As I said earlier, Barbara and I have been married 54 years and counting. Our society today looks at marriage as a legal agreement, not a covenant. As a friend of mine wrote, a legal contract or agreement can be changed by a legal agreement, a covenant cannot be changed. Marriage is not easy but keeping it together appeals to so many blessings. We must understand that many times our heart does not feel like we are in love, but we must make a mind decision that we made a covenant before God and others that we would be true until death do us part. Now there were probably times that Barbara wished that were not so, and maybe even me, but we agreed at the beginning that there was to be no ending except by death, and I promise you no one did or will, we are to go divorce, there would be no leaving to go home because we were mad. This was a mind decision. Given time and effort, the heart would catch up.

Don’t give up on marriage, the rewards are too great to miss, today we have five children, twenty-one grandchildren and soon to be eleven great grandchildren, blessings truly abound!

The last, but most important relationship I want to address is the relationship with our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Without this relationship, none of the others will be the same. This relationship controls our outlook and attitude toward everyone whose lives we cross. Without it, our families never really achieve the satisfaction of being together, and the caring for each other that this brings. True belief and trust in the Lord also takes a mind decision and a heart decision to be fulfilling, and it must be worked on constantly. We cannot give our lives to Jesus, say well I did that, and walk away and lose the joy of his love in our hearts. We must invest in this relationship just like we must invest in a marriage relationship if we want it to truly be a blessing to us and to those around us. We must acquire knowledge and have fear in the Lord before we really are able to feel the love that
By Barbara Harrell

In the month of November of each year we celebrate two very important holidays that remind us of our heritage and history. Those things have become rather unimportant in the current atmosphere in our country today. I would like to remind all of us that it is and has always been very important in our society. We are so blessed to live in a country where we have the freedom to worship as we please. A country where we can succeed or fail depending on ourselves and our circumstances. Many of our young people in this country do not appreciate these freedoms because they have not been taught to appreciate heritage and history. This month in our paper we have included the history of Veterans Day and Thanksgiving Day.

Veterans are the backbone of our freedoms. They have paid the price to keep this country free. Many paid the ultimate price. And yet, today the military is mocked and made fun of and our flag is disrespected. I, for one, am proud to stand tall and salute that flag that stands for our great country. (see our history of Veterans Day on page 4)

Thanksgiving Day had its beginnings when the country was not even a country. It is such a blessing to be able to have the freedom to express our thanks to God for our blessings. In our family this is a sacred day when all of our family that can come, come together to share a meal, fellowship and a camaraderie that spans the generations. We are so large it takes 3 houses to accommodate three-fifths of our family. But, nothing replaces the sweetness of taking to that community building an having each one tell us what they are thankful for this year. This year will be even more nostalgic because we have lost our matriarch. Life goes on and we will cling even closer and continue to teach our young ones the importance of our heritage. (see our history of Thanksgiving Day on page 2)

Barbara Harrell, loving mother, grandmother and great-grandmother Part owner of Blue Ridge Christian News.
What kind of gift makes your spouse happy? That's important to know, isn't it? Because people vary so much in what they like, you must know them. For example, some women might be delighted if you got them a certain kitchen appliance for Christmas or for their birthday—but there are others who if they got a kitchen appliance as a gift they'd be in "the doghouse" for the foreseeable future!

One of the keys to a good relationship is knowing what kind of gift pleases the one you love. And this is true of our relationship with God as well. What pleases Him? That's an important question. Since you are here at church, I assume that means you probably have at least some kind of desire to please God. So, what pleases Him? We see it in...

The Hall of Faith

Hebrews 11:7-12

"By faith Enoch was translated so that he should not see death ... (for) before his being taken up he was pleasing to God." These last 3 words are the key here: "pleasing to God." This is what we are shooting for. This is what we want Jesus to say to us at the end. God is the One who created us. He dreamed us up in the beginning. We wouldn't exist without Him. He formed us and shaped us and gave each one of us life. Psalm 139 says He formed us in our mother's womb. When He breathes into us the breath of life, we live. When He takes it away, we die. Our lives begin and end in Him, and during the whole of our life, we are accountable to Him. We are here on this earth to please God. Many of us may need a conscious reminder of that: we are here to please God.

We are NOT here just to please other people. This is the biggest mistake so many of us make—spending our whole lives trying to please other people. But the problem is, you can never do it. If you please one group, you are going to anger another. If you give in to one group, you offend another. You simply CANNOT please everyone.

You can spend your whole life running around endlessly in circles, and literally spend your whole life trying to please everybody. You cannot do it; you cannot please everybody!

God says the good news is, you don't have to! That is not what you are here for. You are not here to please people. You are here to please GOD.

In Galatians 1:10 the Apostle Paul said, "For am I now seeking the favor of men, or of God? Or am I striving to please men? If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a bondservant of Christ." Paul said, I am not just preaching the things that people want to hear; in fact, he was actually offending a lot of people with his teaching. But he said, I am here to please God. And you are too! You are not here to please people, you are here to please God! "If you do what I want you to do, say "where do I go to see Him, what do I want to do to remember Him?"

But here is another angle on that: we are not here just to please OURSELVES either! Sam, some people would say, "Well, I'm not a people pleaser. I am just going to do whatever makes me happy; no matter what anyone else thinks." Well that's not right either. God didn't pay you here to please other people, but He didn't place you here just to please yourself either.

Jesus said in Luke 9:23 that He was following His mastermen" that you "DEEPLY SELF- TAKE your cross daily and follow HIM." "Deeply yourself" means that as a follower of Christ, you are no longer free to just do whatever you want to do. You are no longer your own master. You can no longer say, "where do I go to see Him, what do I want to do to remember Him?"

No, when you become a Christian, you put to death your own dreams and aspirations, and follow HIM!

I Corinthians 6:19-20 says "you are not your own; for you have been bought with a price. Therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's." The question for the Christian should never be, "What do I feel like doing?" but "What does God want me to do?" So many people give the advice: "Just follow your heart." NO! The Christian is not to "follow your heart." you are to follow Jesus! Every day we are to get up and say like Jesus did in the Garden of Gethsemane, "Not my will but thine." That's what you love. You love Jesus!

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It is in this light of this gift of "pleasing God" that Job became so important if we were created to please God, then HOW do we do that? Verse 6 gives the answer. It says: "Without faith it is impossible to please Him." So, if you want to please God, the Bible says, you must have faith. Faith is God's "language," if you will, the language that pleases God.

So that helps us. If we want to achieve our life's goal and please God, we must have faith. So, one of the first questions we need to ask, then, is: What IS faith? God's word gives us the definition of that in, "Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen." Faith is believing something — really being assured of it; really being convinced of it — even though you have never seen it.

Faith is how we are saved. Verse 1 says, "For by faith, the men of old gained approval." In other words, how they were saved as Old Testament stories. And Acts 16:31 says, "Faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of God." The question for the Christian should never be, "What do I feel like doing?" but "What does God want me to do?"

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The Trail of Waldensian

Christmas Lights
By Sheryl Trow
Burke County

VALDESE — The Waldensian Trail of Faith in Valdese will light up again this year in shining holiday splendor. The 20th Annual Lighting Of The Trail ceremony will take place the Tuesday before Thanksgiving at 6 p.m. at the Trail of Faith.

With more than 100,000 LED bulbs fashioned into favorite Christmas scenes, the Trail of Lights is a Christmas lights display at the Waldensian Trail of Faith. Founded in 1993, the Trail is an outdoor museum consisting of 11 acres that portrays the history of the Waldensian people back to the time of the Biblical Apostles, according to the Trail of Faith’s website, www.waldensiantrailoffaith.org. Scattered among the property are 15 buildings and monuments that detail the history of each phase in the Waldenses’ journey.

The Trail of Faith tour brings to life the struggles faced by the Waldensian people, pays tribute to their sacrifices and also celebrates their success and triumphs, the website reads. The Waldensian people were considered to be people who lived by the scripture and were “tortured, exiled, and martyred, and still the faith that drove them from the Alpine Valleys of Italy to the foothills of North Carolina survived.” The Trail of Faith is the story of the Waldensian people.

Visitors can look forward to students from Drexel Elementary playing music and singing for a short time before Trail of Faith founder and president, former North Carolina Sen. Jim Jacumin, reads the Christmas Story.

“It’s important for us to share the Christmas story with the kids, because the kids are the ones who really like this event,” Jacumin said. “Children play an important role in Christmas and it is important for us to pass on what we know.”

As done in years past, three students will be chosen to turn on the lights at the end of the ceremony, marking the traditional lighting of the trail. This year students from Drexel Elementary will be guided by their teacher Margaret Smith, in their performance of all your Christmas favorites!

The Christmas lights display uses more than 100,000 LED bulbs that are fashioned into favorite Christmas-time scenes that keep a steady flow of traffic, generally averaging 30 to 40 vehicles a night to enjoy the lights display. Jacumin said.

“We have visitors that come all the way from Charlotte for our lighting ceremony and to see the Trail of Lights,” said Jacumin. “Each year we have between 7,000 and 8,000 visitors.”

Volunteers at the Trail of Faith, also known as “trail friends,” begin preparation work for the lighting ceremony a month in advance in order to test the lights and set up the Christmas-time scenes. According to Trail of Faith office assistant Sheryl Trow, the event relies entirely on volunteer help and those who volunteer would not be possible without the help of “trail friends.”

Everything at the Trail of Lights relates to the history of the Waldensian people but the most important thing is that the displays are focused on Jesus.

“We love having families bring their children and we want folks to just come and enjoy themselves,” Jacumin said. “The whole event really reminds us what Christmas is about, and that is doing for others and doing something for someone else. It makes the building blocks of society and it’s a joy to be able to give back — and that’s a big part of the community.”

Visitors of the Christmas lights display are encouraged to stop by the Visitor’s Center where hot chocolate and hot apple cider will be served alongside refreshments.

The Trail of Faith, Inc. is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) funded by donations from guests each year. There is no admission fee to the Christmas lights display but the Trail of Faith will gladly accept donations to help fund December’s utility bill.

The Trail of Lights will be open Nov. 20 through Sunday, Dec. 24 from 6-9 p.m. every night. The Visitor Center will be closed Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. There will be no lights on Christmas Day but the lights will be on Christmas Eve.

For more information on the Christmas lights display lighting ceremony of the Waldensian Trail of Faith, call the Waldensian Trail of Faith Office at 828-847-1893, visit www.waldensiantrailoffaith.com, or email info@waldensiantrailoffaith.org. The Waldensian Trail of Faith is located at 401 Church St. NW in Valdese.
Confusing Evil with Good
By Billy Graham

Many of our news magazines carry stories of immorality. Theologians and pastors are quoted as condemning sexual immorality under certain circumstances. The Bible says through Isaiah the prophet: "Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; who put darkness for light, and light for darkness; who put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter." (Isaiah 5:19-20). Humanity has always been dexterous at confusing evil with good. That was Adam and Eve’s problem, and it is our problem today. If evil was not made to appear good, there would be no such thing as temptation. It is in their close similarity that the danger lies.

Modern social righteousness often differs from the righteousness of the Bible. Someone has said: "A wrong deed is right if the majority of people declare it not bad." By putting this idea to the test, we can see our standards shifting from year to year according to the popular vote! Divorce was once frowned upon by society, and laws against fornication and adultery were strictly enforced. But now divorce is accepted by society, and fornication is glorified in our literature and films. The Bible says: "Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil." God has not changed. His standards have not been lowered. God still calls immorality a sin, and the Bible says God is going to judge it.

"God has not changed. His standards have not been lowered. God still calls immorality a sin, and the Bible says God is going to judge it." —Billy Graham

Happiness can often be attained by "Woe to those who call right evil, and evil right; that which is bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter." (Verse 20).

In one of novelist John Steinbeck’s books he has a character saying: "if it succeeds, they will be thought not crooked but clever." In our desire to achieve success quickly, it is easy to get our values mixed up and call evil good and good evil.

Another way to call evil good is to say that morals are relative. Someone has said: "As the occasion, so the behavior." We have changed our moral code to fit our behavior instead of changing our behavior to harmonize with our moral code. Nothing is firm today. We are not on solid ground. Young people are shifting from one faith to another and back, without any road guide to the other. Merely, they are drifting aimlessly without compass or guide.

Still another way that evil is called good is for the conscience to be persuaded, and certainly our consciences today are persuaded. But right is right even if nobody is right, and wrong is wrong even if everybody is wrong. God does not change the moral law to suit our behavior.

Hassen E. Werner, who served as a United Methodist bishop in Ohio, Hong Kong and Taiwan, once said: "There is no more startling phenomenon in our day than the respectable behavior of evil." We accept in stride the false promises of the evil behind the scenes, the empty promises of Mr. and Mrs. Doe, the cheating on exams, the suggestive conversations in the cafeteria, and the common immoralities of our times. We no longer blush, and we no longer shocked by the immorality that’s going on around us. "Woe to those who call evil good!"

"The modern conscience has been twisted and distorted so badly that it is difficult to tell what is genuine and what is false. Self-centeredness is another reason we are so inclined to call evil good. When something brings profit or pleasure to us we are inclined to call evil good, even though we know it is wrong. "But it’s what I’ve always wanted," or, "It’s good for me, although I know it’s wrong" are the planks which we have manufactured to justify evil and call it good.

If we could only focus our eyes outward instead of inward and heed the words of Luke 9:23: "for the kingdom of God and its righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you." (Matthew 6:33).

Our trouble is that we say about Christianity what we say about everything else: "What’s in it for me?" In our selfishness, we think of God as we think of everyone else—in terms of what He can contribute to our personality. In other words, we want Him to be our servant.

Also, through a popular technique called rationalization we find it easy to call evil good. How easy it is to place the blame on others, on circumstances or on fate. From Adam, said: "The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me an forbidden fruit. It is your fault, and I didn’t know what you had told me." (verse 9). The Japanese kids kidded himself into thinking he was something when he was not. He was skilled in the ancient—and modern—art of rationalization. But the tax collector, whom the Pharisees looked upon as the most sinful of men, saw himself as he was, and said: "God, be merciful to me a sinner." (Luke 18:13). Jesus said: "I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other, for everyone who seeks himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted." (verse 14).

How can we get our values straightened out? How can we sharpen our weapon brought in line? How can we stop calling evil good?

Some tell us that education is the answer to these questions. Proof to people that crime doesn’t pay, that illicit sex is psychologically harmful, that excessive drinking is harmful to the body and brain, that honesty is the best policy. "Let knowledge redeem them," they say. Others say that science is the answer. Science can make a clean bomb. Science can make a harmless cigarette. Science can cope with the problems of alcohol. Science, they say, can tap the brain of man and alter his desires and make him civilized. Science, some proclaim, is the answer to the problems of man.

But the Bible, which has withstood the ravages of time, tells us a different story. In it we possess a nature that wars against us; that seeks to destroy us. The Apostle Paul said: "If I find then a law, that evil is present with me, the one who wields my body to do evil" (Romans 7:21). Evil is present in us disguising itself as good, controlling us and deceiving us. Sin is why the stonewall was necessary. Christ died on the cross to make us one with Him—dead to sin and alive to righteousness.

"Man without God is a contradiction, a paradox, a monstrosity. He sees evil as good and good as evil. That is why some people love evil and hate that which is good—they are still in their sin." —Billy Graham

Man without God is a contradiction, a paradox, a monstrosity. He sees evil as good and good as evil. That is why some people love evil and hate that which is good—they are still in their sin.

"For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death" (Romans 8:2).

Before his convention, he saw Christ as the greatest evil and breathed out "terror and murder against the disciples of the Lord" (Acts 9:1). But after he encountered Christ on the Damascus Road, he loved what he had so fervently hated. At last he could see evil as evil and good as good, and, according to Acts 9:18, "there fell from his eyes something like scales." His values were transformed because his character had been changed by the redeeming grace of God.

Jesus Christ can do the same for you. When Paul heard the voice, he said: "Lord, what do You want me to do?" (Acts 9:6). Jesus Christ is calling you out of a world of delusion and deception in which evil is called good and good is called evil.

If only the scales fall from your eyes you can achieve God’s will. You must have a personal encounter with Jesus Christ.

At our Crusades we have seen thousands come to a knowledge of Jesus Christ. The scales have been lifted from their eyes. They have found new life in Jesus Christ. It can happen to you today. Wherever you are, you can say yes to Christ. This can be your Dungeon experience. Life’s values can be reversed. They can be changed until you call good good and evil evil. And your life can have a new dimension and a new power. ©1964 BGEA Scripture quotations are taken from The Holy Bible, New King James Version.

Say yes to Christ. Today!
Forgive or Self Destruct
By Jerry Lewis

In today’s sermon (https://itunes.apple.com/us/podcast/grace-community-church/id37565553?mt=2&ign-mpt=u%3D4) I ended talking about the consequences of unresolved forgiveness. Here’s the full information on that, taken from Grace’s marriage counseling resources.

**HARD MODEL**

R = Hurt

- Hurts are the origin of most negative behavior
- Hurts is the response to an external ACT—our RESPONSE to the act is the hurt!
- Why someone feels hurt.
- Wounded Feelings — emotional state negatively altered (happy sad)
- Threats to self—feel at risk physically or emotionally (embraceful, exaggerated, abusive language, lack of trust)
- Personalized injustice — external acts seem unfair or inappropriate
- Three reactions to hurt
- Repress — deny event happened/deny hurt feelings (Raised in abusive environment as child)
- Suppress — keep feelings bottled up inside (unfortunately hurts accumulate)
- Express — verbally and nonverbally
- Realize the event happened
- Recognize your hurt feelings because of the event
- Choose to take some form of action
- Verbal expressions are very common.
- Nonverbal expressions are:
  - Withdraw (build four)
  - Bounding fur on the table (moderate form)
  - Abusive acts toward self or one another (extreme)
  - Affairs, pornography, breaking things
  - Passive-Aggressive

Unresolved hurt leads to…

**A = Anger**

- Anger is an emotion (Eph 4:26-27: your anger do not sin)
- 1 Key aspects of anger:
  - Anger is an emotion
  - Anger is caused
  - Anger is directed somewhere
- 4 ways people deal with anger:
  - Repress — push into unconsciousness — denying it
  - Suppress — hot thoughts
  - Express in negative way — retaliate
  - Express in a positive way — identify and solve the problem
- To direct anger properly, it must be managed
- 1-step process to manage anger:
  - Feel the anger
  - Allow time for the intense feelings to pass (Diffusion time scale 1-10, sit 8-10, wait until down to 2)
- Search for causes (wounded feelings, threats, injustice, embarrassed)
- Difference between diffusion and suppressed anger (Bottled up over time)
- Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, and give no opportunity to the devil. (Ephesians 4:26-27, ESV)
- Recall a recent event where you got angry and directed it toward a person who wasn’t the problem—then analyze what was the real problem

Unprocessed anger leads to…

**R = Resentment**

- Sunglasses: resentment becomes a filter through which you see everything and everyone
- The result is negativity
- The good person out of the good treasures of his heart produces good, and the evil person out of his evil treasure produces evil, for out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks. (Luke 6:45, ESV)
- The tongue becomes a thermometer measuring the bitterness of the heart.

Unconfessed resentment leads to…

**D = Destruction**

- Destruction is the cumulative damage that results from the hurt-anger-resentment cycles over time
- Destruction surfaces across the three areas of a Christian’s life
- Physical Effects: High Stress, High BP, insomnia, sluggishness, headaches, weight loss or gain
- Good Effects: Anxiety, confusion, racing thoughts, scrambled thoughts, depression
- Spiritual Effects: Relationship with God struggles; unwilling to attend church; join a small group. Feelings of hopelessness and hostility toward God.

Jerry Lewis is Senior Pastor at Grace Community Church in Marion

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**Crossword Solution**

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OMAR
SOAP
STAMP
MOLE
ONCE
THREE
RAMP
FEAR
READS
INSLUT
LINE
GET
LEE
FLAWLESS
MARSE
AON
AMEEK
ROR
SAM
ARIA
PAD
INTO
TYRE
SPICE
FRO
AGOLDEN
FAS
NED
RUE
AF
NEAR
ELATED
TIRED
GALE
SOAR
ALIVE
LIED
ELSE
LIP
ENVY
SLEW
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**Sudoku Solution**

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3 7 9 1 5 8 2 4 6
1 8 4 2 3 6 7 9 5
6 2 5 4 9 7 3 8 1
5 3 1 8 4 2 6 7 9
9 4 2 5 7 1 3 8 1
7 6 8 3 1 9 5 2 4
8 1 3 7 6 4 9 5 2
2 5 6 9 3 4 1 7 8
4 9 7 5 2 1 8 6 3
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Clint's Chronicles on the Funny Farm

The Rest of the Story
Doug Harell

As I read this story of old, I literally had to wipe the tears of laughter from my eyes and off my cheeks. Remembering the days brought back such thoughts of fun, hard work and memories of times gone by. Of friendships that endured for years, of laughter ringing through the valley of Harrell Hill with friends that I no longer have. Clint was, and will always be, one of a kind. His warmth and friendship with many of us will never be forgotten and his ability to point and make fun of himself on paper is a trait I like no other. He was the same in person. I hope you enjoy this as much as I did in re-reading and reliving it.

Dear friends,

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

Over the River and Through the Woods, With Hope in Hand

Unlike the last several years, 2010 was a challenging one for Western North Carolina farmers. We were in the throes of a severe drought which crippled many family farms, the once fruitful soil兹baked and burning under the scorching summer sun. It was another warm and dry day at Harrell Hill Farm and I was asking God to open the heavens and pour moisture on our parched farmland. “Hast thou given?” “Surely,” answers the voice of a sister tree, “tear patch looks like a forest fire aftermath...”

The cool is gone, the water. The babbling creeks and free flowing streams slowed to a mere trickle. This day my friend Farmer Doug Harrell had dug me all over the mountainsous terrain, spraying some kind of fast-drying weed killer on the fence line. As you may recall, Doug learned to trust me on the tractor in the presence of other human beings, so he did. Close your eyes and picture the powerful Kioti tractor dragging me and 10,000 feet of yellow hose in its wake. I am trudging through the valley, pulling 5 miles of hose, spraying this modern day nuclear waste on a gizzilion miles of pig weed. (By the way, one day I will ask the Lord how come God made pig weed. It’s ugly, it chokes out plants, and even has the size of a horeseshoe nail... that just ain’t right!) Anyway, I’m cautiously running behind the tractor trying to avoid falling into a groundhogs cavern. For I know there is an underground monster wanting to drag me to the center of the earth’s core and deep down in the deep earth.

Well, God spared my life and empowered me to expertly dump that load of herbicide which, over time, would free the entire fencing from the choking weeds. Another chore box “checked,” it’s now time to repair the watering holes for the cows. At the Cow Pasture for the Water...

As we crossed the cow watering holes, although they are more like watering holes... they really aren’t tanks either, they are cement cement's. Whatever! They devices rise out of the earth and fill with water from where knows where. I mean I see no pond, the waters, nowhere in the creeks and here I am looking at a round concrete lucky-doo full of life saving water... go figure. Man, so much to learn!

Anyway, A.D. Harrell “Daddy D” to his family — told Doug we needed to unstop these fountains, pavers, watering holes... whatever in the heck they are. Seems mind and debits were hindering the flow. So off we go to do whatever a farmer does to unstop a cow’s drinking fountain.

Pride Comes Before Electrocution!

Well, there’s an electrical fence around the pastures to keep the bovines in and others out. Weeks ago, we placed the post to connect and disconnect the fence for safe entry. If you care, the power comes out of a little out-building, part of an ancient haunted shed type structure beside Daddy D’s house. My first foray to the shed I found many unexpected two-headed snakes, a gigantic spider or at least a swarm of bess to assassinate my personage. And, so as not to disappoint, I ran face-first into a GIANT spider web apprears like a Johns-Manville fiberglass factory. Thankfully not a single tickmen approached me as Doug told me always to remember to disconnect the power before touching the wire. Did! What kind of nervous does he think I am? As we headed the cow, watering spigot I though I saw Doug take the wire in his hands to steady his vault over the fence. You need to know that Doug and Daddy D are my heroes, in many regards, but especially long to be a farmer like them. And, Doug and I have long had a competitive “thing” between us... either playing golf, playing cards or eating cake. One always hopes to out-perform the other. Back to the fence.

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

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

Before long, Doug finally approached and said, “Uh, what are you doing?” At that moment I lost my will to continue this insanity... I don’t care if Doug had held this fence for longer than 1 time... I surrender. Periodic bursts of electricity passing through Farmer Clint’s body cannot add to life expectancy... I would simply love this challenge!

Pouncing even with both legs, I released the wicked barbed wire at last. I gazed at Doug with newfound admiration and inquired, “How did you do that?” I mean, didn’t it hurt you?” Confused he asked, “How did I do what?” Perplexed and annoyed I continued, “Hold onto that wire so long... it’s HOT!” As I’ve come to expect, Doug just smiled at me — that kind of smile that implies, “Oh goodness where did I find this guy?” — and said, “Clint, the fence is hot. I went under the wire, not over it.”

I burst into laughter, the kind that chokes your belly and inwards... still smoldering from the prehistoric torture fence. Still somewhat dazed, I asked Doug, “Why did you let me do that — I could have been killed?” With that wrinkle in his eyes and wonder in his mind he replied, “Well, I don’t know about that. It’s not likely you would be killed. But I’ve learned that when you mess up it’s with gusto... and by the time I catch what you’re doing it’s too late to save you.” I grunted, and we moved on to help Daddy D unplug the cow fountain.

A Final Challenge to Farmer Doug!

Tapping on Doug’s shoulder, I pronounced with utmost confidence, “Get you can’t hold a hot fence as long as me.” incredulous, he said, “Yeah, you win that one, Pollard,” as he walked away chuckling and shaking his head.

I thought about my misplaced pride and how trying to out-do another, much less a friend, is not what God wants from me. Inappropriate display of pride is shocking — get it, shocking? (That’s funny I don’t care who ya are)Regardless of my incompetence as Farmer Clint, I know that the Lord stood there with me — although He likely kept His distance while I held that hot wire.

Once again, miraculously, God proved that He is God and allowed me to “catch death” on the funny farm.

Humbled in the Hills,

Farmer Clint

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www.brcenews.com
Pleasant Ridge Baptist Church
continued from page 11

And we could go on and on throughout this passage and others. Biblical faith is NOT you just deciding to believe whatever you want, and “claiming it” from God. It is important that you understand this, because you have this kind of teaching a lot from so-called “faith” teachers: claim whatever you want from God. He’s given you a blank check; you just write in there whatever you want. You “name it and claim it.” That’s very common teaching. But that is NOT Biblical faith. Biblical faith is when God tells us something in His Word first, and then we respond to His word with faith and obedience. I hope you see the difference. In the false teaching, we’re trying to tell God what we believe Him for, but in Biblical faith, God shows us in His Word what He wants us to trust for Him.

See, if I had “name it claim it” faith, I might say something like, “I believe in God in so much, that I believe that He will give me the power to stop down from this pulpit, walk outside, and run a 26-mile marathon without ever having practiced one day! I really believe it!! God can do anything!!!” And that would indeed be an amazing step of faith, wouldn’t it? It would be really miraculous if God did that. But I think what you would find when you left this church and drove down the road a bit, would be my body lying on the pavement somewhere — because although I might have had “faith,” it wasn’t BIBLICAL faith; what I was believing God for, wasn’t based on His word.

See, faith that we just “dream up” like that is not what pleases God. The kind of faith that pleases God is when He gives us HIS WORD and we believe on it, and act on it.

IV. Faith ThatPLEASES God ACTS!

And this idea of ACTING on what God says in His Word is another vital element of Biblical faith. If you notice, ALL of the people you read about here in this great chapter, DID SOMETHING because of their faith:

— 4 Abel offered a sacrifice
— 5 Enoch walked with God
— 7 Noah built the ark
— 8 Abraham left his home and went to the land of promise
— 11 Sarah had a child
— 21 Jacob gave orders about his bones
— 24 Moses turned his back on the riches and power of Egypt
— 31 Rahab hid God’s spies to Jericho

One after another, every single one of these people DID something in response to God’s word.

NONE of them sat there and did nothing.

Which reminds us: FAITH ACTS. Faith responds to God, with belief in the heart, and action in the life. And if you don’t act on it, it’s not really faith.

James makes it clear: telling vs. doing in Chapter 2: “Faith without works is dead!” (Jas. 2:17, 26)

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

Cold weather is here...warm up with Carhartt!

FOR THE ENTIRE FAMILY

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12451 Hwy 226 S., Spruce Pine (828) 766-7502
8:30am-5:30pm M.T.W.S.
Closed Sunday - Go to Church

Thanksgiving blessings to everyone

Marlene’s Meditations

Claiming Our Inheritance
By Marlene Hous
Burke County

In the book of Genesis, Sarah, Abraham’s wife, demonstrates a kaleidoscope of countries, cultures, and complications. She encountered danger in Egypt and the Philistine land as well as in her travels. The different cultures in which she lived influenced her in making choices, and her experiences complicated life. But through it all, God saw the colorful tapestry of her life with the strong threads of faith. As a result, she helps us to understand that we can follow her legacy of steps to a mighty faith and point others in the same path. Follow the acronym for a glimpse of Sarah, the princess of God’s promises, and her influence on our faith.

S — The simple, historical life of Sarah is filled with danger, daring disobedience, and riches, and these facets of her life parallel spiritual truths. Likewise, through our life experiences, God grows our newborn faith.

A — Sarah’s existence is a spiritual anointing in Isaiah 31:2, for the LORD brought forth a miracle in her barren womb and fashioned a mighty nation to provide a Saviour for the world. Like Sarah, God can, out of our spiritual barrenness, nourish a strong faith that leads others to Christ and forms His eternal kingdom. We, like Sarah, are trophies of His grace.

R — The influence of Sarah’s faith bursts forth in Galatians 4:21-31 where she becomes more than her historical life. She is now a symbol of freedom found in the LORD. The story of Sarah helps us to understand that we are the children of God’s promises.

S — She found His promises true and empowering in her life, and we can do the same.

A — The final announcement of faith’s fruit is found in Hebrews 11:11, and Sarah beckons us to follow her footsteps to obtain a strong faith.

H — Sarah’s legacy is given to us in 1 Peter 3:6, and her faith merits a lifetime of discovery.

Sarah was a real woman with faults and failures. We enter her story in Genesis 11:29, at a desperate time of her life. She delighted in being the wife of Abraham but despised in her barrenness. Infertility in her day was equivalent to being useless and subject to being accused of sin. We follow her as she:

• Falls into the pit of solving her own problems;
• believesthe culture of the day; and
• succumbs to her emotions.

However, her grand and glorious description in Hebrews 11:11 adds God’s perspective. As she enters the Hall of Faith, Sarah is a living testimony to the certainty that God can and will use women who have stumbled and fallen in life. Just like Sarah, bit by bit, Jesus works: His grace and wisdom into our life’s stories, and He fashion us into His image (2 Corinthians 3:18). Sarah’s faith shines brightly in Hebrews where her faithfulness to us and her legacy of trust in the LORD has moved Christian women worldwide for millennia. We finish our journey with her as she:

• discovers the strength of her faith to fulfill God’s physical plan for her;
• allows her faith to transcend her needs, and
• decides to live the promises of God.

We can rest assured that, as God molded Sarah into a woman destined to shine His light forever, so will He pour Himself into every detail of our lives.

Sarah has bequeathed to us our inheritance of the influence of her heirloom faith. They bequeath: the brilliant diamonds of faith fashioned under the tremendous pressure of barrenness, the dazzling opals of holiness forged in the fires of submission, and the glowing pearls of a meek and quiet spirit formed around the imprints of waiting and disclosure.

How do we claim our inheritance? The first step of the journey is to thoroughly search the stories in Scripture so that the riches are discovered. Develop a passion to explore repeated things such as words, concepts, patterns, etc. Examine the subtle message of things absent, and inspect the mention of things for the first time. Then follow the trail of these clues to sprout principles elsewhere in the Bible. Finally, enjoy these crow jewels as a princess, a daughter of the King. Happy hunting!

Marlene Hous 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 is their church. Her contact is marlenehous@bellsouth.net

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Loneliness
By Alan Griffin

As we approach the twilight years of our life the busy schedule of family and friends soon fade into a time when we find ourselves alone. Our spouses have passed over or are no longer with us as we live our separate ways. After spending so many years working, raising children, and consuming time with relationships, we find we have reached a point in life where others just don’t think about us as much. As we age we lose certain freedoms and slowly, but surely, we find ourselves confined to home alone. Please do not despair. Our bodies age for a reason. It slows down the brain and body life so we can spend more time focusing on our future.

We are not alone.

It is an urge to re-acquaint myself with God. I don’t find myself special in any way. The articles I write on our various websites are fairly basic stuff. I take a subject or a work and research it on biblesgateway.com. I study the scriptures and espouse on the verses using my personal testimony and life experiences. Anyone can do it. My desire is to grow closer to our heavenly Father. The articles are a simple way of sharing with you what I have learned. I do okay with one on one conversation, but I would never attempt to address a large group of people. It just isn’t my way. It seems so impersonal. When I am here it is just a conversation between you, me, and God.

Woe to them who have eyes but don’t say anything. I think about the scripture I just read, and I try to remove all other thoughts from my mind. I start a conversation with my heavenly Father. I thank Him for the day and the abundance of things He has provided me. I discuss with Him my family’s physical and spiritual needs. Then I close the conversation with Him discussing the issues of those who access my ministry. I spend the last part of my prayer time discussing worldly issues.

Each one of us is greater than the worst we have ever done. Looking back only past mistakes is not conducive to happiness. Never be a prisoner of your past, it was just a lesson, not a life sentence. We are always to look toward. Each of us has done things we wish we could do over. I wonder not failures in life are for our own education, and are placed there for the future of our success. It is a good thing to spend time discussing our past with our heavenly Father. Take the time and list everything that comes to mind. A prayer journal is a wonderful tool of prayer. Journal the issues that are on your mind, and then meditate on God’s Word. Then tear the page out of the book and put it away, and throw it in the trash, because those things are totally behind us. All the sins of mankind are forgiven so there is no reason to dwell on the past anymore.

Rock bottom is the solid foundation on which I built my life. Twenty years ago I separated myself from anything that was contrary to the will of God. If you are a new Christian, or are starting out late in life, base your new adventure on the Rock, the cornerstone, Jesus Christ. He is the stone the builders rejected. His foundation is sure and true, and His relationship with you will be based on what is right. Many matters are just now overeating drug, alcohol, and physical abuse. We find that we have separated ourselves from our family, and loneliness is one of our greatest struggles. Many of us feel sorrow and think, “Who cares if one more light goes out when the sky is full of stars?” Tell you with great conviction that your light never goes out. You are an eternal being. One way or another you will live forever. For none of us lives for ourselves alone, and none of us dies for ourselves alone. Romans 14:7

Evangelist and author Alan Griffin started the Kidschrin Ministries in 1997. It has worked with inner-city kids, for 21 years. He founded a need for specialized Biblical literature that would reach people of all ages, and has been writing since 2001. The ministry has expanded its website to reach around the world. Kidschrin.com, millenniachristian.com, teenschrin.com, seniorschrin.com, pictureverse.com, Kidschrin.org. We have an outreach of over 15,000,000 people last year with 36,000,000 impressions. If you have any questions for Alan you can reach him at alan@kidschrin.com

Neuropathy

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- Difficult sleeping due to pain
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The crisp cool air hit his flesh, biting into the fingertips that grasped the walking stick. The wind on the peaks had yet to cause anything more than a stirring of the fading leaves here in the hollow through which he trod. A subtle hint of late summer air was filtered into the near-silent sounds. He turned to his right, and the switchback of his path was the only indication of the height above. Ahead, a fallen tree lay across the path, a barrier that was brushed aside with ease. He took a deep breath, and the cool air filled his lungs, its crispness a testament to the changing season.

The LORD is my Shepherd
By Timothy W. Tran
Burke County

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The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not want.

"Our Father, which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name."

The air that day had been crisp, with a matching breeze. The brilliance of the sky was only enhanced by the majestic snow-capped peaks which reached to heights of which he had never seen; at least not from the foot of the mountain. With each breath, he inhaled the pure air of the mountains, his lungs filling with the crisp, invigorating breath of nature.

"The air he breathed, the landscape, the sky itself were all part of a greater design."

Once we are aware, the awakening of our spirit allows us to know him and use his name. In that moment, as we enter into his glory, as it is by his Grace, we are saved. It is at that point we can boldly say, He is my shepherd.

"The herd in the valley of the shadow of death..."

The world of the mountain was a realm of mystery, beauty, and adventure. In the valley of the shadow of death, he found solace and comfort. The mountains were his home, and he was at peace.

"He maketh me to lie down in green pastures, He leadeth me beside still waters."

The pure, clear waters of the mountain streams were a balm to his soul, a place of rest and renewal. The green pastures were a symbol of abundance and provision, providing nourishment and sustenance.

"He restoreth my soul: He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake."

Matthew 6:9-13, The Model Prayer

"Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name."

The commandments were clear: to love the Lord with all his heart, soul, mind, and strength; to love his neighbor as himself. These were the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

"You shall not murder; You shall not commit adultery; You shall not steal; You shall not bear false witness; You shall not covet."

The paths of righteousness were marked by the absence of sin, the presence of love, and the commitment to the well-being of others. The mountain peaks were a testament to the beauty and power of righteousness.

"For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen."

The mountain peaks stood as a reminder of the kingdom, the power, and the glory that belong to him. The paths of righteousness were a pathway to that kingdom, a way to live in harmony with the living God.

"Let us in all things, and above all things, love one another."

The paths of righteousness were a path to love, a way to love one another as he had loved them.

"Amen."

The mountain peaks were a symbol of the kingdom, the power, and the glory that belong to him. The paths of righteousness were a pathway to that kingdom, a way to live in harmony with the living God.

"The LORD is my shepherd: I shall not want."

The paths of righteousness were a way to love one another, a path to the kingdom that was to come.

"He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake."

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bear creek baptist church

Thank Him
By Bruce Cannon
Mitchell County

The chorus to one of my all-time favorite Christian songs, I’ve Got So Much To Thank Him For, states: “...I’VE GOT, SO MUCH TO THANK HIM FOR...SO MUCH, TO PRAISE HIM FOR...WELL YOU SEE, HE HAS BEEN SO GOOD TO ME AND WHEN I THINK, OF WHAT HE’S DONE AND WHERE HE BROUGHT ME FROM I’VE GOT SO MUCH, TO THANK HIM FOR.”

It’s hard to believe that Thanksgiving is almost here. And, I am so thankful it is God has been so very good to all of us especially here in Western North Carolina. While so many of our North Carolina neighbors are dealing with the loss of their homes due to Hurricane Florence and Michael we, here in Western North Carolina, were spared. Our hearts go out to those affected so badly and we pray God moves upon the hearts of many to help these folks rebuild.

May I share a few of the other things I am so thankful for?
First, for salvation. Thank God He made a way for us to be saved and to be able to have His Presence, His Peace, His Grace and His Love in our lives.
Second, I am thankful for my Church family. Every pastor should feel that the Church he serves is the best. Why? Because when God calls a pastor to a Church he gives that pastor a deep, abiding love for that congregation.
Third, I am thankful for opportunities the Lord is giving for service to Him. Our Church family is involved in Celebrate Recovery, Good News Club, AWA-NAS and so much more. All of these ministries provide opportunities to tell our needs and mentors around that God loves them and so do we.
Fourth, I am thankful for a wife who loves me, walks beside me and sees herself as a minister of the Lord’s also. She and I have been married for forty years and my love for her is greater today than when I was first saved. That is what we are able to be able to have her support, prayers and encouragement.
Fifth, I am thankful for a little boy who has my heart strings. Our grandson is now sixteen months old, is very active, happy and healthy. His smile brightens any dark day and his hugs make all our cares go away.

I am thankful for these blessings and so many more! Our prayer is that you and your family can sit down just a few minutes and recount the many, many blessings God has abundantly bestowed. Happy Thanksgiving from my Family to you.

Rev. Bruce Cannon currently serves as the Senior Pastor of Bear Creek Baptist Church in Behrviile. 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.

When I See It
By Jim Huskins
McDowell County

Recent controversy surrounding the appointment of Erett Kavagnah to the US Supreme Court reminds us that our highest judicial body is often a cause of public concern. This was certainly true when the court decided the case of Jacobelli v. Ohio in 1964. In this proceeding, the Court was called upon to define pornography. Writing for the Court, Justice Potter Stewart explained that, while he lacked the ability to articulate the concept of pornography, "I know it when I see it." Justice Potter’s seven-word legacy came recently as I considered the concept of “sin.”

When I committed my life to Christ at age eight, I thought I understood sin. I had been in church since I was an infant, and since children were not removed from worship services, I heard many sermons. Most of them mentioned specific sins as did many of my Sunday School Lessons like Justice Potter. I may not have been able to explain the concept, but I was confident I would recognize sin when I saw it.

Eleven years later, when I was attempting to process what I perceived as a call to ministry, I realized that I needed a better understanding of sin. To some degree, Bible college and seminary training added to my confusion. I learned the Greek words translated as “sinned” and “discovered” that the most common one is an archery term which means “missing the mark.” Competitive bowmen in ancient Greece did not aim at the middle of a series of concentric circles. Their “unbelievers” was a small circle surrounded by a cord or porchon on a narrow pin. Arrows either hit the target, or they didn’t. No points were awarded for being close. But is sin actually defined by the Bible as aiming for but missing a target? This notion brought no resolution in my attempt to understand sin. I spent the next several decades defining sin as “anything which separates us from God.” Not bad as it goes but still too shallow to bear scrutiny today than when I was first saved. That is what we are able to be able to have her support, prayers and encouragement.

One of the core tenets of our faith is that we are incapable of keeping those instructions perfectly. We desperately need salvation by grace through faith. Romans 2:8 makes this point clear: “Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the works of the law.” The word translated as “without” by the KJV is better understood in modern English as “apart from.” We are not without the atonement which only the sacrifice of God’s Son makes possible, but at the same time, it is ridiculous to assume that salvation by grace through faith somehow makes us exempt from following God’s instructions for living. Paul also states in this point clear three verses later in Romans 3:11: “Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yes, we establish the law.”

Our faith “establishes”—a better understanding is “upholds”—God’s law. In fact, our willingness to follow God’s instructions for living is the Biblical standard for showing that we have acquired saving grace. Jesus says in John 14:15, “I’ve loved you, keep my commandments.” And 1 John 2:2 says, “And hereby we know that we know him, if we keep his commandments,” The Bible defines “sin” as failure to keep those commandments. “Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid.” (Romans 6:1, 2)

Paul’s insistence that we somehow think that God’s Torah was repealed the moment Jesus died. Paul in fact teaches the opposite. “What shall we say, is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I did not know sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet. (Romans 7:7) Jesus taught in Matthew 3:17 that Torah would be in full force for as long as heaven and earth stand. We are not without the atonement which only the sacrifice of God’s Son makes possible, but at the same time, it is ridiculous to assume that salvation by grace through faith somehow makes us exempt from following God’s instructions for living. Paul also states in this point clear three verses later in Romans 3:11: “Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yes, we establish the law.”

Our faith “establishes”—a better understanding is “upholds”—God’s law. In fact, our willingness to follow God’s instructions for living is the Biblical standard for showing that we have acquired saving grace. Jesus says in John 14:15, “I’ve loved you, keep my commandments.” And 1 John 2:2 says, “And hereby we know that we know him, if we keep his commandments,” The Bible defines “sin” as failure to keep those commandments. “Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid.” (Romans 6:1, 2)
by a series of editorials written by Sarah Josepha Hale,[3] proclaimed a national Thanksgiving Day, to be celebrated on the 4th, the last Thursday of November 1863. The document written by Secretary of State William H. Seward, reads as follows:

The year that is drawing towards its close, has been filled with the blessings of fruitful fields and healthful skies. To these bounties, which are so constantly enjoyed by us that we are prone to forget the source from which they come, others have been added, which are of so extraordinary a nature, that they cannot fail to penetrate and soften even the heart which is habitually insensible to the ever watchful providence of Almighty God. In the midst of a civil war of unusual magnitude and severity, which has sometimes seemed to foreign states to invite and to provoke their aggression, peace has been preserved with all nations, order has been maintained, the laws have been respected and obeyed, and harmony has prevailed everywhere except in the theatre of military conflict, while that theatre has been greatly contracted by the advancing armies and navies of the Union. Needful diversions of wealth and of strength from the fields of peaceful industry to the national defence, have not arrested the plough, the shuttle or the ship; the ax has enlarged the borders of our settlement, and the mines, as well of iron and coal as of the precious metals, have yielded even more abundantly than heretofore. Population has steadily increased, notwithstanding the waste that has been made in the camp, the siege and the battle-field; and the country, rejoicing in the consciousness of augmented strength and vigor, is permitted to expect continuance of years with large increase of freedom.

No human counsel hath devised nor hath any mortal hand worked out these great things. They are the gracious gifts of the Most High God, who, while dealing with us in anger for our sins, hath nevertheless remembered mercy. It has seemed to me fit and proper that they should be solemnly, reverently and gravely acknowledged as with one heart and voice by the whole American people. I do therefore invite my fellow citizens in every part of the United States, and also those who are at sea and those who are sojourning in foreign lands, to set apart and observe the last Thursday of November next, as a day of Thanksgiving and Praise to our beneficent Father who dwelleth in the Heavens. And I recommend to them that while offering up the ascriptions justly due to Him for such singular deliverances and blessings, they do also, with humble penitence for our national perverseness and disobedience, commend to his tender care all those who have become widows, orphans, mourners or sufferers in the lamentable civil strife in which we are unavoidably engaged, and fervently implore the interposition of the Almighty Hand to heal the wounds of the nation and to restore it as soon as may be consistent with the Divine purposes to the full enjoyment of peace, harmony, tranquility and Union.

In testimony whereof, I have hereunto set my hand, and caused the seal of the United States to be affixed.

Done at the city of Washington, this third day of October, in the year of Our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-three, and of the independence of the United States the eighty-eighth."
A Thanksgiving of Blessings

Pastor Terry Cheek
Burks County

We find ourselves in November with two very important days ahead of us, Thanksgiving and Veterans Day! I don’t know about you, but Thanksgiving is to me a day of perspective. Looking back over the year, I can’t help but consider all the blessings that God has given and continues to give. This year brings to mind an old hymn, Count your Blessings. Here are the words in case you haven’t heard it or maybe it has been a while.

“When upon life’s illusory you are tempest-tossed,
When you are discouraged, thinking all is lost,
Count your many blessings, name them one by one,
And it will surprise you what the Lord hath done.

Refrain:
Count your blessings, name them one by one;
Count your joys, seeing what God hath done;
Count your many blessings, seeing what God hath done.

Are you ever burdened with a load of care?
Does the cross seem heavy you are called to bear?
Count your many blessings; o’er you will He lead you,
And you will be singing as the days go by.

When you look at others with their lands and gold,
Think that Christ has promised you His wealth untold.
Count your many blessings, money cannot buy,
Your reward in heaven, nor your home on high.

So amid the conflict, whether great or small,
Do not be discouraged, God is over all;
Count your many blessings, angels will attend,
Help and comfort give you to your journey’s end.”

Lord and Savior. Find yourself a Bible believing, preaching, teaching church and join it, stay there and support it. Seek believer’s baptism as a public testimony of your salvation. Find life as you never believed it could exist! This is Thanksgiving! Enjoy the blessing of your meal and the freedom paid for by our veterans. Take time to remember the blessings in your life and always thank God for each and every one. Until next time may God keep you family in His grip.

Terry is pastor of Calvary Missionary Baptist Church in Marion, NC. You can contact Terry by email at terrycheek65@gmail.com, through www.theinspiringword.org or by phone at (828) 460-6120.

And then shall observe the feast of weeks, the firstfruits of wheat harvest, and the feast of ingathering at the year’s end. Exodus 34:22

HONORING ALL WHO SERVED

VETERANS DAY

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As we close I must tell you about the greatest blessing a person can receive, the blessing of salvation by grace and through faith in Jesus Christ. No worldly accomplishment can come close to the miracle of being born again. If you have not experienced it I want to invite you to take time right now and call upon Jesus to forgive your sin. Ask to be born again by grace, placing your faith in Christ as
Tucking God...Even When It's Hard
By Preacher Chris Rathbone
Mitchell County

Sitting here in front of this computer to write right now is a struggle. This has been a tough week for many in our small community. Another high school student has passed away. This is two years in a row that Mitchell High School students and staff have had to deal with the death of a student. Another young life that seemingly ended way too soon. Another child, sibling, grandchild, friend, etc., gone too suddenly has left family and friends in a state of shock.

Even as a preacher I have to admit that I struggle when something that seems like such a tragedy happens. The right words seem impossible to find. If there are any. There’s no way that any of us who have not experienced the loss of a child can ever begin to have any understanding of what that feels like. My heart has wondered, my mind has thought, and I’ve asked myself, “What if that was my child?” Even asking that question, we have no answer because we haven’t experienced it. Our family has shed tears this week, but not from the same pain others have in their hearts. In a small community, you are often allowed the privilege to get to know people. You watch their kids grow up with yours. Sometimes you get to coach these kids in youth sports, watching them play on the same teams as your own kids. You grow to love them and get to interact with and know their families. They have the same classes in school with your own children. Often we see ourselves as a family more than just a community. We celebrate successes and blessings when it’s hard and mourn together in tragedy. We are privileged to share life with people that we have grown to know and love over the years.

With a heavy heart, I travelled out to Mitchell High School the next morning. The school had planned an assembly for the students who wanted to come. Several other ministers were there, hoping to somehow help. So many people I know had prayed for a miracle that never came. The look on everyone’s face, from the students to the teachers and staff, expressed the heavy burden each one was carrying. Broken hearts were longing for healing. Questions in their minds and knowing there were no easy answers. Ministers praying for the right words, knowing that no matter what we said, the hurt in everyone’s heart was something all of us were just going to have go through.

In tough times like this, personally, I struggle with thinking of all the potential that seems to be lost when a person dies so young. Thinking of all the life they had left to live, the other lives they could have impacted, the ways they could have contributed to their community and especially to the work of the Gospel of Christ. I’m tempted to think, “Lord, I believe I would’ve done things differently.” I’m just being honest. And then I guess God begins to work.

One by one the teachers, staff, and students begin to stand up and testify of how this young man had impacted their lives. How that his life was a great example of faithfulness to Christ. Teachers talked of his commitment to excellence in his studies. Friends began to tell of his willingness to be a friend to all. There were stories of how he showed respect to his teachers and leaders. Coaches remembered his hard work in striving to be better in whatever he did. One by one listened to classmates speak of his devotion to his Savior Jesus, how he loved to talk about the Lord, his commitment to morning devotions and daily Bible reading. Even as tears of mourning flowed down faces, voices over the room echoed the hope we have in Jesus Christ. Of how His death and resurrection has conquered the grave and secured eternal life to those who would give their lives to Christ.

Students were quoting scriptures and reading from their Bibles. Even though they were sorrowing, they were not sorrowing as those who have no hope! Much of the same happened at the memorial service. Worship songs were sung, memories of this young man’s influence and life were shared by family, and family members of God cheered up the hope of the Gospel of Jesus.

In all this God reminded me that there’s more involved in the things of this life than just the here and now. There’s a bigger picture being painted by God himself, one’s greater plan being fulfilled, and eternal life being preached to hearts of those who need it. Even though you and I may never understand, never have the answers to questions in our hearts or ever see God’s great plan now, one day when we are spending eternity with Jesus our Savior, all things will be made plain. That my friends is what will help us all to trust God... even when it’s hard.

Trust in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not on thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths. Proverbs 3:5-6

Preacher Chris Rathbone serve as Pastor at Mine Creek Baptist Church.
Four Things the World Needs to See from the Church
By Jason Koon
Burke County

It’s not hard to see that the Church in America is in a state of decline. And while this isn’t the first time in American history the Church has seen declining like this, there is no question something’s not quite right. Millennials are leaving in droves and in many cases, they’re taking their Gen X and Baby boomer parents with them. On top of that, according to a recent study, 50% of the regular Church attendees who remain say they rarely, or never experience God at Church. So what gives? This is the second article in a series looking at what the world needs to see from the Church if we’re going to remain culturally relevant in the coming decade.

Compasion

It seems odd, ironic, but appropriate, that I would be writing about compassion on the month we go to the polls for the midterm elections. Election season is one of those times when compassion seems to be in short supply. Even well-intentioned believers can get caught up in the fray, arguing policy, demonizing opponents, and forget that Jesus said that His Kingdom is “not of this world.”

Compasion, however, is not a political ideology, it is not a set of governing principles, or an emotion or a feeling; compassion is a verb. The writings of the Old Testament prophets are filled with accounts against the people of God for not demonstrating mercy and compassion. These prophets held up the lack of compassion among the people, as Exhibit A that the people have abandoned God, but they never once cite the feelings or the emotions of the people, it is always about their actions.

In Micah 6:8, we are commanded to “do justice,” not to merely feel good about it or agree that it’s a good idea, but to do it. Micah continues, telling us to “love mercy,” which carries with it the same strong sense of doing. The Hebrew word for mercy could be translated, loving-kindness, kindness, goodness, or even covenant faithfulness. It is always the kind of mercy and faithfulness that is expressed through action. There is no room in this verse for someone who feels positively predisposed toward compassion and mercy but is unwilling to participate.

Jesus carries this Old Testament theme to its full conclusion in Matthew 25:40, telling us that what we do for the least of these we are doing for Him. In this passage, He paints a picture of His Kingdom as a place where the poor are looked after, and the marginalized are included. And above all, He shows that this happens because of the compassion of His people.

The world desperately needs to see this vision for His Kingdom fleshed out in His Church today. It is not enough for us to talk about His Kingdom, we must begin learning to live it. Many people know what we’re against, and for good reason, we should defend the unborn, we should stand for biblical morality, but we should also stand for mercy and compassion. The Church is a people founded on the compassion of God in the cross, and we must be the first place where those on the margins of society are not just accepted, they are embraced. We must embrace both, just as we were embraced by God – even while we were still separated from Him (Romans 5:8). The Church desperately needs to recover a sense of the compassion demonstrated towards us by Jesus, and the world desperately needs to see the compassion of God towards them as demonstrated through His people.

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

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Cultivating the Discipline of Praise

By Pastor Dan Qarolo
Burke County

As we approach Thanksgiving, our hearts are often directed to consider all the many blessings we have received from God. Our hearts are warmed with praise as we look back over the year to see all the many ways in which God has blessed us. He truly has been "bountifully abundantly above all that we ask or think" (Eph. 3:20). When we consider our failures, His gracious provision is that much more precious.

But this mindset of praise is not to be limited to one day a year but should characterize our lives every day. Many wrongly believe that praise is a person's natural inclination; yet the lack of praise should be sufficient proof to indicate that it does not just occur naturally. Praise is a discipline that must be intentionally cultivated in our lives, for it governs each moment of our lives.

God knew man would have a tendency to forget that which He has done. Some of the most memorable events in the history of Israel would have been forgotten if they did not make a conscious effort to recall them. For this reason, one frequently sees the erection of altars and monuments throughout the Old Testament in order that succeeding generations would be directed back to that to which God did (e.g., Joshua 4:20-24). We too must make a conscious decision to erect monuments in our own lives to which we can return in praise to God. One of the most effective ways of doing so is to learn the value of journaling.

Christians often mistakenly only regard praise in terms of favorable circumstances and conditions. But Isaiah as God demands our praise and inasmuch as God's nature never changes, it is logical to conclude that our praise is to be constant rather than contingent upon favorable circumstances. One of the most striking examples of this in the Word of God is the life of Job. After losing everything he had — including his own children — Job fell down and worshiped the LORD, giving praise to His name. Job 1:20-21 states, "Then Job arose, and rent his mantle, and fell down upon the ground, and worshipped." And said, Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD." Job had cultivated a heart of praise, and it became evident in his response to God in difficult times.

In many ways, Christians have become adversely influenced by our culture. Rather than being thankful for what we have been given, we demand more because we feel entitled to it. We find ourselves frequently complaining over unfavorable circumstances, difficult jobs, and financial challenges. Praise is a discipline that must be cultivated in our lives, for it is often difficult to praise God when we only look at circumstances. But when our mind is directed towards the nature of God and His bountiful provision, our hearts are warmed with praise. Discipline yourself to praising God before requesting from God in your normal time of prayer. It will change how you look at the various events in your life.

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

A Veteran's Story

By Sherri McKinney
Mitchell County

“Can you swim?” “No Sir, but I’ll try dying.” “Step forward.” Those courageious words Homer spoke when he enlisted are how he came about to be chosen into the ranks of the United States Navy on October 14th of 1944. From Bakersville today he tells his story.

I was born September 30, 1926 in Micaville. Born third to a family of eight, I had to work hard and had many responsibilities. As a boy growing up in the depression, my mom and I ran a farm stand and played fields for farmers. We’d sometimes earn a dollar a day. Daddy worked at the spar mines of Jonas Hollow. I’d help fork spar onto a truck then onto a train at Stack’s Sidings. While the work was hard, it helped provide for the family during those difficult years. We’d walk to Pleasant Gap Church every Sunday from Jonas Hollow. All our concert and we’d take up half the church.

When the draft was issued in 1944, I boarded a Greyhound Bus from Spruce Pine to Camp Croft in Spartanburg, South Carolina. It was there the recruiting officer asked me if I could swim. I said, no sir, but I’ll try dying. I was then told to “step forward” into the Navy branch. My buddy Gerald waited in so bad cane. They didn’t take him. I guess they could only take one a certain number. I went into the bathroom and saw my Cousin Wiley. He was bent over the urinal, saying “look at them punky shores!” He was fixing to take a drink.

After completing recruit training in Norfolk, VA Homer first served aboard the USS Pennsylvania Occupation Okinawa and Japan. Applying his knowledge of specialty equipment and complex amphibious warfare tactics, he served until the end of WWIII. The USS Pennsylvania, which received eight battle stars, supplied the front lines until the end of the war. The last ship Homer served aboard in his eleven years of sea duty was the USS Edisto. His mission was Operation Deep Freeze in Antarctica. While they were trying to break through an iceberg, the captain got off the ship, and a penguin began to chase him. He can still see that captain’s face as he was being chased by that penguin!

Ten years of shore duty provided many opportunities, including marrying two presidents — Ronald Reagan and Harry Truman. While stationed in the Florida Keys, Homer’s duty was being a presidential driver for Truman. Homer recalls going out for the president’s daily newspaper. He wore polka-dotted swimming trunks. As for Ronald Reagan, he was a movie star. He took time to shake my hand while filming in 1947.

On leave home, in 1955, Homer married the love of his life, Joyce Greene. Later in 1959, during the Castro Revolution, Homer was stationed in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. Joyce and their two children joined him there. They also traveled with him to the communication station in Morocco, Africa.

After twenty-one years of service, Homer received an honorable discharge in 1966, with awards and honors. His medals include American Campaign, Arctic Pacific, WWII Navy Occupation Good Conduct, and National Defense Antarctica.

Today Homer lives in Bakersville with his faithful golden retriever, “Tucker.” He enjoys friends and family and telling his story. As his daughter, I know that the reason behind his lifelong service to his family, community, and country, is his devotion and love for people.

Sherri McKinney is a graduate of Bowman High School and Mayland Community College. She enjoys writing and spending time with family and friends. Sherri serves as pianist at Bethlehem Baptist Church, where her husband Mark pastors.

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Heal Our County
By Christy Young
Mitchell County

As the past few weeks have passed, the Lord has begun to tug on my heart. My pastor spoke on the sad state of our county, churches, and nation this past week. My heart, my soul was so burdened. In Mitchell County, we have one of the highest drug problems per capita in the state, one in five people are suffering from addiction. What has happened to our community? Where is our concern? Where is our trust? As Christians, I feel like it is time to make a stand. We have a vote on mission field inside our community. Pastor’s children, deacon’s children, devout Christian people’s children are falling for the lies of Satan. My pastor said, this is a day for no compromise (he’s exactly right). I have two boys that I love dearly, and I am burdened by what this world is offering our children. As parents, grandparents, teachers, leaders we are responsible for speaking the truth, ministering to our children. My only hope, my only hope is Jesus. It’s time we humble ourselves, get serious about this problem, and put our faith to action. My brother suffered from addiction, for over 10 years. The lies and deception of Satan robbed him of his happiness for so many years. But, through the power of prayer, he is redeemed. God is using his testimony to touch and change lives. The Bible teaches us in 1 Chronicles 7:14 “If My people, which are called by My name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.” Mitchell County needs God’s healing! We need revival by the spirit of God! I often tell my boys, Satan is only as powerful as we let him. We have allowed Satan to come into our county, allowed fear and destruction to come into our homes. But, I serve a Savior that is so much more powerful than Satan. With unity, prayer, and humble hearts our community can change. My brother is a living example. I challenge each of you, to commit to praying for the healing of our county. I KNOW that our God is capable of miracles. Our county needs a touch from above! Too many young people are dying from drug overdoses, too many families are being torn apart. God’s word teaches us that he will deliver as. Please find it in your heart to pray, to dedicate yourself to serving this community. It’s time we give it back to God.

Christy Young is the blessed wife of Chris Young and proud mother of Hunter and Holden. She is a life-long resident of Mitchell County, bookkeeper at Young, Miller & Gillaspie, PA, and a member of Bear Creek Baptist Church.

In every thing give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you. 1 Thessalonians 5:18

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“Faces you know.”

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

~ Anne Richardson

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“Faces you trust.”
I Know Who
By Chelsea Elevns
Tancey County

Something happened today that changed my outlook on life forever. I spent the night with my Grandma last night and when I came home something happened.

For those of you who don’t know my Grandma was diagnosed with cancer about a year ago. As soon as I heard the news a cloud of confusion, anger, and guilt came over me. Ever feel like that same cloud follows you? I began to speak, “God, Mitchell just got good news that he has overcome his cancer, now my Grandma? Surely there is a mistake here?”

Yes, I actually said that.

The devil began to speak lies into my mind. He does that doesn’t he? The saddest part is, we allow him to. Now that sounds absurd, but it really is true. I am so bad to let the devil rob me of believing what God has already promised me.

To be honest I came home pretty sad today thinking about my Grandma.

But... There’s always a but with Jesus, isn’t there?

Man, I love that about him.

But, I came home today, and I was reminded of something I sat down on my living floor and began to seek what God would have for me.

I began to speak, “God I don’t know what to do here to help and to stop the hurting!”

And his reply was three words that have forever changed the way I look at life, “I know who.”

Right there in my living room floor, same clothes as yesterday, no makeup, and the same hair I sleep in, huge tears began to fill my eyes as I heard these words. I honestly had to take a step back and evaluate my life.

Sometimes, it’s true, I honestly don’t know a lot of things. Sadly, confusion and doubt cloud my vision a lot of times.

Maybe you feel the same from time to time? I get it, life gets hard. Sometimes you just don’t know what to do.

But today, I was reminded that even when I don’t know, I know who.

I know who sees the moon and rises the sun.

I know who speaks and the winds obey.

I know who died and rose again.

I know who speaks truth over my life.

I know who made promises to me.

I know who has a kingdom waiting for me.

I know who calls me His.

I know who knows, when I don’t know.

I know Him.

His name is Jesus.
He is marvelous, he is kind, he is wonderful, and man, is he holy.
He is the “who” to all of your questions.

I look back on the victories in my life unsure of how I have overcome them. I look back today and give praise to Him, because although I couldn’t see Him, I know who fights and has been fighting for me.

I know who wins and who loses the battles for me.

I know who.

I pray you know Him too.

I pray that if you do know Him you give Him praise today for all the battles He has won in your life. For the answer: He has been to you. For all the gaps He has filled in your life.

I began to speak those truths out loud on the middle of my living room floor.

Yes, the same clothes from yesterday, no makeup, and the exact same as when I woke up and the funny thing is, none of that seemed to matter as I began to praise Him. As I began claiming his victories over my life as I listened to Natalie Grant song, “Earth, Air, Fire, This Jesus”.

He was standing in the middle of my living room with tears in my eyes praising Him for just a moment for all the names of Jesus that has been to me.

Although Satan would love to rob me of the joy I feel in my heart today, he can’t.

Nope, not today Satan.

Because I know who will fight my battles for me.

I know who will fight and provide for you and me.

I know who speaks and mountains move.

I know who breathes life into you and me.

I know who will give my Grandma peace when I cannot.

I know who will keep her and strengthen her.

And Satan, I know who defeated you before.

So, I held to that today.

I held to the one that I know can answer and overcome all that I cannot.

I held to one who fights my battles.

So yes Natalie Grant, his name IS Jesus and yes, you are right, HE IS all that we could ever need.

When you begin to ask ‘who’ can solve your problems, HE IS Jesus, and HE IS the ‘who’ that do and be every answer you will ever need.

I promise you.

I know who.

His name is Jesus.

Chelsea Elevns live in Burnsville, attended Mountain Heritage High School and South College.

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Sidebar option 1: Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. John 15:13

Sidebar option 2: Caring with joy changes you. It changes the person you’re caring for and it changes all the people who witness it. Mary Tutterow

“...was prepared to kill my family member and then myself.” This chilling statement was withheld to Mary Tutterow more times than the cares to count. The confession is offered in gratefulness for the transformative power of the Bible study that Tutterow wrote in 2015, The Heart of the Caregiver.

Sixty-five million Americans currently provide care for aging spouses, parents, siblings, or disabled children. Caring affects every aspect of a person’s life—physical, emotional, and mental health, their finances, social interactions, and church connections. Spiritual life can be deeply affected. Self-care typically declines—resulting in 30% of caregivers dying before the persons they care for as caregivers literally lay down their lives for others.

North Carolina Baptist Aging Ministry (NCBAM) addresses practical help that caregivers need by providing education, resources, and connections to volunteers. NCBAM’s newest outreach to Caregivers features a course that provides spiritual support. The Heart of the Caregiver Bible study is unique because it offers a totally transformative and Christian spiritual approach to caregiving.

On September 26, NCBAM kicked off its partnership with The Heart of the Caregiver in an in-person workshop held in Thomasville. Mary Tutterow traveled from her home in Charleston, SC to share her testimony, encourage caregivers in their holy calling, and share the need for the church to engage in the cultural phenomenon of family caregivers.

As owner of an international marketing company, Tutterow and her husband had it all. When their oldest child was born with a seizure disorder, the unrelenting emotional and financial pressures left Tutterow broken and isolated. Despite her anger at God, she searched the scriptures for comfort and in the process her heart was transformed. “Jesus changed my heart so that I could serve others in a way that had supernatural love. It’s not about the illness. It’s about your heart. It’s about getting down and dirty like Jesus did when He washed the disciple’s feet. It’s about being comfortable with other people in their suffering. Until we deal with our own brokenness, other people’s suffering can’t be borne.”

The Heart of the Caregiver is a 10-week Bible study that can be used individually or with a group. Group studies can take place in person, or online with a select group or with people from all over the world. NCBAM regional directors will facilitate The Heart of the Caregiver support groups in each region of the state. The NCBAM Call Center can connect caregivers to online groups.

Most attendees of the kick-off workshop were caregivers who called in favors or “rearranged the stars and moon” in order to attend the session. Other attendees included senior adult ministers, representatives from the aging services network, or lay leaders of caregiver support groups.

Bill Greenwood, a retired pastor from Danbury Baptist, cares full-time for his wife and attended the workshop for encouragement. “This is an amazing resource. It stretched us and opened our eyes to ministry chains that churches can provide for caregivers. Spirituality is an essential component that has been overlooked.”

Loretta Addison leads a Caregiver Support group at Word Tabernacle Church in Rocky Mount and came for information. “It could have been here here four to six hours easy and I would have enjoyed it. It brought tears to my eyes.”

Mary Tutterow’s vision is for some form of caregiver support to be as common as Sunday school—as important as Grief Share or Recovery programs. “This is the most important thing that the church is going to do. Caregivers need spiritual encouragement just as much. The Word is what will sustain them.”

For more information about NCBAM’s partnership with The Heart of the Caregiver, call 877.566.2226 or visit theheartofthecaregiver.com.

Mary Tutterow, author of The Heart of the Caregiver, began the workshop with a testimony of caring for her daughter with special needs, for the past 10 years.

Following The Heart of the Caregiver workshop, participants prayed for Mary Tutterow, her ministry, and for each other.

Carol Layton is the Director of Communications and Administration for NCBAM at Baptist Children’s Homes of North Carolina.
Avery County Chamber
November 25 Holiday Market, Buckeye Recreation Center, Beech Mountain
December 1 Christmas Parade, Downtown Newland
December 2 A Small-Town Christmas & Parade of Lights, Banner Elk

Barke County
Burke County Chamber
November 16, 2017 Thursday, 7:30-5:00 Event
500-7:30 Open to Public
Footsteps Higher Education Center
2128 Sterling St. Morganton
Business Showcase
What is your favorite Olympic Sport or Team?
This year’s theme is World Games and can be any sport or event. Past, Present or Future?
The Chamber will be Sport Sailing, so just on board with your best theme and see if you can win the Gold, Silver or Bronze Medal.

Catwaba River Baptist Association - Renew: Breathing New Life into Sunday School, High Peak Baptist Church, 1007 High Peak Rd., Valdese, NC, November 6, 7-7:00 pm. Speaker is Dr. Ken Hemphill

Great Hope Seventh-day Adventist Church Of Valdese will be celebrating their one-year anniversary with a special Creation Weekend will be celebrated November 4 and 5 at Great Hope Seventh-day Adventist Church located at 907-1297 Dillard St. Valdese. All friends and former members are invited to the opening ceremony at 11 am on November 4. The day will start with a worship hour, followed by a worship service. The afternoon will be devoted to family activities, such as a games and crafts station, a petting zoo, and a bounce house. The evening will include a special guest speaker, Dr. Ken Hemphill, who will share on the topic of “What Is Genesis History?”, followed by a reception and fellowship. There will be a special prayer time at the end of the evening for all attendees. The celebration will conclude with a closing worship service at 9 pm. This is a day of joy and celebration for the church and the community.

Morganton Seventh-day Adventist Burlee County - God’s Closet - Morganton Free Shop Day will take place on Friday, November 11th, from 9:00 a.m. until 12:00 p.m. There will be free clothing, shoes, bedding, and some household items available. Please bring ID and proof of income. This event is sponsored by the Morganton Seventh-day Adventist Church.

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

McDowell County
Marion Community Building
November 11, 2017 9:00 am - J. Andrew Wagner, ISA Certified Arborist, from Heartwoodtree.com will present on proper pruning techniques on Saturday, November 11 at 9 am at the Marion Community Building, 1191 1st St. Marion. We will have a hands-on tree pruning demonstration. For the pruning demonstration, the tree that will be used for the demonstration was planted by the City of Marion to honor Geneva Elamson in January 2000. The workshop will conclude at noon.

Grace Community Church - New Prayer Line Launches in Marion, North Carolina - James 5:16 says “The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effecti

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Mitchell County Chamber

Over There and Over Here: World War I in the Mountains
Don't miss our special Veteran's Day Celebration on November 9th at 7:00 p.m. at the Mitchell County Senior Citizens Center. We will have a special program on World War I in the Toe River Valley with presenter Jonathan Sammet.

Toe River Arts Opens Bi-Annual Studio Tour Exhibition In Spruce Pine
It's only the very beginning of the holiday season in the mountains, but already leaves have turned brilliant and fallen, holiday greetings are being planned and the Toe River Arts Studio Tour Participant Exhibition is about to begin—November 13 at their Spruce Pine facility at 259 Oak Avenue. It may be too soon to enjoy a real nip in the air, but not too early to visit the gallery and see work from all the artists on this year’s Holiday Tour (December 1-3).

Over 100 artists at the 59 studios submitting work, the walls and the pedes-
trals will be filled from gallery front to back with new and exciting work. And this tour features 13 artists—new or returning after a multi-year hiatus.

Red Cross: Blood Donation — The Amerit on Red Cross serving Mitchell and Yancey County has volunteer positions open at Blood Donor Ambassadors assisting in the areas of Reception and Hospitality at local blood drives in Spruce Pine and Burnsville. With the need for blood donations increased during the holidays, this is a critical and meaningful way to serve in support need through the Red Cross. Drives are held at the First Baptist Church of Spruce Pine and the Higgins Memorial United Methodist Church in Burnsville. Volunteers serving in this role help the Red Cross provide a great blood donation experience for donors—helping to save lives. For more information and to apply go to http://www.redcross.org/volunteer or contact Kimberly Brewer. Volunteer Services Specialist supporting the Mitchell and Yancey area blood drives at kimberly.brewer@redcross.org or 828-333-9808.

Spruce Pine Farmer’s Market — We will have food for any mood!! Winter squash, tomatoes, cabbage, potatoes, cabbages, bell peppers, kale, mustard, chard, greenbeans, collards, eggs, pork, beef, apples, cabbages, scapes, brownies, cheese strip. You can also find essential oils to heat and help with what ails you! Come out and see us, Wednesdays 7-5 in the parking lot under the blue tents.

Tipton Hill Community Foundation (Tipton Hill) — 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, jalap, juice and coffee. Eat in or take out, all funds support the Tipton Hill Community Foundation.

Yancey County

Higgins Memorial United Methodist Church — LOC Gotten Rockin’ Talent Show November 12, 5 pm – 8 pm Burnsville Town Center, 6 South Main Street
It’s your time to shine! Can you sing? Can you dance? Can you entertain the crowd? Join the wi-coin-tality talent show! The event is free, any donation will benefit local charities. Some snacks and drinks will be provided. There are prizes and raffles available to win. Participants will have the opportunity to collaborate on a new album with Christian rap artist, R.O.C. Talent show from 5-8:30, concert from 8-10, featuring R.O.C and special guest, FLUXCQ Daddy Records. Second Event: 16th Annual Thanksgiving Community Dinner Thursday November 23, 11 am – 2 pm
Higgins Memorial UMC, 101 N Main Street, Burnsville
Join us on Thanksgiving Day for a free meal. Higgins serves around 1,500 meals to the community on Thanksgiving. If you would like to help serve, please call 828-862-2835 to find out about opportunities. If you are homebound and living in the Burnsville area, please call that number to inquire about having meals delivered.

Shoal Creek Baptist Church — Prime Night Saturday Nov 4, 2017 at 7:00 PM with Beyond Measure

Yancey County Meals on Wheels (Burnsville) — Volunteers needed to deliver meals to Yancey County shut-ins, any weekday, 10:30 am - noon. If you would like to volunteer, please call the Yancey County Senior Center at 228-682-6011.

Mayland Community College
For more info Contact Allen Cook QuickBooks Drive Test Series Want to try it before you buy it? Taught by a CPA, this four-class series allows students to work with a sample business to learn the features of Quickbooks. This class typically costs $200 per student, but is being offered free through the Mayland Small Business Center! Seats are limited so sign up today.

Introduction to QuickBooks: Class One (3 Hours) Taught by the practicing CPA who knows all the tricks, tips, and trends related to QuickBooks. Class use of this four-class series will discuss the features of QuickBooks Online and compare it to QuickBooks desktop. Determine if QuickBooks is a right for you by "test driving" the software on a sample business. Computer

As part of our spreading "Good News", we have provided these pages for information for your organization or church that would be of interest to the public. I send out reminders in a group email to remind those of you who have requested it, or used this service regularly. If you wish to be added to the email please email me at barbarah@brcnews.com. One of the things any of you using this service needs to remember is that we publish only once a month and the info has to be submitted a month ahead. When sending email please send to my email: barbarah@brcnews.com.

A great way to get your meeting dates, events, and other info to the public.
Registration
Begins:
November 19th
Classes Begin:
January 7th

McDowell Tech
community college
Learning for Life

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

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

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

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

- Landscape Gardening

Nursing:
- Associate Degree Nursing
- Nurse Aide
- Practical Nursing Education

Office Administration:
General Office Administration
Office Administration
Office Finance
Office Software

- Photographic Technology
- School-Age Education
- Surgical Technology

Transportation:
Transportation: Automotive Systems Technology

- Welding Technology

54 College Drive, Marion, NC (828)-652-6021 www.mcdowelltech.edu

Financial Aid Available to Qualified Individuals
An Insect that Prays?
By Christy Lowman
Burke County

Did you know that there is an insect that prays? Well, at least it stands in the position that looks like he is praying. And he does prey on other insects, birds, mice, frogs, and lizards for its meal. But prey is not in the sense of pray is it? Do you know the difference? Praying is talking to God, while praying is hunting down something alive to eat. Have you figured out the insect I am talking about yet? If you guessed the Praying Mantis then you are correct!

The praying mantis, standing in the upright position looks like it is spending its time devoted to prayer, but it is really patiently waiting to spy on another living thing for its next meal. I was shocked to read that these insects can eat birds, (particularly hummingbirds), mice, frogs and lizards. The females also sometimes eat the male praying mantis. They like to eat only live things.

The praying mantis would not survive if it wasn’t for its ability to camouflage themselves. The tropical praying mantis, which is pink, position themselves into looking like a flower. This is one way they are able to catch hummingbirds and other insects. Other mantises are green or brown and are able to disguise themselves like sticks or leaves. This insect can move with precise cat-like jumps and will grab their prey with their front legs in a lightning fast motion that even the human eye can’t see! They will also use their spiky back legs to hold their victim down, then paralyze their 1000-to-be-nearly by biting it on the neck. They sound like vicious creatures, don’t they?

The smallest praying mantis is only one centimeter long while the largest is 12 inches long. The praying mantis is the only insect that is able to move its head in a complete 180 degrees. They have a triangular head followed by a long neck. On each side of their head is a compound eye. These two eyes have a concentrated area that is called a focus, which allows the mantis to see the slightest movement, and rack it with accuracy up to 60 feet away. These eyes also provide the mantis with stereoscopic vision, which is being able to see in 3D. The praying mantis also has three simple eyes between the two compound ones.

They have very powerful jaws for chewing, leaf-shaped wings for flying, and ultrasonic ears. Some are even equipped with a hollow chamber in their bodies that allow them to pick up on heat location. They are then able to change their flight pattern to a downward spiral to escape from being eaten by the bat.

It sure seems like God gave the praying mantis many special abilities, doesn’t it? Did you know that the word mantis came from the Greek language, meaning "prophet" or "soothsayer"? The Ancient Greeks, Egyptians, and Assyrians thought that the praying mantis had supernatural powers.

Although, praying mantises really do not have super powers, God did bless them with many gifts to help them survive. Just like God provided us with the armor of God. We can not equip the armor without doing one important thing. Do you know what that thing is? PRAYER! There is no way to access the armor of God, unless we first pray to God. Prayer is the key to putting on and wearing your armor of God. It is also our only way to communicate with God. Consider it a lifeline that connects you directly to Him. It is everything! You cannot even ask God to save your soul without prayer.

I know that last month I told you that we were done covering the pieces of the armor of God. Even though prayer isn’t one of the pieces, it is the only way to activate the armor!

Dear Lord, I pray that you will encourage each child to grow their relationship with You through prayer. Open their hearts, minds, and eyes to You will for them. Help them desire to talk to You freely about anything. Grow your faith by showing them Your miracles, and by becoming their true best friend. In Jesus’ precious name I pray, Amen.

Then you will call on me and come to pray to me, and I will listen to you. (Jeremiah 14:21) NIV
Therefore, I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours. (Mark 11:24) NIV

Bibliography
https://pets.org/praying-mantis/
https://www.nationalgeographic.com/animals/invertebrates/p/praying-mantis/

Christy Lowman is a Christian author and illustrator that lives in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains with her husband and two children. She enjoys writing and illustrating books for all ages. Some of her short stories are published with Guideposts and HCI. Christy gives all the glory to God in everything she does. A portion of every book sold from the Small Bible Character Series will be donated to battle human trafficking. If you enjoy her books, like her author page on Facebook and let her know! You can buy her books at: https://www.amazon.com/ref=dp_srh_b_1?ie=UTF8&field-author=Christy+Lowman&search-ali=x&text=Christy+Lowman&sector=relancerank
You can reach her at chrissy@christy LOWMAN.COM.
US House of Representatives NC District 11

As November approaches and Thanksgiving soon reaches its peak, my family and I love to stop and reflect on the Lord’s providence with all the things he’s given us. Remembering the Lord’s faithfulness during that opportunity to serve here on Capitol Hill is an humbling and encouraging experience.

In particular, one thing my family loves to do is take time and remember some specific blessings we enjoy because we live in a great country like America. So often in life, we become preoccupied with our daily lives and tend to take for granted the kind of unique freedoms we enjoy living here in this nation. This past year has certainly been a reminder of many of those freedoms and recalling them is especially encouraging.

I’m grateful for a nation that respects freedom of religion, giving people the freedom to worship and give praise to God in the manner they choose. We saw a sharp and yet joyous reminder of this principle with the return of Pastor Andrew Brunson. Pastor Brunson spent two years imprisoned in Turkey, suffering persecution for his faith in the Lord. So many people around the world don’t enjoy the same freedom we experience to worship Jesus openly. As has so often been said—is America, we don’t worship government. We worship God.

I’m thankful for Congress, both Democrats and Republicans, who treat each other with respect. Partisan politics tend to dominate headlines, but behind the scenes, respect for each other as colleagues is still the backbone of our work here in Washington, D.C.

I’m grateful for our troops and the way my opportunity in Congress has allowed me to support them, advocate for them, and hear their stories. It is my privilege to meet and support the men and women who fight for this nation so faithfully and serve them just as they’ve so willingly served us.

I’m grateful for Western North Carolinians who work so hard, stand so firm for their principles, and love their country with all their might. What an honor it is to represent them in Congress.

Most of all, I’m thankful for the grace of our Lord and Savior, Jesus, without whom we would not have a Thanksgiving. Every blessing we have on this earth we owe to His kindness and His mercy.

These are just a few of the countless examples of the Lord’s providence in my life that come to mind. As we gather around the table later this month with loved ones, let us set aside the worries of daily life, be it related to family, finances, or even politics—and make a special effort to thank God for all the blessings he’s given us. In America, there is certainly no shortage for us to enjoy.

This past Tuesday the North Carolina General Assembly passed expedited, bipartisan legislation to address Hurricane Florence-related problems for which an immediate solution existed. The action represents the quickest emergency response in recent memory. The legislature will now await needs analyses from state agencies before reconvening.

This afternoon, the General Assembly passed two bills: the first addresses education-related issues and the second covers the budget, the upcoming election, and DMV fees.

Education

The legislative package allows school districts located in counties under a major disaster declaration by the President of the United States as a result of Hurricane Florence to remain open up to 20 school days, or the equivalent hours of instructional time, completed. The proposal allows school districts to make up any number of instructional days or hours missed but also provides the option to waive the missed class time.

To provide income stability to school staff, the act requires educators and employees be compensated the same as if they had worked any scheduled instructional days or hours missed but also provides the option to waive the missed class time.

The legislation also authorizes $4.5 million to compensate employees whose income is normally supported by school meal receipts or federal funds that will not be appropriated to North Carolina due to the missed school days.

Budget

The legislation passed today transfers an additional $50 million (in addition to the $6.5 million described above) into the newly-created Hurricane Florence Disaster Recovery Fund. This money will provide the state match for federal disaster assistance programs and pay for the costs of relief in North Carolina counties designated under a major disaster declaration by the President of the United States. It is a down payment in anticipation of federal relief and further state action once the federal government completes its needs assessments.

DMV fees

Today’s measures also allow for waivers by the Division of Motor Vehicles for duplicate driver’s licenses or identification cards, applications for certificates of title, registration plate replacements, applications for duplicate registration cards, and late payments of a motor vehicle registration renewal fee.

Elections

Additionally, the legislation extends the voter registration deadline by three days in counties under federal disaster declarations to October 15, 2018. Same-day registration is also available for individuals during early voting.

The legislation further allows county boards of elections to replace hurricane-damaged polling places and early voting sites.

The bill also requires the Bipartisan Commission on Ethics in State Government, the Joint Legislative Ethics Commission, and the Office of the Auditor to triennially report a list of unreported citizens about their options for voting and registration casting ballots. The state board is further directed to cooperate with federal and local agencies in such effort and would be authorized to spend funds to inform the public of voter information via print, radio, online and television advertising, at its discretion.

The General Assembly will reconvene once state agencies complete needed assessments.

As always, if any office can be helpful to you in dealing with state government, please don’t hesitate to contact me or any staff.

Sometimes the NC General Assembly calls for an extra session to deal with issues that arise between regular sessions. Following the historic devastation Hurricane Florence delivered to our state in mid-September, legislators convened twice in October to provide assistance and relief to North Carolinians who were affected.

On October 2nd, members of both parties filed bipartisan legislation to create the Hurricane Florence Disaster Recovery Fund, which transferred $585 million from the state’s record saving reserve as a down payment on emergency spending needs. This fund will be maintained as a special account administered by the Office of State Budget and Management or another state agency determined by the governor. All state and federal appropriations for Hurricane Florence relief and recovery efforts will be budgeted through the fund. Of the $563 million initial transfer, $45 million is for the Department of Public Instruction to supplement lost compensation for school lunch employees whose income is sourced from national school lunch and breakfast programs. Another $30 million will provide the state match for federal disaster assistance programs and pay for the costs of relief in North Carolina counties designated under a major disaster declaration by President Trump.

In addition, the Hurricane Florence Disaster Recovery Fund the legislation filed on October 2nd addresses the control of large mosquito populations resulting from waterways and the waiving of DMV fees for duplicate driver’s licenses or identification cards, applications for certificates of title, registration plate replacements, applications for duplicate registration cards, and late payments of a motor vehicle registration renewal fee.

Following further assessment of Hurricane Florence damage, the General Assembly returned to Raleigh on October 18th and allocated an additional $790 million of relief to the Hurricane Florence Disaster Recovery Fund. The funding prioritizes immediate assistance to repair homes, schools, and local infrastructure repairs, and fully funding the state’s claim to access the maximum amount of federal assistance. Most of the funding allocated by the General Assembly for Hurricane Florence recovery will come from the state’s record $2 billion savings reserve, to rainy day fund.

The General Assembly will convene again on November 27th to enact enabling legislation for constitutional amendments approved by voters in the November 6, 2018 election.

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.
General Assembly passes historic storm relief
State lawmakers on Monday allocated $393 million in additional Hurricane Florence relief funding intended to help the preliminary needs assessment released last week, bringing the legislature’s total commitment to disaster recovery since the storm to $850 million.

For comparison, after Hurricane Mathew, the legislature appropriated $200 million two months after the storm. With this latest action, the North Carolina General Assembly has allocated more than $1.2 billion for hurricane recovery since 2016.

The Hurricane Florence Disaster Recovery Fund (HRDRF) appropriates $65 million to provide a state match for federal disaster assistance and an additional $65 million state match for federal transportation assistance. It spends $60 million on capital recovery funds for public school facilities and $30 million for capital needs in the University of North Carolina system. Another $28 million will benefit local governments, while agriculture recovery received $30 million. More than $10 million was directed to housing recovery support.

Tens of millions more dollars will meet needs in behavioral health, community hospitals, small businesses, community colleges, and disaster relief efforts in areas of North Carolina affected by Hurricane Florence. Funding for coastal beach renourishment, dredging needs, marine debris cleanup, and commercial fishermen were also included in the recovery package.

The measure includes a fix for members of the National Guard who participated in the response to Hurricane Matthew. The bill waives out-of-state customer service members owed due to increased out-of-state costs by the Department of Public Safety (DPS), it also requires DPS to reimburse service members who already repaid the department.

As part of the continuing collaboration among state leaders to respond to the historic storm, officials from the Office of State Budget and Management (OSBM), including State Budget Director Charles Peresse, briefed key appropriations leaders and fiscal staff in the North Carolina legislature on Thursday. Participants discussed the Governor’s proposal at length in a productive working session.

OSBM told lawmakers that, consistent with the descriptions contained in the Governor’s report, the needs assessment released this week was a preliminary figure that may change based on further analysis and the availability of additional federal aid. OSBM also said that this is a long-term, five-year plan.

The report indicated that more concrete, on-the-ground data will soon be available to update the preliminary needs assessment, which relied in part on computer modeling. As such, some assessed needs may shift considerably over time as federal aid becomes clearer and damage assessments continue.

Education needs, for example, are particularly preliminary, and many of the damage assessments will change. OSBM’s final report, lawmakers and staff heard from administration officials.

OSBM is also working on an estimate of how much funding could be spent in the next six months. They indicated that course corrections may be required over time. Based on this information and the Governor’s report, the legislature appropriated the majority of the funding immediately while preserving maximum flexibility to meet the final needs assessments that are currently ongoing.

Most of the funding transfer comes from the state’s record $2 billion rainy day fund.

State lawmakers convened in Raleigh on Monday for the second time in as many weeks, and are scheduled to go into session again in November.

The legislature plans to continue collaborating with state agencies as they finalize their needs assessments for Hurricane Florence.

According to the most recent report on Hurricane Matthew funding, approximately $34 million has been disbursed, $115 million has been awarded, and $212 million remains available out of the total $560 million allocated in prior disaster recovery packages since 2016.

Treasury saves $2.2 million in annual fees
The following is from the office of State Treasurer Dale R. Folwell.

(Raleigh, N.C.) - State Treasurer Dale R. Folwell, CPA praised the Supplemental Retirement Board of Trustees for its recent decision to replace a money manager in the NC 401(k), NC 457 and NC 403(b) supplemental retirement plans. The move will save members who are invested in the fund over $4.2 million per year.

At its September meeting, members of the Supplemental Retirement Board voted to replace the PIMCO Inflation Response Multi-Asset Fund in all three plans.

"This vote shows our continued effort to eliminate unnecessary fees paid by the hardworking public servants who participate in these plans," Treasurer Folwell said. "The Board’s decision to reduce member fees is yet another reason why these award-winning plans are such a valuable benefit for our state and local government workers."

Treasurer Folwell also thanked internal staff for identifying the savings and recommending the change in investment managers.

Within the NC 401(k) and NC 457, the PIMCO Fund will be replaced with the BlackRock Strategic Completion Fund. Fees and expenses for the BlackRock Fund are 0.10 percent compared to 1.22 percent for the PIMCO Fund, saving participants about $4.2 million each year.

Within the NC 403(b), the PIMCO Fund will be replaced by the Principal Diversified Real Asset Fund. The expense ratio of the Principal Fund is 0.80 percent, compared to 1.22 percent for the PIMCO Fund, saving participants approximately $2,553 each year.

Treasurer Folwell has reduced investment management fees and costs for the defined benefit and defined contribution plans by a total of $58 million since 2017. The savings have a four-year run rate of nearly $400 million, far exceeding his pledge of cutting $100 million over four years.

Today is a great day for North Carolina and for the United States, as Pastor Andrew Brunson has been released after being unjustly detained in Turkey for the last two years. Pastor Brunson is from Black Mountain, N.C. and worked peacefully as a Christian missionary for 23 years before his arrest and detention in October 2016. There was no evidence substantiating the terror-related charges against him, and he was repeatedly denied access to appropriate legal counsel.

President Trump and his Administration made Pastor Brunson’s unconditional release a top priority, and I want to thank them for their tireless work on his behalf.

Senators Thom Tillis, James Lankford and others keep up strong pressure from Congress, as well. Because of their efforts, an innocent man is back home.

Our prayers are with Pastor Brunson and his family as they celebrate his return and recovery from this brutal ordeal.

Hurricane Florence Relief from Ample State “Rainy Day Fund”
Hurricane Florence made landfall at Wrightsville Beach, NC on September 14, 2018. Over a month later, North Carolina is still feeling the strong effects of the storm and the devastation that the hurricane left in its wake. With damage estimates high due to the hurricane’s slow movement and high flood waters, the North Carolina legislature came back to Raleigh for special session to pass legislation and begin the process of providing funds to assist those affected and displaced by the storm.

The devastation and cost of the necessary repairs from Hurricane Florence are beyond devastating and could have easily taken an enormous toll on our state financially. Thankfully, the legislature’s wisdom in creating a “Rainy Day Fund,” valued at a record of more than $5 billion, made it possible to pass an extensive recovery package in a timely manner.

The initial aid package by the legislature immediately following the storm was $56.5 million, understanding there would be a need for further action as the extent and nature of damage became clearer. As a result, the legislature again convened and unanimously passed a $939 million Hurricane Florence Disaster Recovery Act. Among other things, this money is being used to reopen schools closed due to wind and flood damage, rebuild roads that were washed out, and restore local infrastructure damaged by the storm.

Because of the extent of the damage and estimated time out of the classroom in these areas most affected, the legislature also took action to allow adjustments to the school calendar, compensate teachers and assist student teachers whose educational programs were impacted by their inability to meet their classroom hours due to closures following the storm. Citizens can be pleased that the legislature’s foresight put our state in position to accomplish all the above without delay, without a tax increase and leaving us still well over a billion dollars remaining in our Rainy Day Fund.
Burke United Christian Ministries

Needs in Our Community
By David Burleson
Burke County

As the holidays approach, the needs in our community increase. Burke United Christian Ministries (BUCM) and our team of volunteers are in the process of making plans to meet these needs.

During the holidays our one group that can get overlooked is our senior citizens. Annually BUCM coordinates a Senior Santa program. Last Christmas, BUCM gave ouralmost 700 Senior Santa bags and this year the need continues to increase. BUCM also plans to provide a Santa Bag for all the veterans that we serve. Any goodies that you would like to donate for these bags would be appreciated.

You and your friends are invited to participate in the second annual BUCM Rivalry Run to Fight Hunger. 3K and fun run on Saturday, November 17 at 9 a.m. on the Freedom High School Cross Country Trail. For more information and to register, go to the Burke United Christian Ministries at www.bucm.net.

With the hunting season approaching, BUCM will be partnering with the Hunters Helping Hungry program and Phillips Meat Processing to provide fresh venison to be used in our soup kitchen. Hunters can donate their deer to BUCM by taking it to Phillips Meat Processing at 48 View Street in Marion, North Carolina and letting them know it is to be given to BUCM. The phone number for Phillips Meat Processing is (828) 724-4190.

Here are some of the ways to support the clients of Burke United Christian Ministries as we approach the holidays:

1. Ornaments for a cause $25
2. Groceries for a family for a month $100
3. Baby items (diapers, formula, wipes) $75
4. Coats for a family of $4100
5. Underwear for a family of four $50
6. Socks and shoes for a family of $4100
7. Tent for the homeless $20
8. Toiletries for a month $100
9. Towels and washcloths for 10 people $100
10. Blankets for the homeless $75
11. Pay Electric Bill for a family for one month $150
12. Pay Water Bill for 2 families for one month $100
13. Provide food for the Soup Kitchens for a week $500
14. Supply 100 lbs. of food $250
15. Coffee and Tea for a day in the soup kitchen $50
16. Volunteer 5 hours of your time once a month FREE

It would be a true blessing to our clients for you to provide new or gently used clothes and shoes, non-perishable food or other necessities to BUCM for distribution over the holidays. We would also encourage you to consider a monetary donation to support the ministries of the Burke United Christian Ministries. From a one-time gift to a legacy giving, anything is appreciated. Our local churches and local donors made up over 50% of the operating budget of BUCM.

Because of churches and donors, during this past fiscal year there were 22,210 incidents for assistance to families that totaled 48,330 assistance for individuals at BUCM. Those times of assistance were comprised of 89,301 pounds of food distributed from our food pantry, assisting 8,757 households, serving 66,489 meals in our soup kitchen, and assisting with $128,545 in rent and utilities crisis assistance. The BUCM Clothing Closet assisted 4,320 individuals with clothing valued at $64,216.16.

Without the support of our volunteers, donors and sustaining churches, the ministry of BUCM could not exist. This group of dedicated and committed servants consistently meet the needs of those in our community who need a hand up. They truly understand the words of the Hebrews when he wrote: “Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God.” (Hebrews 13:10). Please prayerfully consider what you might be able to contribute.

Please do not hesitate to share any idea or ask any question you might have concerning the ministry of BUCM. Feel free to email me at brcmdirector@gmail.com or call at (828) 433-8071. I would also encourage you to participate in one of our Branch and Town worship held the third Saturday of each month at 10 a.m.

Thank you for your prayers for our ministry and clients!

David Burleson is Director of Burke United Christian Ministries

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November 2018 - Blue Ridge Christian News
Dave Says

Dear Dave,

If someone is following your plan, is it a good idea to get mortgage disability insurance during Baby Step 27?

Craig

Dear Craig,

No, it is not. Mortgage disability insurance is a gimmick, and I would never recommend it to anyone.

I think I know where you’re going with this. During Baby Step 1, I encourage people to save up and set aside a beginner emergency fund of $1,000. Baby Step 2 is where you start paying off all your debt, except for your house, using the debt snowball system. A thousand dollars may not seem like a lot in savings during that time, but in the beginning it’s an attainable amount to save. Plus, it’s more than a lot of people have when they make the decision to get out of debt and gain control of their finances. Then, after finishing Baby Step 2 you move directly to Baby Step 3 — fully-funding your emergency fund with three to six months of expenses.

What I would recommend is having long-term disability insurance in place. It’s fairly inexpensive, especially if you get it through your employer.—Dave

Dear Dave,

I’m driving a 12-year-old car with 210,000 miles on it. The car needs close to $2,000 in repairs, and it’s worth $5,000. I have $40,000 in cash saved, $40,000 in investments, and I make $80,000 a year. I also have $15,000 in student loan debt, but the only other thing I owe on is my house. Should I pay to repair the car, or buy something else in the $15,000 price range?—Brett

Dear Brett,

Let’s see, if you wrote a $15,000 check for a newer car and wrote a $15,000 check for the student loans, it would leave you with $10,000. I wouldn’t buy a $15,000 car in your situation. I’d buy a $10,000 car. You could probably sell the old one for around $3,000 if it needs repairs, combine that with your money and get a $13,000 car. Then, you could write a check and pay off the student loans. With no car payment, no student loan payment and a good car, you can really lean into your budget and saving money. You’d have no debt except your home, and you could rebuild your savings in a hurry. You’d be in really good financial shape in about six months. Plus, you’d have $15,000 in the bank in the meantime!—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.

All Buck Stoves

Wood and Gas on Sale!

Layaway now for the upcoming heating season.

Burke County Schools

McMahon Named BCPSS Principal of the Year

By Cheryl Shiffler
Burke County

W.A. Young Elementary School Principal Christie McMahon is the 2018 Burke County Public Schools Principal of the Year. McMahon is in her second year as principal at W.A. Young and previously served as assistant principal at Salem, Forest Hill and Dixed elementary schools and Liberty Middle School.

McMahon is a graduate of Freedom High School, Lees-McRae College and Western Carolina University. She began her career in education as a teacher at Gien Alpine Elementary School.

Fellow Burke County Public Schools principals nominated McMahon for the principal of the year honor. Following an interview process, a selection committee chose her to represent Burke County as principal of the year.

McMahon said, “This is so exciting and humbling. I am thrilled that the community would think enough of me to support me. I hope to continue to work with the school system and the community to make Burke County a better place.”

Burke County Public School Superintendent Dr. Larry Putnam and Director of Elementary Education Karen Atkinson surprised McMahon with the announcement at her school.

Putnam said, “Mrs. McMahon is very deserving of this honor. She is a great leader and a great school and respected by other principals. We are proud that she is representing Burke County as Principal of the Year.”

McMahon is now eligible for Region 7 Director Principal of the Year.

McMahon is married to Tim and they have three children, Austen, Alex and Kate.

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

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**Evergreen Church**

An investment in the future

By Rev. John McCurry
Roan Mountain, Tennessee

Psalms 127:1 and 128:1, songs of family strength, conclude with a look into the distant future, painting a portrait of a healthy, mature family. Like a farmer sowing his crop while planting seeds, Solomon helps us envision the fruit of our labor in the home. Psalms 128:4-5 (KJV) - "Blessed is he who Builds the house, And with His析}..." - 2018, 6:15 AM - "The LORD shall bless thee out of Zion, and thou shalt see the good of Jerusalem all the days of thy life;,Thou shalt see thy children's children, and peace upon Israel." - Again, the scene of today reaches completion. The children are raised, reared, and launched from the nest. The psalmist paints a pleasant picture of security, which includes three realms of blessing: 1. Personal pleasure (128:4). The psalmist says, "for thee" happiness comes. For what? For all the hard work and consistent investment by parents, happiness comes as God's reward. Believe me, if you determine to raise your children and pray that God's Word would be the source of your children's training, you have your work cut out for you! For you will find that you'll be outnumbered, scoffed, considered strange by your neighbors, or a few teachers), criticized, misunderstood, and tempted to compromise. The very forces of hell will unleash their fury on you! You will be on your knees and in prayer. But, if you maintain the standard (with love, gentleness, and consistency, God promises that you will look back in your twilight years and enjoy inward, personal pleasure. The converse is also true. If you relinquish your responsibilities as a parent, you can expect sad and serious consequences. 2. Civic benefits (128:5). Even Zion will be blessed! Jesus will be prosperous and strong! The point is, you're offspring will be used to make a dent in society - for good! All the days of your life, you'll enjoy the fact that your earlier direction and private contributions to the home life of your children pay off in rich, public dividends. National blessings (128:6). Now, in this final verse, grandchildren arrive on the scene. You, the grandparents, see them, and you witness a second-generation investment. Your own children pass on similar teaching so that the entire nation benefits and is blessed because the Lord, originally, was the parent. Mutual love and consistency is your house, and God promises you will enjoy inward pleasure in your twilight years.

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

**Toe River Arts**

Tours and Exhibits

By Kate Graft
Mitchell and Yancey Coordinators

Toe River Studio Tour Among The Best In The County

Twice a year, collectors of fine arts and craft hand to the mountains of Western North Carolina for the Toe River Studio Tour known for over 30 years to be a premier event one of the top rating of quality, beauty, and innovative shining. And beginning November 17, a new excitement will bubble through the air as the Studio Tour Exhibition opens at the Spruce Pine Toe River Arts Gallery (295 Oak Avenue). Each participating studio to artists and gallery are asked to show two of their best pieces with the public in an exhibit under the gallery floor. Displays are arranged geographically and interact with the Tour Guide. With only three tours and as many studios and artists, choices are difficult. The exhibition allows viewers an opportunity to plan their adventures. And if they really like to buy things for their top picks, it's be purchased until the end of the year.

"This tour welcomes a record 15 new artists, 13 in their own studios. Every year is unique. The artists change, the work evolves. I'm always excited when the house arrives to see a new artist's work or the evolution of a once seasoned artist," said Kathy Amirault, who has been Toe River Arts Exhibits Coordinator for over a decade. The participants show the biggest turnout during the year averaging over 150 people on weekends, tables, walls, with a few big pieces inlaid to the floor. And they are the most diverse, with artists ranging from 2 dimensions to glass to clay, wood, metal, and silver - something for every taste, every wallet. And it's all just a sampling of what one can find during tour weekend, November 17-20.

It all begins on November 17 at the Spruce Pine Gallery. Stop by and get a schedule of tours, tour pass available at all galleries. Save the date for "Meet the Artist" reception on the first evening of the tour, Friday, November 18. Join artists, staff, and all the volunteers who make the tour the best and one of the longest running self-guided tours in the country, as we toast the completion of another great year in the Toe River Arts Region of Western North Carolina.

Complete information, including the guide, is available online at www.toeverart.org or by calling 828-682-7215. The Toe River Arts is a non-profit organization serving the counties of Mitchell and Yancey and providing arts experiences and programs to enrich and enhance the lives of its residents.

Barnsville Gallery Pub: A Sparkle Into The Holiday

On November 3, the Barnsville Gallery will be a go arow with the opening of David Wilson’s “Glass and Light” exhibit that will continue through December 29. An open reception is scheduled for Friday, November 9 from 5 to 7 pm. Wilson has been working in glass from the South Toe area of Barnsville for the past 37 years and has established himself in the experimental, innovative glass blowing. He has been a student of art and sculpture at the Danek School of Crafts in glass and lead forms. More recently, he’s been active with six other glassblowers, including his son, Ryan, and numerous glass blowers. One of the most exciting exhibits that one has to witness in person is to fully grasp the "glow" of these small sculptures in a darkened room in the gallery.

And just when you think you’ve seen it all, there’s Wilson, a master glass blower, will have on display a series of bowls, ladders, and blown glass legs. Some are for dining, others for holding, each bowl perfectly positioned and more unique than the one before.

This glass is at its most creative.

The Barnsville Gallery is located at 102 West Main Street and open from 10:30 am to 5:30 pm, Tuesday to Saturday. The exhibit will run from November 3 through December 29. The reception on the 9th of November is free, the public is invited to share a couple hours with the artist. Toe River Arts is a non-profit organization that seeks to connect the arts with the people in the Toe River Valley region of Mitchell and Yancey counties. For more information about the exhibit or other programs of Toe River Arts, please visit the website, www.toeverart.org or call 828-682-7215.

Kate Graft is the Program Coordinator for the Toe River Arts Council.

www.brcnews.com

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No Regrets Family-footprints
By Pastor Dean Honeycutt

Just recently I had a medical procedure and the first time I have ever been put to sleep. Fifty years without a major medical problem I feel truly blessed. However, in the back of my mind was a little doubt. Here I was placing myself in the care of an anesthesiologist and a doctor. I had to trust them, and I was a little apprehensive before the procedure. Maybe that is the reason my blood pressure was a little high. I gained confidence when I found out my doctor was a Christian who had prayed for me that morning and before my procedure. Dan and I had hands with this doctor and we prayed together. That brought me great joy to know my doctor believed in the Great Physician. We can truly be thankful for Christian doctors and care givers.

As a pastor many times people of all ages come to me with doubts and fears. Some have doubts about salvation, some about the future, and still others about God's will. I always open the Bible and read with them the Word of God and reassure them with what God says. God would not make promises to us that He could not keep. And we would not trust a God who could not keep His promises. God is faithful.

For the most part you can talk with believers about their prayer life and ask them to think of something that they have prayed for that only God could do. Almost always that believer will remember that prayer and what God did for them. Then they will begin to remember other things God has done for them. Answered prayer reminds us of God's faithfulness. How soon we forget God's faithfulness. God who is faithful in the past is the God who is faithful in the future. The blessings and protection God provides for Pam and I far outweigh my doubts and fears. We tend to get hung up in the moment and forget how faithful God truly is. Much like the children of Israel, how soon they forget the goodness of God in the wilderness.

We ask the question—Can God? And the answer is—God Can. "For with God all things are possible." Shortly after Pam and I married we began to pray for a washer and dryer, so we would not have to make trips to a laundry mat. Very soon after those prayers a friend gave us a washer and dryer. I began to pray God let my path cross with someone I can share the Gospel with. Soon after that prayer God leads me to a young man I shared the Gospel with. I prayed God would like to preach a revival, so after that prayer God allowed me to preach a revival. God has been so good to us. He is faithful and true.

When I do or fear I look back at God's faithfulness and His footsteps are all over my life. I am sure doubters part of human fallible nature. Doubt and worry are not from God. If we would wake up and ask God to remind us of His faithfulness, and not let this day go by without worshipping a faithful God. If God's footprint is a symbol of my life is larger than God's footprint is in my life, then something is wrong. It is like the young boy following his fathers boot steps in a deep snow. "Son why are you following my tracks?" God is a whole lot easier walking when you have already been. God the Father has gone before us. He has already been where we are going, and its much easier to follow Him. Dear brother and sister, God is faithful, He has given us "exceeding great and precious promises". I leave with you this promise from Isaiah 41:10 (KJV 1900):

10 Fear thou not: for I am with thee. Be not dismayed, for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.

God bless you, and Live Life with "No Regrets".

Pastor Dean Honeycutt shepherds Snow Hill Baptist Church in Burnsville, NC. He may be reached at 258-351-0213, snowhillbaptist@gmail.com, or visit their website at www.snowhillbaptist.org.

 atasounds in Him, if we are truly to feel His presence and be surrounded by the blessings He has in store for us. Romans 10:13 The fear of the Lord tendeth to life: and to that that it shall abide satisfied; he shall not be visited with evil. As we go into this Thanksgiving season, take time to work on relationship. If you want a good neighbor, be a good neighbor. If you want a good mate, be a good mate. If you want to be a loved parent, be a loving parent. If you want a good friend, be a good friend. Most of all, if you want to be a child of God, be obedient, diligent and studious in your study of the Lord's words and works. Have a blessed Thanksgiving.

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.
ACROSS
1 the sons of Eliphez were Teman, ___, Zepho (Gen 36:11)
5 even if I washed myself with Job 9:30
9 Strike your hands together and ___ your feet (Ezek 6:11)
14 the lizard, and the snail, and the eunuch (Lev 11:30; KJV)
15 it is appointed unto men ___ to die (Heb 9:27)
16 and be killed, and after days rise again (Mark 8:31)
17 They built a siege ___ up to the city (2 Sam 20:15)
18 ___ the LORD your God, serve him only (Deut 6:13)
19 Blessed is the one who ___ the words of this prophecy (Rev 1:3)
20 Blessed are you when people ___ you, persecute you (Matt 5:11)
22 thou shalt bind this ___ of scarlet thread in the window (Joshua 2:18; KJV)
24 obtain (Matt 24:18)
25 opposite to windward side (naut.) (Acts 27:7)
26 Every word of God is ___ (Prov 30:5)
28 One of the seven nobles of Persia and Media (Est 1:14)
32 Ezer, Mashhath, Shemesh who built and Lod (1 Chron 8:12)
33 the ornament of ___ and quiet spirit (1,4) (1 Peter 3:4) KJV
34 Distressed and hungry, they ___ through the land (Isa 8:21)
37 she shall shave her head, and ___ nails (Deut 21:12; KJV)
41 first book of the Bible (abbr.) (Gen 1)
42 Philip went down to the city of Caesarea (Acts 8:13)
43 He is a demonic presence and raging ___ Why listen to him (John 16:20)
46 the Lord said unto me, Arise, and go ___ Damascus (Acts 22:10)
48 from Jerusalem, and from the coast of ___ and Sidon (Luke 6:7)
49 cresses of cinnamon and ___ (Rev 18:13)
16 Man is a mere phantom as he goes to and ___ (Ps 39:5)
53 Another angel, who had ___ censer (1.5) (Rev 8:3)
55 David ___ his sword over the tumor (1 Sam 17:39)
60 give God a tenth of your mint and ___ all other (Luke 11:42)
61 back end of Peter’s boat (Gen 12:16)
62 Nebuchadnezzar came ___ to the mouth of the burning fiery (Daniel 3:26)
63 reported this to the men of Jabez, they were ____ (1 Sam 11:9)
67 The people have become hungry ___ and thirsty (2 Sam 17:29)
69 the wind will pick them up, and ___ will blow them away (Isa 41:16)
71 ___ like the eagle and make your nest among the stars (Obad 1:4)
72 thy brother was dead, and is again (Luke 15:32) KJV
73 they have stolen, they have (Job 7:11)
74 Salvation is found in no one ___ for there is no other name (Acts 4:12)
75 in Bethany in the home of a man known as Simon the ___ (Matt 26:6)
76 Do not let your heart ___ sighs (Prov 30:5)
77 Soul ___ his thousands, and David his ten thousands (1 Sam 29:5)

DOWN
1 Ahab son of ___ became king of Israel (1 Kings 16:19)
2 I will howl like a jackal and ___ like an owl (Mic 1:8)
3 Take heed that ye do not bring ___ your men (Matt 6:3)
6 KJV
4 How then can you ___ one officer of the least (Isa 36:7)
5 you ___ it with showers and bless its crops (Ps 65:10)
6 and now ___ greater than Jonah is here (Matt 12:41)
7 they made an idol in the form of ___ (Acts 7:41)
8 He has delivered us from such a deadly ___ (2 Cor 1:10)
9 they found the whole road ___ with the clothing of the kings (2 Kings 7:15)
10 that I might speak ___ among heathen (Gal 1:6)
11 the avenger of blood might pursue him ___ (Deut 19:6)
12 Your kingdom is divided and given to the ___ and Persians (Dan 5:28)
13 I will prevent ___ from devouring your crops (Mat 3:11)
21 also the cucumbers, melons, ___ and bitter gourds (Num 11:5)
23 ___ said to Ruth her daughter-in-law, “It will be good (Ruth 2:22)
24 LORD Almighty, will ___ off the boughs with great power (Isa 10:33)
25 during the time of King Herod, ___ from the east came (Mat 2:1)
29 The God of peace be with you all ___ (Rom 15:33)
30 Joshua ___ his clothes, and fell to the earth (Joshua 7:6)
31 KJV
32 the Babylonian ___ pursued King Zedekiah and overtook him (Jer 52:9)
35 rowing device (Ezek 27:29) KJV

36 a Levite who lived in a remote ___ in the hill country (Judg 19:1)
37 God has ascended ___ shouts of joy (Ps 47:5)
38 let us run with patience the ___ that is set (Heb 12:1)
39 all the trees of ___ that were in the garden of God (Ezek 31:9)
40 put an end to sin, to ___ for wickedness (Dan 9:24)
41 if ___ sin, and hear the voice of swearing (1:4) (Lev 5:1)
42 How ___ did they provoke him in the wilderness (Ps 78:40)
43 because we obey his commands and do what ___ him (1 John 3:22)
44 He ___ to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s (Mark 12:17)
45 From the least to the greatest ___ are ___ for gain (Jer 6:13)
46 ___ but ___ wounded had been healed (Rev 13:3)
47 48 they had ___ for the nattocks (1.4) (T Sam 13:21) KJV
48 but lack___ they ___ the land and then fly away (Nah 3:16)
53 The first was like a lion, and it had the wings of an ___ (Dan 7:4)
59 that may be eaten must ___ the blood and cover it with earth (Lev 17:13)
64 be not lawful to use ___ tribute, or custom, upon them (Ezra 7:24) KJV
65 now therefore ___ them somewhat the grievous servitude (2 Chr 10:4) KJV
66 reached for his sword, it ___ and struck the servant (Matt 26:31)
68 But as the serpent beguiled through his subtlety (2 Cor 11:3)
70 the third book of the Old Testament (abbr.)
Understanding the Power of the Holy Spirit
By Joyce Meyer

There’s nothing more valuable than the presence of God in our lives. And my goal for teaching about God’s presence and anointing is to increase your desire to completely and promptly obey Him. Because the more we love, trust and obey God, the stronger His anointing will be in our lives.

Now, God’s love for you is perfect, complete, and unconditional. He couldn’t love you any more than He does right now, and His love for you never changes. But we can grow in our love for God.

As we learn more about His character and have experience with Him through a personal relationship with Him, our trust in Him and love for Him grows. And this causes more of the anointing of the Holy Spirit to work in us and through us.

The Anointing Abides in You
Jesus Christ is the Anointed One and when we are born again, His anointing abides in us. The word anoint means “to smear or rub all over.” It’s wonderful to think about how in Christ, we are “rubbed and smoozed all over” with the Holy Spirit.

Naturally, the anointing is a free gift from God that comes by His grace and mercy, and in another way, there is a price to pay for it.

First John 2:2 (AMP) says, “As for you, the anointing [the special gift, the preparation] which you received from Him remains [permanently] in you....” Notice how this scripture says that the anointing remains permanently—it won’t go away.

The terms “special gift” and “the preparation” indicate having Holy Spirit “unblemished” or power to do what God is calling us to do. It’s the gentle proddings, urges and leadership of the Holy Spirit in us that shows us how to live.

When we allow the anointing, we feel peace and joy because we’re making wise decisions. It’s so valuable to us, and more than anything else, we need to protect the anointing in our lives.

Pay the Price to Have More Power
While the anointing abides in us throughout our salvation, it can’t work through our lives until we are broken before God. That’s when the oil of the Holy Spirit in us is poured out and can be a benefit to others.

So, what is it that needs to be broken in us? Things like rebellion, enmity, unloveness, pride and spirit that’s independent from God are a few areas of disobedience that can keep the anointing from working through us. This is because the vehicle that carries the anointing is the soul—our mind, will and emotions.

And when we are led by our natural carnal or fleshly impulses, we are not being led by the Holy Spirit.

But as we grow up and mature in Christ, we can be what God wants us to be and live every day empowered by the anointing of the Holy Spirit.

It’s Not Just for Spiritual Things
It’s important to understand that we need the anointing every day, in everything we do. And there’s an anointing for everything we need to do. It’s not just for ministers or for spiritual areas of life.

The anointing is what enables and equips us to do what God asks us to do. You have an anointing to be a parent, instead or wife... to be in business or some kind of organization... whatever you are gifted to do with your life. And it’s amazing when God uses someone to do something that you know they don’t have the ability to do on their own. That’s the power of the anointing!

John 1: Our Example
Philippians 2:1-10 (AMP) says, “At the name of Jesus every knee shall bow [in submission], of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth.” He is God, and He is all-powerful! Yet, He is also our example in humility.

Venes 5-8 in the same chapter tell us we are to have the same attitude that He demonstrated. Although He is one with God, He stripped Himself of all privileges and became a servant. He humbled Himself and was obedient even to the extreme of death on the cross.

Power is connected to obedience. The anointing is released when we get rid of our selfish, self-centered, independent attitudes and humble ourselves before God.

As you choose to be radically obedient to God, you will have the same power that Raised Christ from the dead working in and through you. And you’ll be amazed by the anointing of the Holy Spirit in your life!

For more on this topic, order Joyce’s tour-CD series Learning to Be Led by the Holy Spirit. You can also contact us to receive our free magazine, Enjoying Everyday Life. For more information, call (800) 727-9573 or visit www.joecmeyer.org.

And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the LORD. And whatever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the LORD Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him. Colossians 3:16-17
Thanksgiving Put Into Practice
By Ken and Jan Metrop
Avery County

There’s an old hymn that instructs us to count our blessings… naming them one by one. This develops an attitude of praise and gratitude for those people and situations that bring us joy. But, it isn’t just this thankful attitude that is important. Like faith, gratitude needs an object of integrity and genuineness to cling to. Otherwise, it’s just empty words without power. God is the only one worthy of our faith, trust and gratitude. With him as our center, our actions will demonstrate the attitude of our hearts and minds.

At this season of Thanksgiving, my relationship with God the Father through God the Son, Jesus Christ, and the joy of the Holy Spirit indwelling us top my list. Closely following is my husband and our children and grandchildren, our parents, brothers, sisters and the rest of our extended family and friends. The list is endless as I contemplate God’s protection, guidance and provision at every bend in life’s road. I love knowing I belong to God and he belongs to me. And, God’s words of instruction aren’t only there to enlighten me, but this unique Word is living and practical touches every aspect of daily living. My enthusiastic response is gratitude.

Recently while reading in The Word in Life Study Bible published by Thomas Nelson, Inc., I came across some study notes that grouped together several Scriptures. They portrayed clearly the practicality of the Bible and its instructions for living the Christian life – a life of joy and peace – the abundant life Jesus spoke of.

These verses are directed to believers who are new creations in Christ. Through his transforming power within, new character traits are budding. His instructions give the necessary nourishment to turn back intoMoons.

When depending on Jesus, you begin to live in self-sacrificing, encouraging ways. We develop fruit that is blossoming within us through God’s presence, such as, love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. We are encouraged to think new and good thoughts that emphasize truth, purity and virtue. At last, we are to clothe ourselves with tender mercies, humility, forgiveness, thanksgiving, and songs of praise.

All of these things touch on the practicality of living the Christian life in Christ’s power. When we apply them to relationships, finances, decision making, entertainment, family life and more, we see how the ordinary can become extraordinary.

And I love what it says in Galatians 5: 22b, “Against such there is no law.” Put faith into practice with thanksgiving. Selah

Fiery Fall

What words paint this picture?
There always are none except to gape in the splendor of autumn’s palette.
Think about the beauty of the One
Who is behind it all.
Jesus Christ, the Creator.

“All things were created through Him
and for Him.”
Colossians 1: 16b

Ken and Jan love residing in the mountains of Avery County. Visit Jan’s new blog at passeonderkamzaker.net Journeying with Jan, and Jan’s photos at kenmerkphotography.com.

But he that received seed into the good ground is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it; which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. Matthew 13: 33
Cottage Parenting

By Jim Hart
Every County

Part of our Cottage Parenting at Crossnore is learning about our Spiritual Life programing. Every Monday morning at 9am our Cottagers show up at my office door, papers in hand ready to hear how the Christian parents and youth leaders interweave our Sunday activities into our sanctuary of healing and imaginary. I imagine their excitement when they learn about things like our little program, Youth Life Ice cream Olympciac, Jungle Life, and other things... This Sunday is: Pastor Stan and Sunday Church. The reality is most Cottages are coming to see me on the last day of their first Thursday night living in a cottage 24 hours a day for 7 days. Hearing about spiritual life at 9am is probably as exciting as van training and morally more engaging than being a trainer. In the midst of words like respected, required, chapel, Bible programs and host churches, through the fog of fatigue and their thoughts of, “He doesn’t look much like a preacher. What is all this talk about being in a ministry of presence,” I told my youth that they have 2 options: a) just go with the flow, or b) be intentional, after all, the “gospel” word is “good news”. Of course, most of the Cottagers liked option b. “I decided to take a stand on the path of the spiritual life.” One of my favorite Cottagers, Stan, has 2 weeks to go before he leaves the Cottage. The rest will be leaving in the next two weeks.

Berry Chapel Baptist Church

“Wake Up! Stand Up! Woman Up!”

Women’s Conference

By Teresa Robinson
Mitchell County

What good can enter your mind when you see a sleeping baby? Does a smile spread across your face, as you think there is nothing so precious and beautiful in the world?

Most people think this way. The baby is totally unaware of the dark wickedness that seems to continually grow each day. Yet, we as adults and caretakers of our children and grandchildren are facing the reality that as God’s attempt to point us to the truth that is found in words. Occasionally a sermon penetrates our hearts we just shift the thoughts aside and出去 the sleep of complacency and apathy.

Isn’t it time to “Wake Up”? Take a look around and see what is happening to us and our loved ones, friends and neighbors. Struggles have grasped us by the throat and turned the life out of us. These struggles did not start out as a struggle. Sin never reveals itself as the ugly beast that it is. Just a tiny little crack or moment of weakness, when Satan gets a toe hold in our lives. Suddenly the dust has settled, and we are left with nothing, or an empty shell of “could have” and “should have.” Decision must made with guidance of any God influences in a lonely dark place.

It does not have to be this way. To become aware of the tactics of Satan and how to defend yourself and others, in the power of the Almighty God, is possible for every child of God. The answer to this is to be put on by the believers and “stand up.” Ephesians 6:11-18 says “Put on the whole armor of God that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Stand therefore, putting on the shield of faith with which you may be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God.”

Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints. Once, we are dressed for battle, we are to stand and defend ourselves. This means to hold your ground and be accountable to what has been given to you, including your family. The time to hide in the background is past. Lives are at stake not just our own, but our families. Wake up, stand up and get off the blessed assurance of “do nothing” and be counted in the battle.

You may think that this is a man’s war. Unfortunately, that is incorrect. Women are soldiers, also in this war. We are not to be men, but we are called to be women of prayer and intercession to teach our children how to live a Godly life, and to take care of our families. Proverbs 31 is a description of a hard-working, independent, resourceful woman, who takes care of her husband, her family and her neighbor. In I Tim 2, Paul explains further that we are to help those who are younger to learn from their experiences.

Teresa lives in Spruce Pine and attends berry chapel baptist church.

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Blessing Place at High Pastures

Healing Prayer Weekend
By Kimberly Garland
Yancey County

In the spring of 2018, under the experience, faith, and able leadership of the Rev. John Rice as Director, the Lord has risen up a new healing prayer ministry, “The Blessing Place at High Pastures,” at a beautiful mountainside, non-denominational Christian Retreat Center in Burnsville, NC. The ministry was “birthed” with a prayer ministers’ training weekend followed by a Healing Prayer Weekend. Both weekends were blessed with a fresh release of the Holy Spirit that equipped and empowered the prayer ministers for healing and led prayer participants to experience the love and healing presence of Jesus. If you or someone you know would benefit from being blessed and prayed for in the beauty of God’s creation, you are encouraged to join us for a weekend of healing prayer.

Our Vision: Rekindling the Gift of Jesus’ Healing Ministry at High Pastures...and the world!

Our Mission: To invite the healing presence of God through Blessing and healing prayer ministry—equipping and mentoring of prayer ministers and enjoying Spirit-led worship. Under the power and authority given to his followers by Jesus, God has placed his healing power under our authority. It is up to us to release it—Matt 10:1.

Following twenty-four years as a church pastor, Rev. John Rice left pastoral ministry in 2012 in response to God’s call to focus more of his time and energy on resurrecting and growing Jesus’ healing ministry. He describes his teaching ministry as a way “to encourage, equip, and empower God’s people for Jesus’ healing ministry.” Since 2009, John has led four OSM ministry teams to bring Jesus’ healing ministry to the Diocese of Darapar, located in northeastern India. During the last 20 years, he has taught and preached on healing prayer ministry in churches throughout the United States. John recently completed a DVD teaching series of five healing prayer workshops. This new educational resource, “Equipping the Saints for Jesus’ Healing Ministry,” was created for use in churches, small groups, and CSL Clasps. John and his wife, Debra, live in Burnsville. Family-wise, especially being Poppi to two beautiful grandchildren, lots of flower gardening, and a little fishing, keep John well occupied when he’s not at High Pastures Christian Retreat & Conference Center located at 200 Kings Highway Burnsville, NC 28714. Contact them at 828-989-9623 for more information.

Em Garland serves on the Leadership Team of The Blessing Place and is one of the trained prayer ministers.

Gardner-Webb University

For the Beauty of the Earth
By Dr. Tracy Jessup

“Bless the Lord, O my soul. O Lord my God, you are very great. You are clothed with honor and majesty, wrapped in light as with a garment. You stretch out the heavens like a tent. You set the earth on its foundations, so that it shall never be moved….” —Psalm 104:1-2, 5

Today’s passage is a poetic summary of God’s creation of the world, declaring praise and adoration at the greatness of God. This Psalm somewhat parallels the description of creation in Genesis 1, recounting what God created each day as a reason to praise the Lord. On Day one, God created light (104:1-2; Genesis 1:1); day two, the heavens and the waters (104:3-7; Genesis 1:8); day three, land and vegetation (104:8-18; Genesis 1:9-13); day four, the sun, moon, and stars (104:19-23; Genesis 1:14-18); day five, trees and birds (104:26-26; Genesis 1:20-23); and on day six, animals and human beings (104:21-24, 27-31; Genesis 2:1-24). God’s act of creation is worth of praise — “Bless the Lord, O my soul!”

On October 8, 2015, the BBC posted an article on their website entitled “Cost the Earth’s Sources: How We Derived Financial Value for the Natural World.” Based on research by BBC Earth as well as scientists in collaboration with The United Nations Environment Program World Conservation Monitoring Center (UNEP-WCMC), the study asserts, “It is widely acknowledged that the natural world should not just be reduced to a series of financial values, which are necessarily estimates. However, in a world that often focusses on money, it can be a useful tool to help remind us that nature does have a value, and what might be lost if aspects of it disappear.”

Here are a few examples of the estimated monetary value for various aspects of God’s creation:

- Freshwater valued at $71.48 trillion
- Trees valued at $16.2 trillion
- Coral reefs valued at $9.7 trillion
- Wild sea fish valued at $274 billion
- Bees and other pollinators valued at $170 billion
- Bug beetles valued at $380 million

Neil Nightingale, Creative Director for BBC Earth commented on the study: “When you see the figures in black and white it’s illuminating to see that the annual revenue of the world’s most successful companies, Apple; General Motors; Nestle; Bank of China all pale in comparison to the financial return to our economy from natural assets.”

Beginning and ending with a doxology (“Bless the Lord, O my soul”), the Psalmist clearly is calling us to consider creation not for analysis and explanation, but for joyful celebration. Walter Brueggemann writes, “A theological reading of the world drives us not to knowledge and control, but to praise. As the world is referred back to God in adoration, we are aware that the world is not autonomous, not self-generated, not eternally existing, but exists because of the gracious power of Yahweh, who has made it all” (Tceans for Preaching, p. 551).

Prayer: For the beauty of the earth, for the glory of the skies, for the love which from our birth over and around as she; Lord of all, to thee we raise this hymn of grateful praise (Psalm 148:5).

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 Sanford University’s Beacon 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 Allisa.

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Losing Your Memory
By Pastor Steve Williams
Mitchell County

There was a man who loved to play golf, but he had one problem—he could hit the ball so far that he couldn’t see where it landed. So, a friend suggested that he pair up with this older man, who said he could see for a country mile. So, they paired up and took off for the first hole. The man who could kill the ball now, “keep your eyes on this ball,” and the older man said, “OK.” He hit the ball and he asked the older man “Did you see where it went?” he said, “I sure did.” So, they get in the golf cart and proceeded to go where the ball had landed. When they got there the man asked him where his ball landed. The old man scratched his head and said, “I forgot,” Has America Forgotten?
The Bible says in Psalm 13:1-12 [12] “Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord, and the people whom he has chosen for his own inheritance. [13] The Lord looks down from heaven, he beheld all the sons of men.” Said to say that many people in America have failed to remember that God has and still is Blessing America. I wonder if God may be asking what happened to America’s memory. For decades, this nation was founded on Christian principles. America stayed true to the Word of God and looked to it as its guide for decision making. To a great degree, Americans are blessed with the pleasures and freedoms of a great land as a result of this heritage of honoring and depending on God. Leaders proclaimed their trust in God. Citizens cherished their religious freedoms. Laws protected those rights. But, is God still America’s God today? Has He been replaced with cheap substitutes that will never bring the joy He promised? Could it be that success is our God? Has money become our priority? Pleasure seems to be the driving force of many lives.

I’m proud to be an American and live in America, but it’s sad to see how politics are destroying America. The Republicans, the Democrats, the Independents, the Libertarians, have all become legends in their own minds thinking they know what is best for America. I don’t know a lot of Greek, but I have been to a Greek restaurant before, and I do have a Greek word for that, “boligaa.” What I’m trying to say is that many of our leaders in America today have forgotten who made America Great. Yes, President Donald Trump has coined the phrase “Make America Great Again.” I do believe America is going in a better direction than it has in the past, but remember this— “Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord.” But if our leader fails to turn to God and follow God we are doomed. God is our only Hope. God is our only answer. We must keep our eyes on Him and not forget where He has brought us from, and where He has promised to take us. Many people today have failed to keep their eyes on the Lord and they are saying, “Which way do we go?” Consider the way you are going today. Choose Obedience, choose to follow God and pray that God will save America from this ungodly mess it is facing.

Words of Wisdom
• “Where there is unity there is always victory.”
• “We know what we are, but know not what we may be.” William Shakespeare
• “There are two ways of spreading light: to be the candle or the mirror that reflects it.” Edith Wharton
• “We are made wise not by the recollection of our past but by the responsibility for our future.” George Bernard Shaw
• “Talent is God given. Be humble. Fame is man given. Be grateful. Conceit is self given. Be humble.” John Wooden

A Little Humor:
In the supermarket, a man was pushing a cart that contained a screaming, crying baby. The gentleman kept repeating softly, “Don’t get excited, Albert. Don’t scream. Albert. Don’t yell. Albert. Keep calm. Albert.” A woman standing next to him said, “You certainly are to be commended for trying to soothe your son Albert. The man looked at her and said, “Lady, I’m Albert.”

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

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

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First Baptist Church of Marshall
By Pastor Buddy Freeman
Madison County
SafePlace

My Male Friend Experienced Domestic Violence, Too
By Beth Davis
Mitchell County

By now, you’re more than familiar with my stories of Domestic Violence against women. Well, it happens to men, too, although the statistics are rather low – 1 in 7 – or it’s grossly underestimated.

This story is about a decades-old, dear male friend of mine who was a victim of such, twisted Domestic Violence. To my knowledge, he was never physically abused (although I wouldn’t be surprised if he had held back that detail), but he was severely mentally and emotionally abused by his wife.

My source, Frank, is the most decent, helpful, conservative and convicted Christian man you’ll ever meet. He’d do anything in the world for anyone in need.

Unfortunately, he married Medusa, of Greek mythology fame, who was known for her hatred of men. She’s also a Gorgon, a fierce, frightening, or repulsive woman. (I’ll call her the Gorgon) Now, don’t get me wrong! Outwardly, she’s just about the sweetest, most congenial woman you’ll ever meet. But like I said, outwardly.

Shortly after Jimmy and the Gorgon were married, everything went wrong. He was expected to do all the grocery shopping, all the house cleaning, all the cooking, and, of course, the yard work. She went on exercise runs, and expensive shopping sprees for things they really couldn’t afford.

He worked full-time; she worked a couple hours a day. Yet he was expected to get the limp for the entire yard. Sometimes he wouldn’t get to bed until after 1:00 a.m., although he had to get up at 7:00 a.m. She would often wake up at 5:00 a.m. to exercise. She would come to work tired and messed up.

He was expected to do all the cooking, all the house cleaning, all the yard work. She went on exercise runs, and expensive shopping sprees for things they really couldn’t afford.

Despite the marriage, he once told me, the only thing more he could give up was sleep.

She beat him, embarrassed, and humiliated him every opportunity. She called him hateful names. He was miserable, confused, hurt. Nothing he could do was ever good enough, but he stuck with it because of his Christian convictions.

Then it was time to fulfill one of the goals of that all-important list. A baby.

Both of them were thrilled to find out she was pregnant. Jimmy pampered her, and he honestly believed she’d be a loving, caring, doting mother. Meh. Not quite what he’d imagined or expected.

Baby care all fell on him. In addition to his regular chores, he was the primary caregiver to the baby: up at night when it was fussy or cried or needed to be fed or diaper changed. He said he even changed the baby in the morning. He’s the one who changed the baby. The mother knew what the Gorgon did. She took the baby on her morning run.

They bought some expensive clothes which she couldn’t afford, many of which still had the tags on them, although the baby had outgrown them and continued to fill the closet with the same.

Meanwhile, Jimmy was exhausted and more than a little confused. Don’t get me wrong. The baby adored him. And when it got fussy, only wanted Daddy—much to his dismay, disappointment, and resentment. As stressed and exasperated as Jimmy was, his Christian convictions made him perseverant.

One very, very late night, she demanded that he cook up the yardwork. There was no light, but she had a brilliant idea. She made him pull his car close to the backyard and had him turn on his headlight. So proud of herself, she called to tell her mother. Well, Mother was so impressed that she dispatched her husband to do the same and help Jimmy. Jimmy and his mother-in-law worked until the very wee hours of the morning—5:00 a.m.

Yet Jimmy managed to care for the baby, and make it to work on time, all while plugging away with about 2 hours sleep.

When the Gorgon woke up and saw the work they’d done, she went through the roof. It was certainly not up to her standards: More hell, hell, hell to pay.

Completely defeated, Jimmy seriously contemplated suicide again. He went to the same place with the same plan. He just couldn’t win for losing. This time, his baby (now a toddler) stopped him.

All he wanted… was committed to… was making her happy. Nothing worked.

Then, one day, she came home to find that the toilet wasn’t cleaned to her liking. Wearing her designer silk blouse, she (foolishly) poured Clorox into the toilet. Of course, not being familiar to such a task, she managed to splash some on that precious, over-priced blouse. That did it. She blew her stack and completely lost her temper with Jimmy… slamming it for the ruined silk blouse.

Now, please keep in mind that the toddler saw all of this. That was enough. Jimmy had a belly full. He could not and would not let his child be raised in such an environment. He packed up the bare minimum and left for good. He didn’t want the chaos, he just wanted out of the way. He landed in a shelter for several weeks until he could secure a modest apartment.

According to Sheriff Donald Street, cases of male abuse around here are few and far between, but they do happen.

Mitchell County SafePlace has accommodated and welcomed men who have been victims of Domestic Violence. We cannot stress enough to encourage these victims to please contact us. We’re here to help. Remember, it can happen to him, too.

Beth Davis is the Resource Development Coordinator at Mitchell County SafePlace. She can be reached at 815-746-1015 or bethdavis66@gmail.com.

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A Meditation

By Timothy Eiler
McDowell County

When David took over the Kingdom of Judah it was after many years of preparation and development. After David took his rightful place as the king, he did not forget the people that needed his help and he desired to keep his promises. David and Jonathan were very close, and it grieved David that his friend had died. They had planned on spending many years together and doing life with each other. When evil men cut Jonathan’s life short, David mourned for him. While sitting on his throne he remembered Jonathan and wondered somebody could show kindness to his friend Jonathan’s sake. The king found out that he had a son Mephibosheth who was five years old when his father died, and his nurse dropped him, and he was lame in his feet. The amazing news of his name gives us a hint of this act of kindness of David to the one who destroys sham. David found this young man living in Lodebar which means no word or pasture. It was a barren place. Through the barren place that Mephibosheth was living, God saw him and showed him kindness and favor through King David. In his barren wasteland, he was living, God put on David’s heart to restore him everything that has belonged to his father. So, God and a faithful friend restored everything to Mephibosheth which had been lost. Not only was everything restored but he was allowed to eat at the king’s table for the rest of his life. If you’re going through a barren spot right now, God may just send a friend to you that will restore back to you what the locust has eaten, and have you eat at the king’s table for the rest of your life.

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

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Money Sense

6 Key Character Traits of People Who Win with Money
by Rachel Cruz

Meet the Smith family.

Both parents work, and they make good money. From the outside, life looks good — a new Tahoe, a big house, and private schools for the kids. In reality, the Smiths are barely scraping by. With the help of credit cards and car loans, they spend more money than they make, and they’re just one financial emergency away from being in serious trouble.

Then, there’s the Williams family.

One parent works, and makes decent money, while the other stays at home and takes care of the kids. The Williams family lives on a budget, and even though they still have a lot of student loan debt, they’ve cut the balance in half during the last two years. They have a small emergency fund saved, and they expect to be out of debt completely in two years.

So, what do you think is the difference between the Smiths and the Williamses? Why is one family able to pay off thousands of dollars in debt on a tight budget, while another family barely gets by week after week? Why does one person succeed with money, while another person struggles?

There are dozens of factors, but, many times, it comes down to these key characteristics.

They’re patient. People who win with money are patient. They can delay a short-term pleasure for a long-term gain. In other words, they can walk right by the shoe section without blinking. They knew $100 shoes would be nice, but they have higher priorities. That’s because they understand the bigger picture. It’s about retirement and college funds, but that doesn’t mean they can’t get them.

Believe me, I love the shoe section. But when I stop and pick up a pair of designer shoes in a store, I ask myself if we’ve budgeted for this and if buying that pair of shoes offsets our priorities.

They’re confident. When you’re in control of your money, you’re confident. You also don’t care when other people look down their noses at you, because you’re cutting back on lifestyle costs. Keeping up with the Joneses? Forget about it! One of the mistakes people make is to fall into the social media comparison game. You pull up Instagram and see beautiful photos from your friend Sarah’s Caribbean cruise. Meanwhile, you haven’t taken a vacation in a year because you’re working so hard to get out of debt. But confident people focus on their goals and understand that sacrifices are temporary. They know they’ll be able to take that cruise soon enough!

They’re goal-oriented. People who win with money approach goals with incredible passion. Save $1,000? Check. Get out of debt? Check. Build a full emergency fund? Check. For them, setting goals is fun. This isn’t some special skill you’re born with. Anyone can develop the habit of goal-setting, and here are a few basic tips.

1. Write them down and put them in a visible spot. Seeing your goals written out every day will keep them at the front of your mind.

2. Be specific. Exactly how much debt do you want to pay off each month? How much weight do you want to lose each month?

3. Set a time limit. Where’s your finish line? And, remember, be realistic. You’ll probably need more than a month to get out of debt.

They’re responsible. They get it. They understand in order to get to where they want to be financially, they might have to take a year off from vacation, skip dining out for a few months, or cut back on grocery spending. And honestly, couldn’t we all cut back on our spending? When I talk with people about their budgets, food is one of the main areas where people overspend — either at the grocery store or dining out. Responsible people are willing to look at their money situation and make smart choices. I know sometimes “settling” isn’t fun. But those smaller, “boring” decisions, like budgeting and staying on top of your account balances, can put you in a place to have a lot more fun later. That’s becoming a theme here, isn’t it?

They aren’t materialistic. They understand that you can have a bunch of stuff without being wealthy. You can be wealthy without owning a bunch of stuff. Big houses, nice cars, and fancy vacations are perfectly fine, but someone who was raised with money understands all those things by themselves don’t bring happiness. They live their lives with a full mind. That doesn’t mean they’re against owning stuff, or they think wealthy people are somehow “evil,” but they just get the fact that money isn’t everything.

They’re willing to sacrifice. They understand budget cuts are just temporary. Five years from now, once they’re out of debt and winning with money, they’ll look back on those sacrifices with a smile. This is a big one, and it works closely with patience and responsibility. Sacrifice can’t happen if you aren’t patient or responsible, because you can’t get past the immediate rush of having something or delaying something right now. When it comes to sacrificing with money, you must look past today.

The great thing about these characteristics is you can develop them. Even if you’re not naturally patient, or you aren’t a big goal setter, you can develop these character traits by working to create new habits in your life. And when these habits turn into character traits, you’ll be on your way toward winning with money for good.

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About Rachel Cruz
As a #1 New York Times bestselling author and host of The Rachel Cruz Show, Rachel helps people learn the proper ways to handle money and stay out of debt. She’s authored three best-selling books, including Love Your Life, Not Theirs and Smart Money, Smart Kids, which she co-wrote with her father, Dave Ramsey. You can follow Rachel on Twitter and Instagram at @RachelCruz and online at rachelscrew.com. You can also connect with RachelCruz on Facebook at facebook.com/RachelCرز.
Veterans Day History

Veterans Day is an official United States public holiday, observed annually on November 11, that honors military veterans; that is, persons who served in the United States Armed Forces. It coincides with other holidays, including Armistice Day and Remembrance Day, celebrated in other countries that mark the anniversary of the end of World War I, major hostilities of World War I were formally ended at the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month of 1918, when the Armistice with Germany went into effect. The United States previously observed Armistice Day. The U.S. holiday was renamed Veterans Day in 1954.

Veterans Day is not to be confused with Memorial Day, a U.S. public holiday in May; Veterans Day celebrates the service of all U.S. military veterans, while Memorial Day honors those who died while in military service [1] It is also not to be confused with Armed Forces Day, a minor U.S. remembrance that also occurs in May, which specifically honors those currently serving in the U.S. military.

On November 11, 1919, U.S. President Woodrow Wilson issued a message to his countrymen on the first Armistice Day, in which he expressed what he felt the day meant to Americans:

ADDRESS TO FELLOW-COUNTRYMEN

The White House, November 11, 1919.

A year ago today, our enemies laid down their arms in accordance with an armistice which rendered them impotent to renew hostilities, and gave to the world an assured opportunity to reconstruct its shattered order and to work out in peace a new and juster set of international relations. The soldiers and people of the European Allies had fought and endured for more than four years to uphold the barrier of civilization against the aggressions of armed force. We ourselves had been in the conflict something more than a year and a half.

With splendid forbearance of mere personal concerns, we remodeled our industries, concentrated our industrial resources, increased our agricultural output, and assembled a great army, so that at the last our power was a decisive factor in the victory. We were able to bring the vast resources, material and moral, of a great and free people to the assistance of our associates in Europe who had suffered and sacrificed without limit in the cause for which we fought.

Of our victory there rose new possibilities of political freedom and economic concord. The war showed us the strength of great nations acting together for high purposes, and the victory of arms foretells the enduring conquests which can be made in peace when nations act justly and in fulfillment of the common interests of man.

To us in America the reflections of Armistice Day will be filled with solemn pride in the memory of those who died in the country's service, and with gratitude for the victory, both because of the thing from which it has freed us and because of the opportunity it has given America to show her sympathy with peace and justice in the councils of nations.

WOODROW WILSON

The United States Congress adopted a resolution on June 4, 1926, requesting that President Calvin Coolidge issue annual proclamations calling for the observance of November 11 with appropriate ceremonies [2] A Congressional Act (52 Stat. 1511; 5 U.S.C. Sec. 87c) approved May 3, 1938, made the 11th of November in each year a legal holiday, "a day to be dedicated to the cause of world peace and to be thereafere celebrated and known as 'Armistice Day'. "[3]

In 1943, World War II veteran Raymond Weeks from Birmingham, Alabama had the idea to expand Armistice Day to celebrate all veterans, not just those who died in World War I. Weeks led a delegation to Gen. Dwight Eisenhower, who supported the idea of National Veterans Day.

Weeks led the first national celebration in 1947 in Alabama and annually until his death in 1985. President Reagan honored Weeks at the White House with the Presidential Citizenship Medal in 1992 as the driving force for the national holiday.

Elizabeth Dole, who prepared the briefing for President Reagan, determined Weeks as the "Father of Veterans Day."

U.S. Representative Ed Pasko from Emporia, Kansas, presented a bill establishing the holiday through Congress. President Dwight D. Eisenhower, also from Kansas, signed the bill into law on May 26, 1954. It had been eight and a half years since Weeks held his first Armistice Day celebration for all veterans.

Congress amended the bill on June 1, 1954, replacing "Armistice" with "Veterans," and it has been known as Veterans Day since [5][6]

The National Veterans Award was also created in 1954. Congressmen Pasko received the first National Veterans Award in Birmingham, Alabama, for his support offering legislation to make Veterans Day a federal holiday.

Although originally scheduled for celebration on November 11 of every year, starting in 1971 in accordance with the Uniform Monday Holiday Act, Veterans Day was moved to the fourth Monday of October (Oct 25, 1971, Oct 23, 1972, Oct 21, 1973, Oct 20, 1974, Oct 27, 1975, Oct 25, 1976, and Oct 24, 1977). In 1978, it was moved back to its original celebration on November 11. While the legal holiday remains on November 11, lit any date that falls on a Saturday or Sunday, then organizations that formally observe the holiday will actually be closed on the adjacent Friday or Monday, respectively.

Because it is a federal holiday, some American workers and many students have Veterans Day off from work or school. When Veterans Day falls on a Saturday then either Saturday or the preceding Friday may be designated as the holiday, whereas if it falls on Sunday it is typically observed on the following Monday.

When falls on weekend many private companies offer its as a floating holiday where employee can choose some other day. A Society for Human Resource Management poll in 2010 found that 21 percent of employers planned to observe the holiday in 2011 [8]

Non-essential federal government offices are closed. No mail is delivered. All federal workers are paid for the holiday, those who are required to work in the holiday sometimes receive holiday pay for that day in addition to their wages.

In his Armistice Day address to Congress, Wilson was sensitive to the psychological toll of the war years: "Rustler does not breed reform; it breeds madness," he remarked. [9] As Veterans Day and the birthday of the United States Marine Corps (November 10, 1775) are only one day apart, that branch of the Armed Forces customarily observes both occasions as a 96-hour liberty period.

Electoral Day is a regular working day, while Veterans Day, which typically falls the following week, is a federal holiday. The National Commission on Federal Election Reform called for the holidays to be merged, so citizens can have a day off to vote. They state this is a way to assure voting by energizing democratic rights[10].

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