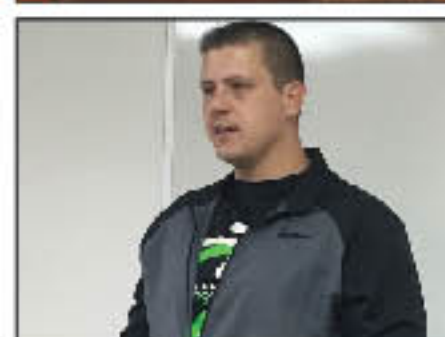




BLUE RIDGE CHRISTIAN NEWS



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 stated 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 presenter after presenter 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, learning of the needs 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 Bear 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 (CC4C), Mitchell County Preschool Services and Family Support Network.)

From this Conference I pray we 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 having 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 will 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."



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Thanksgiving, or Thanksgiving Day, is a private holiday celebrated on the fourth Thursday of November[1] in the 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.[2] 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 in the Heavens," to be celebrated on the last Thursday in November.[3][4] 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 [5] This feast lasted three days, and—as accounted by attendee Edward Winslow[6]—it was attended by 90 Native Americans and 53 Pilgrims.[7] 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 Nationhood

During the American Revolutionary War the Continental Congress appointed one or more thanksgiving days each year, each time recommending to the executives 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 farther Blessings as they stand in Need of: And it having pleased him in his abundant Mercy, not only to continue to us the innumerable Bounties 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 unalienable 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 or 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 penitent Confession of their manifold Sins, whereby they had forfeited every Favor; and their humble and earnest Supplication that it may please God through the Merits of Jesus Christ, mercifully to forgive and blot them out of Remembrance; That it may please him graciously to afford his Blessing 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 fit Instruments, 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 servile Labor, 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



Sketch by Alfred Waud of Thanksgiving in camp (of General Louis Blenker) during the U.S. Civil War in 1861



Home to Thanksgiving, lithograph by Currier and Ives (1867)

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

Isaiah 52:7 KJV



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

Pastors - Tom & Tammy Anglin

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Wednesday Service 7:00PM
Church Office M-F
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Sunday Evening Care Meal/
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2187 Jamestown Road
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828-684-8212

Pastor Rick Mercer

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

Faith Fellowship Church

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

Pastor: David Gillespie

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

Altapass Baptist Church

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

Dr. Marcus R. Benfield

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

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793 Old NC 226 Hwy
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Morning Worship 11:00am
Sunday evening 6:30pm
Wednesday:
J.A.M. (Jesus and Me) 7:00pm
Seekers (young adults) 7:00pm
Mid-week worship 7:00pm
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West Burnsville Baptist Church

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

Pastor: Terry Long

Sunday School: 9:45 a.m.
Morning Service: 10:50 a.m.
Evening Service: 6:00 p.m.
Wednesday Service 6:30 p.m.

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4668 Burkemont Rd.
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Dr. Luke A. Lane

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

Plumtree Presbyterian Church

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

Sunday School 9:45 am
Worship Service 11:00 am
Life Groups Tuesday-Thursday evenings, 7:00 pm
Fusion Youth Wednesday's, 6:30 pm
Healing Services 2nd Sunday of each month, 6:30 pm
John 15:16 You did not choose me, but I chose you
and appointed you to go and bear fruit—fruit that
will last. Then the Father will give you whatever you
ask in my name.

Bear Creek Baptist Church

327 Bear Creek Road
Bakersville, NC 28705
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Reverend Bruce Cannon

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

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Sabbath (Saturday)
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Pine Branch Baptist Church

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

Reverend Bobby Joe Greene

Sunday School • 9:45-10:40am
Worship Service • 10:45am
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Wednesday Faith Formation
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4:00pm

First Baptist Church of Spruce Pine

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

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11090 Hwy. 226 South
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www.sprucepineumc.org
spumc3@bellsouth.net
828-765-7446

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Sunday Worship - 11:00am
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211 Lenoir Road
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**Pastor Patrick Bradshaw
Associate Pastor Javier
Guzman**
pbradshawfaccmorganton@gmail.com

Sunday School 10:00 AM
Sunday Worship 11:00 AM
Wed: Youth Meal 5:30PM -
Meeting 6:30PM
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Choir Practice 7:15PM
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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 has full, 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 in 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 image 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 lace with 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 gems.

What would Peter say about this? What would the grungy fisherman 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 visualize a ring of thirty-five grams of gold on the callused 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 contradict 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 14:23) 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 (maturing believers).

So what would Peter say? To New Believers he would say, "As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word that ye may grow thereby. (1 Peter 2:2) and to the Elders he would say, "I exhort the elders among you, as your fellow elder... shepherd the flock of God among you, exercising oversight...according to the will of God; not for sordid gain... nor yet as lording it over those allotted to your charge, but proving to be examples to the flock. (1 Peter 5:1-3) Most importantly what would Peter say to the unsaved? "Repent 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) Is it possible that 1.2 billion people are being misled? What would Peter say?

(For the preamble 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
choir*

*The music breath taking God's eyes look fire
Beautiful angels on golden streets trod
Proclaim a new morning at the Table of God.*



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

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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 through 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 morn. HE AROSE! Sadly, people just like you and me seemed thankful to meet Him, yet in this sinful world we turned our back to Him and shouted, "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 36 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 the world as we know it has beautiful places, we haven't seen anything yet. God's word tells us that in 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 Sherri 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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Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; Matthew 9:37

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 ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: But if ye 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 pausing one day this month to place specific emphasis on the giving of thanks to God for the provisions that sustain our lives every day. But what many of us will NOT do is link 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 recurring 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 is found in Romans 5:8. *'But God commendeth 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 Institution'). 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 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 has 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 AMCI 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 Spruce Pine and Community Funded Chaplain at Avery-Mitchell Correctional Institution.



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 war 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 a special prayer service for the 116,516 who died in WWI, all veterans, and those currently serving in our armed forces."

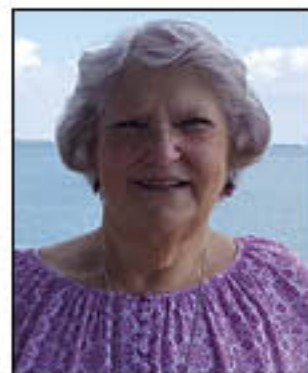
The event originated by The World War One Centennial Commission and has been joined by the Pritzker Military Museum & Library, the Society of the Honor Guard of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, the National Cathedral, The American Legion, and Veterans of Foreign Wars.

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 took place between July 1914 and November 1918, and is among the deadliest conflicts 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.

Congress established the U.S. World War One Centennial 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 828-688-4371, mitchellchistory@gmail.com, or <http://mitchellchistory.org>.



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Rhonda Gunter, Chairman of the Mitchell County Historical Society.

By Doug Harrell

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 and work 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 home! Now I am not suggesting that everyone move back 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 pleasant, but most have, and we have tried to follow the written instructions. Let me be very clear, Barbara is not a meek little mouse 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 these thoughts and ideas. Most of the time, thank goodness, we are on the same page, but when we aren't, and 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 commitment to 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 out front to bring back a switch and had my legs and little butt switched! You would have thought that I would have been a faster learner! Today you can get arrested for spanking 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 *He that spareth his rod hateth his son: but he that loveth him chastens him betimes.*

As we grow up and mature, the tide changes and we children oft times become caretakers 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 that our 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 ground outside the milk house where dad had literally 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 I always respected him because I truly got what I deserved. In 1990 Barbara and 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.

Relations 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 has soooo 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, there would be no 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 love for each other 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 continuously. We cannot give our lives to Jesus, say well I did that, and walk away and have 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



continued on page 37

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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 freedom. 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 47)

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 now so large it takes 3 houses to accommodate three-fifths of our family. But, nothing replaces the awesomeness of sitting in 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 ever 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 Blue Ridge Christian News.

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"The Faith That Pleases God"

Hebrews 11

By Shawn Thomas
Burke County



What kind of gift makes your spouse happy? That's important to know, isn't it? Because people vary so much in what pleases 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 that if you got them a kitchen appliance as a gift you'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 this passage:

I. Your Life's Goal Is To Please God

Verse 5 says "By faith Enoch was taken up so that he should not see death ... (for) before his being taken up he was pleasing to God." Those last 3 words are the key here: "pleasing to God." THIS is what we are shooting for. THIS is what we were made for: to please God.

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 to 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 big 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 drive yourself MAD 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. God put you here on earth to please HIM! Remember that.

But here is another angle on that: we are not here just to please OURSELVES either! See, some people would say, "No: I am 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 put 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 to be His follower means that you "DENY YOURSELF, take up your cross daily and follow HIM." "Deny yourself" means that as a follower of Christ, you are no longer free to do just whatever you want to do. You are not free to say: "where do I want to live, what do I want to do with my life?" 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 with your body." The question for the genuine 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 why Jesus taught us to pray in our daily model prayer: "Thy will be done." Not "my will;" "THY will." God did not place you here to fulfill your dreams; He placed you here to fulfill HIS purpose for you. You do not exist to please other people; you do not exist to please yourself; you exist to please God.

II. You Please God By FAITH

It is in light of this goal of "pleasing God" that :6 becomes so important: if we were created to please God, then HOW do we do that? Verse 6 gives us 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 "love language," if you will; that's the gift 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 conveniently gives us the definition of that in :1, "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 convicted of it — even though you have never seen it.

Faith is how we are saved. Verse 2 says, "For by it, the men of old gained approval" — in other words, this is how they were saved in Old Testament times. And the New Testament teaches us that this is how we are saved today too: Ephesians 2:8 says "for by grace are you saved by faith." And as we saw, "faith" is believing in something we haven't seen.

I Peter 1:8-9 explains this I think as well as any other set of scriptures: "And though you have not seen Him, you love Him, and though you do not see Him now, but believe in Him, you greatly rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, obtaining as the outcome of your FAITH the salvation of your souls."

It says there: you have not seen Jesus. And yet, you love Him — you worship Him; you sing songs to Him — in spite of the fact that you have never seen Him at



all! This is exactly the definition of saving faith: you believe in this Jesus whom you have never seen, and you love and worship and obey Him anyway. If that is what you are doing, then you can be confident that you are saved by your faith!

Some people feel really bad because they have never seen Jesus. I don't. Jesus said, "Blessed are they who did not see, and yet believed." (John 20:29). I have never seen Jesus. Not even close. But I love Him. I pray to Him. I sing to Him every morning. I try to serve Him. And you know what First Peter 1 says? When I love Him whom I have never seen, I will receive as the outcome of my faith, the salvation of my soul! And you will too!

- You didn't see Him walk here on this earth
- You didn't see Him die on that cross
- You didn't see Him rise from the dead
- You can't see Him sitting in heaven right now.

But even though you haven't seen Him, if you believe in Him so much that you really love Him, and commit your life to Him, and worship and serve Him, you will receive as the outcome of your faith the salvation of your soul. Don't be troubled because you haven't seen the Lord. That is what saving faith is: it is believing in Him whom we have not seen.

AND LET ME ADD THIS: although faith is believing in something we haven't seen, the Christian faith is not a blind faith. There are very good, well-grounded reasons for a person to have faith in Christ.

You want a reasonable faith, take Christianity. Every year that goes by, archaeological digs uncover more and more historical artifacts that corroborate that what the Bible says is accurate and true.

Let me give you just one example from our daily Bible reading this week. We read in Jeremiah 38 how the prophet Jeremiah was persecuted by some of the officials in Jerusalem. One of those officials was named Gedaliah, the son of Pashhur. Who knows if this was a real guy or not; maybe they just made it up. Well, on August 9, 2008, the Jerusalem Post printed a story that archeologists had unearthed a 2,600 year old clay seal, bearing the name of Gedaliah the son of Pashhur, an official in Jerusalem!

And we could spend all hour giving examples like that. History and archeology continually reinforce the accuracy of the Bible. And even Jesus Himself, I Corinthians 15 says, was seen alive by 500 people at one time, who at the time I Corinthians was written, were "still alive to this day," bearing witness — many of them going to their deaths under torture, testifying that they had seen this Man alive!

— Now does that "prove" it? No.

— Is it still "faith." Yes.

— But is it "blind, unreasonable" faith? Absolutely not. Not when it is corroborated by credible witnesses who were known to their contemporaries. Not when it is continually attested by history and archeology. Christianity is the most reasonable, the most accurate, and the most historically grounded faith on the planet, hands down.

Blaise Pascal, the great mathematician, had it right: "There is enough light for those who want to believe — and enough shadows to blind those who don't." It's not "blind faith," but faith is believing — on the basis of good evidence — this God and this Jesus whom we have never seen.

III. Faith That Pleases God Is Based On His Word

This is SO important: faith is not something that we just sit around and "dream up." We don't just decide, "I think I am going to trust God for this," and believe it. Biblically, faith is always a response to the word of God. Look at the examples here in Hebrews 11:

:7 "By faith Noah, BEING WARNED BY GOD about things unseen, in reverence prepared an ark ...". See, Noah didn't just sit around and say, "You know, I think I'm gonna believe God for an ark!" No, he'd have never come up with that in 100 years. It had never even rained before!! No, Noah didn't come up with the idea for the ark, GOD did. And Noah responded to the word God gave him, with faith.

We see the same thing in :8, where it says, "By faith Abraham, WHEN HE WAS CALLED, obeyed by going out to a place which he was to receive for an inheritance; and he went out ...". Again, Abraham didn't just decide to go out and "claim some land" he wanted to have. GOD TOLD HIM to go, and Abraham just responded to God's word with faith.

In :11, Sarah didn't just dream up that she was going to have a child. God TOLD her she was going to have a child. The faith she had was based on God's word coming to her first.

In :17, Abraham didn't just decide to go offer up his son one day — God COMMANDED him to do it. He was responding to the command God first gave him, with faith.

continued on page 16

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Christmas Lights

By Sheryl Tron
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 what this event is really about," 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 Tron, the event relies entirely on volunteer help and Tron said the ceremony 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.

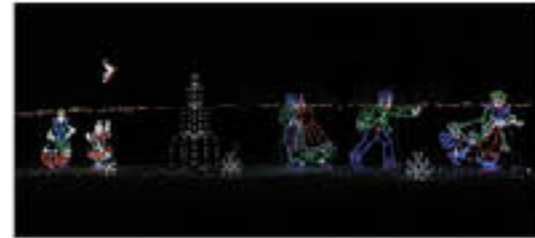
"We love having families bring their children and we want folks to just come and enjoy themselves," Jacumin said. "The whole event really reminds us what Christmas is about, and that is doing for others and doing something for someone else. It enriches the building blocks of society and it's a joy to 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 or the Waldensian Trail of Faith, call the Waldensian Trail of Faith Office at 828-874-1893, visit www.trailoffaith.com, or email trailoffaith1893@gmail.com. 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 condoning 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 5:20).

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 were 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 to be wrong." By this principle 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 Honesty was once the hallmark of character. But it has been set aside with an "It's all right if you don't get caught" philosophy. How do we get our values so mixed up? How do we fall into this trap of Satan? For one thing, we're shortsighted. We look for shortcuts to happiness. Our lust for immediate pleasure prompts us to think of evil as good.

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 side to the other. Morally, they are drifting aimlessly without compass or guide.

Still another way that evil is called good is for the conscience to be perverted, and certainly our consciences today are perverted. 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.

Hazen G. 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 respectabilization of evil." We accept in stride the false promises of politicians, the misrepresentations in advertising, the everyday dishonesties of Mr. and Mrs. John Doe, the cheating on exams, the usual exaggerations in conversation and the common immoralities of our times. We no longer blush, and we're 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 dead wrong. "But it's what I've always wanted," or, "It's good for me, although I know it's wrong" are the alibis 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 Jesus: "Seek first the kingdom of God and His 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 us personally. In other words, we want God to be our servant. "Woe to those who call evil good!"

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, who said: "The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I ate," to a member of the Senate who says: "I did nothing that a thousand other men would not have done," we excuse ourselves. We call evil good.

Our Lord was impatient with our tendency to rationalize our evil and call it good. In Luke 18, He told of the self-righteous Pharisee who stood and prayed: "God, I thank You that I am not like other men—extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this tax collector" (verse 11). The Pharisee 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 Pharisee looked upon as the most sinful of men, saw himself as he was, and said: "God, be merciful to me a sinner" (verse 13). Jesus said: "I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted" (verse 14).

How can we get our values straightened out? How can our warped judgment be brought into line? How can we stop calling evil good?

Some tell us that education is the answer to these questions. Prove 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. It says that we possess a nature that wars against us, that seeks to destroy us. The Apostle Paul said: "I find then a law, that evil is present with me, the one who wills to do good" (Romans 7:21). Evil is present in us disguising itself as good, controlling us and deceiving us. Sin is why the atonement 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 sins."

—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 sins. For them, life's values are confused. Paul found the cure for his violent, destructive disposition, not at the feet of Gamaliel or in the culture of Greece, but on the Damascus Road when he met Jesus Christ. Later he wrote: "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 conversion, he saw Christ as the greatest evil and breathed out "threats 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 straightened out because his nature had been changed by the redeeming grace of God.

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. Only if the scales fall from your eyes can you acknowledge Him as Lord. 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 could happen to you today. Wherever you are, you can say yes to Christ. This can be your Damascus 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!

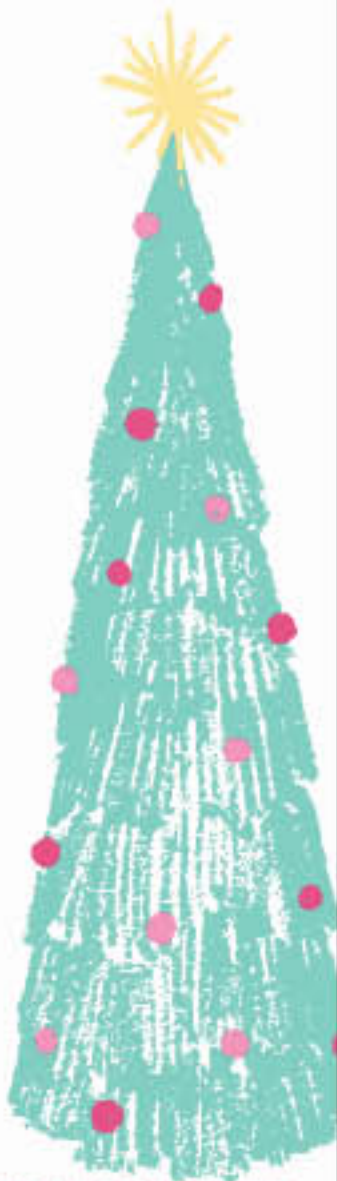
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Forgive or Self Destruct

By Jerry Lewis



In today's sermon (<https://itunes.apple.com/us/podcast/grace-community-church/id573563553?mt=2&l=fr&ign-mpt=uo%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

H = Hurt

- Hurts are the origin of most negative behavior
- Hurt 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-mad)
- Threats to self—feel at risk-physically or emotionally (embarrassed, 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) (packing clothes in suitcase)
- Express – Verbally and nonverbally
- Expressing hurt is when you:
- 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 (mild form)
- Pounding fist 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-In your anger do not sin)
- 3 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
- 3-step process to manage anger:
- Feel the anger
- Allow time for the intense feelings to pass (Diffusion time scale 1-10, if 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 treasure 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
- Soul 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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Sudoku Solution

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

Clint's Chronicles on the Funny Farm

The Rest of the Story Doug Harrell

As I reread this story of old, I literally had to wipe the tears of laughter from my eyes and off my cheeks. Remembering the day 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 valleys of Harrell Hill with friends that are no longer here. 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 talent like no other. He was the same in person. I hope you enjoy this as much as I did in rereading 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 the myriad monsters 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 Hose in Hand I Go!

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 sizzled and baked under the scorching summer sun.

It was another warm and DRY day at Harrell Hill Farms and I was asking God to open the heavens and pour moisture on our parched farmland. Hay ain't growin', 'maters are wilting, 'tater patch looks like a forest fire aftermath... the soil is groaning for water. The babbling creeks and free flowing streams had slowed to a mere trickle.

This day my friend Farmer Doug Harrell had drug me all over the mountainous terrain, spraying some kind of dastardly weed killer on the fence line. As you might expect, Doug learned not to trust me on the tractor in the presence of other human beings, so he drives. 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 pipe; spraying this modern day nuclear waste on a gazillion miles of pig weed. (By the way, one day I will ask the Lord how come He made pig weed...it's ugly; it chokes edible plants, and has thorns the size of horseshoe nails...that just ain't right!) Anyway, I'm cautiously running behind the tractor trying to avoid falling into a groundhog cavern. For I know there is an underground monster wanting to drag me to the center of the earth's core and devour my flesh!

Well, God spared my life and empowered me to expertly dump that load of herbicide which, over time, would free the electric fencing from the choking weeds. Another chore-box "checked," it's now time to repair the watering holes for the cows.

As the Cow Panteth for the Water...

I guess they are called watering holes, although they are more like watering tanks...they really aren't tanks either, they are really cement donuts. Whatever! They devices rise out of the earth and fill with water from who knows where. I mean there is no water on the gardens, no water in the creeks, and here I am looking at a round concrete hicky-doo full of life saving water...go figure. Man, so much to learn on this farm!

Anyway, A.D. Harrell – "Daddy D" to his family – told Doug we needed to unstop these fountains, geysers, watering holes...whatever in the heck they are. Seems mud and debris 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 electric fence around the pastures to keep the bovine in and others out. Weeks ago, I was shown where to connect and disconnect the power for safe entry. If you care, the power comes out of a little out-building, sort of an ancient haunted shed type structure beside Daddy D's house. My first foray to the shed I fully expected a two-headed snake, a gigantic spider or at least a swarm of bees to assault my personage. And, so as not to disappoint, I ran face-first into GIANT spider webs appearing like a Johns-Manville fiber-glass factory. Thankfully not a single behemoth approached me, and Doug told me always to remember to disconnect the power before touching the wire. Duh! What kind of moron does he think I am?

As we neared the cow watering spigot I thought 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 I especially long to be a farmer like them. And, Doug and I have long had a competitive "thing" between us, whether playing golf, picking beans or eating cake. One always hopes to outperform the other. Back to the fence...

Following in Doug's footsteps, I grabbed hold of that barbed wire, with both hands, preparing to carefully lift my right leg over. BAM...BANG...%\$#@!...lightening raced through my fingertips, tingled through my wrists – continued up my arms, neck and head, spilling down into my back and belly, exiting through my feet. Heck I don't know – it's not a constant shock, it's a SLOW 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 suspended in time and space, unsure he was seeing what he was seeing.

Meanwhile, I'm clinging to this fence for dear life – smoke emanating from inside my wet gloves (Okay, not exactly pouring out but so it seemed). Yet I thought, "If Doug Harrell can hold this wire I CAN TOO. I will not give up." And I did...and I did...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 fail what I thought was another test of my farmer mettle.

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 I...time to surrender. Periodic bursts of electricity passing through Farmer Clint's body cannot add to life expectancy...I would simply lose this challenge!

Pouncing over 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 shakes your belly and innards...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 twinkle 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, "Bet 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 outdo another, much less a friend, is not what God wants from me. Improper 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 "cheat death" on the funny farm.

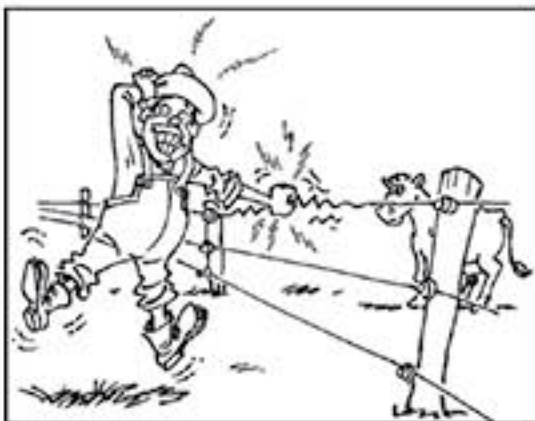
Humbled in the Hills,

Farmer Clint



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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 hear 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 is 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're believing Him for, but in Biblical faith, God shows us in His word what He wants us to trust Him for.

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 step 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 That Pleases 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 us 2 times in Chapter 2: "Faith without works is dead." (:17, :26)

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

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Claiming Our Inheritance

By Marlene Houk
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 sews 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 to the same path. Follow the acrostic for a glimpse of Sarah, the princess of Genesis, 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 analogy in Isaiah 51:2, for the LORD brought forth a miracle in her barren womb and formed a mighty nation to provide a Savior 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. Sarah helps us to understand that we are the children of God's promises. 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 I 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 despaired 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
- believes the 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 fashions us into His image (2 Corinthians 3:18). Sarah's faith shines brightly in Hebrews where her farewell to us and her legacy of trust in the LORD has motivated 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 beckon: 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 irritants of waiting and disbelief.

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 spiritual principles elsewhere in the Bible. Finally, enjoy these crown jewels as a princess, a daughter of the King. Happy hunting!

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



THANKSGIVING
blessings to everyone

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 as many of us do today, we go our separate ways. After spending so many years working, raising children, and consuming our 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 us down from the hustle and bustle of life so we can spend more time focusing on our future.

Something inside of me has always been there. 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 word and research it on biblegateway.com. I study the scripture and expound on the verses using my personal testimony and my life's 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. We don't have to get dressed up. We can sit comfortably at our computer and communicate, share with each other.

I spend a lot of time by myself. I divorced many years ago and never remarried. I have dedicated the last 20 years of my life to the ministry God has entrusted to me. Even though there are times when I am around a lot of people, most of the time I stay to myself. I find that I have developed some unusual habits. I talk to myself. At first I thought I was losing control of my faculties, until I realized that I am never alone. The Holy Spirit of God is always with me. I speak to Him, and in turn He speaks to me. His responses are not, as we say, normal human communication. He is God. He doesn't pull or push us. He just stands there, with His arm around our soul, waiting for us to have fellowship with Him. If there is stress in our life, He is there to comfort us. When I share what's on my mind I stop and listen for a response. It may be an answer to a situation or it may be a still, small voice that may be just what I needed. If you let your mind run out of control you will never hear.

We have to work at relationships whether they are human or divine. No worthwhile relationship comes easy. With God it is a matter of spending time with Him during daily Bible study and prayer. We should strive to understand God's Word just as a detective tries to solve a complicated case. The Bible is the most amazing book I have ever read. It reveals itself over time. It is a living work just as Jesus Christ is the living Word. Careful, dedicated study brings us closer to God. His Word removes the darkness out of loneliness and transforms our solitude into light.

Jesus spent time alone every chance He had. ... He went up on a mountainside by Himself to pray. Later that night, He was there alone. Matthew 14:23 NIV He spent that time in prayer with His Father. Thanks to His unselfish sacrifice His Father is now our Father. He gives us the same opportunity He has to have a personal relationship with Almighty God. Most of us, myself included, see our heavenly Father as being too busy running the universe. He is somewhere up in heaven stuck in a meeting or something. This is simply not true. Many Bible verses express God as being alone. He is not as busy as you might think. He is not up in heaven somewhere He is in your mind. He is the fiber of your being. He resides in every cell of our body and holds those cells together to form our being. He longs to share His overwhelming love for us.

Developing a prayer life takes time. It is something almost anyone can do. So come out of the darkness of loneliness and into the light of prayer. If you are homebound you can sit in your recliner and spend countless hours with your Savior. The most important thing to do is eliminate all distractions. Turn the T.V. off and set your phone on mute. My first prayer is to ask God to open my spiritual eyes and ears so that I will understand the scripture. I study my Bible, and then I try and get as comfortable as I can. I relax the muscles in my neck, shoulders, and arms. When I first close my eyes I don't say anything. I think about the scripture I just read, and I try to remove all other thoughts from my mind. I now 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 spend time with Him discussing the issues of those who are a vital part of 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 on 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 forward. Each of us has done things we wish we could do over. Mistakes and 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. Write down the issues that are on your mind and then read them to the Lord. Then tear the page out of the book 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 over 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 seniors are just now overcoming 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." I 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 NIV Jesus and I care very much about you so take the focus off of yourselves and place it on others. I promise you will not have time to focus on how lonely you are if you are busy helping others. Can't get out of the house? Start a phone ministry checking in on other seniors. I knew a lady named Grace. Her entire ministry was sending birthday cards to people. I loved her so much. Every birthday I would get a card special handwritten note, and two pieces of gum. It was the greatest birthday present ever!!!

Loneliness prospers in a heart that never smiles. If I catch myself feeling lonely or unhappy I start singing hymns. I love the old hymns. It reminds me of when I was young riding in the car with my mom and dad. We were always singing, smiling, and having a great time. It doesn't really matter what time it is. It doesn't really matter what day it is to me, I'm free. All that really matters is I'm alive, feeling fine, singing happily.

*...I have upheld you since your birth,
and have carried you were born.
Even to your old age and gray hairs
I am He, am He who will sustain you.
I have made you and I will carry you;
I will sustain and I will rescue you.
Isaiah 46:3-5 NIV*

Alan Griffin started the kidsnchrist ministries in November 1997. He has worked with inner city kids for 21 years. He found a need for specialized Biblical literature that would reach people of all ages and has been writing since 2005. The ministry has expanded their websites to reach around the world. Kidsnchrist.com, millennialchristian.com, teensnchrist.com, seniorsnchrist.com, picture-verse.com, and soulworks-smallgroups.com. We had an outreach of over 13,000,000 people last year with 36,000,000 impressions. If you have any questions for Alan you can reach him at alan@kidsnchrist.com



Neuropathy



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The LORD Is My Shepherd

By Timothy W. Tron
Burke County

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 holler through which he trod. A fateful night of harsh winds left the trail littered with pine cones and limbs. Up ahead, a fallen flock of trees lay across the path, like obstacles in a steeplechase, over which he must straddle. Onward, like the current in the stream that flowed nearby, his body moved; silent and steady. In his mind, the words of the 23rd Psalm swirled like falling leaves upon the gentle breeze. Their parallel to the model prayer of which Jesus taught his disciples teased his curiosity. Lost in thought, he ambled on, as memories as clear as the crystal waters that gurgled in his ears echoed their distant reply.

"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 as 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 a small satchel upon his back, he began his unknowing ascent upon the footpath that had been well worn from centuries of pedestrian traffic. To be in the presence of such imagery caused him to pause often and stand in awe. Likewise, the reverence for which he watched became increasingly intense with each footstep upward. Like climbing to the Father, our approach to God the Father, each new day living in Christ, we come nearer to Him. In that manner, we humbly enter into his glory, and by his Grace, we are saved. It is at that point we can boldly say, He is my shepherd.

The burdens of the week began to drift back into the man's train of thought. Instinctively, he began to prioritize the list, then stopped. "I shall not want," he said to himself, "God's got this." He reminded himself once again that he was trying to do it all. "I must decrease so that He may increase," he whispered into the chilly air, his breath drifting ahead of his pace.

Once we are aware, the awakening of our spirit allows us to know him and He us. In that manner, we can then know that He will care for us as a shepherd to his flock. There shall be no need of want. No worries shall cause our brow to cross. All we will ever need will be provided if we only trust in Him.

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

Give us this day our daily bread.

As the man returned to his journey up the Germanesca Valley, he recalled standing along the rushing waters of the mighty torrent that tore through the rocks. Like the sound of a roaring freight train, the angry waters thundered past into each falling abyss below. Thirsty, he longed for a drink. Around the next bend in the terrain, a waterfall fell from up above into the pearl blue basin. There, in the foreground of that thundering cascade swirled a beautiful pool of still waters. They beckoned him to come and sup. Bending down, the reflection of a bearded image stared back. He was not the young man he often thought of; rather, this man was aged, but his features showed an internal strength. Cupping his hands, he pulled up toward his face the fresh ice, cold water from the colorless liquid. He drank deeply, as the sweet water poured down his throat, overflowing his chin, it began quenching the deepest desires. He felt a fullness at that point, unlike ever before. The words came to mind, "He who drinks of this water will never thirst again." The chill of the frigid water touched the core of his body as if his soul had drunk from the well; his spirit was likewise fed; "Restoreth my soul," he said.

"He leads me down paths of righteousness for his name's sake."

Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.

It was at this point that the man ran into another traveling companion that had ventured upon the same trail. His name was Stanley. He was the Pastor at a church in the Michigan area. He too was here with the same group with which the man was traveling. "Are you thinking about going further," he asked.

Looking up at the distant peak, they both questioned the challenge that intrigued them both.

"Yes, but you know that the bus leaves at 4:00 pm," the man replied. They both looked back up at the seemingly impossible climb.

Deep down inside, each man could hear the voice of one calling.

"How about we set ourselves a time limit, and when we reach that point, we have to agree to turn around; regardless," the man said to the younger traveling companion.

"Okay," Stanley quickly replied, "you got it."

"We have to both agree that no matter what, no matter how beautiful it gets, we can't keep going."

"Agreed, the young pastor smiled broadly."

Shaking hands, they took off and began the arduous climb.

Each winding turn in the goat trail that led upward kept turning back pages of scripture. It was as if God were rewinding each page of his life with the turn of each fragile page of the Word of God. Hand in hand he had lived his life with God watching over him, sometimes unknowing, other times purposeful; always led by the hand of the Lord. He literally had been led down God's path of righteousness, but not of his own accord.

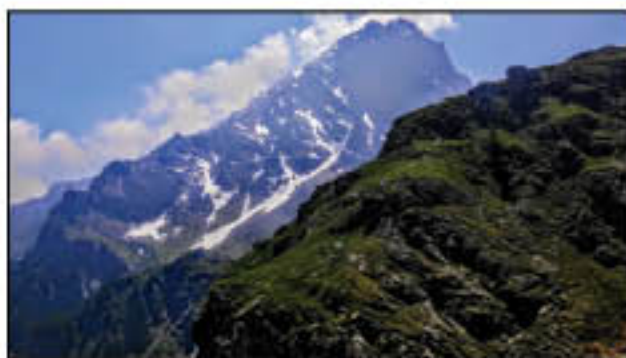
"Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me."

"And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil."

When the two men had finally reached the peak. There was little time to commune with God. Sitting down, they both knew that this may be the only time in this life that they might have the opportunity to reach this point on earth. Praying, they both sought His Majesties presence such that they would feel the Master's place at their table. Around them, a gentle breeze blew, as raptors soared before them, float-



ing effortlessly upon the unseen currents, slowly drifting past where they sat. Like a parade of God's creatures great and small, the display of His creation came alive. Not far from their vantage point, wild mountain goats pranced in the snow, while nearby mountain ferrets chased one another in play.



Once they caught their breath, turning, their eyes followed the long dark chasm from which they had emerged. From this valley they had climbed. Below, in the shadows of the massive peaks upon which they now sat, the farthest reaches of the sunlight strained to find the earth. Where there was light, there was no darkness. Yet, even in the light of the midday sun, there were shadows upon the land. Like stains of memories returned, so many countless lives lost; blood scattered upon those very valley floors from whence they trod. Now, far beneath the soil, their memories not forgotten as the word from which the men quoted had remained alive; preserved by those martyrs of ancient times; the ancient Waldensians.

"He prepareth a table before me in the presence of thine enemies."

"And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors."

Death was merely a shadow, and as such, they feared it not, for to live as Christ was as death, each a gain either way. The rod and staff of God had provided for them even in the darkest of times. When the soldiers came to eradicate them from their homes, they fled to this point, there where the two men sat, and beyond. To the upper reaches of the earth, where if not for safety, to be closer to my God and thee. There the angels carried many to their final resting place.

The pair sat in solemn silence. The awe-inspiring scene before the two men left them speechless. Here, the closeness to God was unmistakable. As they dined on the meager fare from which they carried, clouds chased their images upon the nearby snow-capped peaks as the multitude of waterfalls spoke in hushed whispers.

The vantage point from above, so close to Him, so far from that terrestrial countenance that resided in the shadows of the peaks from which they had now climbed. Their apex but merely temporary achievement, but for that which they truly awaited was one far above this point.

There was nothing more one could say, so divine was the beauty before them.

"He anointeth my head with oil. My cup runneth over."

Each man finished and sat in repose; their thoughts inward and upward.

"Stanley," the man said turning to his newfound traveling companion, "we may never make it here again. This may be the only time in our earthly life that we see the world from this vantage point. Let us give thanks to God for all that we have and for this opportunity to share our meal in his presence." Stanley nodded in agreement. It was then they both knelt in prayer and praised His holy name as one.

Silently and stoically they stood, walking back to the direction from whence they came. Back down to the lower reaches of that distant valley. There was little to say at that point. No words could encompass what they had just felt.

The man rounded the bend in the road, to the place where he had crossed the river many times. The water today was gray and angry. Its reflection was cold and forbidding. Inside, his heart he had been warmed by the memory of that journey now so seemingly far away. For a moment he wondered about Stanley and where he might be in life. Like strangers upon the road who travel along for a while, their union would become a memory for life; a shared point in time. Until that day when we shall all be called to Glory, then we shall reunite with those momentary acquaintances once more and dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

Yes, as the psalmist wrote, *"Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD for ever."*

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

Matthew 6:9-13, The Model Prayer

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

10 Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.

11 Give us this day our daily bread.

12 And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.

13 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen."

23rd Psalm

"The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.

2 He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.

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

4 Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

5 Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.

6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever."

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

Obedient Heart Fellowship

When I See It

By Jim Huskins
McDowell County

Recent controversy surrounding the appointment of Brett Kavanaugh to the US Supreme Court reminds us that our highest judicial body is often the focus of public scrutiny. This was certainly true when the court decided the case of Jacobellis 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 to me recently as I considered the concept of "sin."

When I committed my life to Christ at age eight, I thought that I understood sin. I'd been in church since I was an infant, and since children were not removed from worship services, I'd 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 "sin" 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 "bullseye" was a small circle suspended by a cord or perched on a narrow pin. Archers either hit the tiny target or they did not. No points were awarded for being close.

But is sin actually defined by the Bible as aiming for but missing a tiny 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 far as it goes but still too nebulous to be of much value.

Only after I began trying to understand our faith from a Hebrew perspective did I discover that sin is clearly defined in scripture. 1 John 3:4 says, "Whoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law." We read in James 2:9 "But if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors." The word translated "transgressors" means "lawbreakers." These are two of many scriptures which make it clear that "sin" is "breaking the law." But which law?

The "law" in question is not the Roman penal code. It's not the Greek standards of moral and ethical behavior framed by philosophy. It's not even the Talmud of the Pharisees which many Jews still hold to be superior to God's Word. The law we break when we sin is the Father's Torah as found in the first five books of the Bible. Torah is God's instructions for living. The Bible tells us plainly that when we sin, we break those instructions.

One of the core tensions of our faith is that we are incapable of keeping those instructions perfectly. We desperately need salvation by grace through faith. Romans 3:28 makes this point clear: "Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law." The word rendered as "without" by the KJV is better understood in modern English as "apart from." We are lost 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 makes this point clear three verses later in Romans 3:31: "Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, 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, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." And 1 John 2:3 says, "And hereby we do 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)

Many misinterpret Paul as teaching that God's Torah was repealed the moment Jesus died. Paul in fact teaches the opposite. "What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known 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 5:17 that Torah would be in full force for as long as heaven and earth remain. Without Torah, we cannot even define what it is that separates us from our loving and merciful Creator. Sin is so horrible that it caused the Holy One's death, yet we are prone to think that "missing the mark can't be all that bad." God's Word clearly defines sin, so let's compare our lives to His standards and not stumble through life assuming that we will "know it when we see it."

Obedient Heart Fellowship believes that the entire Bible is true and relevant. We accept salvation by grace through faith in Jesus, and we attempt to love and serve Him by keeping his commandments. We meet each Sabbath—Seventh Day—at Abba's House, 72 South Main Street in Marion. Our meeting time is 10:00 A.M. 828-460-7913

Jim & Beverly Huskins are members of Obedient Heart Fellowship.



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 Hurricanes 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 friends and neighbors 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 ever. What a privilege 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 Bakersville. Formerly he served as Director of Missions for the Bladen Baptist Association and has served on the General Board of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina.



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by a series of editorials written by Sarah Josepha Hale,[3] proclaimed a national Thanksgiving Day, to be celebrated on the 26th, the final 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 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 unequalled 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 axe had enlarged the borders of our settlements, 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 gratefully 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, har-

mony, 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."

Proclamation of President Abraham Lincoln, October 3, 1863.

Since 1863, Thanksgiving has been observed annually in the United States. The holiday superseded Evacuation Day, a de facto national holiday that had been held on November 25 each year prior to the Civil War and commemorated the British withdrawal from the United States after the American Revolution.[39] 1939 to 1941

Abraham Lincoln's successors as president followed his example of annually declaring the final Thursday in November to be Thanksgiving. But in 1939, President Franklin D. Roosevelt broke with this tradition.[41] November had five Thursdays that year (instead of the more-common four), Roosevelt declared the fourth Thursday as Thanksgiving rather than the fifth one. Although many popular histories state otherwise, he made clear that his plan was to establish the holiday on the next-to-last Thursday in the month instead of the last one. With the country still in the midst of The Great Depression, Roosevelt thought an earlier Thanksgiving would give merchants a longer period to sell goods before Christmas. Increasing profits and spending during this period, Roosevelt hoped, would help bring the country out of the Depression. At the time, advertising goods for Christmas before Thanksgiving was considered inappropriate. Fred Lazarus, Jr., founder of the Federated Department Stores (later Macy's), is credited with convincing Roosevelt to push Thanksgiving to a week earlier to expand the shopping season, and within two years the change passed through Congress into law. Republicans decried the change, calling it an affront to the memory of Lincoln. People began referring to November 30 as the "Republican Thanksgiving" and November 23 as the "Democratic Thanksgiving" or "Franksgiving".[44] Regardless of the politics, many localities had made a tradition of celebrating on the last Thursday, and many football teams had a tradition of playing their final games of the season on Thanksgiving; with their schedules set well in advance, they could not change. Since a presidential declaration of Thanksgiving Day was not legally binding, Roosevelt's change was widely disregarded. Twenty-three states went along with Roosevelt's recommendation, 22 did not, and some, like Texas, could not decide and took both days as government holidays.

In 1940 and 1941, years in which November had four Thursdays, Roosevelt declared the third one as Thanksgiving. As in 1939, some states went along with the change while others retained the traditional last-Thursday date. [1942 to present]

On October 6, 1941, both houses of the U.S. Congress passed a joint resolution fixing the traditional last-Thursday date for the holiday beginning in 1942. However, in December of that year the Senate passed an amendment to the resolution that split the difference by requiring that Thanksgiving be observed annually on the fourth Thursday of November, which was usually the last Thursday and sometimes (two years out of seven, on average) the next to last.[45] The amendment also passed the House, and on December 26, 1941, President Roosevelt signed this bill, for the first time making the date of Thanksgiving a matter of federal law and fixing the day as the fourth Thursday of November.

For several years some states continued to observe the last-Thursday date in years with five November Thursdays (the next such year being 1944), with Texas doing so as late as 1956.]



Dr. Mordecai Johnson, president of Howard University, serving portions of Thanksgiving turkey to members of his family in 1942.



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The Inspiring Word

A Thanksgiving of Blessings

Pastor Terry Cheek
Burke 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 billows 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 blessings, see what God hath done;
Count your blessings, name them one by one;
Count your many blessings, see 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; ev'ry doubt will fly,
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."*

Is there anyone who is not touched by at least one of these verses? Especially during the day we live, where daily we find deception, lies, violence and aggression. For the Christian it's very easy to become discouraged and try to hide from the battles before us. Let me encourage you to count your blessings!

The following are important blessings in my life and maybe you can find them in your life as well. Our Veterans are a blessing. These men and women have stepped up to place themselves in harm's way in order to defend "The Constitution of the United States of America." Our freedom, provided by the Veteran, gives you and me the opportunity to worship without fear of physical persecution. Next is family. My wife, children and grandchildren, along with our parents and all the extended family. I'm truly blessed to have them all close by. There are family squabbles but in the end, they always bring us closer. How important is the family? After creation, God established and ordained the family, a husband, a wife and their children. Moving along I can always count my health as a blessing. Let me be clear, I'm not the picture of health. But what I have God has blessed in His service and He allows me the ability to remain at a career which has been good to support my family and His work. I am blessed with a good church family as well. We're a work in progress but I have witnessed this group stick together during some pretty tough times and they have encouraged me to do the same. God's not finished with us yet and that is a blessing to look forward too.

The list could go on and on, but I hope you get the idea? We all have blessings in our lives. Even during the rough times of addiction, financial troubles, health problems, marriage problems or family problems, there are blessings within the difficulties of our daily lives. Search for your blessings, and when you find them thank God for them. Remember the last verse in the hymn above,

*"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."*

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



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 firmly in His grip!

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

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



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Trusting God....Even When Its 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 so sudden 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 even 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 together 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 to 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....God begins to work.

One by one 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 I 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 all 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 scripture 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 faithful men of God shared 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, there's a greater plan being fulfilled, and an eternal salvation that is 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 serves as Pastor at Mine Creek Baptist Church.



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Bridge42 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 GenX and Baby boomer parents with them. On top of that, according to a recent study, 56% 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.

Compassion

It seems oddly 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 furor, arguing policy, demonizing opponents; we tend to forget that Jesus said that His Kingdom is "not of this world."

Compassion, 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 indictments against the people of God for not demonstrating mercy and compassion. These prophets hold 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, lovingkindness, 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 hungry are fed, 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 teach 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 them, 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 Qurollo
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 done "exceeding 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 must govern 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 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 inasmuch 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 stunning 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 shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground, and worshipped, 21 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 if 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 Qurollo is pastor 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 die trying." "Step forward." Those courageous words Homer spoke when he enlisted are how he came about to be chosen into the rank 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 brothers and I cut firewood and plowed fields for farmers. We'd sometimes earn a dollar a day. Daddy worked in the spar mines of Jones Holler. I'd help fork spar onto a truck then onto a train car at Backus Siding. 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 Jones Holler. All our cousins and us-- 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 die trying. I was then told to "step forward" into the Navy branch. My buddy Gerald wanted in so bad he cried. They didn't take him, I guess they could only have a certain number. I went into the bathroom and saw my cousin Willy. He was bent over the urinal, saying "Lord look at them purdy springs!" He was fixing to take a drink.

After completing intricate training in Norfolk, VA. Homer first served aboard The USS Patuxent in Occupation Okinawa and Japan. Applying his knowledge of specialty equipment and complex amphibian warfare tactics, he served until the end of WWII. The USS Patuxent, 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. I can still see that captain's face as he was being chased by that penguin!

Ten years of shore duty provided many opportunities, including meeting 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 then. 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-Asiatic 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.



Homer Harding

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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Celebrate Their Recovery

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 my concern? As Christians, I feel like it is time to make a stand. We have a wise open 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, our 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 2 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 revived 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 us. 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 & Gillespie, 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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~ Anne Richardson

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I Know Who

By Chelsea Blevins
Yancey 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 so 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 as 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 to help and to stop the hurting."

And his reply was three words that has 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 slept 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 does.

I know who.

I know who sets 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 won and continues to win 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 all the answers He has been to you. For all the gaps He has filled in your life.

I began to speak these truths out-loud on the middle of my living room floor. Yes, the same clothes from yesterday, no makeup, and my hair 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 Grants song, "Isn't He, this Jesus".

Before I knew it I 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 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 breaths 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 hold to that today.

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

I hold 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 can do and be every answer you will ever need.

I promise you.

I know who.

His name is Jesus.

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



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NC Baptist Aging Ministry

Provides Spiritual Support to Caregivers

By Carol Layton / NCBAM

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: Caregiving with joy changes you. It changes the person you're caring for and it changes all the people who witness it." Mary Tutterow

"I was prepared to kill my family member and then myself." This chilling statement has been confided to Mary Tutterow more times than she 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. Caregiving affects every aspect of a person's life—their 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 helps that caregivers need by providing education, resources, and connections to volunteers. Now, NCBAM's newest outreach to Caregivers features a course that provides vital 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 introductory 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 peace with 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 sufferings 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 fulltime for his wife and attended the workshop for encouragement. "This is an amazing resource. It stretched us and opened our eyes to ministry 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. "I could have been 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 next important thing that the church is going to do. Caregivers need scriptural encouragement just for them. The Word is what will sustain them."

For more information about NCBAM's partnership with *The Heart of the Caregiver*, call 877.506.2226 or visit theheartofthecaregiver.com.

Carol Layton is the Director of Communications and Administration for NCBAM at Baptist Children's Homes of North Carolina



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 26 years.



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



Mary Tutterow, author of *The Heart of the Caregiver*.

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griffith25@frontier.com

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

Avery County

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

Burke County

Burke County Chamber

November 16, 2017 Thursday, 3:30-5:00 Event

5:00-7:30 Open to Public

Foothills 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 team or sport.

Past, Present or Future!

The Chamber will be Sport Sailing, so jump on board with your best theme and see if you can win the

Gold, Silver or Bronze Medal.

Catawba River Baptist Association - Renew: Breathing New Life into Sunday School, High Peak Baptist Church, 3073 High Peak Rd, Valdese, NC, November 6, at 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 2907-D, US Hwy 70 in Drexel (across from the Foothills Thrift Store). Retired science teacher from Mt. Pisgah Academy, George Grow will be the fascinating speaker for the Saturday worship service at 11:30 am, entitled, "Noah Built an Ark," and 2:00 pm afternoon seminar entitled, "Under Water." The public is invited. Sunday afternoon, November 5, 2:30 at the Old Rock School's Waldensian Room in Valdese, an incredible and convincing movie, "Is Genesis History?", will be shown. This features over a dozen scientists and scholars explaining how the world intersects with the history recorded in Genesis. From rock layers to fossils, from lions to stars, from the Bible to artifacts, this fascinating film will change the way you see the world. The film's goal is to provide a reasonable case for Creation in six normal days, a real Adam and Eve, an actual fall, a global flood, and a tower of Babel. Dr. Del Tackett, creator of "The Truth Project," serves as your guide--hiking through canyons, climbing up mountains, and diving below the sea--in an exploration of two competing views... one compelling truth. Please invite your family and friends, especially teenagers and young adults. A love offering will be taken.

HOLIDAY COOKING--PLANT-BASED will be Tuesday, November 7, 6:00 pm upstairs in the Old Rock School in Valdese. The charge is \$8 which covers handouts, food samples, food demonstrations and inspiration to cook healthfully. Pre-register by calling Sharryn at 828-334-0084. Sponsored by Great Hope Seventh-day Adventist Church of Valdese.

Morganton Seventh-day Adventist-Burke County - God's Closet - Morganton FREE Shop Day will take place on Friday, November 3rd., from 9:00 a.m., until 12:00 p.m. There will be FREE children's clothing, shoes and bedding. No documentation required. We do ask that all shoppers pay a \$1 entry fee. This event will take place at the Morganton Seventh-day Adventist Church, 2187 Jamestown Road, Morganton, N.C.

If you or someone you know in the Burke County area is in need of a Thanksgiving Food Basket, please call or text Kiersten at 828-803-5746 by November 13th. (This distribution is sponsored by the Morganton Seventh-day Adventist Adventurer Club).

Aglow International Hickory Lighthouse Hickory 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, 191 N. Main St, Marion. We will then 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 Blanton in January 2000. The workshop will conclude at noon.

This workshop is ideal for landscape professionals, school maintenance workers, real estate agents, and homeowners. Landscape Contractor Continuing Education credits (2.5L) have been approved, and Pesticide Recertification credits have been applied for.

The workshop is hosted by City of Marion Tree Board and North Carolina Cooperative Extension-McDowell County Center. Cost of the workshop is \$10. Please make checks payable to NCCE-McDowell County Center. Mail to: NCCE-McDowell County Center, 60 East Court St, Marion, NC 28752. Questions? Please contact Molly Sandfoss 828-652-8104.

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

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

Mitchell County

All Saints of America Orthodox - On Saturdays beginning in June, All Saints of America Orthodox Mission will be having Divine Liturgy at the meeting hall located at Trinity Episcopal Church, 15 Hemlock Ave, Spruce Pine, NC 28777. The Liturgy will be served weekly on Saturdays at 11:00 AM. Fr. Steven Webb, the priest appointed to serve the new mission, will be officiating. While All Saints of America Orthodox Mission is a part of the Russian Orthodox Church, all services are performed in the English language. Afterwards, all are invited to a picnic at 1064 Deer Park Lake Rd. Spruce Pine, NC.

Bear Creek Baptist Church-Ledger - November 12th following the Morning Worship there will be a Church-wide Thanksgiving Meal.

The Sunday Night Service will be a Talent Sharing Night. Sign-up sheets are on bulletin boards at front and back of church

Celebrate Recovery

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

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

Calvary Chapel Asheville - Spruce Pine Calvary Chapel Church in Asheville is sponsoring a home fellowship and Bible Study in Spruce Pine. The fellowship is held on Thursday evenings at 7:00pm at 79 Sean Dr. (Estatoe area--off Brushy Creek Rd). Call John Jackson 760-793-3799 for information and directions. And bring your Bible.

Charis Children's Foundation: Meet and greet. It is Nov 4 from 2-4 at The Bridge WNC. There will be light hors d'oeuvres and a presentation at 3 pm detailing our vision. The board will be there to meet and answer any questions people have. We will be taking information for volunteers for future events and hopefully will have some representation from DSS, so if people want to sign up for foster care classes they can.

We are believing God is about to do a mighty work in this community!!

Great Things Are Going to Happen. John and Stephynia Limongello Spruce Pine Citizens and Businesses--Due to the outpouring of complaints of speeding on Oak Ave., We will start a zero tolerance for any speeding inside the city limits in Spruce Pine, NC. Effective Wed. Nov 1 we will start enforcing the speed limits and the citation will be issued by the state. Everyone make your travels to Spruce Pine a Safe and Slow trip!!

Spruce Pine First Baptist Church Drop-Off Center for Shoe Boxes

125 Tappan St.

Spruce Pine, NC 28777

828-765-9411

Hours 8:00 AM - 6:00 PM Monday - Sunday

November 13-19, Monday /November 20 hours

8:00 AM - 2:00 PM

Support Group For Caregivers Of Those With Memory Loss to hold meetings the first Friday of each month from 1-3pm

Care & Share, a newly-formed support group for caregivers of loved ones who have memory loss, will hold monthly meetings at the offices of Hospice & Palliative Care of the Blue Ridge, 236 Hospital Dr. in Spruce Pine, from 1:00 P.M. to 3:00 P.M. High Country Caregiver Foundation welcomes and encourages all caregivers to attend.

Families dealing with a loved one with memory loss can quickly become exhausted, traumatized, and isolated, and this new group intends to provide support, friendship, education, information and referrals for caregivers. Monthly meetings held on the first Friday of each month will offer refreshments and fellowship. There will be opportunities for caregivers to tell their stories, learn useful tips, trade information, and give and gain support to others in the same situation.

For further information about the group and the meeting please contact Suzanne Russell at (714) 614-5867 or Janet Ouzts at jnutouzs@yahoo.com.

Mitchell Baptist Association - 187th Annual Session Baptist State Convention of NC Nov. 6-7, Joseph S Koury Convention Center Greensboro, NC Theme: Return to Me

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 Bennett.

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 get-togethers are being planned and the Toe River Arts Studio Tour Participant Exhibition is about to begin—November 18 at their Spruce Pine facility at 269 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).

With over 100 artists in the 58 studios submitting work, the walls and the pedestals 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 American Red Cross serving Mitchell and Yancey County has volunteer positions open as 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 role and meaningful way to serve an urgent need through the Red Cross. Drives are held at the First Baptist Church of Spruce Pine and the Higgins Memorial 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 Brewster, Volunteer Services Specialist supporting the Mitchell and Yancey area blood drives at kimberly.brewster@redcross.org or 828-333-9809.

Spruce Pine Farmer's Market - We will have food for any mood!!! Winter squash, tomatoes, cabbage, potatoes, cucumbers, bell peppers, kale, mustard, chard, microgreens, collards, eggs, pork, beef, cookies, ciabatta, scones, brownies, cheese strip. You can also find essential oils to heal and help with what ails you! Come out and see us, Wednesdays 2-5 in the parking lot under the blue tents.

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

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

Yancey County

Higgins Memorial United Methodist Church - ROC Gottem' 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 tri-county 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, ROC. Talent show from 5-6:30, concert from 6:30-8:00, featuring ROC and special guest, FLUXX Daddy Records.

Second Event: 15th 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 828-682-2835 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. - Praise 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 828-682-6011.

Mayland Community College

For more info Contact Allen Cook

QuickBooks Test Drive 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 a practicing CPA who knows all the tricks, tips, and trends related to QuickBooks. Class one 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. Computers

with QuickBooks installed will be available to use at this class.

11/28, T, 5:30-8:30 p.m.

Fee Waived Sisk-Morris

Yancey 828.766.1295

QuickBooks Test Drive: Class Two (3 Hours)

QuickBooks taught by a CPA! Class two will focus on setting up QuickBooks in a manner that will work best for your business. Explore features while learning how to launch QuickBooks the right way. Class will work with a sample business downloaded on the Mayland computers.

11/30, Th, 5:30-8:30 p.m.

Fee Waived Sisk-Morris

Yancey 828.766.1295

QuickBooks Test Drive: Class Three (3 Hours)

This class will focus on recording income and expenses in QuickBooks as well as balancing transactions. We will also look at various scenarios that your business may face when keying transactions into QuickBooks. This a great class to get answers to QuickBooks questions.

12/5, T, 5:30-8:30 p.m.

Fee Waived Sisk-Morris

Yancey 828.766.1295

QuickBooks Test Drive: Class Four (3 Hours)

The final class of this series will explore the use of QuickBooks for payroll.

Learn how to set up payroll and cut checks using QuickBooks payroll features.

Cut checks and make deposits on a sample business in this test drive of the most popular small business accounting platform in use.

12/7, T, 5:30-8:30 p.m.

Fee Waived Sisk-Morris

Yancey 828.766.1295



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 info 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

- 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

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- Transportation: Automotive Systems Technology

- Welding Technology

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An Insect that Prays?

By Christy Lowman
Burke County

Did you know that there is an insect that prays? Well, at least he 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 the same as pray is it? Do you know the difference? Praying is talking to God, while preying 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, when standing in the upright position looks like it is spending its time devoted in prayer, but it is really patiently waiting to prey on another living thing for its next meal. I was shocked to read that these insects can even 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 their ability to camouflage themselves. They are master disguisers. 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 spikey back legs to hold their victim down, then they paralyze their soon-to-be-meal by biting it on the neck. They sound like viscous creatures, don't they?

The smallest praying mantis is only one centimeter long while the largest is 12 inches. 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 forea, which allows the mantis to be able to see the slightest movement, and track it with accuracy up to 60 feet away. These eyes also provide the mantis with stereovision, 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, leathery wings for flying, and ultrasonic ears. Some are even equipped with a hollow chamber in their bodies that allow them to pick up on bat echolocation. 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 "super 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!

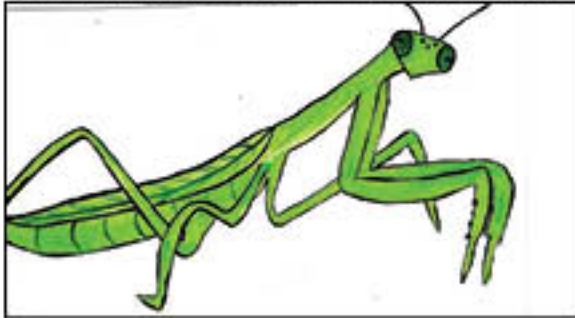
Dear Lord, I pray that You will encourage each child to grow their relationship with You through prayer. Open their hearts, minds, and eyes to Your will for them. Help them desire to talk to You freely about anything. Grow their faith by showing them Your miracles, and by becoming their true best friend.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

Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. (Jeremiah 29:12) 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

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



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YOUR GOVERNMENT PAGES

US House of Representatives NC District 11



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

As November approaches and Thanksgiving season 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 my 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 we live in 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—in America, we don't worship government. We worship God.

I'm thankful for colleagues in Congress, both Democrats and Republicans, who treat each other with respect. Partisan politics tends 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 firmly 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.

NC Senate District 46



Sen. Warren Daniel
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919-715-7823

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 deem 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 deemed completed by the public school unit during September and October of 2018.

The legislation also allots \$6.5 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 agencies complete their needs assessments.

DMV fees

Today's measures also allow fee 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 requires the Bipartisan State Board of Elections and Ethics Enforcement, and county boards, to educate hurricane-impacted citizens about their options for voter registration and casting ballots. The state board is further directed to cooperate with federal and local agencies in that 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 needs assessments.

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

NC Senate District 47



Sen. Ralph Hise
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919-733-3460

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 \$56.5 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 \$56.5 million initial transfer, \$6.5 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 \$50 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 to creating the Hurricane Florence Disaster Recovery Fund, the legislation filed on October 2nd addresses the control of large mosquito populations resulting from floodwaters 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 15th and allocated an additional \$793 million of relief to the Hurricane Florence Disaster Recovery Fund. The funding prioritizes immediate assistance to speed repairs to hard hit schools, as well as clean-up, road and local infrastructure repairs, and fully funding the state's match 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, or 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.

YOUR GOVERNMENT PAGES

General Assembly passes historic storm relief

State lawmakers on Monday allocated \$793 million in additional Hurricane Florence relief funding in response to 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 Matthew, 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 (HFDRF) appropriates \$65 million to provide a state match for federal disaster assistance and another \$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 \$50 million. More than \$30 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 mosquito abatement 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 outstanding debt service members owed due to accidental overpayments 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 Perusse, 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 in 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 a 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 \$124 million has been disbursed, \$115 million has been awarded, and \$121 million remains available out of the total \$360 million allocated in prior disaster recovery packages since 2016.

Treasurer saves \$4.2 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 \$86 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.

NC House District 118



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NC House District 86



Rep. Hugh Blackwell
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Hugh.Blackwell@ncleg.net

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 relief 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 \$2 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 \$793 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 those 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.



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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 those needs.

During the holidays one group that can get overlooked is our senior citizens. Annually, BUCM coordinates a Senior Santa program. Last Christmas, BUCM gave out almost 200 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 5K 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 partnering with the Hunters Helping the 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 let them know it is to be given to BUCM. The phone number for Phillips Meat Processing is (828) 724-4190.

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

- 2 outfits for a child \$25
- Groceries for a family for a month \$100
- Baby items (diapers, formula, wipes) \$75
- Coats for a family of 4 \$100
- Underwear for a family of four \$50
- Socks and shoes for a family of 4 \$100
- Tent for the homeless \$20
- Toiletries for a month \$100
- Towels and washcloths for 10 people \$ 100
- Blankets for the homeless \$75
- Pay Electric Bill for a family for one month \$150
- Pay Water Bill for 2 families for one month \$100
- Provide food for the Soup Kitchen for a week \$500
- Supply 500 lbs. of food \$250
- Coffee and Tea for a day in the soup kitchen \$50
- 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 legacy giving, anything is appreciated. Our local churches and local donors make up over 90% 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 assistances for individuals at BUCM. Those times of assistance were comprised of 809,801 pounds of food distributed from our food pantry, assisting 8,757 households; serving 66,489 meals in our soup kitchen; and assisting with \$128,545.32 in rent and utilities crisis assistance. The BUCM Clothing Closet assisted 4,320 individuals with clothing valued at \$64,226.76.

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 writer of Hebrews when he wrote: "Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God." (Hebrews 13:16). Please prayerfully consider what you might be able to contribute.

Please don't hesitate to share any idea or ask any question you might have concerning the ministry of BUCM. Feel free to email me at bucmdirector@gmail.com or call at (828) 433-8075. I would also encourage you to participate in one of our Brunch and Tours which are held the third Friday 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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Dear Dave,
If someone is following your plan, is it a good idea to get mortgage disability insurance during Baby Step 2?
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 debts, except for your home, 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 in 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 loan debt. 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.



McMahon Named BCPS Principal of the Year

By Cheryl Shuffler
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 Drexel 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 Glen 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. There are a lot of other principals in our district who are deserving of this honor."

Burke County Superintendent Dr. Larry Putnam and Director of Elementary Education Karen Auton surprised McMahon with the announcement at her school. Putnam said, "Mrs. McMahon is very deserving of this honor. She is a great leader at her 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 District Principal of the Year.

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

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



Burke County Public School Superintendent Dr. Larry Putnam, left, W.A. Young Elementary School Principal and Burke County Public Schools 2018 Principal of the Year Christie McMahon and Burke County Public Schools Director of Elementary Education Karen Auton.

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An Investment in the Future

By Rev John McCoury
Roan Mountain, Tennessee

Psalms 127 and 128, songs of family strength, conclude with a look into the distant future, painting a portrait of a healthy, mature family. Like a farmer imagines his crop while planting seeds, Solomon helps us envision the fruit of our labor in the home. Psalm 128:4-6 (KJV) "Behold, that thus shall the man be blessed that feareth the LORD. The LORD shall bless thee out of Zion: and thou shalt see the good of Jerusalem all the days of thy life. Yea, thou shalt see thy children's children, and peace upon Israel." Later Years in the Home- The domestic scene now reaches completion. The children are trained, reared, and launched from the nest. The psalmist paints a pleasant picture of serenity, which includes three realms of blessing: 1. Personal pleasure (128:4). The psalmist says "for thus" happiness comes. For what? For all the hard work and consistent training invested by parents, happiness comes as God's reward. Believe me, if you determine to have Christ as the central figure of your home and His Word as the authority in rearing your children, you have your work cut out for you! You will find that you'll be outnumbered, scoffed, considered strange by your neighbors (and 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 the Word regularly. 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! Jerusalem will be prosperous and strong! The point is this: your offspring will be used to make a dent in society—for good! All the days of your later life, you'll enjoy the fact that your earlier direction and private contribution to the home life of your children pay off in rich, public dividends. 3. National blessings (128:6). Now, in this final verse, grandchildren arrive on the scene. You, the grandparent, see them, and you witness a second-generation investment. Your own children pass on similar training so that the entire nation benefits and is blessed because the Lord, originally, was at the very center of your home. Maintain love and consistency in your home, and God promises you will enjoy inward pleasure in your twilight years.

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



Tours and Exhibits

By Kate Groff
Mitchell and Yancey Counties

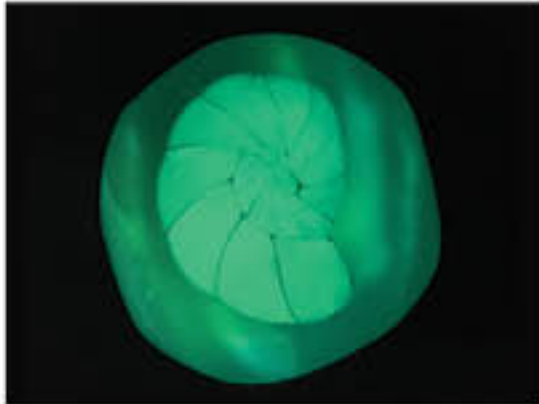
Toe River Studio Tour Among The Best In The Country

Twice a year, collectors of fine art and craft head to the mountains of Western North Carolina for the Toe River Studio Tour known for over a quarter century as an event of unsurpassed quality, beauty, and innovative thinking. And beginning November 17, a new excitement will crinkle through the air as the Studio Tour Exhibition opens at the Spruce Pine Toe River Arts Gallery (269 Oak Avenue). Each participating studio tour artist and gallery are invited to share two of their best pieces with the public in an exhibit mounted on the gallery floor. Displays are arranged geographically and coordinate with the Tour Guide. With only three tour days and so many studios and artists, choices are difficult. The exhibition allows a viewer an opportunity to plan their adventure. And if they aren't able to be here for the tour, pieces may be purchased until the end of the year.

"This tour welcomes a record 18 new artists, 13 in their own studios. Every year is unique. The artists change; the work evolves. I'm always excited when the boxes arrive—to see a new artist's work or the evolution of a more seasoned artist," said Kathryn Andree, who has been Toe River Arts Exhibits Coordinator for over a decade. The participant shows are the biggest exhibits during the year averaging over 150 pieces on pedestals, tables, walls, with a few bigger pieces relegated to the floor. And they are the most diverse, with media ranging from 2-dimensional to glass to clay, wood, and fiber—something for every palate, every wallet. And it's all just a sampling of what one will find during tour weekend, November 30-December 2.

It all begins on November 17 at the Spruce Pine Gallery. Stop by and get a sneak preview of tour participant art. Gallery hours are 10:30am to 5pm, Tuesday through Saturday. And don't forget the "Meet-the-Artists" reception on the first evening of the tour, Friday, November 30. Join artists, staff, and all the volunteers who make the tour the best and one of the longest continually 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.toeriverarts.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.



Burnsville Gallery Puts A Sparkle Into The Holidays

On November 3, the Burnsville Gallery will be set aglow with the opening of David Wilson's "Glass and Light" exhibition that will continue through December 29. An open reception is scheduled for Friday, November 9 from 5 to 7pm.

Wilson has been working in glass from the South Toe area of Burnsville for the past 37 years and has established himself as an experimental, innovative glass blower. He has been both a student and instructor at the Penland School of Crafts in glass and neon studies. More recently, he worked with six other glassblowers, including his son, Hayden, in blowing hundreds of glass orbs for the Burnsville Gateway Tower.

"Glass and Light" will showcase several of his small sculptures, including several fluorescent glassworks. The glowing effect is achieved by combining glass with rare earth oxides before melting for coloration. And the various types of oxides produce different colors, from oranges to greens, to brilliant blues. The glass fluoresces under ultra-violet (UV) light. This is one of those exhibits that one has to witness in person in order to fully grasp the "glow" of these small sculptures in a dark area in the gallery.

And just when you think you have seen it all, you haven't. Wilson, a multi-faceted glass blower, will have on display his almost alien-like bowls cradled atop blown glass legs. Some are for drinking, others for holding, each bowl perfectly positioned and more unique than the one before.

This is glass at its most creative. The Burnsville Gallery is located at 102 West Main Street and open from 10:30am to 5:00pm, Tuesday-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 of hours with the artist.

Toe River Arts is a not for profit organization that seeks to connect the arts with the public 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.toeriverarts.org or call 828-682-7215.

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



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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 anesthetist 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 Pam and I held 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 have come to me with doubts and fears. Some have doubts about salvation, some about the future, and still others about God's word. 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 them 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 protections God provide 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 forgot 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 Lord I would like to preach a revival, soon after that prayer God allowed me to preach a revival. God has been so good to us, He is faithful and True.

When I doubt or fear I look back at God's faithfulness and His footprints are all over my life. I am sure doubt is part of human sinful nature. Doubt and worry are not from God. If we could wake up and ask God to remind us of His faithfulness, and not let this day go by without worshipping a faithful God. If my footprint as a symbol of my life is larger than God's footprint 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?" "Dad it is a whole lot easier walking where you have already been." God the Father has gone before us, He has already been where we are going, and it is 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 Bakersville, NC. He may be reached at 828-385-0213, snowhillbaptist@gmail.com, or visit their website at www.snowhillbaptist.com.



abounds in Him, if we are to truly feel His presence and be surrounded by the blessings He has in store for us. Proverbs 19:23 *The fear of the Lord tendeth to life: and he that hath 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.



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Crossword

ACROSS

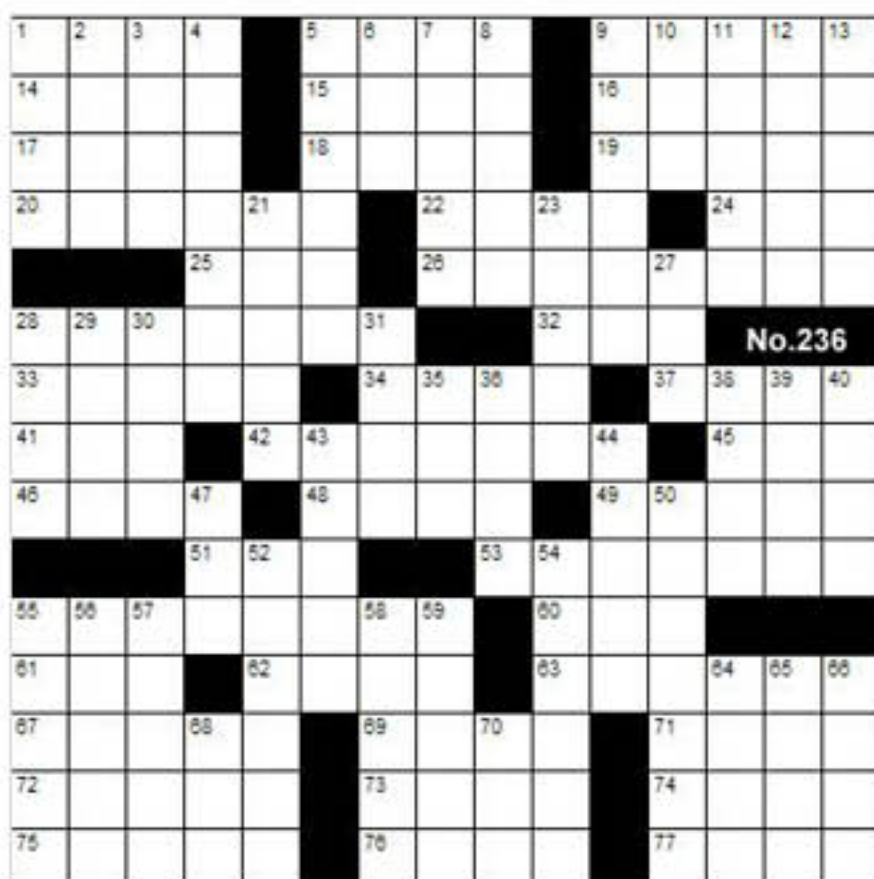
1 the sons of Eliphaz were Teman, _____, Zepho (Gen 36:11)
 5 even if I washed myself with _____ (Job 9:30)
 9 Strike your hands together and _____ your feet (Ezek 6:11)
 14 the lizard, and the snail, and the _____ (Lev 11:30) (KJV)
 15 it is appointed unto men _____ to die (Heb 9:27)
 16 and be killed, 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 Eber, Misham, Shemed 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 will _____ through the land (Isa 8:21)
 37 she shall shave her head, and _____ her nails (Deut 21:12) (KJV)
 41 first book of the Bible (abbr.)
 42 Philip went down to the city of _____, and preached (Acts 8:5) KJV
 45 He is demon-possessed and raving _____. Why listen to him (John 10:20)
 46 the Lord said unto me, Arise, and go _____ Damascus (Acts 22:10)
 48 from Jerusalem, and from the coast of _____ and Sidon (Luke 6:17)
 49 cargoes of cinnamon and _____ (Rev 18:13)
 51 Man is a mere phantom as he goes to and _____ (Ps 39:6)
 53 Another angel, who had _____ censer (1,6) (Rev 8:3)
 55 David _____ on his sword over the tunic (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
 62 Nebuchadnezzar came _____ to the mouth of the burning fiery (Daniel 3:26)
 63 reported this to the men of Jabesh, they were _____ (1 Sam 11:9)
 67 The people have become hungry and _____ and thirsty (2 Sam 17:29)
 69 the wind will pick them up, and a _____ 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 _____ (Josh 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 _____ sinners (Prov 23:17)
 77 Saul _____ his thousands, and David his ten thousands (1 Sam 29:5)

DOWN

1 Ahab son of _____ became king of Israel (1 Kings 16:29)
 2 I will howl like a jackal and _____ like an owl (Mic 1:8)
 3 Take heed that ye do not your _____ before men (Matt 6:1) KJV
 4 How then can you _____ one officer of the least (Isa 36:9)
 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 _____ (1,4) (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 (2 Kings 7:15)
 10 that I might preach him among _____ heathen (Gal 1:16)
 11 the avenger of blood might pursue him in _____ (1,4) (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 (Mal 3:11)
 21 also the cucumbers, melons, _____, onions and garlic (Num 11:5)
 23 _____ said to Ruth her daughter-in-law, "It will be good (Ruth 2:22)
 27 LORD Almighty, will _____ off the boughs with great power (Isa 10:33)
 28 during the time of King Herod, _____ from the east came (Matt 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) KJV
 31 the Babylonian _____ pursued King Zedekiah and overtook him (Jer 52:8)
 35 rowing device (Ezek 27:29) KJV



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36 a Levite who lived in a remote _____ in the hill country (Judg 19:1)
 38 God has ascended _____ shouts of joy (Ps 47:5)
 39 let us run with patience the _____ that is set (Heb 12:1)
 40 all the trees of _____, that were in the garden of God (Ezek 31:9)
 43 put an end to sin, to _____ for wickedness (Dan 9:24)
 44 if _____ sin, and hear the voice of swearing (1,4) (Lev 5:1) KJV
 47 How _____ did they provoke him in the wilderness (Ps 78:40) KJV
 50 because we obey his commands and do what _____ him (1 John 3:22)
 52 _____ to Caesar the things that are Caesar's (Mark 12:17)
 54 From the least to the greatest, all are _____ for gain (Jer 6:13)
 55 but the _____ wound had been healed (Rev 13:3)
 56 they had _____ for the mattocks (1,4) (1 Sam 13:21) KJV
 57 but like locusts they _____ the

land and then fly away (Nah 3:16)
 58 The first was like a lion, and it had the wings of an _____ (Dan 7:4)
 59 that may be eaten must _____ out the blood and cover it with earth (Lev 17:13)
 64 not be lawful to impose _____, tribute, or custom, upon them (Ezra 7:24) KJV
 65 now therefore _____ thou somewhat the grievous servitude (2 Chr 10:4) KJV
 66 reached for his sword, _____ it out and struck the servant (Matt 26:51)
 68 But as the serpent beguiled _____ through his subtilty (2 Cor 11:3)
 70 the third book of the Old Testament.(abbr)

Solution on page 14



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 smeared all over" with the Holy Spirit.

In one way 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 2:27 (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 "umph!" or power to do what God is calling us to do. And it's the gentle promptings, urges and leadership of the Holy Spirit in us that shows us how to live.

When we follow the anointing, we feel peace and joy because we're making wise decisions. It's so valuable for 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 through 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, stubbornness, pride and a 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 God's 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, husband 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!

Jesus Is Our Example

Philippians 2:10 (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.

Verses 5-8 in this 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 abased and 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 four-CD series Learning to Be Led by the Holy Spirit. You can also contact us to receive our free magazine, Enjoying Everyday Life, by calling (800) 727-9673 or visiting www.joycemeyer.org.

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



Christmas Pageant

By Wanda Harding
Yancey County

It's the most wonderful time of the year! Homes are decked with twinkling lights, and lighted trees are covered with tinsel and ornaments. Carols fill the air as busy shoppers crowd the malls searching for that perfect gift. Children are filled with wonder as they dream of special toys they hope to find under the tree on Christmas morning.

But the reason for the celebration should fill ALL our hearts with wonder. Join us at West Burnsville Baptist Church as we present the Eighteenth Annual Christmas Pageant, "The Wonder of His Love." The pageant opens on Thursday, November 29 at 7 PM and continues on Friday and Saturday, also at 7 PM, closing on Sunday at 3 PM. We begin with a concert of joyous Christmas carols and continue with a musical drama of the life of Christ. Thrill to the proclamation of the angels that the Prince of Heaven is born! Marvel as the blind see, the lame walk, and sinners are forgiven as the crowds reach out to Jesus. Mourn with Mary and the disciples as Jesus is crucified and rejoice with them as they discover that He is risen! The pageant ends with the promise of life everlasting to all who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.

West Burnsville Baptist Church is located one mile west of Burnsville town square on West Burnsville Church Road just off US Highway 19 E. Seating is available forty-five minutes before the performance. Reservations for groups of six or more may be made by calling 828-682-3990. While there is no admission charge, your love offering is gratefully accepted.



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 whatsoever 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 3:15-17

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Thanksgiving Put Into Practice

By Ken and Jan Merop
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 me tops 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 practically 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 him. Through his transforming power within, new character traits are budding. His instructions give the necessary nourishment to turn buds into blooms.

When depending on him, we learn to love 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 almost are none except to gasp
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 @ pauseandconsider.net, Journeying with Jan; and Ken's photos at kenmeropphotography.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 13:23

Crossnore School

Cottage Parent Training

By Jim Hart
Avery County

Part of new Cottage Parent training at Crossnore is learning about our Spiritual Life programming. Every Monday morning at 9am new CPs show up at my office door, papers in hand ready to hear how the Christian part of our mission statement is woven into our sanctuary of hope and healing. I imagine their excitement when they learn about things like our Bible program, YoungLife ice cream Olympics, Jungle Life, Winter Jam, spiritual life retreats, Thursday Chapel and Sunday Church. The reality is most CPs are coming to see me on the last day of their first seven-day shift 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 marginally more engaging than med training. In the midst of words like 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 am prayerful the one thing they take away is that every day, we are planting the seeds of the Gospel in the children we serve. It is in the planting of those seeds of love that there is hope and healing. Each day, we plant seeds that we pray will break the cycle of abuse and trauma that many of our kids have experienced. We plant seeds in fertile soil that for so long has been neglected.

Fertile, but neglected, red, crusty, filled with rocks and weeds; too many years have passed sitting forgotten on the back of campus. Clover and dandelions were the prevalent crop visible from my office window. A faded plastic play castle stood among the creeping clover and dandelions as a strange reminder that something greater used to stand here. For years, that greater thing was Roadman Cottage. It stood as a castle of hope and healing, a home for those in need for 58 years. Now replaced with beautiful new homes with beautiful names like Yandle and Florence, there was nothing left to remind those passing by but a remnant of a rock foundation and a small plaque, "Site of Roadman Cottage. Built in loving memory of Roadman Hollander (May 17, 1926 - May 2, 1940). Served as a cottage for Crossnore children from 1949 to 2007."

What was a home of hope and healing for many years is now a community garden of growth and daily change. A reminder that God does provide for the seeds planted in love. On a warmish April afternoon, with soiled hands, dirty toes and a prayer, we planted potatoes. Amid the rocks and weeds, we gently placed each cut potato into the furrow, making sure their eyes were facing up. A subtle reminder that even where only rocks and weeds once flourished, life is possible; a reminder that after being cut away, life springs forward from warmth, care and from looking up. Still, I was not so sure, so I told the 30 or so kids and staff who came out to dig and plant and laugh, "If we get any potatoes at all, let's be happy!" In the back of mind, I did not hold out much hope. We had too much working against us. Too many, too manys. Too many years in the dark under a cottage; too many years of neglect; too many years of clover and dandelions — weeds; too many rocks; too many years; too much neglect; not enough care.

How Love burns through the putting in the Seed
On through the watching for that early birth
When, just as the soil tarnishes with weed,
The sturdy seedling with arched body comes
Shouldering its ways and shedding the earth crumbs.
Robert Frost, "Putting in the Seed"

Today as I sit in my office and look out my window, I still see some grass and some clover and some unknown weeds. But, I also see onions and carrots. I see beautiful green collards and kale. Best of all, I see potatoes, lots of potatoes. Despite the too manys we had against us, we have potatoes. Despite my lack of faith, my doubt, we have potatoes. Even as I doubted, the potatoes were sprouting.

Frost was right when he wrote, "How Love burns through the putting in the Seed." At Crossnore School and Children's Home, we plant the seeds of love each and every day. We plant the seeds of the Gospel by living in a ministry of presence as a community and in our community garden. With the right care, I know those spiritual and physical seeds will grow, but I still worry. It seems the weeds grow so readily and so easily. It seems as if the rocks reproduce where rocks were cleared, so many obstacles to overcome to bear fruit. Yet, we plant, and we nurture, and we offer grace, peace and love to our children knowing that love overcomes all the weeds and rocks that try to squeeze their way in.

Our new community garden at Crossnore stands as a reminder that we must have faith. Faith that planting potatoes on a warmish April afternoon will result in beautiful potatoes in the fall. Faith that in planting and loving seeds there will be new life where there was nothing but neglected, rocky soil, and faith that God's provision is enough. I invite you to come visit our community garden, experience the laughter and joy over fresh radishes and leaf lettuce. Be amazed that potatoes grow even when we doubt and worry. Come see first-hand the new growth.

Jim Hart is the student pastor of Crossnore School in Crossnore, NC

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Berry Chapel Baptist Church

"Wake Up! Stand Up! Woman Up!" Women's Conference

By Teresa Robinson
Mitchell County

What thoughts enter your mind when you see a sleeping baby? Does a smile spread across your face, as you think there is nothing so peaceful and beautiful in 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 snoring on the church pew as men of God attempt to point us to the truth that is found in the Word. If occasionally a sermon penetrates our hearts we just shift the thoughts aside and settle back into 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. Strongholds have grasped us by the throat to choke the life out of us. These strongholds did not start out as a stronghold. Sin never does reveal itself as the ugly deadly 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 but an empty shell of "could have" and "should have" beens. Decisions made without guidance of any Godly influence end 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 armour of God is ready to be put on by the forgiven sinner and "stand up". Ephesians 6:11-18 says "put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, and against powers, against rulers of darkness, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; And your feet shod with preparation of the gospel of peace; Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall 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 fade into 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 faith, to teach our children how to live a Godly life, and to take care of our families. In Proverbs 31 is a description of a hard-working, intelligent, resourceful woman, who takes care of her husband,

her family and her neighbors. In Titus 2, Paul explains further that we are to help those who are younger to learn from the experiences we have endured. To be a Christian woman today, calls for a strong dedicated woman that loves Jesus with all her heart, mind and soul. A Christian woman is also obedient to God's Holy Word. She is fearless when she knows who fights her battles. She is strongest when she is weak, for in Him, He is strong. It is time for Christian women to Woman Up! We are princesses of the King of Kings! It's time to get to work for the glory of Jesus Christ! The lives of our children and grandchildren are at stake. We must be wake and ready to protect the blessings that God has given us.

Please join us at the "Wake Up! Stand Up! Woman Up!" Women's Conference will be held November 17th at Berry Chapel Baptist Church starting at 9am to 3:30pm. Lunch is provided. Come, prayed up and ready to go do the mission that Jesus commanded us to do. Let's allow God to break those strongholds and create the women He desires us to become.

Teresa lives in Spruce Pine and attends Berry Chapel Baptist Church.



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 recipients 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 parish ministry in 2012 in response to God's call to focus more of his time and energy on restoring 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 OSL ministry teams to bring Jesus' healing ministry to the Diocese of Durgapur, located in north-eastern 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 OSL Chapters. John and his wife, Debra, live in Burnsville. Family life, especially being Poppi to two beautiful granddaughters, lots of flower gardening, and a little fishing, keep John well occupied when home. High Pastures Christian Retreat & Conference Center is located at 290 Kings Highway, Burnsville, NC 28714. Contact them at 828-989-9626 for more information.

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



John Rice



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 shaken." — 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 1:3); day two, the heavens and the waters (104:2-3; Genesis 1:6); day three, land and vegetation (104:6-18; Genesis 1:9-13); day four, the sun, moon, and stars (104:19-23; Genesis 1:14-16); day five, fish and birds (104:25-26; Genesis 1:20-23); and on day six, animals and human beings (104:21-24, 27-30; Genesis 1:24-31). God's act of creation is worthy 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 Values 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 focuses 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 \$73.48 trillion
- Trees valued at \$16.2 trillion
- Coral reefs valued at \$9.9 trillion
- Wild sea fish valued at \$274 billion
- Bees and other pollinators valued at \$170 billion
- Dung 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 revenues 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 preexisting, but exists because of the gracious power of Yahweh, who has made it all" (Texts for Preaching, p. 553).

Prayer: For the beauty of the earth, for the glory of the skies, for the love which from our birth over and around us lies; Lord of all, to thee we raise this our hymn of grateful praise (Folliott S. Pierpont).

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

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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 to the first hole. The man who could kill the ball said 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 got 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 33:12-13 [12] "Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord: and the people whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance. [13] The Lord looketh from heaven; he beholdeth all the sons of men." Sad to say but 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 that was founded on Christian principles. America stayed true to the Word of God and looked to it as her 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, "bologna." 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 careful. John Wooden

A Little Humor:

In the supermarket, a man was pushing a cart that contained a screaming, bellowing 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 sickle, and reap: for the time is come for thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe. Revelation 14:15



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First Baptist Church of Marshall

By Pastor Buddy Freedom
Madison County

Two women were talking. One asked the other lady, "Aren't you wearing you wedding ring on the Wrong Finger?" The other lady replied, "That is because I married the wrong Man."

One Sunday morning, before the beginning of worship service the preacher asked group of children, "What do you have to do to get to heaven?" One young boy yelled at the top of his voice, "You gotta die."

One of the best football coaches told about one of his players. The coach said, "That player doesn't know the meaning of the word fear. In fact, I just saw his grades and he doesn't know the meaning of a lot of words."

A mother overheard her little girl praying. She prayed, "Now I lay me down to rest. I pray I pass tomorrow's test. If I should die before I wake, that's one less test I'll have to take."

A Heavy snow storm closed the schools for several days. When the children returned to school, the teach asked her class whether they had used their time constructively. One little girl said, "I sure did teacher. I prayed for more snow."

In the traffic court of a large Midwestern city, a young lady was brought before the judge to answer for a ticket given her for driving through a red light. She explained to his honor that she was a school teacher and requested an immediate disposal of her case, so she could get to the school on time. A wild gleam came into the judge's eye. "You're a school teacher, eh?" said he. "Madam, I shall realize my life long ambition. I've waited years to have a school teacher in this court. Sit down at that table and write," "I went through a red light" 500 times."

Dr Buddy Freeman is now serving as the pastor at First Baptist Church of Marshall, NC.





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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 underreported.

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

My sweet friend, whom I'll call "Jimmy", is the most docile, 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 awry. He was expected to do all the grocery shopping, all the house cleaning, all the cooking, and, of course, all the yard work. She went on exercise runs, and expensive shopping sprees for trinkets they really couldn't afford.

He worked full-time; she worked a couple hours a day. Yet he was expected.... no, demanded, to carry the full marital load. Jimmy could never get caught up to her satisfaction, and, believe me, there was hell, hell, hell to pay because of it. And he didn't exactly make oodles of money. Sometimes he wouldn't get to bed until after 1:00 a.m., although he had to get up at 5:00 a.m. She came from money. She went to bed at 10:00-ish, with a big notepad where she wrote lists of chores, plans, and goals, waking up between 6:00-7:00. And was none too pleased if breakfast wasn't ready. At one point he seriously considered suicide, and nearly acted on that notion.

Desperate to make the marriage work, he once told me the only thing more he could give up is sleep.

She berated, diminished, and emasculated him at 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 on that all-important list. A baby.

Both of them were thrilled to find out she was pregnant! Jimmy pampered her, and 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 care giver to the baby: up at night when it was fussy or cried or needed to be fed or a diaper-change. He was the one who dressed and fed the baby in the morning. He's the one who played with the baby. Wanna know what the Gorgon did? She took the baby on her morning run. She bought obscenely expensive outfits which they 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, it only wanted Daddy-much to her dismay, disappointment, and resentment. As stressed and exhausted as Jimmy was, his Christian convictions made him persevere.

One very, very late night, she demanded that he catch up on 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 headlights. Oh 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 father-in-law worked



until the very wee hours of the morning...4:00-ish a.m.

Yet Jimmy managed to care for the baby, and make it to work on time, all the 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 dejected, 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.....blaming him for the ruined silk blouse.

Now, please keep in mind that the toddler saw all of this.

That was enough. Jimmy'd 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 cheese, he just wanted out of the trap. He landed in a flea-bag motel 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 welcomes 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 828-765-4015 or bethbdavis60@gmail.com.



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A Meditation

A Friend
By Timothy Eller
McDowell County

When David took over the Kingdom of Judah it was after many years of pain and development. After David took his rightful place as the King, he did not forget people that needed his help and he desired to keep his promises. David and Jonathon 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 Jonathon's life short David mourned for him. While sitting on his throne he remembered Jonathon and wanted somebody he could show kindness to for his friend Jonathans 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 meaning of his name gives us a hint of this act of kindness of David as the one who destroys shame. 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 wordless place, he was hiding; 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 kings 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.



Tim Eller graduated from Carolina Graduate School of Divinity and has been involved in prison and jail ministry for the past fifteen years. Currently he is operating in the capacity of a servant of Jesus Christ.

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






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Traditions

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



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. But 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 know \$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 and that beach vacation they're dreaming about. 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 effect 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 been on vacation in a year because you're working so hard to get out of debt. But confident people stay focused 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 grocery 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 "adulting" isn't fun. But those smaller, "boring" decisions, like budgeting and staying on top of your account

balance, 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, and you can be wealthy without owning a bunch of stuff. Big houses, nice cars, and fancy vacations are perfectly fine, but someone who wins with money understands all those things by themselves don't bring happiness. They live their lives with that in mind. That doesn't mean they're against owning stuff, or they think wealthy people are somehow "evil," 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 doing 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 aren't 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 well on your way toward winning with money for good!

About Rachel Cruze
As a #1 New York Times best-selling author and host of The Rachel Cruze 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 Cruze on Twitter and Instagram at @RachelCruze and online at rachelcruze.com, youtube.com/rachelcruze or facebook.com/rachelramseycruze.

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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.



Veterans Day parade in Baltimore, Maryland, 2016

With splendid forgetfulness of mere personal concerns, we remodeled our industries, concentrated our financial 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. Out of this victory there arose new possibilities of political freedom and economic concert. 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 furtherance of the common interests of men. To us in America the reflections of Armistice Day will be filled with solemn pride in the heroism 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[2]

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. 351; 5 U.S. Code, Sec. 87a) approved May 13, 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 thereafter celebrated and known as 'Armistice Day'." [3]

In 1945, 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 1982 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." [4]

U.S. Representative Ed Rees 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. [5]

Congress amended the bill on June 1, 1954, replacing "Armistice" with "Veterans," and it has been known as Veterans Day since. [6][7]

The National Veterans Award was also created in 1954. Congressman Rees of Kansas 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 22, 1973; Oct 28, 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, if that date happens to be on a Saturday or Sunday, then organizations that formally observe the holiday will normally be closed on the adjacent Friday or Monday, respectively.

Observance

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 a Sunday it is typically observed on the following Monday. When it falls on weekend many private companies offer it 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 on 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 lean War years: "Hunger 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.

Election 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 as a way to honor voting by exercising democratic rights. [10]



Poster for Veterans Day 2018, the 100th anniversary of the end of World War I



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