

# The Good News Banner

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## Thoughts from the Pastor

by Jack Gill

When I was growing up, I used to spend every holiday traveling with my family to my grandparents' house. While it was so good seeing everyone and playing things like football, or shooting guns, one of the best memories for me was the mealtime. My grandmother would put out a feast like you wouldn't believe!! There would be four to five different kinds of vegetables (straight out of her very *own* garden), and they would be cooked in different ways—boiled, fried, steamed, etc. There would be between two to five different kinds of meat, from pork to beef to fowl. There would be homemade rolls—ones that no freezer type could ever duplicate! Finally, the desserts! Oh the desserts! Cherry pie, egg custard pie, pecan pie, chocolate cake, apple pie, and on and on! It was absolutely wonderful!

My grandmother always made it a point to try and have a variety. She knew some things were certain family favorites, and she tried to have at least one or two items that every person would say was their favorite. One of my personal favorite vegetables was turnips—but that was definitely NOT one of most people's! When those were out on the table, they were pretty much there for me! The rolls were my dad's favorite—although nearly everyone liked them (unlike the turnips!)

That dear woman took on quite a bit to feed us all. What's more, this was a way in which she could show us her love for us, and consider each one of us by preparing each one of our favorites.

Can you imagine if she made nine different dishes, but they were all fried? Or what if one of us had been a vegetarian, and she served only meat? Or if someone was allergic to nuts, but every dish had a form of nuts in them? What would that have said about her? I can't imagine my grandmother telling someone in a situation like that—"Sorry. That's it. Eat, or go back to your homes hungry."

There's more to this story than just food. I write this as sort of a parable to talk about *style* of worship. Notice I didn't say worship, but rather *style* of worship. I'm writing with the assumption for now that everyone realizes the significance of worship, as well as the necessity and desire of any body of believers to want to worship. Very few problems exist within the Christian faith regarding worship, but a LOT of problems exist when it comes to *style* of worship.

The elders have wrestled with this issue for years. The best way to let you know where we are as a church is by using my dinner analogy.

First, some people have a conviction about style. (Notice that I said conviction, and not just a problem.) Their issue is that they feel as though some styles *inhibit* their worship. They simply feel as though in conscience they cannot worship with a particular instrument, or a fast beat. I liken their situation to the person with a peanut allergy. They cannot eat what we serve when it has this ingredient in it. For this reason, we seek to ensure that our style is multi-faceted. While we do not feel that we must *remove* the style or instrument (because no one—not even the weaker

brother—should dictate what we collectively do), we will limit it. We do not feel that any instrument is sinful—you won't find that in Scripture! However, knowing that some members of the family have great difficulty with them, we will seek to help them to be able come to the table to worship. That way those that like "peanuts" (those contemporary styles and instruments) can still have them—but they aren't on every single dish on the table. Those that are allergic can still come to the table and be satisfied. (And who knows? You just *might* even build up a tolerance to that allergy!)

Second, there are some folks who don't like traditional, older style songs, or hymns. They don't feel the same emotion and familiarity that they might like with contemporary songs. The music seems to them to be dead, or lifeless. I'll liken them to the folks who don't like "turnips"—often these are songs that don't necessarily taste good to everyone, but are still very healthy for all. Well, once again we seek to be blended so that those who like "turnips" can enjoy them, and the theology that we find in them can be healthy to anyone that tries them. (You never know, but you just might get an acquired taste if you keep trying them!)

Finally, let me close with a quote from an anonymous pastor with regards to this issue as a whole:

"In a church I think this matter needs to be dealt with first in principle (e.g. "putting up with one another"), and then in practice. The one thing I would strongly recommend against is having two different worship services, one a "contemporary worship service," and the other a "traditional worship service," ... it lets saints off the hook too easily. This lets each group do its own thing, without "putting up with one another," without making concessions and sacrifices. ...Heaven will be one large worship time, so why should we segregate our worship on earth? I believe that the unity we express in our diversity is very significant." (see Romans 15:7-13).

Pretty wise and convicting words, don't you think?

So I now go back to my dinner analogy. Which is more important—that the dinner consists mainly of *my* favorite dishes, or that everyone around the table is included and can enjoy and be filled?

Do we seek *our* style of worship—or our love and forbearance with the family? *Our* personal preferences—or the unity of the body of Christ?

Come each Sunday ready to worship in unity! Each time come and sing in unity and joy! And the next time you hear a song or style that doesn't resonate with you, stop and think for a moment about that dinner table. (But don't think too long about it—it's awfully close to lunchtime when we sing!)



## Administratively Speaking

by Debbie Stevenson

### KEEPING YOU SAFE AT BRBC

As there are continuing news reports of attacks in public places including churches, our deacons are researching and thinking through ways to make our church more safe, especially on Sundays. Last year they began posting one deacon at the lower level entrance each Sunday during the worship service. They are making plans to have another deacon at the upper level door during the service. Walkie-talkies are going to be used to communicate between the lower level and upstairs. When I am here alone during the day, I keep the doors locked, so if you ever come to the church during regular office hours and the door is locked, please use the doorbell. Consideration is being given to having video cameras at each entrance for added security.

We also have an emergency evacuation plan in case of fire or other emergencies which would require us to quickly and safely leave the building. We are providing a summary of this plan on the following page of this newsletter, and ask everyone to review it with everyone in your family.

We continue to ask for your cooperation as you check in your children in the pre-school classes. The teachers and helpers are asked to faithfully follow the security procedures, and parents and siblings are asked to fully comply as well. We are also diligently doing background checks on all of our volunteer workers, and are working to expand this process. Also, as a reminder, should your child need you during the worship service, the sticker number assigned to your child will be displayed at the bottom of the projection screens.

These precautions and plans are being put into place for the safety of everyone who comes to Blue Ridge, but we need your awareness, assistance and cooperation in making this the safe place we want it to be, where we can fellowship together, where others who may not know our Lord can come and meet Him and His people, and where we can serve Him together. We do not need to live in fear or mistrust, but we must be wise and prudent. (2 Tim. 1:7)

### CHURCH WORK DAY

Come one, come all to help beautify the church building and grounds on Saturday, April 26, from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. There will be many tasks available, both inside and out, for all ages, for all abilities. Check email and bulletin announcements for details on tools and abilities needed. You can come for all or part of the day. All help is appreciated and definitely needed. Lunch will be provided. Rain date will be May 3.

### New Church Mailing Address

After 20 years of needing a post office box because we had "no fixed address", we are switching to just using the church's street address. Please use the following for all mail to the church:

**Blue Ridge Bible Church**  
**770 South 20th Street**  
**Purcellville, VA 20132**



Our Awana year is almost complete. Keep working hard to get your books finished. Only five nights left to recite those verses!!! We have some fun theme nights planned for April.

Baby Night kicks off our month. Raid the photo albums and bring your favorite baby pictures. We will be guessing who everyone is -- leaders too! It is going to be a walk down memory lane.

On Joyful Noise Night, we are having a guest musician sing with us during Council Time. The church will be filled with praise music as we worship the Lord together!

The Water Memory Challenge will run for our last three nights of Awana. On April 20, 27 and May 4th, the clubber who recites the most verses per club will get to throw a wet sponge in the face of their leader, director or Mr. Hall during council time on May 4th. We will be celebrating our last regular Awana meeting night on May 4th outside with wet sponges flying!

Plan to attend our 11th Annual Awana Award Ceremony and Ice Cream Social on May 18th!

Please thank your clubber's leaders for all the hard work they have put into making this year a success. The leaders pray each week for your child, for your family and for the spiritual growth of each clubber. We are dedicated to coming alongside parents to help their children grow in their love of God and know Him more.



### April Awana Dates:

April 6	Baby Night
April 13	Joyful Noise Night
April 20	Water Memory Challenge
April 27	Water Memory Challenge

## BLUE RIDGE BIBLE CHURCH EMERGENCY EVACUATION & SAFETY PLAN

This plan is to be implemented in case of fire or any other emergency requiring evacuation from the building.

### When you hear the alarm,

- **Do not assume it is a false alarm.**
- **Follow instructions in this plan.**
- **Parents must not attempt to personally retrieve their children from other locations from within the building**
- **Take all practical steps to reduce personal injury.**
- **Additional evacuation instructions may come from the Emergency Evacuation Team consisting of pastors, elders, deacons, church staff, teachers, or other designated team members.**

The lower parking lot (near the playground) is the **designated rendezvous area**. Families will reunite at the rendezvous area. Once in the parking lot, parents will locate their children. **Under no circumstances will anyone re-enter the building.**

The following sections describe particular roles and responsibilities.

### Teacher Responsibilities

1. Teachers are part of the **Emergency Evacuation Team**.
2. Each teacher must be familiar with this Emergency Evacuation and Safety Plan.
3. Each teacher must already be acquainted with at least three options for exiting the building from their classroom.
4. When the alarm sounds, teachers must escort their classes to the nearest safe exit by following the lighted exit signs in the hallways. They will continue to the lower parking lot.
5. If necessary, teachers may recruit **known individuals** to assist with evacuation.
6. Teachers will stay with their students at the designated rendezvous area (near the playground) until each child has been reunited with his/her parents.
7. It is very important that children are handed directly to a family member (or other trusted person) at the rendezvous area.
- 8.

### Everyone's Responsibilities

1. Exit signs should remain lit and lead you to the nearest exit. Everyone must evacuate quickly and in an orderly fashion. If the closest exit is blocked, then a secondary exit should be used. Someone will direct you to the best exit.
2. People on the balcony level will exit through the two side stairwells and proceed to the main level exit.
3. Children in the worship service must be escorted outside by their parents and older siblings.
4. Children in class will be escorted by their teachers to the playground rendezvous area.
5. To avoid confusion and risk, parents must not attempt to personally retrieve their children from other locations from within the building.

**It is very important that parents do not attempt to personally retrieve their children from other locations within the building.**

**Although this is understood to be very difficult to accept, doing so is likely to put more people at risk.**

1. Families will be reunited at the **designated rendezvous area** near the playground.
2. Once outside the building everyone must go directly to the playground rendezvous area.
3. Parents and older siblings may retrieve their children at the rendezvous area in the parking lot near the playground.

### Safety Reminders for Other Times

Churches are considered a safe and trusted environment, and are therefore vulnerable to criminal activity. We let our guard down when we come to church assuming we are among trusted friends. There are unstable people who understand this and may try to exploit the fact to commit violent crimes. For example, estranged parents may try to kidnap children. This is especially dangerous because the victim may acknowledge the criminal and even demonstrate personal affection for them. In another scenario, a disturbed person can pull the fire alarm in order to cause chaos that gives them an opportunity to kidnap a child. No teacher or worker must ever hand over a child to anyone who is not known by that teacher. This is true even if the child appears to acknowledge the stranger. Parents always need to be aware of our children's locations in the building.



# Missions Report

Smyrna Ministries International

*"The evangelization of the world depends first upon a revival of prayer. Deeper than the need for workers; deeper far than the need for money; deep down at the bottom of our spiritual lives, is the need for the forgotten secret of prevailing, worldwide prayer."*

~ Robert Speer

Christians talk a lot about prayer. Sometimes we spend more time talking about it than doing it. Especially when we pray about the same thing for a long time, there can be a feeling that prayer is something we are "supposed to do," but with little impact in our lives. Even the most faithful prayer-warriors must sometimes struggle with this doubt.

Yet Paul wrote to the Thessalonians, **"To this end we always pray for you, that our God may make you worthy of his calling and may fulfill every resolve for good and every work of faith by his power."**

If you need encouragement to get down on your knees once more, take heart: **Prayer works.**

Consider the story of Count Zinzendorf. A community of persecuted Moravians who took refuge on his estate was wracked with dissension. Zinzendorf and others covenanted to pray for revival—and it came! This was the beginning of a round-the-clock "prayer watch" that continued for *more than a century!* Out of that tiny body grew a missionary movement that sent more than 300 evangelists to the neglected peoples of the earth. The Moravians also had a profound effect on John Wesley, one of the key characters in the Great Awakening.

Or consider the famous "Haystack Prayer Meeting." A few young men caught in a storm took refuge under a haystack. They began to pray—and were surrounded by a spiritual storm, struck by a burst of holy lightning that set their hearts on fire. These men were the first of a flood of missionaries from North America to carry the Gospel of Jesus throughout Southeast Asia.

We have seen the power of prayer ourselves in the overwhelming response to the Water Truck initiative. Where a few weeks ago there were rapidly drying pools and cracked mud, now there will be a large tanker offering life-giving water—and a word of hope.

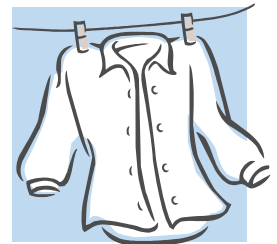
Sometimes we let prayer be a mere perfunctory few words before we begin "the real work." But prayer *is* the real work. As David Bryant writes: *"Prayer is action. By it we step out in advance of all other results.... Praying is an activity upon which all others depend. By prayer we establish a beachhead for the kingdom among peoples where it has never been before. Prayer strikes the winning blow. All other missionary efforts simply gather up the fruits of our praying."*

There is no conflict between "praying" and "doing." One of our contacts in the Muslim world said in a recent e-mail, *"When we pray, especially as a church, we literally move the hand of God to action."* And it is as we pray that we are moved to become God's hands and feet.

This is the bottom line. **Through prayer we have a potential—a resource—a power—a force—that knows only the limits of God Himself.**

Dare we take hold of it?

## Clothing Exchange



The Clothing Exchange is here!

It is being organized this year by Erin Landavere and Courtney Shipe. You can come by the church Monday, March 31 through Friday, April 4 to donate any clean, gently used clothes of all types and sizes, for men, women and children. We will also accept accessories such as shoes and purses, linens and large baby items like strollers. All items are free for the taking. The hours for drop-off and "shopping" are 9 a.m. until 2 p.m. each day. On Saturday, April 5, we will open to the public until noon and then anything left will be donated to charity. We need help Monday through Saturday (March 31 to April 5) with sorting clothes, babysitting, and clean up.

To volunteer to help, or for more information, please contact Erin at 703-771-4023 or [erin@dullesinsurance.com](mailto:erin@dullesinsurance.com).



If you have the gift or skill for singing or playing an instrument then Tom Gossage wants you to come and be a part of our Praise Choir or Praise Orchestra!

Both groups rehearse on Wednesday nights: choir from 7:30-9pm and orchestra from 6:15-7:30pm in the sanctuary.

### BRBC Attendance

	3/2	3/9	3/16	3/23 (Easter)
Sunday School				
Adults	112	103	112	121
Children	132	118	120	127
Total	244	221	232	248
Worship				
Auditorium	410	345	426	526
Classes	54	60	60	78
Total	464	405	486	604





## Blue Ridge

Bible Church

770 South 20th Street

Purcellville, VA 20132

### KIDS TALKING IN CHURCH

A little boy was overheard praying: "Lord, if you can't make me a better boy, don't worry about it. I'm having a real good time like I am."

After the dedication of his baby brother in church, Jason sobbed all the way home in the back seat of the car. His father asked him three times what was wrong. Finally, the boy replied, "That preacher said he wanted us brought up in a Christian home, and I wanted to stay with you guys."

Three-year old daughter, Caitlin, was learning the Lord's Prayer at bedtime. She would repeat the lines from the prayer after her mom. Finally, she decided to go solo. Mom listened with pride as she carefully enunciated each word, right up to the end of the prayer: "Lead us not into temptation," she prayed, "but deliver us from E-mail."

One particular four-year-old prayed, "And forgive us our trash baskets as we forgive those who put trash in our baskets."

Six-year-old Angie and her four-year-old brother, Joel, were sitting together in church. Joel giggled, sang, and talked out loud. Finally, his big sister had had enough. "You're not supposed to talk out loud in church." "Why? Who's going to stop me?" Joel asked. Angie pointed to the back of the church and said, "See those two men standing by the door? They're hushers."

