

The Good News Banner

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Thoughts from the Pastor

by Jack Gill

While living in Hawaii, I had the privilege of being disciplined by a gentlemen who made a tremendous impact upon me. His name was Mike, and our first time of meeting was when he tapped me on the shoulder at church, introduced himself, and invited Karen and me to his small group! From then on, he and his wife endeared themselves to us as we spent much of our time in his home, at his dinner table, and on the beautiful Hawaiian beaches with him and his family.

Being with Mike was wonderful as he put on no airs at all, and no show. There was nothing phony or fake about him. We had the opportunity to see him and his family in the successes and the joys of life, as well as the times of pain and difficulty. Mike didn't air dirty laundry, but neither did he hide behind a mask. In a nutshell—he was real.

Being real is not common in our day. Magazine ads display beautiful people all the time—people with big perfect smiles, perfect bodies, and no blemishes (thanks to digital photography and editing!). However, I think that if we could see those people up close, we'd find these superstars actually looking a lot more like the rest of us—normal. We'd see lives that would not have a permanent perfect smile, but ones that had to deal with problems, deep concerns, and even pain.

Isn't it great when you're around people who are real—people who will "let their hair down" when you're around? I have always admired people who will invite you inside their home—even at those times

when they haven't necessarily had time to fix it perfectly. There's something about people who allow themselves to be seen for who they really are, isn't there?

It makes them real.

This is one of the most significant things we find about Jesus Christ. God became incarnate as a Man, allowing us to peer into His life and to see Him—as He cried at a tomb, enjoyed children in His presence, and prayed in quiet desperation in the garden. That's being real—and being vulnerable.

I have found that as you let yourself become known...really known...you discover that people find you *more* endearing—and not less! This is a display of your essence, your true character. Yet, all too often we fear that we'll find rejection. However, as you allow people to really get to know you, they discover that you need the grace required for daily living every bit as much as they do—maybe even more so!! As a result, they find hope for themselves.

Character will not emerge from a phony life, which is all the more reason to go back to that word that so characterized my friend Mike's life: *real*. Know who you are, and then give your true self away!

Administratively Speaking

by Debbie Stevenson



Just like everyone else, I'm looking for ways to get a summer break. So I'm going to take a break from writing my column this month, by having the July 2007 column re-printed just for you. It was creative and would have been prize-winning, if we gave out prizes. So here goes. Everything still applies, so read carefully and see what applies to you...

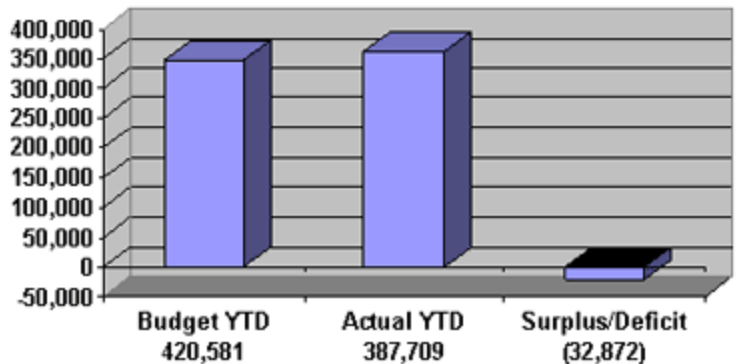
Vacations are great. I think everyone should take them...take them regularly...and often. We all need a break from our daily routines of work, school, housework, and even ministry during the summer. At this point you're probably saying, "Where's she going with this not-so-profound" thought? Although vacations are great and are usually taken in the summer, the regular stuff still happens. In your own house, you still have to water and mow the grass, the electricity is running and therefore a bill still needs to be paid, and somehow everyone keeps getting hungry at least three times a day and the kitchen gets messed up. The same is true in God's House here at Blue Ridge Bible Church. Even though you may not be here every Sunday, Sunday still comes every seven days and the preparations for and work during the worship services and other ministries still need to be done whether or not you are here. The offerings are still needed to pay the bills and spread the Gospel. And somehow, like at home, the "house and yard" still needs cleaning and mowing even though you may not be in it as much as usual. Yes, being the wise congregation you are and also being familiar with where my mind goes, you have probably picked up that this is my creative way of saying the following: 1) If you are assigned to teach or serve in the nursery or other classes, we need you to be here or we need you to find a substitute. And we need you to sign up just for the summer to fill a slot so that the regular teachers and workers can take a summer break. 2) If you haven't signed up for online giving yet, so that your regular giving can occur even when you aren't here, it's easy to do. Just email me using the email address you want to use, and we can get you started. 3) If you have some time when you and your kids would like to do something together and serve the church body at the same time, consider spending an evening pulling weeds or weedwacking or watering plants on the church property while your kids play in the playground. Contact Jeff Stocker (jeffrey.e.stocker@aero.org or 540-338-8543).

Thanks for considering how you can help...and have a great summer. We will be here when you get back.

BRBC Attendance

	6/1	6/8	6/15	6/22
Sunday School				
Adults	98	97	110	89
Children	110	111	128	106
Total	208	208	238	195
Worship				
Auditorium	405	358	436	305
Classes	32	37	34	36
Total	437	395	470	341

Actual & Budgeted Offerings as of 6/22/08



MISSIONS REPORT

By Leah Garber

The Mark and Patrice Smith family Trip to Ireland – July 9-27, 2008

We first went to Ireland in April 2001. Our family babysitter, a 17 year old homeschool graduate, was doing a six month missionary internship in the Dublin area and we felt called to go and encourage her half way through her time there. The missionaries who started the church she was working with were on furlough in the U.S. and allowed us to live in their home. We led worship and a puppet show for a children's Easter party and Mark preached the Easter sermon. We helped with an Easter theater production in the neighborhood and made several friends, including Peter and Ruth Redmond. We returned to Ireland a year later and looked into several possibilities of going back full time. It was not the Lord's will for us, but we strengthened our friendships there. The Redmonds have visited us several times in the States, and Peter even worked for Mark remotely for a year.

When the Redmonds were here a year ago, I asked Ruth what she thought the church's greatest need was in Ireland. She said short term missions. Short term trips encourage the small fellowship of believers and get them excited about serving again. And yet, short term trips allow the Irish to continue to lead and grow as leaders in their churches. So, thus was born the idea of our family's third trip to Ireland. Many ideas have been tossed around as to what we will do. You have to be very careful over there, because if you come in and put your foot in your mouth, you could easily turn people away from the church permanently. The pastors of the churches are very sensitive to this and protective (as they should)

(continued on pg. 3)

be), knowing that Americans especially (and unfortunately) have done such things in the past.

Peter and Ruth's church in Wexford has just planted a new church in a neighboring town of Gorey. We will be putting on a children's craft camp in Gorey. This will introduce the community to the church and hopefully let them see that the Christians are normal and loving people. Craft supplies are very expensive and hard to come by over there, so I've been told this will be a big treat for the children of Gorey. We will be taking all the supplies needed for the camp outside of snacks. So we are packing a mountain of craft supplies from Oriental Trading, puppets, and a portable puppet stage.

We know we will have some time with the church in Wexford as well, such as fellowship nights, but how much we do not know. The Irish are pretty laid back and often plans come at the last minute. We also hope to visit with another missionary family in Dublin we have spent time with on our other two trips.

Prayer requests for our trip (at the moment) include:

- Health and safety for our family of eight
- Health and safety for the Redmonds: Peter, Ruth, their son Josh, and Ruth's Mom, who has brain cancer
- Safe arrival of our luggage and craft supplies
- The hearts of the people of Gorey – that they would come to know Christ
- Our hearts – that we would be Christ's servants and show His love in whatever way we can to the people He puts in our path.

If you would like to be on our email list, we will be sending updates and photos before, after, and (we hope) during the trip. To be added to our email updates please email Patrice@datamarksystems.com.



Getting To Know You: The McKenzie Family

By Breana Paist



Have you met the McKenzie family before at church? If you haven't, I'd like to introduce you to David, Chris, and Julia! David grew up in Maryland before moving to West Virginia. He was raised in a Christian home and surrendered his life to Christ at the age of six during a Summer Bible Conference. Chris was born and raised in Virginia, coming from a Christian home as well. She was saved at a Youth Group Retreat when she was twelve years old. Now, I am quite positive that between these young ages we have mentioned and present day there are many, many experiences in their walks with God which they could share with you. Unfortunately there is not enough room in the article for that, so we will highlight a meaningful lesson that stands out to David in his Christian life:

"Psalms 18:30 says, in part, 'As for God, His way is perfect; the word of the Lord is flawless.' As we think back through our experiences, we see the Lord's hand in everything. Even circumstances that seem tough from a human perspective, the Lord has turned them into blessings because He truly is good."

God *is* truly good. One of the ways this is evident is how He takes pleasure in making each our lives creative. Take David and Chris as example—God creatively planned their first meeting on the tennis courts! They were both attending Shepherd College at the time, David was a junior and Chris was a freshman. "We enjoyed the next two years together at Shepherd. I then went to West Virginia University for graduate school while Chris finished her junior and senior year at Shepherd. Many car miles and high phone bills later, our degrees were completed and, finally, "the proposal" came during the Christmas season of 1998. We then began planning for our October 2, 1999 wedding...a mere five years after we met." The McKenzies now live in Berryville. David works as an administrator at *(continued on pg. 4)*

Farmwell Station Middle School in Ashburn, and will be principal in Leesburg this summer for middle school age students attending summer school. Chris taught 1st and 2nd grades in Ashburn prior to their daughter's birth, and is now a stay-at-home mom.

But wait! Who is this daughter we've mentioned? Meet Julia, age three, soon to be older sister of an expected July baby. "Julia enjoys any type of outdoor activity, singing, dancing, "fixing" Mommy's hair, and playing with Daddy's fishing worms," her dad says. "She is very helpful and will, without a doubt, make an excellent big sister." Julia and her mom and dad spend lots of time together, of course. Besides David going to work, nearly everything they do is done as a family! "We view everything that we do together as enjoyable, no matter how big or small the occasion, or whether or not the occasion goes as planned. We enjoy spending time with our parents (who are all nearby), going to parks, camping, taking full-day or half-day trips to local places like arboretums and zoos, and slowing down to simply sit on the couch and read together."

However, during those times when the family is not doing something all together...David enjoys hunting, fishing, camping, playing the trumpet, playing tennis, and other sports. Although I suppose most of these are actually family activities...except for playing the trumpet. That usually doesn't work for three people and one trumpet. Chris likes to bake and sew. She also enjoys playing tennis and camping also!

A particular spiritual lesson Chris has been learning lately is straight from Numbers 9:23, which says: *At the Lord's command they encamped, and at the Lord's command they set out. They obeyed the Lord's order in accordance with His command through Moses.* "The Lord directed the Israelites' walk and had plans for them even when not moving." Chris explains. "This lesson has taught me that although planning for tomorrow is important, God has a plan for today and I must be open to His direction." While Chris has been listening to God on that topic, David has been hearing God tell him this: "The Lord has been showing me that the more time I spend with Him (through prayer, devotions, reading His Word, etc.), the more I view everything from a biblical lens. If I give him my heart, soul, and mind, he will prepare me for the things that this world presents to me."

And now, how did this fine family begin attending Blue Ridge Bible Church? They saw an ad for the church in the local newspaper! David and Chris chose BRBC because of the sound teaching that comes directly from the Bible. They have been members for two years and currently attend the Fontaines' home-group each Tuesday night. Chris has worked in the nursery and taught the two-year-old's class. David is in the orchestra and part of the Worship Planning Committee. What do they enjoy about our church? "Aside from the orchestra? ... Just kidding," David jokes. "At a time when many churches are entertainment-based (both in preaching and in the fine arts), we know that at BRBC, teaching and proclaiming the Truth will always be the focus of the worship services and other activities."

Two years ago the McKenzie family wrote out their family "Belief Statement" and hung the framed, finished product inside by their front door. As far as a guiding thought for their family, the last

paragraph from their statement sums it up quite well. The paragraph reads, "Everything we have, both tangible and intangible, are gifts from God and, therefore, belong to Him. Nothing we have acquired has been from our own doing, but only from the strength that has been given to us by Him." Together with that, a favorite passage of the McKenzie family is Psalm 100:

Shout joyfully to the LORD, all the earth. Serve the LORD with gladness; come before Him with joyful singing. Know that the LORD Himself is God; it is He who has made us, and not we ourselves; we are His people and the sheep of His pasture. Enter His gates with thanksgiving and His courts with praise. Give thanks to Him, bless His name. For the LORD is good; His loving-kindness is everlasting and His faithfulness to all generations.




We had a FANTASTIC year! The Lord has greatly blessed us and thousands of Bible verses were planted in our children's hearts during this last Awana year. We don't want to lose the momentum! We are again issuing a summer memory challenge to every clubber, parent and leader. There will be a special pin for everyone who comes to Awana in the fall ready to recite these verses word perfect :)

The Whole Armor of God Ephesians 6:10-20 (NKJV)

10 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. 11 Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. 12 For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. 13 Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. 14 Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, 15 and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; 16 above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. 17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; 18 praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints— 19 and for me, that utterance may be given to me, that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel, 20 for which I am an ambassador in chains; that in it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.

Only ten verses to memorize before Awana meets again on September 7th to kick-off our 12th year of Awana!! Mark your calendar and we will look forward to seeing you in the fall! Leader training will be in August. Won't you consider joining our team and letting the Lord use you to help boys and girls learn the Gospel of Christ and training them to serve Him? Pray about it!

July 2008

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2 Worship Practice Youth Group Wilcox Small Group	3 Smith/Berry Small Group	4  Independence Day	5 Brotherhood Prayer/ Breakfast Fellowship
6 Worship Practice Elders' Prayer	7 Scouts	8	9 Worship Practice Missions Committee Youth Group Wilcox Small Group	10	11	12 Shipe/Stocker Small Group Brotherhood Prayer/ Breakfast Fellowship
13 Worship Practice Elders' Prayer Baptism Sunday	14 Scouts	15 Newsletter Deadline	16 Worship Practice Youth Group Wilcox Small Group	17 Smith/Berry Small Group	18	19 Brotherhood Prayer/ Breakfast Fellowship
20 Worship Practice Elders' Prayer	21 Scouts	22	23 Worship Practice Youth Group Wilcox Small Group	24	25	26 Shipe/Stocker Small Group Brotherhood Prayer/ Breakfast Fellowship
27 Worship Practice Elders' Prayer Communion	28 Scouts PLC	29 Deacons' Meeting	30 Worship Practice Youth Group Wilcox Small Group	31		

Happy Birthday to...

1 Chrissy Essex
1 Joe Essex
1 Cameron Marshall
1 Joshua Porter
3 Suzanne Larry
3 Breton Geyer
4 Kaysha Mendoza
5 Rachel Mickahail
5 Mike Strickland
5 John Crosen
5 Liam Smith

8 Logan Hall
8 Alex Walker
8 Stephen Ellis
9 Christopher Fernandes
9 Bob Ness
9 Nolan Yost
9 Noah Gilanshah
10 Peter LaRock
12 Abby Metzgar
13 Lauren Mehrens
13 Russell Jenkins

14 Seth Berry
14 Carin Bozarth
15 Hannah Porter
15 Zachary Reynolds
15 Paul Eskew
17 Reagan Hall
17 Joshua Tigges
18 Wesley Marshall
18 April Matovich
18 Greg Matovich
18 Dana Soltis
18 Breana Paist
18 Caleb Kim
18 Mary Ann Willett

20 Zachary Kim
20 Sydney Vann
22 Rachel Warren
23 Joey Baer
23 Karen Heidorn
24 Regina Gossage
25 Peter van der Hoek
26 Elizabeth LaRock
26 Daniel Protic
26 Kristen Strickland
26 Taylor Wilson
27 Grace Dorsey
27 Rachelle van der Hoek
28 Sherri Wilson

28 Faith Dillmuth
29 Jacob Porter
29 Tim Donnelly
30 Heidi Berry
30 Sarah Porter
30 Christopher Esposito
31 Colleen Cook
31 Eleanor Winants





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Encouragement for Women

By Kendell Taylor

When was the last time you thought of one of your daily tasks as a "most sacred and blessed work"? It is so easy to go through the day with the To Do list in hand and forget that each simple act can be a pleasing offering to our God.

"We do not always perceive that even the writing of a note of congratulation, the fabrication of something intended as an offering of affection, our necessary intercourse with characters which have no congeniality with our own, or hours apparently trifled away in the domestic circle, may be made by us the performance of a most sacred and blessed work, even the carrying out, after our feeble measure, of the design of God for the increase of happiness."¹

Serving others, whether it is our own families, other believers, strangers with whom we come in contact, and even those who "have no congeniality with our own" does not go unnoticed by our loving heavenly Father. So the next time you put aside your To Do list for the unexpected need of someone else, make a meal for your family or someone who is sick, choose to respond kindly when others are not being kind, work diligently (at home, in school, or in the workplace) and no one even notices...remember, God has called us to a most sacred and blessed work. Relying not on our own strength but on God's power and grace working through us, we can bring "the increase of happiness" and encouragement to those who know God and be the reflection of God's love and grace to those who do not.

God is not unjust; He will not forget your work and the love you have shown Him as you have helped His people and continue to help them. Heb. 6:10.



¹Sarah W. Stephen as printed in *Daily Strength for Daily Needs* by Mary W. Tileston