

# the *Good News* banner

## Thoughts from the Pastor

By Jack Gill

Winter is that time in which the frost and chill of the season overshadow us. We experience the bare trees, snowfalls, and the sometimes harsh blast of a humid wind that can cut through the heavy clothes that we wrap around ourselves. It is only for a season, but sometimes that season seems to last for much longer than three months!

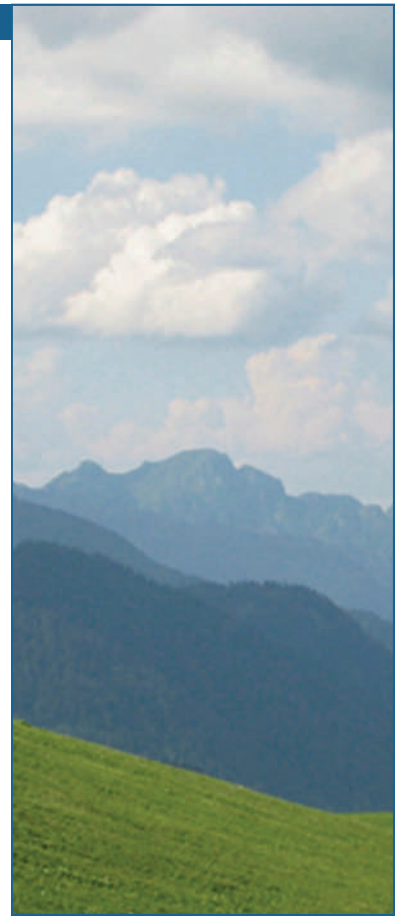
For our family—as well as for several other members of our congregation—that season has happened metaphorically as well. The season I speak of is the cold season of death that comes upon us. It is a sobering time—a time that has us really examine and ask what it is that our lives are to really be about. Death has a way of cutting through the hustle and bustle of life, and has us stop and think. We consider, “How will my life be remembered? What characterizes my life? What is it in life that truly is most important?”

The best summary for a life well-lived comes down to how you answer this question: “Did my life glorify God?” Jesus taught us this in His prayer to the Father when He said, “Father...glorify your Son, so that your Son may glorify you.” (Jn. 17:1)

One of the greatest things about Christmas is that it is a time in which we remember God’s glory revealed—in His son being made flesh. This little microcosm of Christ’s life was a preview of what would mark His entire life and ministry—a life of love in which He did not seek His own interests. He surrendered and gave up so much to *live with us*—and to *die for us*. We see how this was expressed through His prayer to the Father at the end of His life: “I glorified you on earth by completing the work you gave me to do.” (Jn. 17:4)

At Christmas, we remember the *finished* work that Christ has done. We remember how He became one of us. We remember how He lived without sin. We remember how He died for our sins. We remember how He arose from the grave! And now...we can glorify God as we embrace Him by faith. We can glorify Him as we seek to obey Him, walking in His Spirit. We can glorify God as recipients of His great love. We can glorify God as we worship Him. We can glorify God as we tell others about Him. Surrendering our lives to this Savior who has given us so much is what makes a life that is worth living...and remembering...for it glorifies God!

As we experience this Christmas and winter season, may it be one in which we truly rejoice, remembering how Jesus Christ came to glorify His Father and to enable us to live lives for His glory.



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- Jack Gill - Pastor
  - Rich Shipe - Associate Pastor
  - Tom Gossage - Worship Pastor
  - Debbie Stevenson - Administrator
  - Chris and Amy George - Layout & Editing

## November Attendance

**11/7/10**

**Sunday School**

Adults	111
Children	143
Total	254

**Worship**

Auditorium	479
Classes	41
Total	520

**11/14/10**

**Sunday School**

Adults	113
Children	116
Total	229

**Worship**

Auditorium	449
Classes	35
Total	484

**11/21/10**

**Sunday School**

Adults	109
Children	100
Total	209

**Worship**

Auditorium	474
Classes	37
Total	511

**11/28/10**

**Sunday School**

Adults	115
Children	102
Total	217

**Worship**

Auditorium	464
Classes	39
Total	503

## Administratively Speaking

by Debbie Stevenson

Merry Christmas!! Thank you all for another great year serving you as your church administrator! It's a privilege that I do not take lightly, and I enjoy the blessings and the challenges it brings each day. Thank you too for your prayers, meals, cards, flowers, and encouragements during the health challenges I had in 2010. Have a blessed holiday season, celebrating the Baby who is our Redeemer!!



## Year-End Giving

Even though we have changed our fiscal year, for tax deductions our contribution period still ends on December 31. Donors must deliver checks on or by Friday, December 31<sup>st</sup>, no later than 11:00 a.m. in order to claim a charitable contribution deduction for 2010. Checks that are placed in the offering on January 2, 2011 will not qualify for a charitable contribution in 2010, even if the check is predated to 2010 or was actually written in 2010. However, under the IRS "mailbox exception", checks that are written AND mailed AND postmarked in 2010 will be deductible in 2010 though they are not received by the church until the first week of 2011. For those who use our online automatic giving, ALL giving to be credited in 2010 needs to be dated no later than December 24 because of the delays in processing of the automatic banking system. That may require you to go into your Logosmanager profile and change the date on your December gifts if your normal processing date is in the last week of the month. Your help on this is greatly appreciated.

## Christmas Play

Blue Ridge Bible Church presents an original Christmas story, *Home For Christmas*. It is December 1941 in Purcellville and America is on the brink of joining the Allies in WWII. The antics of old Mrs. Tibbit and young Jimmy Sanders, of Uncle Frank and his tree-selling cronies, will have audiences laughing from the start. The story of the Clayborne family and a child in need, will touch hearts as they face the ultimate sacrifice of war, learn what is most important in life and grasp what it truly means to be home for Christmas.

Invite your family, friends and neighbors to enjoy a little history of Purcellville and the United States, and to hear a clear gospel message.

Blue Ridge Bible Church presents an original Christmas story

# Home for Christmas

Greater love has no man than this...

December 10, 11, 12 at 7 pm  
Blue Ridge Bible Church - 770 South 20<sup>th</sup> St., Purcellville  
540-338-2299 [www.brbible.org](http://www.brbible.org)

General Admission Seating is FREE  
Big Band Concert at 6:30 PM  
Free Family Pictures

## Getting To Know You

by Breana Paste

If you were allowed to give people as presents for Christmas, Chrissy Schneider's would be out of stock in every store. Just imagine: under your Christmas tree is a nice, big box with a stunning bow. When Christmas morning finally rolls around you tug on that big beautiful bow and out pops a Chrissy! "Oh MAN!" you exclaim, because she is simply the perfect gift: she walks, she talks, she plays soccer, ultimate Frisbee, and much more!

Unfortunately for you, this is not the case in life as we cannot give people as Christmas gifts. All is not lost, however, because THE Chrissy Schneider happens to be a member of our very own church! In between enjoying her two hobbies of traveling (she loves exploring new places and learning about different people, cultures, customs, and foods!) and playing sports (although she never played any before the age of 19, her favorites are now soccer, Ultimate Frisbee, and volleyball and she is always trying something new!), she found time to sit down and tell me a little more about herself.

Chrissy's father was in the Air Force, so the early years of her life were spent up and down the East Coast. Her family settled in Alabama when Chrissy was 10 years old, and since then has considered it her sweet home. "I spent my speech pattern forming years in Tampa, Florida—hence no accent," Chrissy says, "and my mind and worldview shaping years in Alabama—hence it's my home!"

Chrissy moved to Virginia from Montgomery, Alabama five years ago to attend Patrick Henry College. During her senior year of college the Home School Legal Defense Association (HSLDA) offered Chrissy a job as the Exhibit Coordinator. "Essentially, I'm in charge of making sure that HSLDA is represented at over 100 homeschool 'conferences,' or events—most of which happen between April and June. My favorite part of the job is working a conference; I love selling memberships to an organization that I really believe in!"

HSLDA is an organization Chrissy believes in because even though their main focus is homeschooling, at the epicenter of the company is Christ. Chrissy made the choice for Christ to become the center of her life by surrendering her life to Him at the age of seven. "I prayed with my dad during family devotions and accepted Christ." She goes on to say that since then it has been a process of growing and learning more about Him. A very formative experience in her spiritual life was during her senior year of high school, when her mom was diagnosed with early stages of cancer. "That was a rough couple of months for my whole family, but God taught me so much about faith, overcoming fear, and letting others support me and my family. Praise God, the doctors were able to remove the cancer surgically and she's been cancer free for over five years!"

Another crucial experience for Chrissy was the summer she spent interning in Phoenix, Arizona. Because she knew no one there she says it was a very lonely and just plain hard summer. "I faced so many fears that I had never realized were an issue until it was just me and

God, without friends to distract my overactive brain. I emerged from that summer with probably ten times more confidence in God than ever before! During that time, Psalm 103 became, and remains, one of my absolute favorite chapters in the Bible."

Currently she lives in a Purcellville townhouse with four other young women of which she says, "It's a great place for entertaining, which is something that all five of us love to do! We also have an astonishing amount of wedding experience—and opinions!—for being a bunch of single girls! And if you ever need a scrumptious meal, I can definitely recommend them."

Chrissy first visited BRBC three years ago as she was searching for a church in which she could be really involved. Since she was already volunteering in AWANA and knew the Paist family, she decided to stay! Although the latter of those reasons is incredibly good reason, she also chose BRBC because there were "so many families and they were all so nice!" She also appreciated that the staff and various ministry leaders made it easy for her, as a busy PHC student, to become involved. "I'd attended another church, and I had a really tough time connecting with any ministries. So it was refreshing that the folks at BRBC were so easy to work with." She continues to appreciate that all the families at BRBC look out for her. "Living so far from my family, it's wonderful to know that if I ever needed help in an emergency (snowpocalypse, anyone?), someone from BRBC would be there." Chrissy became a member of BRBC in 2008. Chrissy has remained an AWANA leader through the years as well as being the 2's and 3's class coordinator, and greeting with the Welcome Team. She has also helped with Reflection Ministry events and Disciple Now 2009 (where she had a blast as a leader and can't wait till this March's D-Now!).

Over the years Chrissy has learned to live by the phrase, "Don't take yourself too seriously." She says that for her, stepping back and looking at the humor in a given situation is a key part of staying humble and realizing that God is in control. "Plus, 'A glad heart makes a cheerful face,' (Prov. 15.13) and 'A joyful heart is good medicine' (Prov. 17.22)!"



Chrissy with her family

## Missions

By Bill Willcox

### Bangladesh: Too Much to Describe!

The village is beyond poor, and more than beautiful. By dint of backbreaking labor, pathways of hand-piled dirt offer passage through land annually besieged by monsoon floodwaters. Fields of rice and jute stretch out in unending tracts, and the Bengali harvester poles his boat and casts his nets regardless of burning sun or constant hunger. Even if I'd traveled there as a photographer for National Geographic, I still would have struggled to capture the paradox of a breathless landscape serving as the backdrop of unrelenting human pain and toil. My mission was to meet up with Akhish, a Bengali pastor/evangelist and operator of a safe-haven camp for converts in dire need of a refuge from their Muslim persecutors. **In Bangladesh, leaving Islam to follow Christ can cost you your life.**



First, I needed to get to the village. I flew into Dhaka, a teeming city of almost 12 million, and after six hours in a van, a long ferry ride, and a precarious passage on a narrow boat (think of a floating dining room table), I found myself scrambling up a muddy bank to walk the last leg of the journey. There were no roads in sight, and apart from a few bikes, no vehicles. The remote location of this village provides an extra measure of safety for Akhish's ministry—vital in a country with a population 86 percent Muslim and a growing Taliban presence.

I'm hard-pressed to describe what Akhish has gone through because of his whole-hearted love for Jesus Christ. A few years ago, an Islamic leader found out Akhish was sharing the Gospel with Muslims. The leader hired a bus driver to put a stop to Akhish's outreach...by running him over. Miraculously, Akhish was not killed, but his arm was crushed and spiked with shattered glass. Yet when he arrived at the hospital, all five doctors were afraid to treat his wounds, explaining that militants had given hospital staff strict instructions to kill the dangerous Christian. He was forced to find another hospital, and for the next several months, excruciating pain was his constant companion. It was two full years before he regained the use of his arm.

Prior to the bus-incident, Muslims attacked Akhish. After beating him with iron rods, they left him in a ditch to drown. His friend found him, took him by rickshaw to a hotel, and helped him travel from city to city to avoid detection. On another occasion, a hit-man, in the pay of an irate Muslim, cornered Akhish and put a gun in his face. Akhish immediately cried out to God in prayer, and the assassin's hand froze—paralyzed. The man panicked. Filled with compassion for his would-be killer, Akhish offered to pray for him, whereupon the man's hand unfroze...and he fled from Akhish in fearful awe.

As I spoke with Akhish, I was reminded of the Apostle Paul's tireless passion for Christ and his Church. Akhish is like Paul. **He bears on his body the marks of the Lord Jesus; the Gospel is his all.** He's in his late fifties, but he looks like a man past seventy. Diabetes, coupled with old injuries, makes each day painful, yet Akhish is content with his circumstances. Akhish lives with his wife in a barebones room smaller than a college dorm room, and the only possession that distinguishes him from the refugees he serves is his computer. Everything he has goes to the welfare of his fellow Christians. He built the camp on land he inherited, as well as some he bought with his own money. His obedience and devotion to Christ is tangible—he leads by example.

Each day at 6 a.m., Akhish leads the whole camp—about 60 adults and 150 children—in a time of praise and devotion. They meet again at 8 p.m. for the same purpose. Every day, he and his assistant teach four hours of Bible classes, preparing the Muslim background believers to go back out into their communities. **Hundreds of pastors and evangelists throughout Bangladesh trace their beginnings directly back to Akhish’s discipleship training.**

I found Raton’s testimony especially powerful. He was a Hindu, but 10 years ago relatives told him about a God who forgave sins, and he began to follow Christ. About a year ago, he witnessed to Asha, a teenage Muslim girl. When relatives discovered she had become a Christian, they threatened to kill both Asha and Raton for apostasy. The pair promptly fell in love, fled to Dhaka, and were married. Six months ago they found refuge at Akhish’s camp, where Raton has received training in small engine repair, and Asha in tailoring. Despite the danger, they share a passionate desire to return to Asha’s village as evangelists!

**The camp serves, not as a permanent residence, but literally as a place of refuge when the battle goes hard.** But the absence of physical threat doesn’t mean life at the camp is easy. Not one moment of the day is wasted. Akhish and his staff—which includes his brother John and sister Minoti—are on the go non-stop. Although she has her Masters in education, Minoti has chosen to act as the camp school’s headmistress, where she manages classes for the 150 refugee children, as well as 600 or so village children. Only part of the new school building has been finished, so classes are a cramped affair. Benches and blackboards comprise 90 percent of school supplies, but the educational standard is high—from what I saw of their work on equations, the kids know more math than I do! Minoti’s clothes are ragged, it’s hot, she’s sweating, but it is obvious that her joy is living everyday as a servant of her Lord.

But it’s not just the kids who learn. Classes in small engine repair, carpentry, welding, construction, and tailoring provide adult converts with vital bread-winning skills. The furniture in the men and women’s dorms, hand-welded window frames, and homemade clothes (made by students like the one pictured to the left), attest to the fact that no talents are wasted. The amount of manual labor performed each day is staggering—machines play a minor role in day-to-day life—but I didn’t hear any complaints.

In addition to leading devotions and handing out blankets, I was privileged to baptize six new converts in the camp pond (fortunately, not on the same side as the chicken coop!). **It’s hard to describe what it felt like, knowing these men and women could shortly join the martyred saints under the throne in Revelation 6:9-11.**

Did this short article do justice to the vibrant faith of Akhish and his community of saints? Did I adequately describe a country wracked with terrorism, poverty, and disease? My heart says no. And what I saw and heard is merely the tiniest sliver of what’s going on around the world. Search your heart. Get on your knees. Our God is Almighty—He will hear and act on our prayers!

On behalf of the faithful struggling in the strongholds of Islam, Bill Wilcox



## The Ladies Monthly Birthday Club

Happy Birthday to our November birthday ladies – Lisa Sraders, Kendell Taylor, LeaAnn Reynolds, Leslie Warren, Donna Gicker, Chelli Monroe, Gloria Baer, Vickie Farris, Kelly Pickeral, Terry Schulman, Patty Richardson, Trudy Wright, Maria MacKay, and Mahvash Ghaffari! We will gather on Tuesday, December 21<sup>st</sup> at 7 p.m. in the garage apartment behind the Halls’ house to celebrate these precious ladies’ birthdays. The dual purpose of the birthday club is to fellowship with our sisters in the Lord and to honor the ladies who had birthdays in the previous month. We’ve had wonderful gatherings of women each month with rich, encouraging conversations. Please, NO GIFTS! We share savory treats and transparent lives. Won’t you join us? Contact Geni Hall (genihall@aol.com) with any further questions.



## AWANA

By Geni Hall

Dust off your poodle skirt and brush up on your Hula Hoop skills cause it's gonna to be like crazy, man! Our first Awana meeting in December will be 50's Night to help celebrate Commander Hall's 50th Birthday! Don't be a square, be there. We'll have a special council time message reminiscing back at all that the Lord has done.



On December 19, we will have a blast decorating the classrooms with wonderful homemade Christmas decorations. We will be celebrating the birth of Christ as the real reason for the season. This will be our last Awana meeting for 2010.

Our first meeting in January will be the half-way point of our year! All clubbers who are half way through their book will receive a special prize. Keep memorizing God's Word!

Tips for memorizing scripture that have worked for our family:

1. Recite verses 5x per day
2. Recite verses before each meal
3. Review verses first thing in the morning and last thing at night
4. Review verses with Dad
5. Be consistent! Review verses every day.

December 5	50's Night
December 12	NO AWANA (Christmas Play)
December 19	Deck the Halls
December 26	NO AWANA (Christmas)
January 2	NO AWANA (New Year's)
January 9	2nd quarter club/Sunday school attendance/Half-way Prize Night

# December 2010

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
			1 Band of Brothers (6.30a.m.) Children's Choir (7.00 p.m.—8.30 p.m.) Worship Practice Wilcox Home Group (7.00 p.m.—8.30 p.m.)	2	3 Refuge College and Career Home Group (7.30 p.m.—9.30 p.m.) Reynolds Home Group (7.00 p.m.) Tigges Home Group (6.30 p.m.)	4 Men's Breakfast (7.00 a.m.—8.30 a.m.) Ladies Christmas Brunch (10:00 a.m.—Noon)
5 Town Hall Meeting (12:20 p.m.) AWANA (6.00p.m.—8.00p.m.)	6 Scouts & Cub Scouts (7.00 p.m.—9.00 p.m.) AHG (7.00 p.m.—9.00 p.m.) Moms In Prayer (9.30 a.m.—11.a.m.)	7	8 Band of Brothers (6.30a.m.) Missions Committee Children's Choir (7.00 p.m.—8.30 p.m.) Worship Practice Youth Group (7.00 p.m.—8.45 p.m.) Wilcox Home Group (7.00 p.m.—8.30 p.m.)	9 Berry Home Group (7.00 p.m.)	10 Refuge College and Career Home Group (7.30 p.m.—9.30 p.m.) Reynolds Home Group (7.00 p.m.) Tigges Home Group (6.30 p.m.) Christmas Play (7:00 p.m.)	11 Men's Breakfast (7.00 a.m.—8.30 a.m.) Christmas Play (7:00 p.m.)
12 Christmas Play (7:00 p.m.) No AWANA	13 Scouts & Cub Scouts (7.00 p.m.—9.00 p.m.) AHG (7.00 p.m.—9.00 p.m.)	14	15 Band of Brothers (6.30a.m.) Children's Choir (7.00 p.m.—8.30 p.m.) Worship Practice Youth Group (7.00 p.m.—8.45 p.m.) Wilcox Home Group (7.00 p.m.—8.30 p.m.) Newsletter Deadline	16 Berry Home Group (7.00 p.m.)	17 Refuge College and Career Home Group (7.30 p.m.—9.30 p.m.) Reynolds Home Group (7.00 p.m.) Tigges Home Group (6.30 p.m.)	18 Men's Breakfast (7.00 a.m.—8.30 a.m.)
19 AWANA (6.00p.m.—8.00p.m.) Singles Sunday Home Group (1.15 p.m.) Angel Tree Party (2:00 p.m.)	20 Moms In Prayer (9.30 a.m.—11.a.m.)	21 Ladies Birthday Club (7.00 p.m.)	22 Band of Brothers (6.30a.m.) Children's Choir (7.00 p.m.—8.30 p.m.) Worship Practice Wilcox Home Group (7.00 p.m.—8.30 p.m.)	23	24 Christmas Eve Service (6:00 p.m.)	25 Christmas
					Church Office Closed	
26 Communion No AWANA	27	28	29 Worship Practice	30	31 New Year's Eve	

## Blue Ridge Bible Church

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770 South 20th St.  
Purcellville, VA 20132

Phone: 540-338-2299  
www.brbbible.org

## Blue Ridge Bible Church

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Communicating Christ,  
Building Believers,  
Sending Servants.



*In the same region there were some shepherds staying out in the fields and keeping watch over their flock by night. And an angel of the Lord suddenly stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shown around them; and they were terribly frightened. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of great joy which will be for all the people; for today in the city of David there has been born for you a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger." And suddenly there appears with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among men with whom He is please."*

Luke 2:8-14