

the *Good News* banner

Thoughts from the Pastor

By Jack Gill

January...a time when the gyms are all full, diets have begun, and new resolutions begin to invade our minds! I like resolutions, because they are a target. They can help us to bring a focus to our lives in a small but applicable way. I recently examined yet again Solomon’s statement:

It is better to go to a house of mourning than to go to a house of feasting, because that is the end of every man, and the living takes it to heart. (Eccles. 7:2)

Notice that the verse doesn’t say it’s more *fun*, or that we should all *desire* to go to funerals! It just says that it is *better*. Why? Because a funeral makes us stop and think. But why wait for a funeral? Why not do this with a new year?

Reflective thinking does not happen much in our day. We have these devices that were meant to make our lives easier, but can actually steal more than they give to us—particularly our times to reflect and think. Commutes in the car become times of listening to the radio or talking on cell phones. Time alone at the gym actually becomes times when we just “check out”—with our ipods in our ears so that we don’t have to talk to anyone or even think, but just absorb.

I wonder if that’s why our lives are so packed these days. The most important things of our lives can give way to the most urgent...and that’s not good. But who has time to plan anything different? Who’s got time to think about a plan to change?

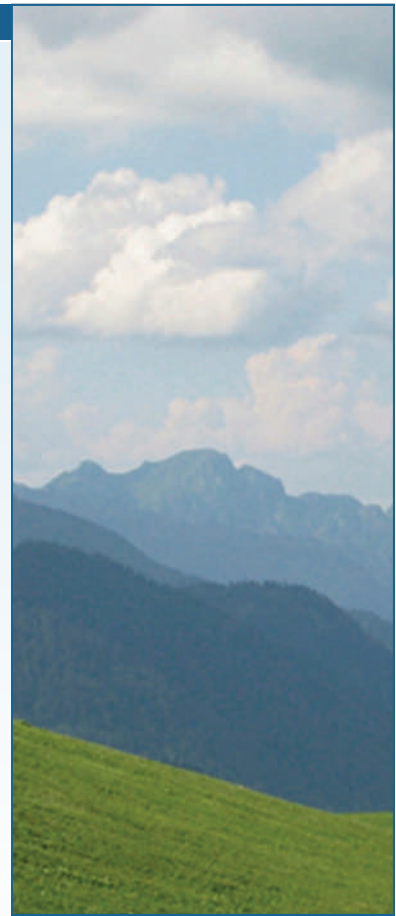
I want 2011 to be a time in which I am confident about my purpose in life—and I want to encourage the same for you too. I want it to be a time when we **think...**

...about how to engage with people better...and how I can be creative in my romance with my wife...to engage at a fun and deeper level with my kids...to creatively find ways to engage with people who don’t go to church at all... to disciple others at a better and deeper level...to seek to find ways in which I can know God deeper.

In order to keep these kinds of priorities, we all have to stop...and... reflectively...think. **What must I give up? What must I change? What must I embrace?** That *demand*s that we think.

Reflective thinking is a diminishing art these days. I want to resolve to pick it up again, and to master it. We can do this...and we don’t even have to wait until someone dies to get us to “take it to heart!” We can simplify our lives, get a clearer focus, be more resolved, and make each day count for the glory of God.

Think about it!



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December Attendance

12/5/10

Sunday School		
Adults	114	
Children	113	
Total	227	

Worship

Auditorium	527	
Classes	30	
Total	557	

12/12/10

Sunday School		
Adults	104	
Children	96	
Total	200	

Worship

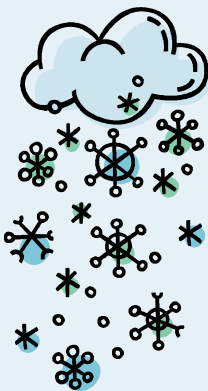
Auditorium	437	
Classes	46	
Total	484	

12/19/10

Sunday School		
Adults	105	
Children	98	
Total	203	

Worship

Auditorium	462	
Classes	36	
Total	498	



Administratively Speaking

by Debbie Stevenson

Happy New Year! It's a new year!! And yes, for us "older" generation the years are going by at a faster and faster pace. Wasn't it just yesterday when we had concerns about Y2K? Here are just a couple of financial things for your planning as we move into 2011:

Giving Statements – We will send out your 2010 giving statements by January 31. These statements provide a complete and authenticated record for your tax preparation. If you do not receive one and think you should OR if you have questions about the contents of your giving statement, please contact me (debbie@brbible.org or 540-338-2299).

Electronic Giving – Have you considered using an electronic method for your regular giving to the Lord? It enables you to give deliberately, consistently and conveniently. It also enables you to give even when you are not sitting in the worship service. Few people carry checkbooks anymore, and forget to bring it to church, resulting in putting in whatever cash is available at the moment. That's not cheerful, thought-out or even sacrificial giving. Our church management software offers an easy-to-use system. You can access your account at any time, enter the data, choose a set recurring amount or change it weekly. You can go online to check your entire giving record at your convenience because it combines donations online with any other donations you have made by check through the Sunday offering. It assists our church staff because we can automatically download your donation into our accounting system, eliminating manual data entry. Some of our congregation also make their donations automatic through their own bank account, and the checks are sent directly to church for processing. You can go to the church website to set up your account through our software company. It's easy and just takes a few minutes to get your "cheerful" giving started in 2011.

Worship Arts - Home for Christmas

by Patrice Smith

The Franklin Park Big Band started each night off with classic 1940s Christmas music. People mulled around buying time period goodies and getting their free family photos taken at the photo booth. When the lights went down at 7:00 p.m., a black and white slide show followed depicting images of the 1940s and WWII. Some photographs were even of our members and their relatives in that time. When the lights came up on the street set, the show began and so did a roller coaster of emotions – lots of laughter and for many, tears as well. It was a story of a family in Purcellville, experiencing war first hand and a young girl who needed a family, but more importantly, needed Jesus.

After many months of planning and rehearsals, God provided all our needs for the BRBC play, *Home For Christmas*. Though many in the 15-member cast suffered sickness leading up to and during the play, all soldiered through every rehearsal and performance. We had great audiences each of the three nights

averaging 350-400 in attendance, with a guess that at least half of those came from outside our church. Sixty-nine Bibles were given away. At least 35 families from Blue Ridge participated in some way, either in cast, crew, props, costuming, greeting, kitchen working and baking, advertising, building sets, setting up, cleaning up, painting, filming and photography. They donated their time, their talents and much, much more. We are so thankful for all of you and the sacrifices you made to make this production a success!

This year's play gave a clear gospel message as well as some challenges to all of us to get rid of the idols in our lives and to live eternally minded. Cast members told me they were ministered to through the lines of the play, especially in remembering, "Jesus. It's all about Jesus."

Be watching for the DVD release coming soon!

AWANA

By Geni Hall

We will hit our half way point of the year on January 9! For all clubbers who are half way through their book and in attendance on January 9, there will be a special prize! You won't want to miss this!

Break out the flip flops and shorts! We're going to beat those winter dol-drums! Come play volleyball and Frisbee tag. It is going to be a luau time of fun (no swim suits, please). January 16 will be a warm Hawaiian night at Awana!

Topsy Turvy Night is back. ALL EVENTS WILL BE IN BACKWARD ORDER! Council time will happen first. It should be a crazy, mixed up night. Clubbers are encouraged to wear their clothes backwards.

On January 30, we will focus on the Romania Reborn ministry with a special guest speaker, Jayme Metzgar. She will be sharing from her heart about how we can have an impact on the world for Christ.

January 2	NO AWANA (New Year's weekend)
January 9	2nd quarter club/Sunday school attendance Half way Prize Night
January 16	Luau Night
January 23	Topsy Turvy Night
January 30	Reborn Night

Ladies Birthday Club

Come celebrate our December birthday ladies: Michelle Essex, Darlene Watson, Patti Gregory, Becky Porter, Denise Geyer, Beth van der Hoek, and Amanda Lants. We will gather on Tuesday, January 11th at 7 pm at the garage apartment behind 1250 Hirst Road, Purcellville. This is an excellent time of encouragement, fellowship and laughter. You won't want to miss this! No gifts! For more information or to RSVP, contact Geni Hall (540-338-4287 or geni-hall@aol.com).



Missions Update - Adventures in India

By Carin Bozarth

I recently had the privilege of going to India to see my daughter, Chloe, while she is there serving with Bethania Kids ministry. She had already been in the country two months and I was eager to see her and meet the people she had grown to love.

I am not sure what I expected when I arrived but I found India to be amazing. It was exciting to begin to take in all the different sights and sounds and smells: the vibrant colors of the buildings and temples, the smells of tea and fried food as we passed street vendors, and the sounds of busy city streets with everyone honking horns. I loved it! Chloe had changed locations several times and was then staying in Nagercoil.

Imagine 120 girls, ages 4 through 18, several tutors, two cooks, a house mother, and a head teacher all under "one roof"! One could usually hear talking, giggling, chanting of lessons, or chores being done during all waking hours. Have I mentioned the rooster that crowed before 4:30 am each morning? Fortunately, no one had to get up until an hour after Mr. Rooster did each morning!


Chloe introduced me to the staff and girls. The girls were energetic, enthusiastic, and entertaining! They wanted to tell me their name and grade, show me the garden, and dance for me. In turn, they wanted me to show them photos of my family, let them fix my hair, and sing. Their eagerness to befriend me was almost overwhelming! I was amazed at how easy it was for these precious ones to trust and accept me. Nagercoil girls are a mix of orphans, semi-orphans, and children from very poor families.

Besides all the basic necessities, a quality education is paid for by the ministry. They are up early and get to bed late – in between prayers, school, and studying. Taking a "shower" using a bucket and cup for a couple of weeks seemed like nothing when I considered that these children do it every day. And the water was not hot. Washing clothes from the same bucket was fun – really! But, I returned home with a new appreciation for my old washer and dryer.

On the first Sunday I was there, Reverend Monikaraj asked me to "preach" and Chloe and I to sing for two of the congregations he pastors. Preaching simply meant that I was to give my testimony, present the gospel, and tell what the Lord has been teaching me lately. Reverend Monikaraj stood beside me and translated my words for his congregations. What a privilege that was! I believe the hardest part of the entire Sunday was keeping my head covered with a shawl while we prayed or the pastor read Scriptures. I apparently have slippery hair. Chloe had loaned me a saree to wear and I was glad she had. We stuck out as it was and didn't need to add to that by wearing western clothing.

After the last service, Chloe and I were invited by a family to their home. After walking a short distance, we arrived in front of a two room house. It appeared that we sat in the only two chairs they had as everyone else stood while visiting with us. As I sat there enjoying their hospitality and eating some delicious bananas (did you know there were more than one variety of banana grown in the world?), I wondered what if the situation was reversed. What if I had the two room home? Would I invite people over for "tea"? I thought about my habit of waiting until my home was "just perfect" before I would even think of inviting guests over. I shuddered at the thought of impromptu guests! Yet, this family who had so little had so readily showed hospitality to us. It was convicting as I sat on their plastic chair and simply enjoyed the conversation (and the delicious red banana).

Before I knew it, the day had come to move on to Rajahmundry. It was difficult to say goodbye to the girls at Nagercoil. In particular, there was a little four-year-old orphan, Sanayha and a sad 12- year-old, Ahgeeta. There were others, many others whose faces I can still in my mind's eye. It is easier to neglect praying for children that we haven't met. These girls are more than a name on a page now.



We left the girls and met boys in Rajahmundry. I believe there are 46 boys in the orphanage there. I am not sure what I expected an orphanage to be like, but this was it! It certainly didn't have that "Little Orphan Annie" feel to it. Instead, this home felt warm and loving. I had the privilege of giving the devotional the last evening I was in Rajamundry. Chloe and I taught them a song and then we read Joshua 1:9. It seemed fitting for a house full of young men ages 9-14. At the close of our time together, I was asked to pray for the boys. I felt so unworthy to bring these dear children before the Lord. They all rose to their knees and waited expectantly for me to begin praying. Wow! I think sometimes I forget that I don't have to have a special degree to pray "powerfully" or a certain amount of experience to ask for the Lord's blessing. These children's expectant hearts were incredibly encouraging. Anyone can be a prayer warrior!

My time in India passed all too quickly. It was wonderful to see my daughter and witness how well she had done in assimilating. It was evident that she was enjoying the work that the Lord had provided for her. I left on a bus bound for Bangalore. While in Bangalore I was able to meet friends of Ashy Koshy, Sushma and Georgie and their two daughters. What a lovely Christian family! They fed me, took me to their Bible study that evening, and shared their family devotional time – all before I was dropped off at the airport for a 3:00 a.m. flight.

While I would have loved to stay longer, it was truly a blessing to be able to visit India and see what God is doing in that beautiful country.

Project Angel Tree

by Kim Chambers for Team Project Angel Tree

We could not have been more pleased with the results of our first Angel Tree party on December 19! Every detail that we had planned including the plans God had, came together like a fluid machine in motion!

The youth group wowed all of us with pulling together an original script based on the age old Charlie Brown true meaning of Christmas story, along with the youth band preparing a Christmas sing-along for the kids working hard to help with set-up and clean-up. We even had time for a snow ball fight! We could not have been more proud of them!

The outpouring of delicious and beautiful food had us all thinking of the story of the five loaves in scripture! We were hoping and praying not only for food to be provided, but for extra goodies to give to the families involved in Project Angel Tree. That prayer was answered in abundance! A big hearty thanks to all of you that gave in food, gifts, supplies, finances, time, talents, and prayer!

In all the planning, we prayed for families to be moved to come. Out of the 11 families invited one family showed up with a young teen and a toddler. We are thrilled with those results! We are reminded of how precious one soul is to our Lord when we read in Luke 15.

He told them this parable. "Which of you men, if you had one hundred sheep, and lost one of them, wouldn't leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness, and go after the one that was lost, until he found it? When he has found it, he carries it on his shoulders, rejoicing. When he comes home, he calls together his friends and his neighbors, saying to them, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost!' I tell you that even so there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents, than over ninety-nine righteous people who need no repentance."

We had many families come forward and offer to deliver the remaining gifts to the families that did not come. Those families were greeted with gifts for their children, an invitation to our Christmas Eve service and a holiday Bible study. This party is just the beginning of an ongoing ministry.

Many parents commented on how touched they were with the party. It was a tangible way for the entire family to be involved in missions without having to travel thousands of miles to love in the name of Jesus. The broken and the needy are among us right here in our community. It also gave us an opportunity to model service with our children. We reflect again on the words of Jesus when he tells us in Matthew 25:

'Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.' "Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?' "The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.'



As I glanced at the 10-foot table overflowing with beautiful handmade desserts and artistically decorated cookies I thought about the heavenly feast that you and I will be at one day. A truly hopeful and exciting word in Revelation 19 offers us a glimpse of our invitation to receive the fullness and glory of our Lord and Savior! Makes you want to cry in thanksgiving and walk with Him all the more!

Then I heard what sounded like a great multitude, like the roar of rushing waters and like loud peals of thunder, shouting:

"Hallelujah!

For our Lord God Almighty reigns.

Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory!

For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready.

Fine linen, bright and clean, was given her to wear."

Then the angel said to me, "Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding supper of the Lamb!" And he added, "These are the true words of God." At this I fell at his feet to worship him. But he said to me, "Don't do that! I am a fellow servant with you and with your brothers and sisters who hold to the testimony of Jesus. Worship God! For it is the Spirit of prophecy who bears testimony to Jesus."

From the bottom of our hearts, we simply offer the BRBC family a huge thanks for partnering with us for this first-time event and hope that you'll continue to pray for these families and for the Christmas 2011 party!



January 2011

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
						1 New Years Day
2	3 Scouts & Cub Scouts AHG	4	5 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.)	6 Berry Home Group (7.00 p.m.)	7 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.)	8 Men's Breakfast (7.00 a.m.—8.30 a.m.)
9 AWANA (6.00p.m.—8.00p.m.)	10 Scouts & Cub Scouts AHG Moms In Prayer (9.30 a.m.—11.a.m.)	11 Ladies Birthday Club (7.00 p.m.)	12 Band of Brothers (6.30a.m.) Children's Choir (7.00 p.m.—8.30 p.m.) Missions Committee Worship Practice Youth Group (7.00 p.m.—8.45 p.m.) Wilcox Home Group (7.00 p.m.—8.30 p.m.)	13 Berry Home Group (7.00 p.m.)	14 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.)	15 Men's Breakfast (7.00 a.m.—8.30 a.m.) Newsletter Deadline
16 AWANA (6.00p.m.—8.00p.m.) Singles Sunday Home Group (1.15 p.m.)	17 Scouts & Cub Scouts AHG	18	19 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	20 Berry Home Group (7.00 p.m.)	21 Refuge College and Career Home Group (7.30 p.m.—9.30 p.m.) Tigges Home Group (6.30 p.m.)	22 Men's Breakfast (7.00 a.m.—8.30 a.m.)
23 AWANA (6.00p.m.—8.00p.m.) New LIFE Groups Launched	24	25	26 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.)	27 Berry Home Group (7.00 p.m.)	28 Refuge College and Career Home Group (7.30 p.m.—9.30 p.m.) Tigges Home Group (6.30 p.m.)	29
30 AWANA (6.00p.m.—8.00p.m.)	31 Moms In Prayer (9.30 a.m.—11.a.m.)					

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Blue Ridge Bible Church

Communicating Christ,
Building Believers,
Sending Servants.

Some thoughts on focusing our lives on God's priorities in the new year...

*Teach me, O Lord, the way of your statutes, and I shall observe it to the end.
Give me understanding that I may observe Your law and keep it with all my heart.
Make me walk in the path of Your commandments, for I delight in it.
Incline my heart to Your testimonies and not to dishonest gain.
Turn away my eyes from looking at vanity, and revive me in Your ways.
Establish Your word to Your servant, as that which produces reverence for You.
Turn away my reproach which I dread, for Your ordinances are good.
Behold, I long for Your precepts; revive me through Your righteousness.*
Psalm 119:33-40