

the *Good News* banner

Thoughts from the Pastor

By Jack Gill

Recently I just finished a class on the doctrine of salvation. As I took my final exam for it, the last question was one that has made me think quite a bit since. Here it is:

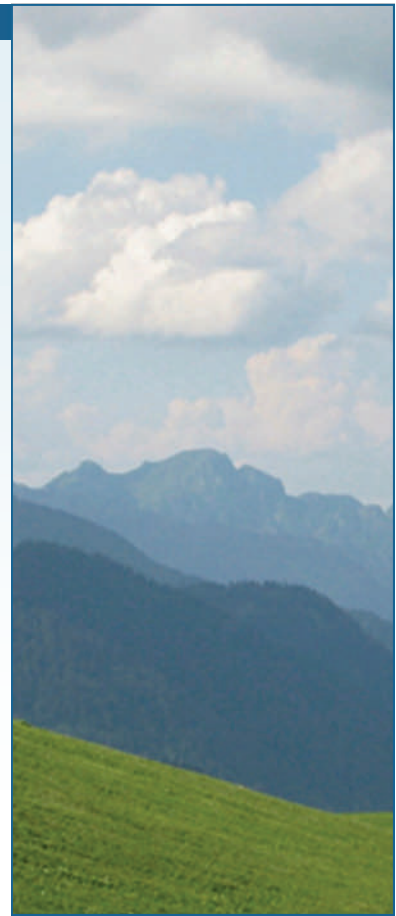
What do you regard to be the greatest obstacle to the gospel in the culture within which you plan to minister? What strategies would you suggest to someone doing evangelism in that culture?

Ours is a culture of great affluence as well as influence. For years now we have been considered one of the wealthiest counties in the nation, and we are on the cusp of our nation’s capital. Add to that the fact that our county is still relatively young age-wise. That presents a very unique challenge to us when we consider outreach, because so many of those we would reach out to are young, influential, highly educated, and wealthy!

I immediately thought of someone similar that Jesus encountered in his ministry. In three of the gospels the event is recorded. (Luke 18:18-30, Mark 10:17-23, and Matt. 19:16-26. Take a moment and read through one of those passages when you have a chance). This is all about a man described as both young and rich who was a ruler over others. He was self-sufficient, and he was self-righteous. However, despite possessing youth, influence, and money, the man lacked one thing—assurance that God would accept him. I don’t think that is any different today.

Have you read the projections for our area for the coming year? Economically they are not too good. It is reasonable to expect that our county will begin to feel the impact of a downward turn—and that means that the people that we are around could potentially begin to feel their need for something more secure than their jobs, position, and money. They could very well begin to recognize that they need the Lord this year! We cannot bring people to this recognition, but God can and does! (Mt. 19:25-26)

When God allows something to come our way—even difficulties—I believe it can always be utilized for His glory. As 2012 comes, we need to be alert! What opportunities might we have to share with others about the security of knowing Jesus Christ in a personal way? As the county walks in fear of *losing* what they have, Blue Ridge might use this situation to show them what they stand to *gain* in Christ!



Inside this issue

Attendance	2
Administratively Speaking	2
Awana.....	4
Missions	5
January Calendar	9

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December Attendance

12/04/11

Sunday School

Adults	134
Children	108
Total	248

Worship

Auditorium	
1 st service	118
2 nd service	363
Classes	
1 st service	4
2 nd service	34

Total 519

12/11/11

Sunday School

Adults	110
Children	116
Total	226

Worship

Auditorium	
1 st service	74
2 nd service	346
Classes	
1 st service	7
2 nd service	39

Total 466

12/18/11

Sunday School

Adults	95
Children	75
Total	170

Worship

Auditorium	
1 st service	92
2 nd service	317
Classes	
1 st service	6
2 nd service	31

Total 446

I have a challenge for each of us this next year:

For 2012, what if each of us were to develop at least one relationship with a non-Christian neighbor of ours? For some, it might be to *renew* a relationship. In other cases, it might be to *start* one. What might God do through us if we were to invite them over to eat...or to watch a movie together...or to play a game of cards...or to have a cup of coffee and just begin to talk with them about life? For families—how might God use your home to love others, to begin to pray for them by name, and then to begin to build a relationship with them...or their children? This is the pathway to presenting the gospel! It begins with sharing life, and then expands to the message of God's love and Christ's sacrifice.

This could very well be the year in which they will need someone to talk to. This could be the year when God would work to have them recognize their need—and maybe...just maybe...YOU might be the one God uses to minister to them in their hour of need!

Let's let 2012 be a new year in which we resolve...to be initiators in developing at least one relationship with a non-Christian!

Administratively Speaking

By Debbie Stevenson

Many thanks to those of you who stopped by to ask questions in our December demonstrations of the Blue Ridge Community Builder. We will continue to have periodic demonstrations, so watch for future opportunities. Also a special thanks to so many of you who have logged on and looked around, added your photo, and updated your profile. This is a "continuing education" project for all of us, and obviously the more we use it, the more uses we will find for it and the more comfortable it will be to use it.

The biggest project for the beginning of January relates to the "financial" tab on your profile. As of January 1st we will begin entering weekly offerings into Community Builder. We also hope to have the online giving switched over from Logos by then as well, but that may take a little longer. Our current online donors will be provided instructions on what to do, but until then, please keep your Logos account active.

As in all transitions to new software, we ask for your patience in completing this financial part. It may need to be done in stages. For example, currently at your financial tab, you will see a total amount for 2010 and a total amount for January-September 11, 2011. That data was our initial entry into the system. In the first few weeks of January, we will enter in a total amount for September 12 through December 31, in order to provide a complete record of your 2011 gifts. One last time we will send out giving statements for 2011 from the Logos program.

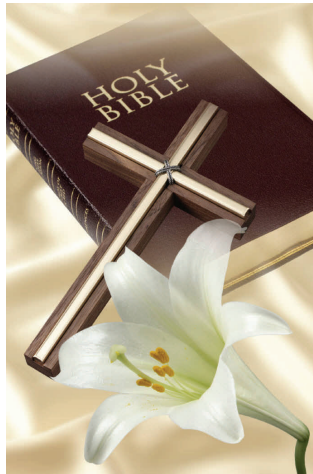
Overall, the process for recording donations weekly will not change – the deacons do the initial counting and recording, and then two of us on staff do the data entry of the offering checks and cash into the software. The online giving option will still be available and is even handled by the same third party that Logos uses. The availability of looking at your own giving record is the main difference and benefit for each individual. Only you can see your own record. When someone looks up your profile, the “financial” tab does not appear.

Please take a few minutes to familiarize yourself with Community Builder. Our LIFE group leaders will begin this month using it to communicate within the groups. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me, and we can continue learning this together. And I would be encouraged to hear how you are using it, what you have learned, and what would be good for others to know.

Women’s One-Day Retreat

By Heidi Berry

Calling all Blue Ridge women! In an effort to build fellowship, encourage our walk with the Lord and just have some good old fashioned fun, the Women’s Ministry Committee invites you to our a One-Day Retreat on January 21 right here in our Blue Ridge auditorium. The topic is “Living Out The Gospel” and it promises to be uplifting, encouraging and challenging!



Two of our pastors’ wives, Karen Gill and Christy Shipe will encourage us to put Christ first as we live our daily lives. Along with these wonderful women, we will hear from a panel of women on how they practically work out Christ’s call, willingly and obediently in daily life. And the day is completed with additional testimonies and great worship music led by Abby and Anna Parker. Of course, fellowship and laughter are always included in our times together!

So if you have been attending here for years, “We want YOU!” If you are new to Blue Ridge, “We want YOU!” If you are under 25, “We want YOU!” If you are over 75 or any age in-between, “We want YOU!” This is a time to get to know other Blue Ridge women and grow in a deeper love for our Savior.

The program goes from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., followed by a fellowship and dessert time until 5:00. Registration is \$20 per person which includes a great lunch from Panera Bread. You can register online through Blue Ridge Community Builder, and in the foyer on Sunday, January 8 and 15. For additional information, contact Heidi Berry (540-338-9711).

Monthly Newsletter

The Good News Banner, our monthly newsletter, is going all digital. This edition is the last one we will have in print. February’s edition will totally be found on our website home page. We will feature articles in a timely and individual way, rather than as one whole newsletter report. So this month we will send you the link to the website as we have done, but you may also go to the home page and watch for highlighted articles.

AWANA

By Geni Hall

The new calendar year is upon us! We reach our halfway point for the Awana year in January.

On January 8, we have a special missionary report from the Ghana Five, our young short-term missionaries that we sent to Ghana last summer. They are home on Christmas break from college so we are looking forward to the wisdom they will share.



Our half-way point of the Awana year is January 15! There will be a special reward for those clubbers who are half-way through their Awana book. Also, wear your ugliest sweater ever for an additional prize.

January 22 is pillow night. Bring your favorite pillow to club as we snuggle down and hear about the comforting words of God.

Mystery Night is January 29! You have to come to club to learn what the mystery is all about!!

January 1	NO AWANA (New Year's Day)
January 8	Ghana Five
January 15	2nd quarter, Half-Way Point, Ugly Sweater
January 22	Pillow Night
January 29	Mystery Night

New Life Group Session Begins



Our second 10-week session of LIFE Groups begins the first week of January for most of the groups, with a few starting the second week. Check out this month's newsletter calendar or the Community Builder calendar for specific information on each group. In Community Builder, you may also request to join a specific group by going to Groups > type LIFE in search box > click on a choice. Then read about the group, and on the right side of the screen click on "Request to Join" which will contact the group leader with your request.

If you are looking for a place to develop deeper relationships within the church and receive the encouragement you need to follow after Christ, consider joining one of our LIFE Groups. The acronym LIFE stands for groups who Live the Word, Inspire works of ministry, Foster love, and Encourage intimacy. Now is a good time to consider joining a group. There are three sessions from September through May and each session lasts 10 weeks. The groups meet weekly. Some meet for the purpose of applying each week's sermon, and some cover other topics. Some of the groups are adults only and many others include childcare by our trained and paid childcare teen girls. For more information, contact Rich Shipe (rich@brbible.org).

Missions

Local Mission News

By Marion Esposito

In October, nine teen girls successfully completed an eight-week evangelism class called, "The Way of the Master." Those girls are: Katarina Esposito, Bethany Gicker, Catie Jessberger, Tamar Mickahail, Kayleen Miller, Rachel Miller, Grace Rogan, Rebekah Watson and Christina Webster.

These girls learned how to share their faith biblically, answer some of the most common questions unbelievers ask, overcome their fears, and many of them examined their own personal salvation and walk with God in the process.



Over the course of the eight weeks, the girls learned various ways to evangelize. Some had opportunities to share their faith one-on-one with a co-worker, relative or friend. All of them gave gospel tracts to people they knew and/or complete strangers. We set up a booth at the Purcellville Town Tag Sale, representing Blue Ridge Bible Church, while handing out gospel tracts, water and home-baked goodies. Our next opportunity was to set up a table at the October Clothing Exchange, similar to what we did at the Tag Sale. On December 10, the girls made up gift bags for the neighbors near Blue Ridge, which included information about Blue Ridge, a gospel tract, and a candy cane. They sang Christmas Carols and were so blessed by the reception they received from the neighbors. It was a great experience for all of us, and it was all done for God's glory. The girls now look for opportunities to share their faith and many see evangelism as a "way of life," understanding that it is what Jesus has called us to do. Luke 24:47, Matt.28:19-20, Mark 16:15



If you have an interest in becoming better equipped to share your faith, please contact Christopher & Marion Esposito (mespo@me.com).

Missions

World Mission News

By Benjamin Garber (with Leah Garber)

Last month our church had the privilege of hosting Adi and Lavinia Dreana, our supported national missionaries in Romania. They issued an open invitation to any Blue Ridge family who would like to come work with them next summer on a painting project and at a summer camp. If you said “yes” to this invitation, what would your service look like?

As anyone who has visited the country knows, Romania is a beautiful land in eastern Europe, full of mountains and forests. The people still struggle from the aftereffects of decades of communism that ended only 22 years ago. There is also tension between ethnic Romanians and the Gypsy population. Finally, there is intense poverty in many parts of the country. After visiting both Ghana and Romania, my observation is that Ghanaians live in mud huts and Romanians live in concrete huts. Both places still have goats and chickens wandering in and out of the houses, limited electricity and running water, and other indicators of severe poverty.

Adi and Lavi were born and raised in northern Romania, which is a more affluent part of the country. However, as they were dating, they went on frequent mission trips to the poorer south, where they ended up moving after getting married. Jayme Metzgar spent a year in Romania, during which time she met Adi and Lavi, and was very impressed with their passion and vision. She maintained contact with them after returning to the States, and helped our church establish a warm relationship with the Dreanas. Of course, once you've met Adi and Lavi for yourself, you realize it's not hard to maintain a warm relationship with this dynamic couple!

Although Adi and Lavi are currently back in the vicinity of Oradea, where they grew up, they lived for over a decade in Tirgu Jiu in the south. There they established several ministries, including:

1. A church, which unites the Romanian and Gypsy peoples in common worship. Adi has personally mentored the current pastor, who has been transformed from an uneducated Gypsy boy to a man with a heart for his congregation.
2. The Living Hope Center, which offers a warm welcome and special services such as after-school tutoring, hot lunches, and an annual summer Vacation Bible School to needy schoolchildren. LHC also offers vocational opportunities for women, who sew maternity clothing that is sold to support them and other aspects of Adi's and Lavi's ministry.
3. A health center, which offers quality medical services to the local population on a pay-what-you-can-afford basis. While some of Tirgu Jiu's wealthier citizens can afford to cover the costs associated with their care at the Dreanas' center, many poorer people are serviced free of charge...and our giving through Blue Ridge's support of the Dreanas and through Romania Reborn enables this ministry to continue.

Our church has sent several teams to Romania over the years, whose members have had the opportunity to view the Dreanas' good work first hand. However, it has now been five years since we sent a team, and it's definitely time to send some more encouragement in the form of a Blue Ridge team...or, perhaps, an entire family from our church.

As I mentioned, Adi and Lavi are currently back in Oradea, where they are helping with some extended family issues. They could definitely use our prayers with some of the things that are going on in their lives now, as they are balancing their family service with trips to the south to monitor and assist with the ministries in Tirgu Jiu. Please pray for Adi and Lavi – and for their three daughters, Becky, Seia, and Adriela – as well as for their work both in Oradea and in Tirgu Jiu. And pray too about whether God may want YOU to serve in Romania this summer!

January 2012

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1 New Year's Day Worship Services (8:30 a.m. & 11:00 a.m.) Sunday School (9:45 a.m.)	2	3 LIFE Group (Smith) (7.00 p.m.)	4 LIFE Group (Wilcox) (7.00 p.m.) LIFE Group (Paist) (7.00 p.m.) LIFE Group (Larry) (7.00 p.m.) Children's Choir (6.00 p.m.—7.00 p.m.) Worship Practice Jr & Sr High Group (7.00 p.m.—9:00 p.m.)	5 LIFE Group (Sraders) (7.00 p.m.) LIFE Group (Casserino) (7.00 p.m.)	6 Refuge College and Career Home Group (7.30 p.m.—9.30 p.m.) LIFE Group (Reynolds) (7.00 p.m.)	7 Men's Breakfast (7.00 a.m.—9:00 a.m.)
8 Worship Services (8:30 a.m. & 11:00 a.m.) Sunday School (9:45 a.m.) Baptism AWANA (4.00p.m.—5.30p.m.)	9 Scouts & Cub Scouts (7.00 p.m.) AHG (7.00 p.m.) Moms in Prayer (9:30 a.m.)	10 LIFE Group (Berryville/Winchester) (7.00 p.m.) LIFE Group (Smith) (7.00 p.m.)	11 LIFE Group (Wilcox) (7.00 p.m.) LIFE Group (Paist) (7.00 p.m.) LIFE Group (Larry) (7.00 p.m.) Children's Choir (6.00 p.m.—7.00 p.m.) Worship Practice Jr & Sr High Group (7.00 p.m.—9:00 p.m.)	12 LIFE Group (Sraders) (7.00 p.m.) LIFE Group (Casserino) (7.00 p.m.) LIFE Group (Richardson) (7.00 p.m.)	13 Refuge College and Career Home Group (7.30 p.m.—9.30 p.m.) LIFE Group (Reynolds) (7.00 p.m.) LIFE Group (Stocker) (7.00 p.m.)	14 Men's Breakfast (7.00 a.m.—9:00 a.m.)
15 Worship Services (8:30 a.m. & 11:00 a.m.) Sunday School (9:45 a.m.) AWANA (4.00p.m.—5.30p.m.)	16 Martin Luther King Day Scouts & Cub Scouts (7.00 p.m.) AHG (7.00 p.m.) Newsletter Deadline	17 LIFE Group (Berryville/Winchester) (7.00 p.m.) LIFE Group (Smith) (7.00 p.m.)	18 LIFE Group (Wilcox) (7.00 p.m.) LIFE Group (Paist) (7.00 p.m.) LIFE Group (Larry) (7.00 p.m.) Children's Choir (6.00 p.m.—7.00 p.m.) Worship Practice Jr & Sr High Group (7.00 p.m.—9:00 p.m.)	19 LIFE Group (Sraders) (7.00 p.m.) LIFE Group (Casserino) (7.00 p.m.) LIFE Group (Richardson) (7.00 p.m.)	20 Refuge College and Career Home Group (7.30 p.m.—9.30 p.m.) LIFE Group (Reynolds) (7.00 p.m.) LIFE Group (Stocker) (7.00 p.m.)	21 One Day Women's Retreat (9.00a.m.—4:00p.m.)
22 Worship Services (8:30 a.m. & 11:00 a.m.) Sunday School (9:45 a.m.) AWANA (4.00p.m.—5.30p.m.)	23 Scouts & Cub Scouts (7.00 p.m.) AHG (7.00 p.m.) Women's Prayer Group (7.00 p.m.)	24 LIFE Group (Berryville/Winchester) (7.00 p.m.) LIFE Group (Smith) (7.00 p.m.)	25 LIFE Group (Wilcox) (7.00 p.m.) LIFE Group (Paist) (7.00 p.m.) LIFE Group (Larry) (7.00 p.m.) Children's Choir (6.00 p.m.—7.00 p.m.) Worship Practice Jr & Sr High Group (7.00 p.m.—9:00 p.m.)	26 LIFE Group (Sraders) (7.00 p.m.) LIFE Group (Casserino) (7.00 p.m.) LIFE Group (Richardson) (7.00 p.m.)	27 Refuge College and Career Home Group (7.30 p.m.—9.30 p.m.) LIFE Group (Reynolds) (7.00 p.m.) LIFE Group (Stocker) (7.00 p.m.)	28 Men's Breakfast (7.00 a.m.—9:00 a.m.)
29 Worship Services (8:30 a.m. & 11:00 a.m.) Sunday School (9:45 a.m.) Communion AWANA (4.00p.m.—5.30p.m.)	30	31 LIFE Group (Berryville/Winchester) (7.00 p.m.) LIFE Group (Smith) (7.00 p.m.)				


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Blue Ridge Bible Church

Communicating Christ,
Building Believers,
Sending Servants.

A close-up photograph of a simple wooden cross resting on a light-colored, textured surface. The cross is made of two rectangular wooden beams. The lighting is soft, creating a gentle shadow to the right of the cross. The background is slightly blurred, showing what appears to be a dark, possibly black, cord or chain.

Be Grateful...God says to do it!

Psalm 92:1

Philippians 4:6

I Thessalonians 5:18