

Are You Ready for Christ's Return?

Happy New Year! But what in the world just happened? It seems like just a couple of weeks ago we were coming out of the summer and preparing to kick off our regular programming for the fall and here we are at the start of a brand New Year! I feel like I just entered some kind of crazy time hop. But before we put away all of the Christmas decorations and jump completely into the new, I want to take a moment to celebrate what happened in December. We were ushered into the Advent season on that first Sunday with our “**Hanging of the Green**” service. This is always a wonderful kick off to the Advent season and to help the sanctuary begin to take on the look and feel of Christmas. I want to say a special “thank you” to our **Flower Committee and those who helped** them and invested extra time making things so beautiful during this season. On the 8th, we were led in worship by our adult and children’s **handbell choirs** as they played some beautiful and technical pieces to put us in the Christmas spirit. I thoroughly enjoyed the arrangement of *Joy to the World* that the adult handbell choir played! On the 15th, the **adult Christmas choir, children’s choir and musicians** presented the Christmas cantata, *Arrival*, in the afternoon and evening and both services were absolutely beautiful! A special thanks to **those who helped provide refreshments** after the Hanging of the Green and choir presentations and to everyone who participated in the **Advent readings and candle lightings** each Sunday. Add to that our **Christmas Eve service** which is always a beautiful way to celebrate and remember Christ’s birth and I would say it was a wonderful Advent season!

Are you ready for Christ’s return? After all, the season of Advent is meant to help us focus on His return one day and hopefully to live better lives as we wait. I was reminded about Christ’s return especially as I worked on our sermon series, “*Unwrapping the Gifts of Christmas*”. As I was preparing for the week in which we focused on “joy,” I came across some interesting information about the much beloved Christmas carol, *Joy to the World! The Lord is Come*. A young boy once complained to his father that most of the hymns they sang in church were boring to him, too far behind the times, tiresome tunes and meaningless words. Haven’t I heard that before within the church over the years, especially my years in youth ministry? The young man’s father put an end to his son’s complaints by saying, “If you think you can write better hymns, then why don’t you?” The boy went to his room and wrote his very first hymn, *When I Survey the Wondrous Cross*. The year was 1690, and that teenager was Isaac Watts. Watts went on to write somewhere between 600 to 750 songs to include *Joy to the World! The Lord is Come*. But did you know the song is actually based on Psalm 98:4-9 and Genesis 3, and was written to celebrate Christ’s second coming much more than His first? The song speaks to Christ’s return when He will rule in power, justice and mercy and that is what Advent is about as we wait and anticipate His coming again one day.

So, let me ask you again, **are you ready for Christ’s return** or are you packing the meaning of Advent away with the rest of your Christmas decorations and just looking forward to a New Year? Did your season of Advent prepare you to live better in the coming year? Can you sing *Joy to the World! The Lord is Come* at the top of your lungs, or did it leave you busted and wondering how you will make it in the coming year? I am excited about 2025 and all that the Lord has in store for us individually and as a church. I’m longing to be a better person at the end of 2025 than I was at the end of 2024. How about you? What are you doing to have a better heart that prepares Him room as you wait to receive your King? What plans have you made to make space for the Savior to reign in your life this year? Have you considered how you will seek to grow in righteousness in 2025? Rather than packing Advent away for another eleven months, why not begin to make some personal plans to be better and continue to sing *Joy to the World! The Lord is Come* the entire year long.

Happy New Year! I pray you experience God’s grace and peace abundantly in 2025!

Danny

Our Stewardship

8:30 Service Nursery Workers

January 5 Debbie Rago & Kelly Focht
 January 12 Debbie Rago & Kim Lawrence
 January 19 Annette Shaw & Jordan Kidd
 January 26 Debbie Rago & Jennifer Simmons

9:45 Sunday School Nursery

January 5 Don Epperly & Sandra Kidd
 January 12 Debbie Rago & Rachel Witt
 January 19 Rene & Ned Jeter
 January 26 Erik & Kelly Olson

11:00 Service Nursery Workers

January 5 Chelsea King & Sue Lee
 January 12 Sherry Sink & Laurel Bowser
 January 19 Melina Marshall & Ashleigh Kritzberger
 January 26 Patricia Lightner & Kayla Anhold

8:30/11:00 Service Toddlers Workers

January 5 Sarah Ryder/Danielle Tolley
 January 12 Jill Ferguson/Mary Bowser
 January 19 Melissa Peery/Jess Hayden
 January 26 Marybeth Rush/Maribeth Martin

8:30/11:00 Service Preschool Workers

January 5 Sharon Ernest/Luke Winand
 January 12 Kayla O'Bryant/Rachel Witt
 January 19 Cindy Holland/Melanie Thacker
 January 26 Chelsea King/Nikki Cook

8:30 Greeters

January 5 Mark Painter, Pat Shotwell, Teresa Simmons, Nancy Epperly
 January 12 Judy Prease, Jimmy Brugh, John Plenge, Melissa Peery
 January 19 Jerry & Sue Sweet, Pam Gibson, Sandy Moore
 January 26 Vickie Martin, Mike & Mary Clement, Pat Shotwell

10:45 Greeters

January 5 Klayton Akers, Don Epperly, Melissa Peery, Deacon Witt
 January 12 Bruce Lightner, Wayne & Sandy Myers, Kelly Denison
 January 19 John Murphy, Elaine Bays-Murphy, Sidra White, Lewis Sifford
 January 26 Donna Mack, Don Johnson, Ferguson Family, Vickie Martin

8:30/10:45 Usher

January 5 Mark Painter & Phillip Simmons/ Melissa Peery & Bill Wagner
 January 12 Judy Prease & Jeff Gibson/ Wayne Myers & Bill Wagner
 January 19 Jerry & Sue Sweet/ John Murphy & Elaine Bays-Murphy
 January 26 Nancy Epperly & Pat Shotwell/ Donna Mack & Don Johnson

Our Kingdom Giving

	SS	8:30am Worship	10:45am Worship	Regular Offering	Building Fund
December 1	186	148	133	\$9,052.00	\$700.00
December 8	220	228	175	\$22,268.00	\$2,111.00
December 15	198	151	127	\$18,441.00	\$685.00
December 22	228	231	176	\$15,675.00	\$990.00
December 29	184	167	126	\$16,866.00	\$930.00

Lottie Moon Offering Total as of 12/29/24: \$6,832.00

Remember that we need a combined \$13,327/week in regular offering to meet our budget needs.

Happy January Birthday!

- 1 Richard Gregory
Rachel Epperly Hall
- 2 Lane Caldwell
Judy Prease
- 4 Leigh Hamilton
- 6 Helen Hodges
Brad Hamilton
Etta King
- 7 Pam Morris
Marty Martin
- 8 Ellison Simmons
- 9 Wayne Wertz
- 10 Haley Austin
Melissa Barnard
Judah Witt
- 11 JoAnne Humphries
- 13 Steve Hubbard
Alex Strickler
Abby Elkins
Mike Clement
Victoria Chocklett
- 14 Cathy Downs
- 15 Donna Lucas
Logan Blair
Erik Swortzel
- 16 Zach States
Luke Winand
Cherie Neighbors
David Robertson
- 17 Danny Quirin
Mary Bowser
Chris Rago
Morgan Thorne
- 19 Dan Bowser
Katie Imron
- 20 Colin Cook
Noah States
- 21 Gino Arbogast
Emerson Kidd
Carol Theimer
Lila-Rose Waddell
- 22 Scott Boone
- 23 Jacob Simmons
- 24 Cindy Gibson
- 25 Loretta Smith
- 26 Julia Ferguson
Jenny O'Bryant
- 27 Skeets Ulrich
- 28 Ruth Fix
- 29 Justin Barnard
Gail Bowyer
- 30 Lyle Kritzberger
Ripley Hayden
- 31 Jessica Mack
Ridge Peyton



Our Sunday Morning Schedule

8:30am Worship
 9:45-10:45am Sunday School
 11:00am Worship

MUSIC NOTES.....



We had such a wonderful Christmas season at MCBC! Advent, music, bells, kids, food and especially celebrating the birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ. Our sanctuary was so beautifully decorated to honor our King! Thanks to every single person who helped make Christmas such a special time at Mill Creek!

Calling all 3-5 year olds! We are excited that a Half-Notes Choir will begin on Wednesday, January 8th. We will meet in the room next to the church office (Joyful Servants Class) at 5:30pm. Our Whole-Notes Choir, grades K-5, will also begin on January 8th at 5:30pm in the choir room. The Whole-Notes Choir will be presenting a musical in the spring, so please plan to have your kids here to begin practice. Pickup from childcare is available for both children's choirs. Can't wait to see you there!!

Adult choir will begin on Wednesday, January 8th, at 7:35pm. We welcome anyone who would like to sing with us. We really are a family who loves to sing and worship God together. We promise we don't bite (well most of us don't).

We will be having our annual Memorial Service on Sunday, January 5th, at both services to remember our members who have gone to be with the Lord in 2024. This is always such a special way to honor those whom we miss so much.

2 Corinthians 5:17 *"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come."*

Happy New Year! I can't wait to see what God has in store for our wonderful church in 2025!

Cindie



Mill Creek Baptist & Buchanan Baptist Blood Drive

Saturday, January 11

9:00am-1:00pm

Mill Creek Baptist Fellowship Hall

American Red Cross
Give blood. Help save lives.



Prayer Meeting

Wednesday, January 8

5:45pm—6:20pm

In Room M-1



Memorial Service Sunday, January 5



Our annual Memorial Service will be Sunday, January 5. During the service, we will have a time of remembrance for members of our church who have passed away during 2024. Those being remembered will be: Bertha Brugh, Mary Deel, Les Mabe, Joy Nickelston, Toney Smith, Ken Stanley and Jewell Tyndall.

Mission Meal Sunday, January 19

Hosted by the SWVA Mission Team Construction Crew

Menu: Baked Potato, Salad & Dessert

Lunches will be available after Sunday School and the 11:00 worship service.

All proceeds will be used toward construction projects during the SWVA mission trip in March.



Happy New Year and welcome to 2025! I am truly excited to experience all that this new year has in store for our students and our youth ministry. We will be kicking off the new year with one of the BEST weekends of the entire year: The Edge Conference. Right now, we have 21 students and adults headed with us to Ridgecrest Conference Center for a weekend of worship, Bible study and fellowship. There is STILL room for more youth to join us. If you would like more info about this retreat, please reach out to me ASAP. The Edge is going to be an incredibly memorable weekend for everyone who attends!

Upcoming Events:

- 1/1: No Wednesday Night Activities
- 1/8: 90's Night (dress in your favorite 90's outfit)
- 1/18-20: The Edge Conference at Ridgecrest Conference Center
- 2/5: \$50 deposit due for FUGE Camps (6/16-21 @ North Greenville University)

Upcoming Wednesday Night Series:

Let's Goooooo! Answering God's Call

Youth Culture Corner:

Teens & Cell Phones

- Common Sense Media reported in 2023 that teens receive an average of 237 notifications per day on their cell phones.
- Many states (including Virginia) are taking steps to limit or ban cell phone use in school.
- The average teenager spends over 8 (EIGHT) hours PER DAY on some kind of screen.

Tips for Parents dealing with cell phone use:

- Have a cell phone use contract between you and your teen.
- Set screen time limits for all devices. (and stick to them)
- Know passcodes and passwords...and check their phones regularly (this is something that should be specified in the cell phone use contract)
- Set limits on all social media platforms

Blessings,
Josh
540-521-9266



(Photos are from our youth Christmas party.)

From the Deacons' Desk

Happy New Year!!
Hello 2025

Is it just me, or were we just celebrating 2024 coming? We were wrapping things up from 2023 and looking forward to the new year ahead.... a new year ...new resolutions.

I can't count the times I have made resolutions only to be two months into the new year and realize that I'd fallen back into old habits. Now, rather than attempting to make big changes, I focus on things I can do every day to make a difference. I look for opportunities in my daily life to serve those around me - my wife, family, friends, coworkers, even people I don't know. Besides the obvious of my wife and family, my greatest joy is making a difference in the life of our church family. Serving as a deacon was never on my to do list, but here I am serving my third rotation and I am so thankful for that.

I want to encourage you to find ways to plug into life more fully by looking for opportunities here at Mill Creek and beyond the walls of our church. Be the kindness others need and remember, you may be the only hands and feet of Jesus that others see.

In Him,
Tony Holdren
Deacon Chair



Deacon Ministry

"but we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word." Acts 6:4

Another year has come and gone. Goodbye 2024! Hello 2025! For many of us, the beginning of a new year brings with it a unique sense of hopefulness and optimism, that one only feels with the turn of the calendar from December to January. For some, a sense of hope and optimism is harder to find. 2024 could have been your best year yet, or your worst year ever, but one thing is for certain, it is in the past. God doesn't care about our past, He gives us a fresh start. He tells us in **Isaiah 43:18-19**: ***"Forget the***

former things; do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland."

Like so many I am entering the New Year with a variety of plans and goals I hope to achieve. Along with that, some of us will carry the worry and anxiety that comes with wondering if those will come to fruition and what will happen if they never do. Let us not be worried by what we cannot control but place all our faith in the Lord.

"Many are the plans in a man's heart, but it is the Lord's purpose that prevails." Proverbs 19:21

May the Lord bless all of you in the coming year.

God bless,
Chad Simmons
Deacon

Christmas Bazaar

Mill Creek's Gift to the Community for a Quarter Century ... Or MORE!

Like many traditions, the first year of Mill Creek's Christmas Bazaar is a bit unclear, but we do know that this event has taken place nearly every December for YEARS and YEARS! The proceeds from this event have been given to international and local missions and for several years a portion has helped to pay off our building fund debt. The Bazaar has grown over the years and now includes vendors, crafts, high quality "yard sale/White Elephant" items, gift baskets, photos with Santa, Santa's Workshop shopping for children, bake sale, breakfast and lunch. That first Saturday of December is a busy day filled with joy and excitement! However, to get to the joy and excitement of the day, LOTS OF BEHIND THE SCENE work takes place... sometimes MONTHS in advance! Many are busy with pricing our White Elephant donations, scheduling the photo shoot with Santa, enlisting the help of our church bakers, seeking those who will provide baskets filled with goodies for the raffle, collecting and displaying items for Santa's workshop, purchasing food for breakfast and lunch, advertising, setting up for the special day, and CLEANING UP! WHEW! It is a busy time of hard work for many, but it is such a sweet gift to our community!

For Some--- It's All About the Food! Breakfast, Lunch, and Bake Sale!

Some of the visitors to our Christmas Bazaar come just for the food! Breakfast is very popular and this year, 10 dozen eggs, 10 dozen biscuits, 7 pounds of sausage for gravy, 9 pounds of bacon, 4 gallons of juice and lots of pots of coffee were consumed. At lunchtime, 80 hot dogs were enjoyed! Our Mill Creek bakers had been busy the week of the bazaar and provided a wide array of baked goods! There were cakes and pies, candies and cookies, rolls and loaves of bread, brownies, homemade jellies and hot mustard and even a couple of gingerbread houses!

Gift Baskets

A most popular part of the bazaar is the gift basket raffle. Every year we have lovely donations, and this year was no exception! Thank you to the following:

- Seed Sowers Sunday School Class – Date Night Basket
- Helping Hands Class - Breakfast Basket
- Ruth Creasy -- P.Buckley Moss Framed Print
- Prayer Blanket Team– Cardinal Basket
- Dominican Republic Mission Team - Gift Card Wreath
- Alaska Mission Team – Man's Basket
- Ruth Creasy -- Gingerbread House
- Joyful Servants Sunday School Class--- Mill Creek Basket
- Gary Fix – Antique Truck Yard Light

Your gifts brought excitement to many!



White Elephant Sale --- Treasures Galore!



"One man's trash is another man's treasure!" This is certainly a true statement when it comes to our bazaar's "yard sale". We accept Christmas decorations and donations of "nicer" household items that can be useful for gift giving or decorating for the holiday season. Storage space is very limited, so collection of goods takes place in the late fall and the pricing of items for the sale begins a month or so before the Bazaar. Givers and buyers are pleased! Items that are not sold are donated to Solomon's Mission in Buchanan at the end of the Bazaar. Our White Elephant goods are very popular!



Christmas Bazaar (continued)

Santa Photos and Santa's Workshop

Visits by Santa to our Mill Creek Bazaar began 22 years ago as an opportunity to offer high quality free photos to community children along with the focus of telling them the true meaning of Christmas. This was before the widespread use of cell phones and easy access to taking photos. In those early days, 50 or more families enjoyed this opportunity to capture their children's visit with Santa and receive photos of that special visit. Over the years, the camera lens has seen the great excitement of children as they greet Santa with a smile. It has also witnessed the tears of some at the very sight of the jolly man in the red suit. Some of those children from the early days are now grown and married and they are returning to Mill Creek with children of their own for this special Christmas event. This year, 30 families enjoyed the opportunity to have photos taken with Santa. These families came from nearby and as far as Salem and Appomattox! There is no charge for this photo shoot, but a donation box is available.



Shortly after the Santa photo taking began, we started looking for ways to enhance the children's experience as well as occupy them while they waited their turn before the camera. For a couple of years, craft projects were attempted and then the suggestion was made to have a place where kids could shop for gifts for their parents. This would be a hands-on way to teach children the joy of giving. Today, thanks to the many donations of new or nearly new items, gift bags, tissue paper, and ribbon, the tradition continues! This year a staff of around 9 volunteers helped the children pick out gifts – all by themselves! The young shoppers have so much fun choosing what they will give! Their gifts are then wrapped, tagged and bagged so that the receiver will be surprised Christmas morning... assuming that the excited child can keep the secret that long! Children who are prepared, pay \$1 for each gift. The initial focus was buying for parents, but thanks to many generous donations some also are able to shop for grandparents and siblings. One of our very first shoppers was a preschool aged child whose mother had recently been diagnosed with cancer. Now a teenager, he along with his mom and grandmother, still visit every year.

The week following the bazaar, Mill Creek Child Care kiddos get to shop for free. This is a very special ministry to our child care families. Here is one story that was shared by the staff.

* One of the first years that our child care children shopped and wrapped their gifts, Mrs. Regina told of a mother who took the gift out of the child's cubby when she came to pick her up at the end of the day. The mother, upon the realization that the Christmas gift was for her and that her preschooler had chosen and wrapped it, began to cry. Through her tears she told Mrs. Regina how very much the gift meant to her on a day when she was completely depleted.

From our church and community, we have these stories regarding special gifts purchased from our Santa's Workshop:

- * A grandmother relayed that for 8+ years, she has been drinking her morning coffee from a mug that her granddaughter excitedly gave her one Christmas morning.
- * A church member with grown children shared that they still had a very "unusual" deer statue that their child had picked out in Santa's Workshop long ago. She said that the gift still makes her smile when she looks at it. This same Mom has volunteered in the Santa Shop.

Our Santa Photos and Santa Workshop provide memories that last for years!

Christmas Bazaar (continued)

It is guesstimated that about 35 people helped on the day of our 2024 Christmas Bazaar! There is no way to count the number of folks who donated for the White Elephant Sale and the Bake Sale. We are grateful for each of you!

How many community folks visited the Bazaar???? Maybe 200?? There was a steady stream of visitors from early until late! Some have come every year. Some were new-timers. Some we see ONLY at the Bazaar! All were greeted with a display of red and green, Christmas decorations, the hustle and bustle of the season, and the warmth of our Mill Creek fellowship.

The Baptist Women's Night Group with the help of the Daytime Mission Group sponsor this event, but more help is needed. Won't you consider how you might volunteer for the next Mill Creek Christmas Bazaar? Mark your calendar for December 6, 2025! This event will be another opportunity to show God's love to our community and you won't want to miss it!

Thank YOU!

On Saturday morning December 7, there were many joyous sounds and happy faces in the fellowship hall. Our annual bazaar was a huge success due to those of you who bought, cooked, crafted, donated, and just visited! Santa was here and lots of photos of happy children were taken. The children got to shop in Santa's workshop to purchase surprise gifts for their families and friends. The receipts are \$5,200 and this will be divided between the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for International Missions and our church's building improvements. Many thanks go to all of you!



The Prayer Blanket team covets your prayers and is thankful for your support. As December is a time of reset and reflection, the team would like to recap the progress of this ministry for 2024, as well as remember our group mission projects. As of December 1, the Prayer Blanket Ministry Team has furnished approximately 172 blankets, as tangible reminders of Mill Creek's prayers. This includes our group mission projects, where 16 blankets were presented to Mill Creek Child Care students, and this fall 15 blankets were gifted to the Greater Outdoor Ministries Disabled Sportsmen. Also, 14 blankets have been sent to the North Carolina victims of Hurricane Helene. To be good stewards of the fabric, bought solely by donations, the team used scraps to make 6 baby blankets, 16 hats, and 14 scarves. For those into accounting, that breaks down to 15.6 blankets per month these past 11 months! Our team is small, but mighty, and we would welcome any newcomers to teach them how to square and tie blankets. Please contact Josephine Powell at 540-588-2807 if you are interested in joining the team or if you have any questions about the ministry.

When blankets are sent out, prayers are renewed and updated in the sanctuary by Pastor Danny. Blankets are placed on the edge of the stage within reach, so please feel free to add your own prayer and special touch on your way in or out of the sanctuary. Blankets can also be prayed over in Sunday School classes. The success of this ministry would not be possible without Mill Creek's generosity and mission mindedness. Wishing you a healthy, Happy New Year!



Philly Christmas Trip 2024

On a cold December 6th morning around 6:15 a.m., a group of eight from Mill Creek boarded the church bus bound for the Acts of Apostle Church in Philadelphia. The bus was loaded with Christmas gifts and goodies for the children and women at the shelters there. This was our 29th year.

The group spent the night in Lancaster, PA, which is about an hour and half out from Philly. After dinner the group retired for the evening knowing that Saturday would be a busy day for all concerned.



Getting into Philly and finding a place close by the church to unload always, always presents a challenge to the best of us. This year proved to be no different. But our God, the amazing One who reminds us to trust Him, showed up in a big way. The street was blocked off due to the power company having to replace a pole directly across from the very spot we needed to unload. Oh no!!! Why is this wrecker stopping to block the entrance? Leave it to an Elf, who happened to be riding with us, deciding to get off and assess the situation. So, the wheels on the bus go around the block not once but twice. The second time around we got stopped by the Elf who informed us that the electric workers were backing their truck up and making room for us to get in. There was no problem with the driver of the wrecker as he was able to come back later.



With help from the folks at the shelter, the unpacking of the bus began, and the gifts just kept coming out of that little bus. Seems as though there were secret compartments everywhere! So many that the men from the electric company were in awe of all the presents.



After the sorting of gifts and organizing all the new and gently worn clothes (10- 6 ft. tables, with multiplies layers), “The Mill Creek Philly Santa Shop” was ready to open.

What an amazing day it was for so many of them and us! Their eyes lit up when they saw the gifts and the women were so appreciative that others cared to share much needed clothing with them. At long last, the man in



the red suit appeared and the children listened as he read them the Christmas story of Jesus being born. All were amazed by what they knew about Jesus’ birth.

It may seem like a very small thing we do for these children, but it is a BIG thing for so many, even folks we meet along the way.

Whatever role you played in making this happen, the team says “Thank You “to each of you. Because of you these little ones had a happy Christmas and for a short time their worlds were bright. Please know that your thoughtfulness, love and generosity has made a difference in someone’s life.



Merry Christmas and love to each of you from the 2024 Philly Team, Tommy, Dawn, Mike, Shearry, Bubby, Janet, Jerry and Sue

Southwest Virginia Partnership Mission Trip to Nickelsville March 9 – 13, 2025

It's time to start planning for the 2024 SW Virginia Partnership Mission Trip to Nickelsville. This mission trip is sponsored by the WMU of the Roanoke Valley Baptist Association and is a cooperative effort of many churches in our area. Those who participate can choose to be involved in a number of ways --- **construction and home repair, BookNet visits to public schools, serving at the food pantry in Gate City, meal preparation, or assisting with the filling of ditty bags** for the BookNet teams. **Information will be shared on Sunday, January 12th following each of the worship services in the historical room.** The registration fee is \$125 per person and will be used for food, construction supplies, Bibles and ditty bag supplies. The cost of lodging at the Manor is \$15 per night per person. There are sites for campers available and the cost is \$15 per night per camper (regardless of the number of people staying in them). An associational planning meeting will be Thursday, January 9 at 6:30pm at Connelly Memorial Baptist Church. Contact Judy Deel (540.759.1914) for more information.

Daytime Mission Group January 7, 2025 at 10am

Bill Price from the non-profit organization Sirens and Salutes, will be the speaker at the January 7th Daytime Mission Group. This organization is committed to honoring and memorializing first responders and Veterans. Come and learn how they honor those who have served our country with steadfast commitment and faithfulness. The meeting begins at 10 am and a potluck lunch will follow. Contact Judy Deel for more information. (540.759.1914)

Congratulations to Ben & Jess Hayden on the birth of their baby boy, Mack Morton, on December 5. Mack weighed 9 pounds 15 1/2 ounces and was 22 inches long. Proud big sister is Ripley. Proud grandparents are Philip & Cindie Hayden and Larry and Lisa Sumpter.



Due to Mill Creek's supporters (50 households) who shopped at Kroger between 8-28-24 and 11-30-24, we will receive a donation of \$341.45 from the Kroger Community Rewards program. This donation will go to our bus ministry.

If you have not registered your Kroger Plus card, simply log on to www.kroger.com/communityrewards. Click on "sign in/register" then click on "sign up today" as a new customer and follow the directions to select Mill Creek Baptist Church. Then when you swipe your card, we will get credit.



Soup for Seniors



We can make a difference in our community by teaming up with the LOA (Local Office on Aging) and others to **collect food items for seniors in our area.** We will be collecting canned soup, crackers and other non-perishable food items during the month of January. The items most

needed by our elderly neighbors include **low sodium and nutritious soups, crackers, canned vegetables, canned fruit, canned meats such as tuna, peanut butter, Boost or Ensure and oatmeal.** No glass containers, please. **Donations are due by Sunday, February 2.**



Inclement Weather Policy

For Sunday services, decisions about canceling church are made by 7am. Cancellation notices will be emailed to the church email list, posted on Facebook and posted on WDBJ7. (If you would like to be added to the church email list, please send your request to office@millcreekbc.com.) During the weekdays, when Botetourt County Schools close early or are closed for the day, all church activities for that day are canceled. Delayed school openings do not affect church schedules.

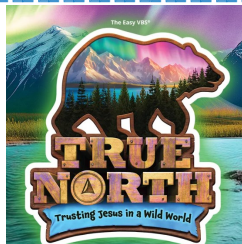
Ditty Bag Sunday February 2nd

On February 2nd, we will collect monetary donations for hygiene supplies that will be distributed to children during our 2025 SW Virginia Mission trip. The approximate cost is \$7 per bag. Please join in helping to provide these needed supplies to students in our own state.



Help with Processing Books for SW VA Needed

The books that are donated for BookNet will need to be processed for distribution and lots of steps are a part of this! Someone will need to look at each book and determine if the condition is good. Then labels are placed in each book and books are sorted by grade level. Finally, the books are counted and placed with the appropriate grade level. Since the books for this mission trip are stored at our church, the work on the books will take place in the Fellowship House. Beth Hetherington is the leader of the RVBA WMU BookNet and she has asked for help on the following Thursdays: January 16, 23, 30. We will work on books from 9-2. The giving of books to children in Southwest Virginia has been taking place for more than twenty years and it is a privilege for our church to be a part of this ministry! Interested in helping to process books? Contact Judy Deel at 540.759.1914!



Save the Date! VBS 2025 July 13-17

As you are planning your 2025 vacations, please remember to keep this week open! It will be an amazing week of trusting Jesus in a wild world!

“Victory Over the Darkness” Realize the Power of Your Identity in Christ By Neil T. Anderson

13 Week Winter Bible Study

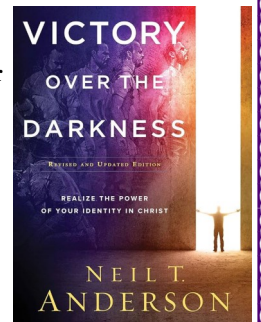
Beginning Tuesday, January 7, 2025

9:30am & 6:00pm

Facilitated by Brenda Fowler

“Victory Over the Darkness” spells out practical ways to experience Christian growth based on Christ's promise. Learn to apply the truths of Scripture as a base from which to

renew your mind and become the person Christ empowers you to be. **For more information, look for a flyer at the bulletin locations or you may contact Brenda Fowler at 540-728-1904 or 2beencouraged49@gmail.com.**



Thank you so much for your shoebox donations. Your gifts will bless so many children with the gospel! Blessings,
Donna Lucas



Mini & Mighty Mill Creek Explorers

December is a crazy busy month for adults and little people are just super excited.

We have been busy decorating cards for our Advent Christmas Stockings that went to special people. Thanks to our deacons for delivering those! Then one Wednesday, we made gum drop Christmas trees and boy were they fun AND YUMMY! Last but not least, we spent time making some special Christmas presents for special people who love us!



January will be off to a great start as we have our annual snowball fight! Want to come join the fun? We eat supper at 6 p.m. and then activities start at 6:30 and are over at 7:30 p.m. Activities will resume on January 8.

If you would like more information about our Wednesday evening children's activities, you may contact Peggy Arbogast at 540-520-0107.



Child Care News

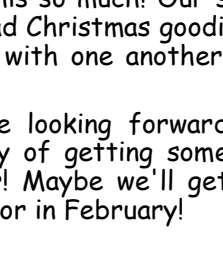
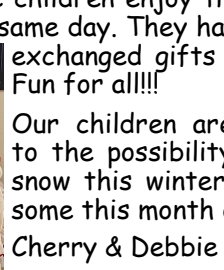
Happy New Year to everyone! Last year flew by, and now it's 2025! How is that possible?

We had a fun December! Our older preschoolers went on a field trip to see Santa at the O Winston Link History Museum in Roanoke. We spent an entire hour with him! He sang and played his guitar, and we all sang with him. He told us stories, and talked about sharing love with one another at Christmas time. He told the children that the reason he comes each year is to spread love, and joy, and not just to give gifts to everyone.

We also had Christmas parties on Dec. 18th. Our preschoolers' party was at 10:00 that morning. Santa and Mrs. Claus came to pass out the gifts to each child. The children enjoy this so much! Our school-agers' party was at 3:00 that same day. They had Christmas goodies to eat, and then exchanged gifts with one another. Fun for all!!!

Our children are looking forward to the possibility of getting some snow this winter! Maybe we'll get some this month or in February!

Cherry & Debbie



Botetourt Resource Center, Inc.
"Together We Make a Difference"

P.O. Box 153, Buchanan, Virginia 24066
33 Bedford Street; Buchanan, Virginia 24066
540-254-1468/ mlucasbrc@yahoo.com
www.botetourtresourcecenter.com



December 2, 2024

Board of Directors

Mary K. Bowser
Mary Worthington
Tommy Moore
J.D. Robinson
Sue Sweet
Todd Wampler

President

Melissa Lucas

Pastor Danny Quirin
Mill Creek Baptist Church
11475 Lee Highway
Fincastle, VA 24090

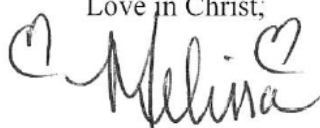
Dearest Pastor Quirin and the Congregation of Mill Creek Baptist Church:

On behalf of the BRC, Inc. Board of Directors and myself, I would like to express our gratitude for your generous support of the Center and the "good works" we have made possible together. This assistance helps strengthen people in many ways and lets them know that assistance is available in this caring community. Every life we strengthen together also strengthens the community.

Please see the enclosed "Accomplishments" from the Center's last fiscal year. The BRC would not be able to serve our wonderful community without the generosity of church congregations who partner with the Center in order to carry out our mission each and every day.

We thank you for your wonderful donation of \$3,000.00 to the BRC,
Thank you also for your generous
donation of \$500.00 to the Crisis Fund.

Together we do make a difference in lives!

Love in Christ;

Melissa Lucas
President

P.S. Wishing everyone a beautiful Christmas and blessed New Year!

* The Mission of the Botetourt Resource Center, Inc. is to provide and connect needed human resources to the residents of Botetourt County through information, referral, advocacy and programs.

Botetourt Resource Center, Inc. “Together We Make a Difference”
Accomplishments of the Botetourt Resource Center July 1, 2023-June 30, 2024

*** During this 2023-2024 fiscal year, the BRC case-managed 200+ households in Botetourt County to respond to requests for assistance as information, advocacy, referral and services.

1. The BRC, Inc. was awarded \$29,455.00 from the Mary Louise Home Fund and \$11,070.00 from the Marion S. and Willie Z. Camp Fund for Eldercare through the Community Foundation Serving Western Virginia (CFSWVA) to support the Center’s programs for older adults.
2. **Fourteenth fiscal year** for the only non-profit and county-wide crisis fuel fund in Botetourt County called the **Botetourt Resource Center Interfaith Crisis Fund** under the non-profit status of Mill Creek Baptist Church and in partnership with 25+ churches. Funds spent this year = \$3,417.87 on helping 34 households with fuel assistance and free firewood delivery to seniors. In addition to this assistance, 41 senior homes were helped with \$14,803.10 in fuel assistance from a CFSWVA Grant. Total fuel assistance through the BRC, Inc. = \$18,220.97.
3. Continued the first and only **Senior Dental Assistance Project** in Botetourt County to give 7 seniors free cleanings, x-rays and extractions, fillings and resurfacing of teeth. This program was possible this fiscal year from the CFSWVA with funds of \$3,030.15. A total of \$22,256.60 has helped 85 seniors who otherwise could not afford dental services.
4. **Delivery of 20+ loads of Free firewood to 10 senior homes** through a partnership with Mill Creek Baptist Church “Woodcutter” volunteers throughout the fall and winter months.
5. Coordinated **Thanksgiving and Christmas adoptions** with local churches **for 12 children and youth in 6 families** to receive gifts and food; the BRC’s **Elves for Seniors** Program provided Christmas gifts to 108 seniors living in Botetourt County.
6. **In partnership with the Local Office on Aging (LOA)**, the BRC, Inc. received **65 Soup for Senior Bags in February 2024**, which were distributed to older adults in northern Botetourt County. The BRC served as a distribution site for 30+ Seniors in Botetourt County to receive a monthly Food Box through **Feeding Southwest VA Commodity Supplemental Food Program**.
7. In June and July of 2024, the BRC partnered with **Feeding Southwest VA** to offer **Summer Food Boxes** through their **Summer Food Service Program (SFSP)**. The Center served 34 children in 14 families. The Center hopes to continue offering this program to help ensure children have access to nutritious meals over the summer.
8. The **LEAP (Local Environmental Agriculture Project) Mobile Market** (1st and 3rd Weds) offered farm fresh items for the public to purchase in both **Eagle Rock and Buchanan**; **Feeding Southwest Virginia Mobile Market** (4th Weds) also offered fresh items as well as canned food and non-perishables for purchase each month in Buchanan; 30-50 people served/month.
9. **Recreation for Seniors = Beginning in January 2024**, the Resource Center resumed weekly **Senior Bingo** activities, offering two separate Bingo groups every Thursday. An average of 12-15 seniors attended weekly activities at the Center. The BRC partnered with **Solomon’s Mission** to offer a **Senior Valentine’s Day Luncheon** in February – Over 100 seniors attended; In April 2024 Solomon’s Mission hosted a **Senior Spring Fashion Show** - shopping at the Mission, lunch, various prize drawings and bingo were offered compliments of Solomon’s, the Local Office on Aging and the BRC – 30+ seniors attended.
10. Facilitated **Basic Needs Assistance to Seniors** through fuel/utility assistance, other bill assistance, home supplies, recreation, dental assistance, small home repairs, etc. (not including the value of free firewood, clothing and food) with \$36,923.60 funds spent from a CFSWVA grant.
11. Disbursed \$50,354.31 in helping needy individuals and families in Botetourt County with basic needs/crisis assistance.

*** In addition to all the support by partnerships mentioned above, we wish to thank these groups for their generous support: Botetourt County Board of Supervisors, The Bank of Botetourt, Buchanan Area Ministerial Associates, The Wells Foundation, The Fresh Pond Trust, Lawrence Companies, Local Office on Aging, John Alderson Agency, Knights of Columbus, Council 12134, Tuesday Morning Club, New River Electrical Corporation, Benevity from Apple Corporation employees and many generous individual donors and church congregations.

*** The BRC, Inc. raises all expenses for a Budget of \$88,000 and provides programs through county, private and public donations, grants and fundraisers. The BRC, Inc. receives in-kind services from the Town of Buchanan and the Town of Troutville. If interested in making a tax-deductible donation, please send to the Botetourt Resource Center, Inc., P.O. Box 153, Buchanan, VA 24066. Additional information will be supplied by calling the BRC at (540) 254-1468. Please visit us on our website at www.botetourtresourcecenter.com. Thank you for your generous support! Together we make a difference!



January 2025



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 Happy New Year!! Church Office Closed No Wednesday Evening Activities 9:00am Woodcutting @ Chip Lawrence's	2	3	4
5 8:30am Worship & Memorial Service 9:20am - 9:55am Holy Grounds Coffee Shop 9:45am - 10:45am Sunday School 11:00am Worship & Memorial Service	6	7 8:30am Men's Breakfast @ Greenwood Restaurant 9:30am "Victory Over the Darkness" Study 10:00am Daytime Mission Group in Fellowship Hall 6:00pm "Victory Over the Darkness" Study	8 5:30pm Half Notes & Whole Notes Practice 5:45pm Prayer Meeting in Room M-1 6:00pm Supper for Mini & Mighty Mill Creek Explorers 6:30pm Mini & Mighty Mill Creek Explorers, Youth Activities/Bible Study, Adult Bible Study, Adult Handbells 7:35pm Adult Choir Practice	9	10	11 9:00am - 1:00pm Blood Drive @ Mill Creek
12 8:30am Worship 9:20am - 9:55am Holy Grounds Coffee Shop 9:30am SWVA Mission Trip Informational Meeting 9:45am - 10:45am Sunday School 11:00am Worship 12:00pm Deacons Meeting, SWVA Mission Trip Informational Meeting	13 6:00pm BWNG Potluck in Fellowship Hall	14 9:30am "Victory Over the Darkness" Study 6:00pm "Victory Over the Darkness" Study	15 Newsletter Articles Due 5:30pm Half Notes & Whole Notes Practice 6:00pm Supper for Mini & Mighty Mill Creek Explorers 6:30pm Mini & Mighty Mill Creek Explorers, Youth Activities/Bible Study, Adult Bible Study, Adult Handbells 7:35pm Adult Choir Practice	16 9:00am - 2:00pm Processing Books for SWVA	17	18 Youth at The Edge Conference
19 Youth at The Edge Conference 8:30am Worship 9:20am - 9:55am Holy Grounds Coffee Shop 9:45am - 10:45am Sunday School 10:45am Mission Luncheon for SWVA Construction Crew 11:00am Worship 12:00pm Mission Luncheon for SWVA Construction Crew	20 Youth at The Edge Conference	21 9:30am "Victory Over the Darkness" Study 6:00pm "Victory Over the Darkness" Study	22 5:30pm Half Notes & Whole Notes Practice 6:00pm Supper for Mini & Mighty Mill Creek Explorers 6:30pm Mini & Mighty Mill Creek Explorers, Youth Activities/Bible Study, Adult Bible Study, Adult Handbells 7:35pm Adult Choir Practice	23 9:00am - 2:00pm Processing Books for SWVA	24	25
26 8:30am Worship 9:20am - 9:55am Holy Grounds Coffee Shop 9:45am - 10:45am Sunday School 11:00am Worship	27	28 9:30am "Victory Over the Darkness" Study 6:00pm "Victory Over the Darkness" Study	29 5:30pm Half Notes & Whole Notes Practice 6:00pm Supper for Mini & Mighty Mill Creek Explorers 6:30pm Mini & Mighty Mill Creek Explorers, Youth Activities/Bible Study, Adult Bible Study, Adult Handbells 7:35pm Adult Choir Practice	30 9:00am - 2:00pm Processing Books for SWVA	31	

Mill Creek Baptist Church
11475 Lee Highway
Fincastle, Virginia 24090-4481
(540) 992-3474

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*Mill Creek Baptist Church
Ministers... the Congregation*

Pastor..... Danny Quirin
Minister of Music..... Cindie Hayden
Minister of Youth..... Josh Witt
Directory of Children's Ministry..... Peggy Arbogast
Pianist..... Marcia Neighbors
Administrative Assistant..... Sandra Kidd



Save the Date!
Sunday, February 9
Dominican Republic Mission Team
Dessert Auction
Watch for more details coming soon!

