



**A SPECIAL THANK YOU  
FROM BRENDA GRAY**

See page 4.

# Charity & Children

*The historic publication of Baptist Children's Homes of North Carolina—first to tell the story since 1887.*



@bchfamily

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## Harry Fields turns faith into God-honoring service

By Jim Edminson, Editor

**H**arry picks up a few flowering plants from the garden shop and drives to the memory care center for his daily visit with Gale. It was a difficult decision, the couple were inseparable, but it was for her safety and there are days now when she doesn't recognize her husband.

Harry has taken over the beautification of the center's patio area. He and Gale do the gardening together. Sometimes there is not much conversation between the couple who

marked their 50th anniversary last year, but they stand side by side planting new plants, deadheading flowers, and watering the garden to ward off the day's summer heat.

After serving in the Army, Harry Fields moved to Wilmington in 1969. A new job, a young family, and a bright future—he was living the American dream. Then his wife left, taking their two sons. Harry was alone, surprised by the turn his life had taken. He was surprised again when she called suddenly, telling him to come and pick up the boys.

Harry would raise them as a single parent until he met Gale. She became a family friend. The couple married in 1974. The boys were five and seven.

"She fell in love with the boys—and I fell in love with her," Harry recalls.

Harry has learned that God is trustworthy. His is a faith tempered by hardship and nurtured by blessing. It is an unwavering faith. He asserts, "I never have a need that God doesn't supply."

*(Continued on page 9.)*



# Shining bright by faithfully serving Mercer Home

By Kristyn Butts, BCH Director of Volunteer Engagement

Scripture taken to heart is a powerful thing. Matthew 5:16 encourages believers to “let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.” Brent Walton is that shining light. Since March 2025, Brent has faithfully served as a volunteer at Mercer Home, one of nine homes operated by Baptist Children’s Homes (BCH) for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD).

Each Tuesday, like clockwork, Brent arrives to lead a Bible study with the residents. The men eagerly look forward to this time of fellowship, learning, and prayer. During a recent series, Brent led the group through an in-depth study of the book of Jonah. Together, they explored Jonah’s calling to Nineveh, his attempt to flee from God, and the powerful transformation that occurred when he finally obeyed. The residents were actively engaged in the discussion, and some even began requesting specific topics for future studies.

When staff shared that a few residents were battling anxiety and fear, Brent responded with compassion. He focused the Bible study for several weeks on what Scripture says about worry and how to find peace in trusting the Lord. His thoughtful preparation and deep care have been a source of comfort and encouragement to the men.

Brent’s passion for serving individuals with special needs is nothing new. He previously taught in special needs Sunday School classes and has chaperoned numerous Joy Proms. When asked what drew him to Mercer Home, he shared, “I thoroughly



Above, the men from Mercer Home in Sanford enjoyed a night of Durham Bulls baseball with their friend and Bible study leader Brent Walton (second from right). Residents of both Lanier and Mercer Homes cheered on the Durham Bulls alongside some of their friends from their Sunday School class and Walton.

enjoy being around the individuals and I wanted to get involved at Mercer since it’s close to home.



For me, I’m just grateful for the opportunity to serve and get to know some great people!”

Brandy Hodgin, administrator and qualified

I’m aware of the special things BCH does!”

Reflecting on his time at Mercer Home, Brent said, “Multiple times I know that God has led us to a particular passage or message that someone in the group needed to hear at that moment. BCH has so many worthwhile programs to get involved with.

professional at Mercer Home, deeply values Brent’s service. “He’s given a lot of dedication to the home,” she said. “He’s very in tune with the needs of the guys. Even after the Bible study, he’ll take time with an individual to share scripture and help them through their day. He has definitely gone above and beyond. His full attention is on the residents, which even allows the staff a moment to breathe. Volunteers like Mr. Brent are true blessings.”

The men at Mercer Home see Brent as more than a volunteer—he’s part of their family. Their bond has grown so strong that they recently invited him to a Durham Bulls baseball game. Together, they shared laughs, cheers, and a night of fun—strengthening the special connection that’s formed through faith and friendship.

Volunteers like Brent Walton reflect the heart of BCH’s mission. Their service goes far beyond tasks—it’s about relationships, discipleship, and being the hands and feet of Jesus. Through his faithful presence, Brent is truly letting his light shine to glorify the Father in heaven.

If you feel called to serve and make a lasting impact, visit [bchfamily.org/volunteer](http://bchfamily.org/volunteer) or contact me, Kristyn Butts, Director of Volunteer Engagement by emailing [kbutts@bchfamily.org](mailto:kbutts@bchfamily.org).

*Your light could be the hope someone’s been praying for.*

**Mission:**  
sharing hope . . . changing lives

**Vision:**  
To provide the highest quality of Christian services to children, adults and families in a caring culture of measurable excellence

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# Don't let it slip away—make the most of your time

By David Melber, Chief Executive Officer

**W**hen you think of the word *time*, perhaps many thoughts come to mind. Maybe you're feeling, "I don't have enough time," or "Time is flying by." These are common reactions when we reflect on time.

The Bible speaks often and directly about the importance of time. One passage that provides a powerful framework for how we should view time is Psalm 90. The entire chapter offers a sobering yet hopeful perspective on life and the passing of days. Perhaps the most well-known verse is Psalm 90:12: "So teach us to number our days that we may get a heart of wisdom."

Who doesn't want a heart of wisdom? And why is numbering our days connected to wisdom? The answer is perspective. We need perspective in life, just as we do in every task we take on. A new mother needs perspective in the midst of sleepless nights. A farmer needs perspective when heavy rains delay planting. And all of us need the reminder that our time on this earth is both short and ordained by God.

God, in His sovereignty, has set the boundaries of our lives. Psalm 139:16 reminds us: "Your eyes saw my unformed substance; in your book were written, every one of them, the days that were formed for me, when as yet there were none of them."

Yet, we often resist embracing the reality that our time is finite. We're easily drawn into distractions like scrolling through phones, browsing social media, or shopping without purpose. Time escapes us, and we fail

to prioritize what truly matters. Day after day passes, and when we pause to reflect, we wonder where the time went. Too often, the cycle repeats.

We need God's grace to transform our perspective on time so we can live intentionally, pursue the Lord, and walk in His purposes. Each day, we must recalibrate our hearts toward God, asking Him to teach us how to steward our minutes and hours wisely. When we recognize that our time is limited and fleeting, we're more likely to seek His eternal purpose in it.

The world constantly pulls our attention away with its noise, distractions, and struggles. We face difficult circumstances that feel endless. But God invites us every day to focus on Him and to live

with eternal perspective.

I'm reminded of the Israelites at the Red Sea. We read the story now knowing how it ends—the sea parts and God makes a way. But they didn't know

what was coming. In that moment, fear overtook them. They needed the perspective that God was with them and that His faithfulness never fails.

Today, your Baptist Children's Homes (BCH) is connected to hundreds of people with real and pressing needs. Many may wonder if time will ever heal the brokenness they've experienced. Perhaps God is stirring your heart to step into this mission field. While the needs are great, I want to highlight two specific opportunities.

At BCH, we need missionaries. Missionaries to serve as houseparents and foster parents. Houseparents and foster parents who will step into the lives of children who did not choose their circumstances, but who can help these kids encounter hope and healing through the power of the Gospel. Missionaries who serve while praying for the day when families will be restored and reunified in hope.

So, what might be standing in the way? Maybe it's time. You may be thinking, "I don't have the time for that kind of commitment."

But take a moment right now to pray.

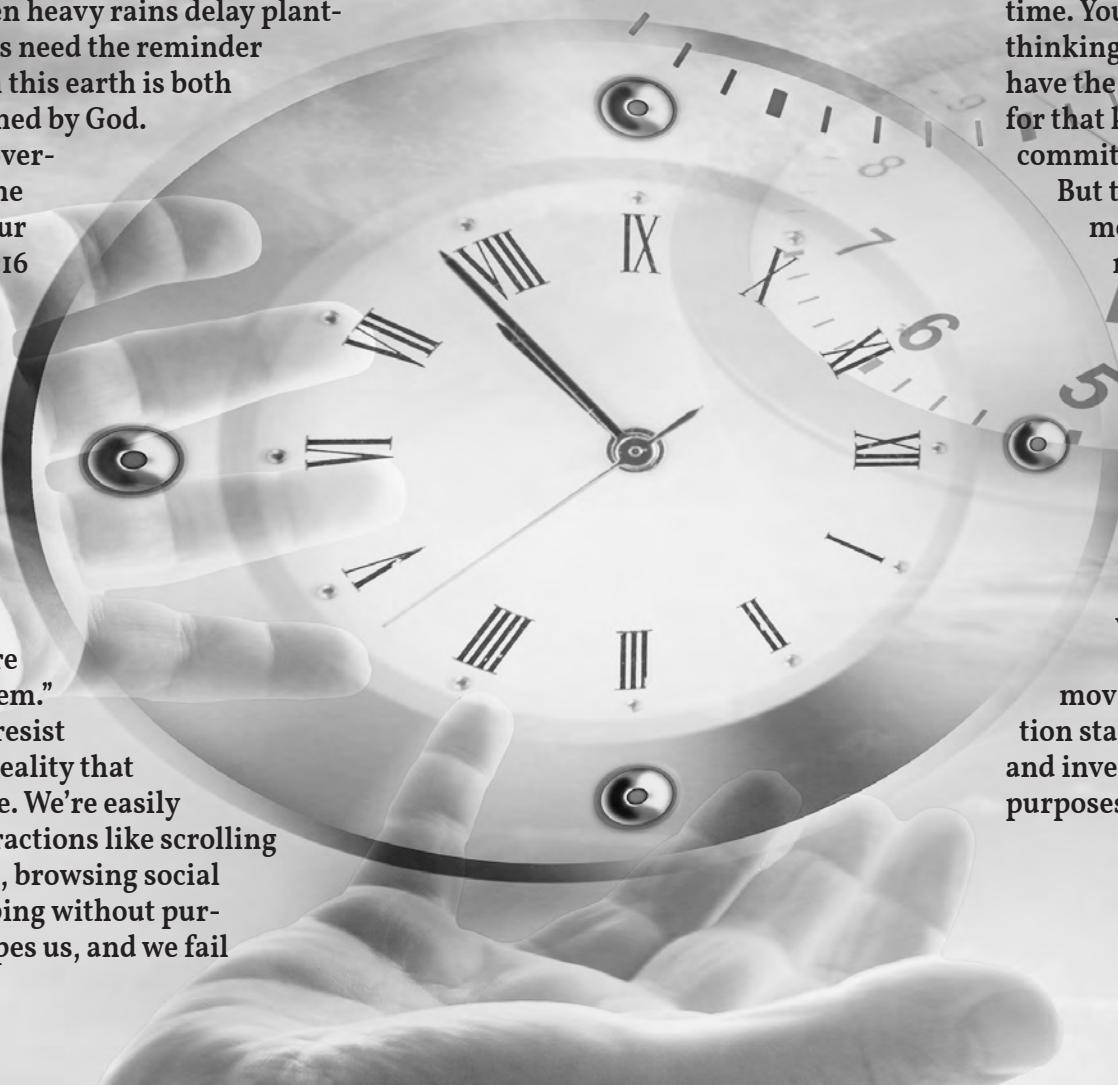
Ask God to raise up those who are being prepared, yourself or others, to give their time to children and families who need them.

Become a missionary right here in North Carolina—serving the vulnerable.

Our time is precious. God is moving all around us and His invitation stands. Let's join Him right now and invest our time wisely for Kingdom purposes.



David Melber





# Thank you for the love and prayers you have showered

By **Brenda B. Gray**, Executive Vice President, Development & Communications

**Y**esterday, July 16th, I attended the Celebration of Life service for Ted Lanier. Ted was 90 years old and lived a life striving to imitate Christ in everything he did. However, Ted would not want too much attention placed on him—he was a very humble man—but would place the attention on the loves of his life: his Lord and Savior, his wife Peggy, his family, his church, and his community. Ted’s business accomplishments were many, but his caring for others was even greater. Ted loved Baptist Children’s Homes and Peggy will continue to share that love for our ministry. Ted served on our Board of Trustees, chaired our capital campaign to build our two IDD homes in Sanford, and chaired our Sandhill’s regional division of our Sharing Hope Changing Lives Campaign. I learned so much from Ted’s business insight, but even more from his spiritual walk.

As I sat in the church reflecting on my friendship with Ted and Peggy, a feeling of extreme gratitude to God came over me, gratitude for Ted, Peggy, and the hundreds of friends God has placed in my life during the twenty-six years I have had the privilege to serve at Baptist Children’s Homes.

It is hard to believe that it was twenty-six years ago when I was blessed to become a part of the team. It has been an amazing journey. One of the best parts of the journey has been Ted and Peggy Lanier and you! **Yes you!** You have walked each step of this journey to care for God’s precious and most vulnerable children in North Carolina and beyond. You have prayed with us, you have cried with us, painted cottages with us, provided Easter baskets for thousands of children, you have collected clothes and food to provide the most basic of needs of those in our care. You have provided amazing Christmas parties unlike anything our children had ever experienced. You have given at times when it was a real sacrifice for you. You have blessed this ministry over and over again. Whenever I would wonder about where the next gift would come from when funds were tight, you were there. Most importantly, thousands have heard the Gospel and accepted Christ as their personal Lord and Savior. There are thousands today saying, “Thank you for giving to the Lord, I am a life that was changed.” **THANK YOU!**

Each month for twenty-six years, you have welcomed me into your home, allowing me to



# Thank You!

share my heart through this column. Some of my favorite memories during this time have been witnessing how God has used you! **THANK YOU!**

I have written this message to you several times during my 26 years here. A message of gratefulness beyond measure. Whenever we have faced challenges, God was already at work in the hearts of His children—you, our dear friends, our family. In those moments, God used you to fill the void. God used you to make up the deficit! I am grateful beyond words to you for walking this twenty-six-year journey with me. Through the years, your “what can I do to help” calls, notes of encouragement and most important your prayers have meant the world to me. **THANK YOU!**

As I continue to reflect on the love you have shared through the years, I am reminded of a young boy locked in a closet who was rescued to experience freedom—freedom that only comes from God. I am reminded of a young girl whose mom had been charged with 52 counts of abuse who is today a beautiful mom who spends her days as a nurse caring for others. I am reminded of a young girl who had been abandoned by her mom, who is today giving back as a school counselor. I am reminded of a family of six who walked through our doors feeling hopeless, broken by poverty and substance abuse who found a place where they could experience hope, restoration, recovery, and self-sufficiency. I am reminded of three brothers living in their car with their father struggling with a drug addiction who became clean and was able to once again give

them a home. You have helped to walk these very difficult steps on this journey with each child, each family on this sometimes—most times—very messy, dusty, muddy road. **THANK YOU!**

I am so grateful for the opportunity over the past twenty-six years to personally witness God at work every day through our amazing staff who have given their hearts so unselfishly to care for those God has given us to give care. Through the years, I have shared with you that I truly believe these are my children, children God has entrusted to my to care, but you have also heard me say that I truly believe these are “your” children God has entrusted to your care.

In James 1:27, we read, “Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world.” You have heard God’s call through this passage and traveled this journey. **THANK YOU!**

I am beyond grateful to have personally witnessed hundreds who have been able to let go of their painful past and ask Jesus into their hearts. **THANK YOU!**

You have overwhelmingly been faithful. You have impacted thousands of lives. You have impacted my life in ways that words could never express how thankful I am for you. I count you as a very special gift in my life. You have reminded me over and over of the meaning of Ephesians 3:20-21: “Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.”

**THANK YOU!**

I take this opportunity to say thank you and to let you who have been so faithful to go with me on this journey know that I am retiring. Your next question is probably when? I do not have an exact date at this time—I expect sometime this fall. Our leadership is in the process of seeking a person to serve as the next Chief Development Officer.

I ask you to be in prayer as they strive to discern who God has prepared for this position as they plan for the future. I have committed to stay until they have filled the position.

Again, thank you for the love and prayers you have so generously showered on me through this journey you have walked with me, run with me, and, at times, sat, listened, and prayed with me.

I would love to hear from you, so feel free to reach out to me over the next couple of months.



# School begins soon and you are needed

*Throughout this summer, our boys and girls have witnessed our awesome Creator through the beauty of his creation. Children have seen the vastness of the ocean, played in the shallows, and sat in awe of the brilliant sunsets along the sound. In the process, we have made the name of Jesus known to them, instilling a hope that can only come from our Lord and Savior. Your prayers and support have made these opportunities possible.*

School buses will soon be pulling up to the front of BCH cottages and at the homes of our foster families. One of the greatest ways you can come alongside as the new school year begins is by making a back-to-school gift.

*Your back-to-school gift helps with the traditional needs: new clothes, backpacks and school supplies. We need a lot of these items, and your gift is vital. What you may not realize is that we have many children who come into our care over the summer. They often arrive on our door steps with little to no belongings.*

*Your gift now helps provide these necessities, too. Because of their backgrounds of neglect, this is the first time they have had a new backpack or clean clothing that fits them. You are helping build confidence. The children feel valued and loved—this is one of the most important gifts! Will you please make your back-to-school gift today?*

Thank you for being the hands and feet of Jesus to our children.  
*Please know you are needed. Your gift is vital to their successes!*

David Melber  
Chief Executive Officer



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Make a credit card gift at [bchfamily.org/backtoschool](http://bchfamily.org/backtoschool) or scan the QR code. You can also phone **Faith Frazier at 336-474-1312**.

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☐ I have included Baptist Children's Homes in my estate.





# Real Heroes: Honoring the courage of birth mothers

By **Wade Parker**, Director of Development Northeast Region, Young Leaders Relations

I grew up reading comic books. Like most kids, I was drawn to stories of caped crusaders, masked vigilantes, and cosmic defenders who stood between good and evil. These heroes flew through the skies, lifted buildings, and saved the world—issue by issue. They were brave. They were bold. But they were fictional.

For a long time, that’s what I believed heroism looked like—something larger than life, something reserved for fantasy. My definition has changed. Not because I stopped believing in courage, but because I’ve come to recognize a different kind of strength—a quieter, deeper, more sacrificial kind.

I believe the greatest heroes in the world are real. Some of them are birth mothers who made the unimaginable decision to place their child for adoption when they realized they couldn’t give the child what was most needed.

These women don’t fly or wear armor, but they possess a strength that can defy explanation. They are a definition of selflessness. After spending a weekend at a retreat with some of them, I’ll never see the word “hero” and not think of them.

### A Sacred Gathering

The retreat brought together women from across the country—mothers whose stories are often unheard and whose grief and strength are rarely acknowledged. What unfolded felt holy.

The phrase “gave the baby up for adoption” is still far too common. It carries a tone of detachment, even abandonment. But choosing adoption is not about giving up a baby. It’s about giving of oneself deeply, more than most of us can imagine. The phrase doesn’t come close to explaining what goes into such a decision. It’s one marked by careful reflection and questioning.

Over the course of the weekend, something remarkable unfolded. In a room once filled with uncertainty and guarded silence, laughter erupted. Tears flowed freely—not just from pain but from release. It was the first time for some to be surrounded by others who understood their story



The 28th Annual Birth Mothers Retreat was held in Durham on April 11-13. A record number of birth mothers attended, each bringing a unique story, yet all united by their courageous decision to choose life through adoption. Fifteen women made decisions to either accept Christ or rededicate their lives to Him.

without judgment or need for explanation.

It was in those unguarded moments that the true depth of their heroism came into focus. They were not women who ran away from responsibility, but women who faced their circumstances head-on, made a choice rooted in love, and carried the weight of that decision long after the ink on legal papers had dried.

### A Misunderstood Narrative

One of the most heartbreaking themes that emerged during the retreat was how many birth mothers felt invisible and mischaracterized. More times than not, adoptive parents are publicly celebrated while the birth mothers, the ones who made the story possible, are portrayed as ones who failed—not as heroes.

Whether this happens through careless language, cultural bias, or simple misunderstanding, the result is the same. Birth mothers can be made to feel like a mistake that had to be corrected and not as the courageous women they are.

That narrative has to change.

It’s not a matter of choosing sides. Adoptive families should be honored for their love and commitment. But birth mothers must also be honored for their sacrifice and strength. Both roles matter. Both are sacred. There is no adoption story without a woman who carried life and chose to entrust that life to someone else out of sacrificial love.

### The Power of Being Remembered

Some of the most beautiful moments shared at the retreat came from women who continue to

receive updates from the adoptive families. Every adoption looks different and not all remain open, but the impact of being remembered is undeniable.

For a birth mother, a letter, a photo, or even a simple message saying, “We’re thinking of you today” can bring great comfort. These gestures don’t erase the grief they may feel, but affirm them and recognize the love they have for the child and their sacrifice. They feel not forgotten, their role didn’t end at the hospital, and they matter.

One woman shared how the adoptive parents of her child send her a scrapbook every year on the child’s placement day. Another receives a text every Mother’s Day that includes a photo and the message, “We wouldn’t have this day without you.” Those moments go beyond courtesy—they are

acts of grace.

Adoptive families who choose to honor the birth mother’s place in their child’s life give a gift that words can’t fully capture. They help keep the door to healing open. They remind these women that their decision didn’t end a connection, but created one.

### Looking Ahead with Honor and Hope

There is a growing need to speak differently about birth mothers—not with pity or with shame—but with dignity. They are not “the girl who got into trouble” or “the one who gave a baby away.” They are women who made a decision few people can understand, and they did it with more love, strength, and sacrifice than one can imagine.

If our culture hopes to understand real courage, real sacrifice, and real heroism, it must begin here.

To the birth mothers, I say thank you! Thank you for your courage. Thank you for your honesty. Thank you for showing the world what it means to love beyond yourself.

To the adoptive families who offer updates, honor placement anniversaries, and keep space in their hearts for the woman who gave them the greatest gift, I say thank you! Your kindness helps bring healing where it is needed most. Your compassion is writing a new story of hope.

And to the rest of us, I say may we learn to listen better. May we challenge old assumptions, reject harmful labels, and speak life over those who rarely hear it. Heroes do exist. They just don’t always wear capes. Sometimes, they wear hospital bracelets, carry silent prayers, and walk forward with a strength that can move mountains.



Wade Parker



# Your Legacy of Faith: Why planned giving matters

By Jody Yopp, Senior Director of Development and Planned Giving

As believers, we understand that everything we have is a gift from God—entrusted to us for a season and for a purpose. Our time, talents, and treasures are all part of the story God is writing through our lives. One of the most meaningful ways we can continue that story, even after we've gone to our eternal reward in Heaven, is through Planned Giving—a thoughtful, prayerful decision to include causes close to your heart in your Estate Plan.

At Baptist Children's Homes of North Carolina (BCH), we are incredibly blessed by individuals and families who choose to support this ministry—not just now but well into the future—through Planned Gifts. These gifts ensure that children in crisis, special needs adults, aging seniors, and families seeking adoption will continue to experience the love of Christ for generations to come.

But before we talk more about BCH, we want to begin where every conversation about giving should begin—with the local church.

## Always Start with the Local Church

At BCH, we believe deeply in the importance of the local church. It is the place where faith is nurtured, where the Gospel is preached, and where mission giving begins. Your local church is your spiritual home—and it should be the first place your generosity flows.

Planned Giving should never replace your faithfulness to the church. Instead, it should extend from it. Once you've been obedient and generous to your congregation—supporting its ministries, mission efforts, and outreach—then you can prayerfully consider how to bless other ministries that have shaped your life—like BCH.

We urge every North Carolina Baptist to view their Estate Plan as a final act of stewardship and discipleship, one that first honors your church and then leaves a lasting spiritual legacy through the ministries that reflect your heart.

## The Time to Plan Is Now

Here's a sobering truth: Most Americans do not have a will. They may delay it because life is busy or because thinking about the end of life feels



Learn more about planned giving by visiting [www.bchfamily.org/legacy](http://www.bchfamily.org/legacy).

uncomfortable. But as Christians, we are called to live—and to prepare—with eternal purpose.

Creating an Estate Plan is an act of love. It allows you to care for your family, express your values, and support the causes and ministries that matter most to you. More importantly, it gives you control over how your resources are used after you are gone.

Without a will, the government—not you—will decide how your estate is administered. That can mean missed opportunities to bless your loved ones, your church, and the ministries that align with your faith.

## What Is Planned Giving?

Planned Giving is simply the process of intentionally including charitable gifts as part of your long-term estate and financial planning. This can include:

- A bequest in your will or trust
- Naming a ministry as a beneficiary of your retirement or life insurance
- Establishing a charitable trust
- Gifting property or other assets

These gifts don't typically impact your current financial situation, but can have a tremendous impact after your lifetime. They allow you to continue supporting Kingdom work long after your time on Earth is complete.

## Passing on a Legacy of Generosity

Perhaps the most powerful aspect of Planned Giving is the legacy it leaves—not just financially, but spiritually. When you take the time to talk to your children and grandchildren about giving, estate planning, and supporting ministries like BCH, you teach them a crucial lesson: our generos-

ity reflects our faith.

Children learn by example. If they see that you prioritized the church, that you gave joyfully, and that you thoughtfully prepared to bless others, even after your passing, they will be more likely to do the same. One of the most important discipleship tools we have as parents and grandparents is modeling a life of generosity rooted in the Gospel.

We encourage you to make these conversations a part of your family life. Let your loved ones know why you give. Share stories of how your church and BCH have impacted you. And let them see that your giving is not about obligation—it's about worship, obedience, and love.

## Your Gift Can Change Lives

At Baptist Children's Homes of North Carolina, we've seen firsthand how a single legacy gift can transform lives. Whether large or small, these gifts provide safety, healing, and hope to vulnerable children, adults with special needs, and aging seniors. They help us share the love of Christ in practical, powerful ways.

When you include BCH in your Estate Plan—after first blessing your local church—you are helping write a new future for someone who desperately needs to know they are loved and not forgotten.

## Let Us Help You Get Started

Planned Giving may seem overwhelming, but it doesn't have to be. At BCH, we're here to help. We can connect you with trusted partners, provide free resources, and help you explore ways to structure your estate plan according to your values and goals.

It all begins with one simple step—creating a will. From there, you can prayerfully consider how your resources can make an eternal difference.

## Your legacy is more than what you leave behind—it's the faith you pass forward.

Let that legacy begin in your church, flow through your family, and reach into the future through ministries like Baptist Children's Homes of North Carolina.

For more information about Planned Giving, contact me, Senior Director of Development Jody Yopp, by calling 1-704-314-5291, emailing [jyopp@bchfamily.org](mailto:jyopp@bchfamily.org), or visiting [www.bchfamily.org/legacy](http://www.bchfamily.org/legacy). I would be honored to walk with you as you plan to leave your *legacy of faith*.



Jody Yopp



# BCH family unites at Mills Home to celebrate God's everlasting love

By Blake Ragsdale, Editor

On June 24, Baptist Children's Homes (BCH) team members, children, foster care families, special adults, and friends gathered at Mills Home in Thomasville for "Family Fun Fest." It was an opportunity to bring the entire BCH family together from across NC to fellowship, participate in a number of activities, and, most of all, celebrate God's everlasting love.



"The day was evidence of the Lord's faithfulness," said BCH CEO David Melber. "As you heard the laughter, saw the smiles, and

witnessed everyone united at Mills Home where BCH was born 140 years ago, you could not help but give God the glory for it all."

BCH marks its 140th anniversary on November 11, 2025. The nonprofit started in Thomasville and is now located in more than three dozen locations throughout NC, SC, and Guatemala. The trees that tower above the Mills Home campus—known as "God's Canopy"—provided relief from the summer heat as boys and girls played on a variety of inflatable games while adults, who do not often see one another, enjoyed the fellowship.



Family Fun Fest on June 24 brought together BCH's team members and those served through the nonprofit ministry for a day of fun and fellowship. The theme of the day was "Everlasting Love" celebrating God's goodness throughout BCH's 140-years of ministry and service. The highlighted photos depict a number of moments from throughout the event which took place at Mills Home, BCH's oldest location in Thomasville. The day was filled with activities including inflatable games, face painting and praise and worship singing. Children and adults alike enjoyed snow cones, cotton candy and other treats. Laughter and smiles resonated throughout.



## Celebrating another graduate



Tristan Nolan, who lives at Broyhill Home in Clyde, graduated from Tuscola High School. He is currently working and will continue to stay at Broyhill while his cottage parents and staff help him make plans for the future.



# Fields recognized as faithful volunteer

By Jim Edminson, Editor

(Continued from page 1.)

Harry and Gale had looked forward to his retirement. They had plans—spending time doing the things they had talked about for years, Harry tackling a list of honey dos, serving more through their church, and having time with family. It was after his retirement that Harry became involved in the men's mission group at his church, Scott Hills Baptist Church in Wilmington. He and Gale were active members.

He was approached to be part of a group that would build a new chapel at Pender Correctional Institute. He discovered his gifts for organization and recruiting. He made sure materials were onsite and was exceptionally good at leading and affirming the other men.

"God gives us talents," he says. "We learn new skills and use the gifts He provides, honoring Him for His purpose." After more than two years, the chapel was completed. Harry gives credit freely to the volunteers: "They are the ones who made it happen, completed the job and got it done."

In 2014, Harry visited Kennedy Home in Kinston. His heart quickened as he toured the campus. "It was amazing. Everything from the grand archway as you enter campus, to exploring the property as far back as the river, to walking the Cedar Dell."

Harry loves children. He and Gale have two children together—a girl and a boy. All four of their children are married now and there are 10 grandchildren. It was hard for the two to imagine what it must be like for a child to not have a place to call home.

This time Harry was asked to tackle a project to renovate and up-fit the "Food Locker." He would again recruit and organize a team and schedule the volunteers for work days.

He spent hours researching needed materials and coordinated with the Kennedy Home

management team to secure the supplies. Finding the proper supplies was a challenge. The team needed to seal the outside brick wall to protect from water intrusion. Through his research, he found the best product.

"We accepted the challenge as a team and completed the work in just over a year,"



On May 16, BCH CEO David Melber recognized volunteer Harry Fields, presenting him a certificate of appreciation during a ceremony at Kennedy Home in Kinston

Harry says. "We replaced the kitchen ceiling with period-style beadboard, added new restrooms, painted the interior, and sealed the exterior brick. I thank God for supplying all our needs and for the team who got the job done."

Harry and the men have

tackled other projects as needed, adopting the motto, "No job too large or too small."

Life took a turn in 2017. Harry faced knee replacement and the onset of health issues. He had provided all of Gale's care up to then, but she could no longer be left alone and moved to the memory care center. He began daily visits. Through it all, he remained in touch with the church's mission leader and the other volunteers—always with an "eye on things."

An invitation to return to Kennedy Home was unexpected. Baptist Children's Home Trustee Nathan Sanders and new CEO David Melber had special plans. Standing by Melber, Harry was recognized for his volunteer work. The framed certificate presented him commended Harry for his "exceptional dedication, compassionate service, and unwavering support."

Melber cited 1 Peter 4:10, affirming Harry as an example of a great God-honoring volunteer—"Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful servants of God's grace in its various forms."

Harry humbly accepted the honor. But in fine Harry fashion, he took the opportunity to urge others to volunteer, saying there is always something one can do when it comes to helping hurting children and families.



# Alumni remember those who recently passed – “Scrub orphan” recounts joyful years at Mills Home

By **Lib Johnson** (336) 299-7412 [libsjohnson@triad.rr.com](mailto:libsjohnson@triad.rr.com)

**W**e hope you are remembering Homecoming on August 1, 2, and 3. Please join us for a fun weekend. If you have any questions, call **Alumni President Jackie Walker**: 1- 919-606-6027.

We were saddened to learn from **Raymond Ball** that his sister **Ethel Dae Ball Woodall** passed away on May 23. The Ball family entered Mills Home (MH) in 1939 and Ethel graduated in 1948 (the last MH high school graduation). Like almost all MH children, Ethel engaged in the myriad of activities at school, at church, in her campus duties, and in campus life. Such activities helped produce an excellent student, vocalist, band member, and seamstress. Ethel always had many activities and friends. She was so lucky when a Sunday School class in a Greensboro church “adopted” her after her senior year and paid her way through Woman’s College—now University of North Carolina Greensboro.

Ethel began her teaching career in Stoneville, NC, where she taught seven classes and coached girls’ basketball. She was an excellent coach who produced a team that went undefeated for two years. From an early marriage to **Bob Comer**, Ethel had two sons and moved to Albany, Ga. That marriage ended but she remained in Albany teaching and rearing her sons. It was there she married **Charles Woodall**, the love of her life, and remained there even after he died. She loved honoring veterans and supporting Sloan Kettering Cancer Research. Ethel was quite beautiful, talented, athletic, civic minded, and an outstanding America citizen. She is survived by sons **Barry and Robert**, one grandson, and her brother **Ray** who resides with his wife **Virgie** in Phoenix, AZ. Their other siblings, **Gale and Noble Lee**, are deceased. Send condolences to Ray Ball, 14824 S. 9th St., Phoenix, AZ 85048.

We were sorry to learn that **Per-**

**cival (Percy) R. Bradshaw** passed away on December 19, 2024. In his adult life, he was known as a loving husband, father, and grandfather. He and his wife **Dottie** were living in Charlotte at the time of his death and had been for 62 years.

Percy and his brother **Robert** entered MH in 1938. He too engaged in the same campus opportunities as Ethel: school and church activities, recreation, and social activities. He loved them all, especially the band. He too was a dedicated student and won many academic honors and acceptance to the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill where he cooked for the college Monogram Club. Thanks to that MH cooking skill, he was able to put himself through college. As a student, he made his home in a room above the theatre in Memorial Hall. After earning his BA degree, he joined the US Army and fought in the Korean War.

In 1963, Percy moved his family to Charlotte where he served as Director of Food Service at Queens College. Eventually he developed and worked in his own company, Bradshaw Brokerage, until he retired. Percy will be remembered for his kind and beautiful spirit and the stories he told. He is survived by Dottie, his wife of 69 years, one son, one daughter, two grandsons; and one brother. A celebration of his life was held on January 10. Send condolences to his wife Dottie at this address: 2011 E. Barden Rd., Charlotte, NC 28226. 16

**Kathryn (Polly) Jolly Nemeth** passed away of natural causes on May 11 at Piedmont Medical Center in Athens, GA. A native of Hiddenite, NC, Polly was a beloved and devoted mother, grandmother, daughter, and sister. She was often described as being beautiful “inside and out.” She graduated from Thomasville High School in 1959, but had been a star basketball player and co-captain for the MH girls’ basketball team. She attended Wingate

Junior College and graduated with an AA degree in Education in 1961. She next attended Appalachian State Teachers College and graduated in 1963 with a BS degree in social studies and a minor in education. She then married **John Nemeth**, settled down to teach history and geography in Greensboro, and had two daughters.

After a few years of teaching, Polly decided to stay home to rear her girls. She became an active school volunteer, Brownie and Girl Scout troop leader, hospital volunteer, and “neighborhood mom.” She loved learning and traveling, gardening, spending time with her beloved pets, collecting antiques, and cultivating friends. Her family was the center of her life. She resided primarily in Marietta, GA.

Polly is survived by her daughters, **Jackie Nemeth and Cheryl N. Cumbus (Dwayne)**; two grandchildren; three siblings, **W. I. Jolly (Linda); James P. Jolly (Tish); and sister, Dianne Benoist (Al)**; many nieces, and one nephew. She is preceded in death by her brother **Clyde Jolly**. Polly’s funeral service and burial were held May 17 at Rocky Hill Baptist Church in Statesville, NC. For those wishing to honor Polly, donations may be made in her name to the Baptist Children’s Homes of North Carolina, P.O. Box 338, Thomasville, NC, 27361. Condolences may be sent to the family at [www.alexfernalservice.com](http://www.alexfernalservice.com).

We send condolences to **Delores Williams McPherson** and her husband **Hugh** for the loss of their son **Stanley**. Stanley was a proud veteran who served four years as a US Marine. Your condolence may be sent to Delores and Hugh at this address: 141 Woodbridge Circle, Mt. Holly, NC, 28120.

We’re also sorry to hear of the deaths of **Gene Staton and Rev. J. Parker McLendon**. They will be remembered in my next column.

I was happy to notice in my stock of unused sheets an update sheet

from **Marcia Louise Grant**, daughter of the late **Marse and Marion Grant** who were mentioned in this column in the last issue of *Charity & Children (C&C)*. As I mentioned then, Marse had served as editor of the C&C from around 1949 to 1960 and lived with his wife and family in the house beside the Huffman Cottage. The couple had three daughters who were quite popular among the MH residents. This popularity developed because the Grants engaged their youngsters with MH residents through many campus activities—church and recreation especially. On the update sheet, Marcia identified herself as a “scrub orphan”—meaning a child of a MH worker. She recalled that she enjoyed the church activities like GAs, BTU, and Bible School. She also enjoyed hot summer days when she and **Susan** took little sister **Carol Ann** to the swimming pool. It was a sad day when the Grant family left to live in Raleigh. Marcia fondly remembers that **Grace Jenkins and Estelle Crouch** continued the connection to the Grants by sending Carol Ann a birthday cake every year. She also remembers falling into the fish pond at the Simmons Nursery a couple of times, youngsters getting off the “merry-go-round” in the valley only to find themselves vomiting afterwards, and a trip her father made with her and **Christine Beshears** in the back seat of his car. After she graduated from high school, Marcia married **Spencer Lee Morton** and reared three sons. Today, she and Spencer also have two grandsons. Susan retired in 2018 from guidance counseling in the Wake County School System.

Dear Readers: If you need to discuss the columbarium, please contact **Sharon D. Stile** at this number: 1-704-685-2443. *See you at Homecoming!*

Lib Johnson was a resident of Mills Home from 1946 to 1957. Johnson began writing the Mills Home alumni column in 1992.





# Homecoming weekend was a meaningful success!

## Kennedy Home family members remembered

By **JOHN THOMPSON**, 102 Maritime Court, Havelock, NC 28532 (252) 671-3515 jbtompson43@gmail.com

**K**ennedy Home Homecoming was a great and meaningful time for our alumni and families. On Saturday, the alumni started arriving early in the morning to see all the classic cars and trucks. They were a sight to see and all in great shape. Before lunch time, the gym started to come alive with folks playing bingo, greeting and hugging, and sitting around talking about old times. Some chose to go fishing back at the Skeeter Hut or in the Neuse River or one of the great big canals. We had a delicious supper in the gym and then sat down for our annual business meeting. The alumni voted to keep the same board as the present year. **Larry Gilliam** has served as president for several years. He is very good at leading the meetings and just being there for alumni to talk to if they needed information. On Sunday morning, the alumni met at the church for snacks, Sunday School, and our annual worship service. We had a very good group of folks but not as many as years in the past. About 60 or 65 registered on Saturday or Sunday. We had around 100 people gather at the gym after worship for a delicious lunch served by King's Restaurant. At the worship service, we were welcomed by **Matt Chilson** and by **Alumni President Larry Gilliam**. I led the congregational singing. **Doris Russ** played the piano and was recognized for playing many, many years for Homecoming. You can really tell that Doris loves the Lord and loves to share her musical talent. She is now 93 and continues to drive to church every Sunday and plays either organ or piano. **Clayton Pate** had words of recognition and appreciation of our military. **Joyce Surbaugh** read the minutes from our business meeting. Larry gave out golden awards. We had a Memorial Rec-

ognition and prayer. Our featured speaker was our new CEO of Baptist Children's Homes, **David Melber**. He and his wife **Tera** were very well received by the alumni. They were so friendly and went around all weekend shaking hands, meeting everyone, and talking like they had known us for years. We have already asked David to come back next Homecoming and preach the message. Let's try our best to have many, many more people present at Homecoming 2026. It will be June 6 and 7. Go ahead and make your motel reservations.

**Debbie Caulder**, the daughter of former staff members **Mr. and Mrs. Mac McCormick** who have gone on to be with the Lord, helps a senior adult lady in LaGrange every Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday. She discovered that the lady has several yearbooks from North Lenoir High School where many of our alumni graduated in years past.

This month, I want to share alumni who graduated in 1952: **Jessie Medlin Albert Spellman Gladys Mosley Samuel, R. Edwards, and Everette Wilkie (son of Rev. Cleve and Nancy Wilkie)**.

I received a letter from **Beatrice Shivar** and her daughters sharing that **Linwood Shivar** of Kinston passed away on November 10, 2024. He passed away from cancer. He came to live at Kennedy Home (KH) when he was 13 years of age and graduated from North Lenoir High School in 1965. Linwood played baseball and he was an avid reader. Many remember him as a prankster. While at KH, he met the love of his life, **Beatrice Parris**. They were married 57 years and have two daughters, **Sheila West and Sandra Jones** of Kinston. The Lord blessed them with six grandchildren and one great grandchild. He managed drug stores for close to 40 years. He was a faithful

member of Grace Baptist Church and was deacon for many years. He left a legacy of wisdom, generosity, and kindness. He had a servant's heart.

**Earl Maready**, former houseparent of Williams Cottage, passed away in early July. Earl was married to **Louise**. Earl was a great person to repair your car. (He kept my cars running when I served at KH from 1972-1977.) Earl and Louise brought their four children to serve with them. The children were very active with church, gym, and many other things on the campus. Remember the Maready family in your prayers. **Judy Stallings Murray**, one of their Kennedy Home youngins, stated that he was a great houseparent and taught her to get along with others.

Here is a little history: Cedar Dell was the beautiful residence of **Captain and Mrs. W. L. Kennedy** in the Falling Creek Township. The home is a reminder of the antebellum days, patterned after some old aristocratic house. It's furnishings throughout the home display the taste of cultured people. It was directed that much of the furniture never be removed. The furniture in the dining room can never be taken out. There was a man (his manager) of the livestock and things in general on the property. He served for thirty-two years. The land had Berkshire pigs that rolled in fat, produced by peanut feasting. There were many turkeys of a choice breed and a covey of peafowls. There was a herd of 50 Jerseys and the long row of stables suggested a number of horses and mules. The home was built on 1,500 acres. It is four miles from the entrance gate to the Neuse River. There is a family cemetery located near the mansion.

Someone sent me this note to share. It tells about a boy who lived at Kennedy Home in 1945—

**Johnny Justice, Jr.** The boy's life began in humble beginnings, yet went on to become a professor at Baylor College of Medicine in Houston, Texas and was the founding force of the Ophthalmic Photographers' Society (OPS). In 1945, he and his sisters moved to the KH campus. Johnny remembers the beautiful Cedar Dell mansion with pecan trees lining the main road to the house and recall how the main road was paved in the late 40s. Johnny was very proud of being a part of KH and all it has meant to him over the years.

Here is something to remember and share: The best mathematical answer to an equation I have ever seen is  $1 \text{ cross} + 3 \text{ nails} = \text{forgiven}$ .

Please put these dates on your calendar and plan to attend:

**Alumni Beach Cottage Retreat**  
**October 3, 4, and 5**  
**Alumni Christmas Party**  
**December 6**

**Charity and Children** is read by as many as 100,000 people an issue by folks all over North Carolina. You are always reminded that you can bring a youth group, senior adults, or just your family to come visit the campus. You will need to call the main office if you would like to take an official tour. When you visit, you will be able to visit in one of the cottages, tour Cedar Dell mansion and the great big gym, and walk through Kennedy Home Baptist Church. The alumni have taken three rooms of the church to make a photo memory display of former alumni for you to visit. Let me encourage you bring some folks from your church to visit.

Thanks for reading every month. Love ya!—jt



John Thompson served at Kennedy Home from 1972-1977. At age 80, he continues to serve the Lord.



# Remember Mom and Dad

**NOTE:** Listed are *all* Honor and Memorial gifts made to BCH from March 1 through July 1.

## IN HONOR

### Kathy Alex&er

By Alex&er's Property Service

### Dr. & Mrs. Stephen Anthony

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**Agnes Joyner**  
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By Donna P. Kelly

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By Beverly Baker

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By Canton HS Class of 1957

**Walker Killman**  
By M/M Michael H. Walters

**Sybil Kimbrell**  
By Samuel Kimbrell

**M/M A.H. Kirk**  
By Martha K. Murray

**Helen Kissner**  
By M/M Paul B. Herring

**Helen Kissner**  
By Ila Davis

**M/M Glenn S. Kornegay**  
By Glenda K. Alcock

**Neil E. Ladtkow**  
By Kerry S. McFarlane

**Jean Lamm**  
By M/M Stephen F. Harrell

**Elizabeth Lancaster**  
By Capt. & Mrs. Michael D. Coleman

**Kenneth Lance**  
By M/M William B. Carringer

**Claude & Freida Landers**  
By Tina A. Landers

**Travis Langdon**  
By Pamela Jones

**Luanne Lanier**  
By M/M Ted Lanier

**Shirley Larimore**  
By Supply Baptist Church

**David Lee**  
By Freddie L. Beasley & Arnold

**Brian Douglas Lewis**  
By Geraldine & Fred Steele  
By Geraldine & Fred Steele

**Robert Lingerfelt**  
By M/M Michael H. Walters

**Dr. Samuel Little**  
By Nancy M. Reavis

**Nettie Livingston**  
By Jenkins Tyler

**Mack Long**  
By Supply Baptist Church

**Lambeth S. "Penny" Long**  
& Kathleen C. Long  
By Linda L. Dixon

**Kennith Malcolm Long, Sr.**  
By M/M Jimmy Clemmons

**Betty Loos**  
By Nancy A. Sherrill

**Betty Love**  
By Kay M. Lewis

**James A. & Marie J. Lucas**  
By Kenneth & Dawn Lucas

**Fred Lunsford**  
By Mrs. Barbara Barrett

**Spencer George "Rusty" Maddox**  
By W&a Beasley

**Pop & Virginia Marks**  
By M/M Morris E. Stamey

**Gray Brantley Marrow**  
By Pam Jones

**Toopie Martin**  
By Carol King

**Carole Mathis**  
By Johnnie Gatlin

**Kathy May**  
By Rebecca N. De Silva

**John Mayberry**  
By Dorothy Mayberry

**Mary Lois & Glenn McDonald**  
By Joseph & Judy Lachenev

**Luke McDowell**  
By Angela Cody

**William "Bill" Augustus McLean**  
By Elizabeth B. Daly

**John & Catherine McLeod**  
By Ms. Jeanette Henley

**Jean Merritt**  
By Brenda W. Merritt

**Brandon Mikeal**  
By M/M David E. Mikeal

**Lillian Miller**  
By Frank & Edie Miller

**Christopher Miller**  
By Charlotte First Baptist

**McCoy "Coy" Mizelle**  
By Paige C. Myers

**Tom Moore**  
By Elmer & Betty Hayashi

**Don Morris**  
By Marie D. Morris

**Layton Tylor Morris**  
By Joan M. Ragsdale

**Don Morris**  
By Marie D. Morris

**Lewis K. Mowery Sr.**  
By Barbara K. Mowery

**Early & Peggy Mullen**  
By Phyllis Townsend

**George R. Murphy**  
By Terry F. Rose

**Ray Mylan**  
By Kaye G. Batchelor

**Cecil & Mildred Narron**  
By JoAnn N. Jordan

**Roland L. Neal**  
By Sandra D. Myers

**Polly Kathryn Jolly Nemeth**  
By Julie Steiner  
By Norma J. McLees

**Brenda Green Newsome**  
By Tori Neville

**William & Mildred Nivison**  
By Nivison Family Foundation

**Jimmie Nowell, Jr.**  
By Glenn & Mary Lou Smith

**Cecil & Jewel Oates**  
By Susan O. Anthony

**Joy Oller**  
By M/M James D. Pullium

**Nancy Joanne Overton**  
By Jeff & Melinda Overton

**Allen Overton**  
By Jeff & Melinda Overton

**Lyle Pace**  
By George & Kathryn Pace

**Barbara Mayo Page**  
By William R. White

**My Loving Parents**  
By Helen Griffin

**Ethel George Parish**  
By M/M Richard L. Wagner, Sr.

**Jean Parker**  
By Earl W. Parker

**Christian Blake Parker**  
By Jennifer Parker

**Jackson E. Parker, Sr.**  
By Katrina S. Parker

**Jim Parrish**  
By Mary Mc. White

**Jim Pendleton**  
By M/M Don C. Hathaway

**Ila Penny**  
By M/M Johnny Hewett

**Carl Peters**  
By Larry & Charlene Peters

**Rodney Gordon Phelps**  
By Lorealee Marsh

**Gordon Phelps**  
By Teresa Williams

**William Earl Phillips**  
By Joyce B. Ipock  
By Penny & Seth Dawson  
By Robert E. Maready

**Donna & Gregory Kearney**  
By Barbara Everette

**M/M Claude Pickler**  
By Daphine P. Pickler

**Shelva Jean Pickler**  
By Daphine P. Pickler

**Mary P. Pickler**  
By Daphine P. Pickler

**Howard Pless**  
By Dale G. Fischer

**Sara Posey**  
By MaryAnne Townes

**Harrison "Harry" Powell**  
By M/M Robert L. Powell

**Doris Powers**  
By Paul K. Platts

**Virginia Dare Prince**  
By Judy Howard

**Buster Quin**  
By Darin & Donna Strother

**Iris Hall Quinn**  
By Mary Q. Blackwell

**Margaret Ragan**  
By Karen Preddy

**Commander Robert Sherwood Rawls**  
By Martha R. Rawls

**D. J. & Alene Redding**  
By Donna R. Abernethy

**Amber Louise "Nalley" Reed**  
By M/M Alfred L. Nalley

**James Revis**  
By Betty J. Parham  
Donald & Tamara Hicks Rhodes  
By M/M Larry F. Tuggle

**Juanita Richardson**  
By Ronald R. Richardson

**A. C. Rivenbark**  
By Brenda W. Merritt

**Carmen Rivera**  
By M/M Glenn D. Sellers

**Gene & Opal Roark**  
By Richard Roark

**Patricia Roberson**  
By M/M Don Scarborough

**Amelia Roberts**  
By Mr. Harvey D. Roberts, Jr.

**Sidney & Cleo Roberts**  
By Nancy & James Willard Robson

**James Willard Robson**  
By Nancy & James Willard Robson

**James Knight Rogers**  
By Chuck & Lynn Lusk

**Gilbert E. Rose**  
By Terry F. Rose

**Joseph Alex Ross**  
By M/M Carl A. Ross

**Anna Lee Rowland**  
By Thomas W. Oswalt

**Ralph Green Royal & Hazel B. Royal**  
By Patty S. Whitaker

**Sandra Cooper Rubin**  
By Aaron T. Beddingfield

**Daniel Rudisill**  
By Linda & Harry Covington

**Richard Russell**  
By Zeb Russell

**Charles Stratford Sawyer**  
By Patricia T. Saunders  
By Johnny E. Turbyfill

**Steven Sawyer**  
By Kaye G. Batchelor

**George Schantz**  
By M/M Johnny Hewett

**George Coleman Scruggs**  
By Carol C. Leonard  
By Matthews First Baptist  
By Beth Shoffner  
By M/M Donnie L. Hall  
By Bethlehem Baptist Church  
By Naomi S. Rice  
By Jeannette M. Ketner  
By M/M John B. Link  
By Karen P. Sexton  
By James & Marsha Carter  
By Joe & Stacey Giglio  
By Sue Threatt

**Nancy Sebastian**  
By M/M J. C. Sebastian

**Sherri Setzer**  
By Janet C. Nelson

**Gene Shaw**  
By Brenda W. Emmons

**Bernie Sheffield**  
By M/M Hershel L. Reddeck  
By Janet E. Odum

**Eunice Shelton**  
By M/M Stephen K. Hensley

**Eddie Shockley**  
By Forbush Baptist Church

**Priscilla Shoemaker**  
By M/M Benjamin L. Shoemaker  
By Brian & Kay Carreira

**Phyllis Marie Little Shuping**  
By Wanda Echerd

**Rick Simpson**  
By M/M Roger F. Davis

**Duncan "Dunc" James Sinclair**  
By Duncan J. Sinclair, III

**Mark & Sally Sink**  
By Anna S. Lowe

**Johnny J. Smith**  
By Steve & Barbara Parish

**Johnny Franklin Smith**  
By Judy Batten  
By Clement Baptist Church

**Lee Roy Smith**  
By M/M Johnny Hewett

**Ray Smith**  
By Janice S. Goodman

**Bessie Smith**  
By Janice S. Goodman

**Joshua Ryan Smith**  
By M/M Roger W. Smith

**Elizabeth Anne Smyre**  
By Fidelity Charitable Gift Fund

**Don Solomon**  
By M/M Johnny Hewett

**Susan E. Spahr**  
By John Spahr

**Roger & Mae Spivey**  
By Loretta S. Wiggins

**Gene & Jean Stamey**  
By M/M Morris E. Stamey

**Josh Scott Stanbery**  
By M/M Mack N. Hampton

**Brian Stanley**  
By Mrs. Joyce M. Stanley

**Hattie Starnes**  
By M/M Larry F. Tuggle

**Lynn Marie Stokes**  
By M/M William D. Stokes, Jr.

**Dr. Robert Eugene Stroud**  
By Wanda Beasley

**Belinda Summers**  
By Virginia Quaglia

**Juneen Talbot**  
By Janet C. Nelson

**Girtrue H. Young Talley**  
By Holland Ray Talley

**Harry "Sonny" Tanner**  
By Sarah Harrington

**M/M Tom Taylor**  
By M/M Michael E. Williams

**Jane Taylor**  
By M/M Murray D. West

**Marlin Teaman**  
By Dora M. Teaman

**Danny Tharrington**  
By Tommy & Judy Dempsey



<b>Danny Tharrington</b> By Bethesda Ruritan Club	<b>Nathaniel "Nat" Vaughan</b> By Rich & Rich Bonded Auctioneers	<b>Jean Abbott Walsh</b> By Janet B. Durham	By Lois B. Wease	By Sandy Cross Baptist Church	By Faye H. Willingham	<b>Ann N. Womble</b> By Barbara G. McKay
<b>Melvin &amp; Martha Tomblin &amp; their children</b> By Donna Tomblin	By Edwards, Inc.	By Bruce & Salley Wilson	<b>Villee Weatherly</b> By Mrs. Lillian T. Turnmire	<b>Stella Willett Wilcox</b> By Virginia Whittle	By Cherryfield Baptist Church	<b>Virginia Wright</b> By Beth Trouille
<b>Virgil &amp; Blanche Toney</b> By Phillip A. Toney	By Rosemary Baptist Church	By Betty & John Holl&	<b>Billie Weavil</b> By Beverly W. Weavil	<b>Hester W. Williams</b> By Cape Fear Interpreters, Inc.	By Treasured Memories Community Funding	<b>Elizabeth Rollins Wright</b> By Mr. J. D. Wright, Jr.
<b>Cathy Travis</b> By Teresa Haines	By Edith W. Harris	By Salley S. Bradford	<b>Kenneth Wayne Wheeler</b> By Hallie Wheeler	<b>Mary Hunt Williams</b> By Linda Marshall	<b>Jerald McKee Willingham, Sr.</b> By Jeff & Cheryl Bradbury	<b>Jesse Yarborough</b> By M/M Larry F. Tuggle
<b>Bo Treadaway</b> By M/M Don Scarborough	<b>Merle Veasey</b> By Joyce Watkins	By Louise N. Monroe	<b>Moody &amp; Eva Whitaker</b> By Patty S. Whitaker	<b>Frances Williams</b> By Michael Kaplan	<b>Connie C. Willis</b> By Dale Willis	<b>Richard Edward Younts</b> By Brandon Burnette
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<b>Ruby Elizabeth Turbyfill</b> By Mrs. Nancy Munday	<b>Baby Sutton Walker</b> By M/M Mitford M. Walker, Jr.	<b>Linda Sloan Ward</b> By Jimmy S. Combs	<b>John Whitfield</b> By Ronald Bruce & Cynthia Whitfield	By Sarah S. McLaurin	<b>Nancy Wilson</b> By Karen & Chris Smith	By Jami Ervin
<b>Judith Murrin Vandervelde</b> By William V&ervelde	<b>Melvin "Bud" Walker</b> By Sandra Walker	<b>Frances Warren</b> By Mrs. Jenny J. Ayers	<b>Elaine Wickert</b> By John N. Wickert, Sr.	<b>M/M Johnny Williams</b> By M/M Michael E. Williams	<b>Pamela Moran Wilson</b> By Wanda Beasley	By Charlotte Pipe & Foundry Company
	<b>Roger Walker</b> By M/M Randy M. Beal	<b>Billie Warren</b> By Mary S. Jones	<b>Maxine S. Wiggins</b>	<b>Jerry Willingham</b> By Bob & Marcia Young	<b>Joe Winningham</b> By Lizbeth A. Kennedy	

# "Will you join me and become a monthly PRAYER PARTNER?"

Signing up to be a Prayer Partner simply means that you will receive a monthly email with an overall prayer focus from myself along with additional prayer prompts to guide your time with the Lord on behalf of the children, families, and adults in our care. Let's be prayerfully united to see God will work through Baptist Children's Homes so that those we serve come to know the Lord Jesus Christ."

— DAVID MELBER, CEO



## Signing up to be a prayer partner is easy.

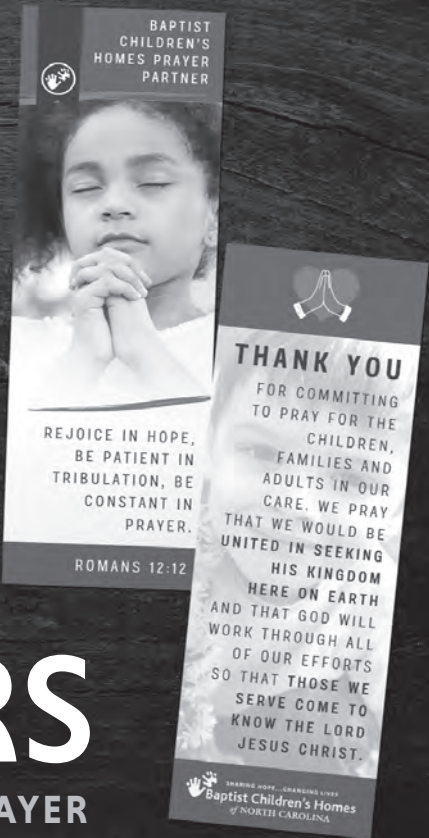
Scan the QR code below to go to the sign up page. You can also access the form by going to **BCHFAMILY.ORG/PRAYER** or choose "Prayer Partners" under the "Get Involved" section on our website.

As a thank you for partnering with Baptist Children's Homes in prayer, we are offering a **BOOKMARK DOWNLOAD** to all of our prayer partners. You will receive a welcome email from David with the download once you sign up.



# PRAYER PARTNERS

SIGN UP AT **BCHFAMILY.ORG/PRAYER**







**Summer memories made on the sound**  
BCH girls staying at the McNeill Beach Cottage with their cottage parents marvel at the sunset along the sound.



**NC State treats adoptive families**  
NC State football hosted Christian Adoption Services families for a fun time and stories by players who've been adopted.



**College students help Greater Vision**  
Students from High Point University volunteered at Greater Vision Outreach, which aids community families.



**BBQ festival delivers record amount**  
Ridgeway Baptist pastor Mike Leslie and Broyhill BBQ Festival volunteers present a \$51,840.72 fundraising total.



**Children experience the ocean**  
This summer, children and cottage parents splashed in the ocean. It was the first beach trip for many of the children.



**Nine salvations at Midway Baptist VBS**  
BCH's Lewis Smith presented the Gospel at Midway Baptist's VBS where nine children proclaimed Christ as Savior.



**New Life Baptist VBS loves BCH**  
VBS children at New Life Baptist Church have been giving their mission offering to support the children served by BCH.



**Boys experience an ocean boat ride**  
Boys from BCH's Broyhill Home took turns steering during the boat ride they enjoyed during their beach trip.



**T-Mobile Foundation makes gift**  
The T-Mobile office in Pembroke made a donation of \$2,500. They presented the check to Odum Home's Kathy Locklear.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

Check out our Events Calendar for opportunities to serve and registration information. Visit [bchfamily.org/events](http://bchfamily.org/events)



### SEPTEMBER

- 4: Western Area Conference  
Broyhill Home, Clyde
- 8: NCBAM Field of Makers, [ncbam.org](http://ncbam.org)  
Mills Home, Thomasville

### OCTOBER

- 16: Christian Adoption Services (CAS)  
Benefit Banquet - Raleigh Area  
Faith Baptist, Youngsville

### NOVEMBER

- 6: CAS Banquet - Rocky Mount Area  
Englewood Baptist, Rocky Mount
- 22: Thanksgiving Turkey in the Hole  
Cameron Boys Camp, Cameron

### FRIENDS OF CHILDREN

Saturday one-day missions for all ages--

- Sept 6: Oak Ranch, Broadway
- Sept 13: Kennedy Home, Kinston
- Sept 20: Mills Home, Thomasville
- Sept 20: Odum Home, Pembroke
- Oct 4: Cameron Boys Camp



Info and registration at  
[bchfamily.org/foc](http://bchfamily.org/foc)

**Annual Offering/Week of Prayer**  
November 9 - 16, 2025  
Resources on the way - [bchoffering.org](http://bchoffering.org)



How can we help you? Contact 1.800.476.3669 or [bchfamily.org/referral](http://bchfamily.org/referral) >>>

For each person's specific need, Baptist Children's Homes offers a unique ministry that is prepared to help. Reach out today.



We equip your church to be a part of foster care & adoption so that every child receives the caring home he or she deserves.

Get connected at [every-child.org](http://every-child.org)



## TURN YOUR CALLING INTO A CAREER

Statewide positions to serve children, families and/or adults are available for you or someone you know.

**BCHCAREERS.ORG**

## DONATE YOUR VEHICLE

and it becomes a part of the ministry.  
Doctor visits, rides to school, church activities — your vehicle helps!



Contact Sam Barefoot  
at [svbarefoot@bchfamily.org](mailto:svbarefoot@bchfamily.org)  
or call him at 336-474-1224

**SECC**  
State Employees  
Combined Campaign

**#3641**



# Even when we wobble, we do not fall down forever

By **Jim Edminson**, Editor

**T**he music minister led the choir and congregation in the hymn “Blessed Assurance,” and to our collective surprise, we the people belted out the anthem much bigger than our troubled hearts could have imagined.

The pastor illustrated the tempests of life, calling attention to the devastation and the despair we can easily fall prey to because of the unfolding events in our country and world and the wild raging weather stories too awful to recount.

We sat attentive, mindful of that week’s tragedies. It is true. We can find ourselves tossed about and if we are not careful, we can metaphorically either snap in the wind or be swept away. The solutions are deep roots and firm anchors.

The allusions to water and the human choice to snap or be washed away sent my thoughts to my boyhood days, summertime, and a motel pool.

I paddled in the shallow end, cordoned off from the “big kids” by a blue rope with blue and white striped buoy balls. All us “little kids” longed for the eventual graduation from the shallow end to the deep end, and Mom assured me I would be there in no time.

To adults, the time frame “in no time” is multipurpose and reflects the short period between preparing, practicing, drilling, trying, and finally being ready. Short period to adults can vary from a few minutes to a few months. Time is relative, after all, and I really did heed my mom’s encouragement as I watched my older brother and sisters in the big pool. Then came the moment when my brother jumped from the diving board to cries of admiration, and I thought to myself, “I can do that.”

I moved quickly after making up my mind. Out of the pool, I trotted to the deep end, climbed onto the diving board, and called out to everyone in general, “Watch this!” as I bounced and then plunged into the water, just like Eddie had done. The crowd, however, did not react in the same way.

This event became a story of my childhood that has been told and retold over the years with

different intents: a cautionary tale, a description of my character, the effects of a stout heart...and the incredible athleticism and quick-witted reaction of my dad.

Here’s the short story: As I yelled to the crowd and then jumped into the water, my mom shouted in horror, my siblings stared in disbelief, and my dad jumped up from his lounge and ran to where I was bobbing, leaving a trail of clothes, wallet, sunglasses, and shoes as he sprinted and then dived into the drink to save his son from his own foibles.

Although Bible stories of David fuel my imagination and the words of Paul deepen my understanding of Christian living, I have to admit that I can identify with the accounts of Peter.

Peter journeyed from fisherman to fisher of men. His life showed impressive ups and amazing downs. When Jesus asked His apostles who He is, Peter boldly declared, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God” (Matthew 16:16). In the courtyard following Jesus’s arrest, Peter denied that he even knew Jesus. This Jesus follower walked on water in imitation of his Master. He witnessed Jesus’s resurrection. He emerged as a restored leader after the Holy Spirit came upon him. His very human life mirrors my and your struggles as we teeter between faith and failure.

Peter exhibits resilience throughout his adult life, and stories about him remind us that we can stumble, but by the power of the living Lord, we do not have to fall. Looking fully into the face of Jesus and acknowledging Him as Savior is redemption.

In his epistle, Peter pens: “And after you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and estab-



lish you” (1 Peter 5:10). Reading accounts of his life, I know that Peter writes the words from personal experience. He offers assurance because he has known the sureness of God’s love and forgiveness.

My mind jumps here to another memory of childhood—go with me.

The “Weeble World” had a snappy commercial jingle about those figures’ ability to stand upright. Memorably, it went: “Weebles wobble, but they don’t fall down.”

From its beginning in 1971, Playskool’s Weebles playsets captured the imagination of children (and adults) everywhere with their innovative egg-shaped people with painted smiles on their faces and bright colored outfits on their sturdy wooden bodies. Over the next decade, the brand grew to include playsets with a tree house, a haunted house, a western set, a circus, a camper, the Magic Kingdom, and beyond. Toddlers with chubby hands easily moved the Weebles and although they wobbled, they did not fall down.

I cannot say whether the playsets or the commercial jingle is the primary reason they occupy a soft spot in my recollections. But as I contemplate Peter and his amazing ability to be knocked down and yet bounce back up, I think of those Weebles and ponder the ability of all of us to be resilient.

We can face trials and setbacks, failures and sins, and let those moments define us. Or we can turn toward our God in the midst of those tempests and find forgiveness, succor, and a new beginning. There is a blessed assurance, when Jesus is ours, that when we wobble, we do not fall forever.

# SHARE

*The Story!*

## 3 WAYS A BAPTIST CHILDREN'S HOMES (BCH) SPEAKER CAN SHARE AT YOUR CHURCH:

### 1

#### FULL SERMON

20-25 mins

A speaker will prepare a message for your worship service to edify the congregation, provide a BCH missions update, and share stories of lives that have been changed through your support.

### 2

#### MISSION MOMENT

2-5 mins

A speaker will share a BCH update and talk briefly how your missions dollars are impacting God's kingdom. The speaker can also set up a small display table to greet people.

### 3

#### SMALL GROUP/ SUNDAY SCHOOL

A speaker will share a BCH mission update and stories of lives changed. Your group will hear ways to pray, volunteer and support the ministry as a group or as a church.



**TO INVITE A SPEAKER, GO TO [BCHFAMILY.ORG/](https://bchfamily.org/) SPEAKER OR SCAN THE CODE. CALL 336-474-1218.**