

\$250,000
MATCHING GIFT CHALLENGE

Double your gift. Give now!

Between October 1 until January 31, 2021, gifts will be matched dollar for dollar. See page 12.

Charity & Children

And now abides faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity. Baptist Children's Homes of North Carolina



@bchfamily

December 2020

Issue 12

Volume 133

By Jim Edminson, Editor

*The greatest gift
is the gift of eternal life!*

Gift giving at Christmas is big. It is estimated that on average nearly \$1,000 is spent on gifts per person in the United States. And if all goes well next year, more presents will be bought—with as much if not more money being spent. Every year, the newest trending gift skyrockets sales. The “newest” model replaces last year’s “older” model and last year’s must-have gift becomes passé.

But the gift that never goes out of fashion and truly “keeps on giving” is the gift of salvation. It never tarnishes. It never needs a newer edition.

“On July 6 last year, I asked

God into my life,” Megan confides. “It is the greatest gift I have ever received.”

Helping to lead children to Jesus has been at the heart of Baptist Children’s Homes’ mission since 1885. It is what distinguishes the ministry from other good children’s causes.

Those who support this 135-year-old ministry know their gifts not only provide all the necessary things to create a loving home, but their gifts make an eternal difference.

703

In the last five years,
703 children and residents
made decisions for Jesus.



Still runnin' against the wind

By Michael C. Blackwell, President/CEO

'm older now but still runnin' against the wind.

The words are from a Bob Seger song and they speak to my 38-year presidency better than just about anything.

Not once have I rested on my laurels. Not once have I said BCH has enough money to last a lifetime. Not once have I even hinted that money is no longer a problem.

Money for a ministry to children and adults and babies and orphans is always a need. That's why I write this rarest of fund raising columns, urging you to **"Run with me against the wind"** and help the least among us—the most vulnerable.

Winds of adversity have blown strong since 11/11/1885 (the date when we were founded on faith). They are blowing with devastation during this pandemic era.

Budgets are stretched like a taut rubber band. Traditional fundraising events that totaled hundreds of thousands of dollars were canceled.

But, we are built on love and we will rise. Scan the QR code and view this mini-documentary. See what "Founded on faith...Built on love" has meant to our 135-year history.

The Annual Offering must be a success! It is crucial as we begin a new year in 2021. Please help us. Help us with your check, cash, in-kind gift, online gift, food, supplies, church offering. Scan the QR code and take a look at this video.

We are strong, mighty, enduring—30 Carolina communities plus Guatemala and international adoption services. More than 107,000



lives touched—to the glory of God—beating with one heart.

BCH is there in your stead.

In Christ's name.

Cradle to grave.

BCH is there.

We never stop serving.

We must not be sidetracked by the current crisis. Crisis is opportunity. Children need us more than ever. Listen. What you hear are the cries of babies, children, orphans, youth, special needs adults and the frail elderly. Listen. They are calling your name—my name.

We must answer the cries. Give as you are able—and then maybe a little more.

We are older now and still runnin' against the wind. But thank God, we ARE still runnin'. Ain't no devil gonna slow us down. Truth crushed to earth, the saying goes, shall rise again.

Give generously. Give of your best to the Master who loves children—for

of such is the Kingdom of God.

Giving is made simple.

There's an envelope inserted for your convenience. Remember, you can also give online. It's fast, convenient, and safe. Scan the QR code or go to bchfamily.org/givenow to get started—and thank you!

We are BCH strong.

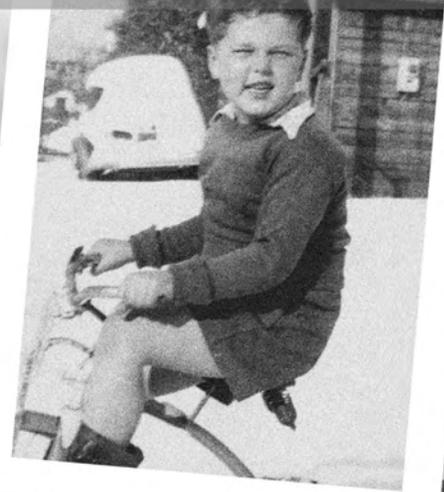
We shall rise.

We shall overcome.

Count on it. Trust in it.

God bless you.

And God bless The Baptist Children's Homes of North Carolina.



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

Charity & Children – Baptist Children's Homes of North Carolina, Inc., 204 Idol St., PO Box 338, Thomasville, NC 27361-0338. Michael C. Blackwell, publisher; Jim Edminson, editor (wjedminson@bchfamily.org); Blake Ragsdale, managing editor (jbragsdale@bchfamily.org); Marcia Housand, account clerk. **Charity & Children** (ISSN 0009-1723-09 USPS 100-460) is published 11 times a year for friends and supporters of Baptist Children's Homes. It is printed at Triangle Web Printing, Durham, NC and mailed by Excalibur, Winston-Salem, NC. **Circulation:** 62,000 seven times a year, 30,000 four times a year. Periodicals postage paid at Thomasville, NC, and at additional mailing offices. **For free subscription or to be removed from the mailing list or make address correction or change,** use the above address and write to **Attn: Circulation Manager,** send an email to address@bchfamily.org or call at 336-474-1209. **Subscribe online** at bchfamily.org/charityandchildren. **POSTMASTER:** Send change of address to **Charity & Children,** PO Box 338, Thomasville, NC 27361-0338.

BCH University grads reach new level of excellence

By **Jim Edminson**, Editor

The third class of Baptist Children’s Homes University (BCHU) graduated November 12 at Mills Home in Thomasville.

“Well,” BCH president/CEO Michael C. Blackwell said, “this is a different kind of graduation.”

Blackwell alluded to how COVID-19 continues to change the way things are done at Baptist Children’s Homes (BCH).

“When Cohort 3 began on December 4, 2018, no one could have imagined,” he said. “Not only did you master a very stringent program, but you pushed through at the end during the pandemic to be here today celebrating the completion of your program.”

BCHU is a leadership and talent management program covering eight core areas that challenge participants to reach their “next best.” Classes are made up of staff members who not only do their jobs, but look for ways to improve BCH’s overall “culture of excellence” in their areas and departments.

In his commencement address, Blackwell affirmed the graduates: “You did it. And today, that which may have seemed impossible, that which may have been improbable, has now become inevitable. You are a graduate of BCH University, reaching a level of excellence and knowledge that only a few have achieved.”

Blackwell affirmed graduates personally offering gifts to each one in the class.

To Chris Allabaugh, he gave the gift of leadership; to Samantha Allred, the gift of enthusiasm; to Brenda Hofstetter, the gift of innovation; to Bobby Mitchell, the gift of positivity; to Dana Hartman, the gift of empathy; to Shannon Fulp, the gift of understanding; and to Kevin McPherson, the gift of life-long learning.

“When I first greeted this cohort in 2018,” Blackwell said in concluding his commencement address, “I charged you with three things: be open to learn, be willing to participate, and be excited to implement. You have done all three. All these months later, I add this: live simply, love generously, care deeply, speak kindly, and leave the rest up to God.”

The 2020 BCHU graduates are:

Christopher Allabaugh

Eastern Regional Director, Kennedy Home

Chris has served BCH since November 2016 in several different roles. He began his career as a Foster Care Case Manager and then transitioned in to the Director of Residential Services at Kennedy Home. He currently serves as the Eastern Regional Director.

Samantha Allred

North Central Regional Director, NCBAM

Samantha has served at BCH since May 2017



The third cohort of Baptist Children’s Homes University graduated on November 12 at Mills Home in Thomasville. BCHU is a leadership and talent management program that challenges participants to reach their “next best.” Pictured left to right: Samantha Allred, Kevin McPherson, Shannon Fulp, BCH COO Keith Henry, BCH president/CEO Michael C. Blackwell, BCH senior advisor Nancy McNeill, Chris Allabaugh, Dana Hartman, and Bobby Mitchell.

as a call center specialist and now serves as the North Central Regional Director for North Carolina Baptist Aging Ministry.

Shannon H. Fulp

IDDM Administrator/Qualified Professional

Shannon has served on staff at BCH since July 2017. She began her ministry as a qualified professional for the Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Ministry in Winston Salem at Hinkle and Davis House. Shannon will be transferring to a new position as the IDD Program Coordinator starting December 1.

Dana L. Hartman

Case Manager, Mills Home

Dana has served at BCH since August 2013. She served on staff previously between 2000 and 2007. She began serving in two areas—emergency care and transitional living—before joining residential services at Mills Home.

Brenda Hofstetter

Director, Robert Idol Child Development Center

Brenda has served at BCH since September 2012. She began serving in weekday education as a lead teacher in the NCPReK program at Robert Idol Child Development Center. Currently, she is the Center’s director.

Kevin McPherson

Case Manager, Mills Home

Kevin has served with BCH since October 2015. He began his career with his wife, Becky, as cottage parents at Mills Home. He now serves as a Mills Home case manager for residential services.

Bobby Mitchell

Statewide Facilities Manager

Bobby has served at BCH since July 2010. He began serving as an IT network analyst before moving to the properties office to serve in his current position.

 **New website - www.bchfosteradopt.org**

Foster Care Adoption Get Involved Contact Us For Churches Donate

Foster Care & Adoption

Working with families and churches to connect vulnerable children to Christian homes.

[Learn More](#)



Fear not: Let hope be the baby's gift to you!

By Brenda B. Gray, Executive Vice President, Dev. & Com.

We read in the Gospel of Luke, “And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.”

Today, there is so much swirling around us that causes fear. But do not let your heart despair, there is good news. Hope, peace, and salvation came to us as a baby: “For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord.”

Mary and Joseph were weary. The couple trudged the streets of Bethlehem looking for a place to rest. Finding an inn, they knocked on the door and bid the innkeeper, “Sir, we are tired and alone. May we stay here tonight?”

The couple was desperate and alone. But hope was coming. Fear was ushered out and the comfort of a bed was replaced by the smell of fresh cut hay—a barn became a palace for a king. Peace engulfed the small family as they welcomed a son. Their desperation was replaced by hope.

Many of the children who come to Baptist Children's Homes (BCH) know the feeling of being alone. They know desperation and fear.

The terror of being locked out of her house shook the precious 9-year-old. She did not understand why her mother would not protect her as her mom's boyfriend pushed her out into the darkness. She felt the crush of hopelessness as the door closed in her face. She was left standing outside alone. But hope was on the way. Safety and peace beyond understanding was coming to this child.

Kelsey leaves the abortion clinic, the door closing behind her. She is afraid and overwhelmed. She chose life for her precious child. For Kelsey and the baby, hope is on the way.

A future and peace beyond understanding awaits. Kelsey chose adoption over abortion. She chose life and hope rather than fear.

Five hungry children came into BCH's care. The parents' addictions left the family desperate without shelter or food. Trauma cloaked their chaotic life. The siblings were frightened and alone. But hope was on the way for these precious boys and girls.

The physical abuse she had suffered put her into the hospital. She was afraid. Hope had vanished until she received word that she would live with a BCH foster care family. The door from her painful past closed and a new door opened. Hope was on the way!

This Christmas will be different on BCH's campuses. We typically have lots of celebrations beginning early November. Through the years, our children have been blown away by those who come and shower them with gifts of love. And while BCH friends will not be able to come and visit this year, I know they are more determined than ever to make this Christmas memorable for our children.

Like the angels, you have heralded a message of hope in these trying times.

You have said in so many ways: “Do not be afraid.”

So, what will Christmas look like for BCH's children? The trees and decorations you donated are being put into place.

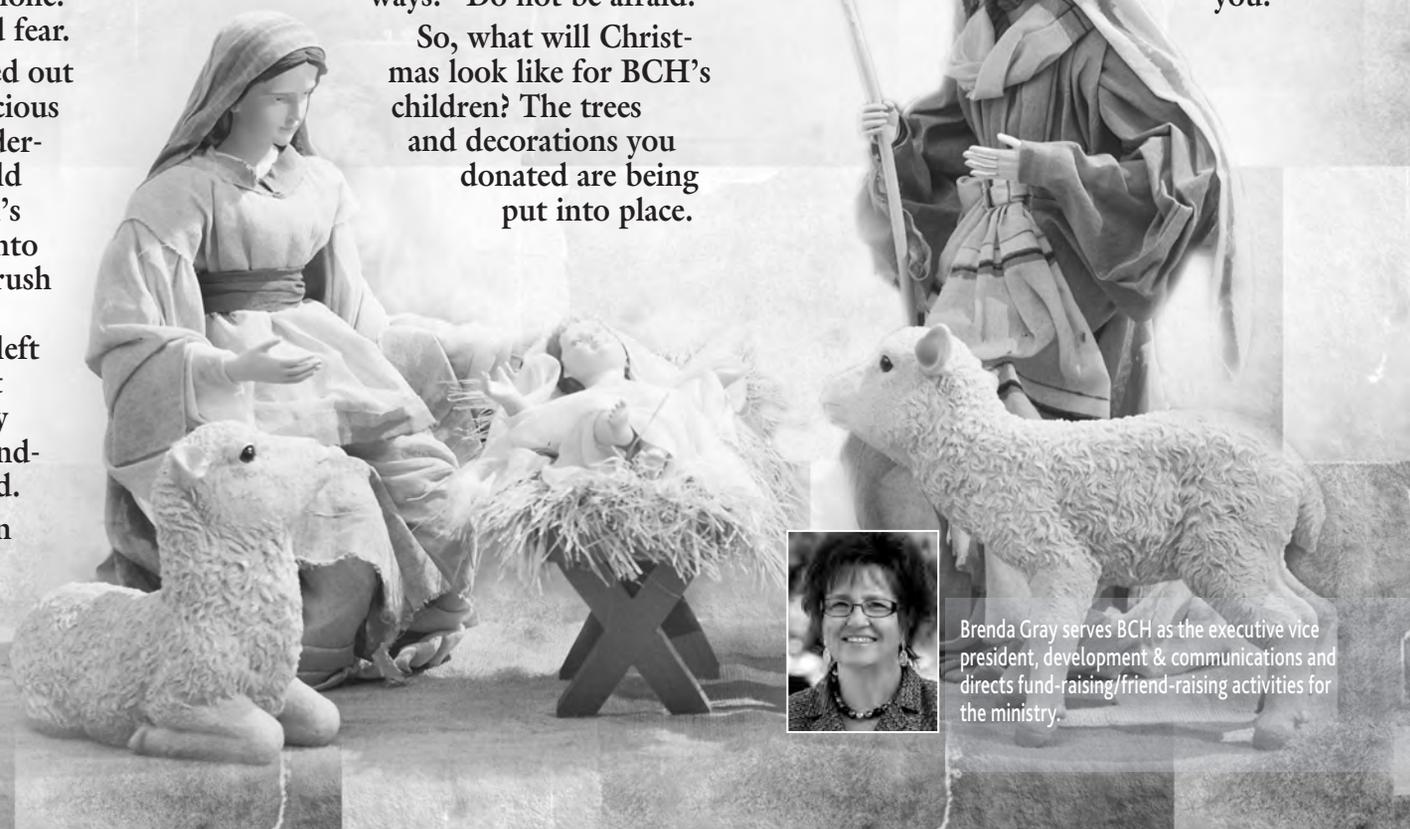
Staff and children are talking about how they can make Christmas brighter for someone else by sharing acts of kindness. Even though you cannot be here in person, you are delivering Christmas gifts and food to every location. Your generosity is helping fill cottages with brightly wrapped presents, smells of holiday cooking, and lots of laughter and cheer.

But even more significant, you are helping to fill hearts with love, joy, hope, peace, and the message of grace and salvation that came to us as a baby.

One of my favorite Christmas songs proclaims “the hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.” What do you hope for this Christmas? My faith tells me that we can bring our hopes and fears to the one sent by God—Jesus. The Christ child gives us hope and He has the power to cancel fear and darkness.

Paul wrote to the Romans: “May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.”

Let
hope be
the baby's
gift to
you!



Brenda Gray serves BCH as the executive vice president, development & communications and directs fund-raising/friend-raising activities for the ministry.

Something to smile about!

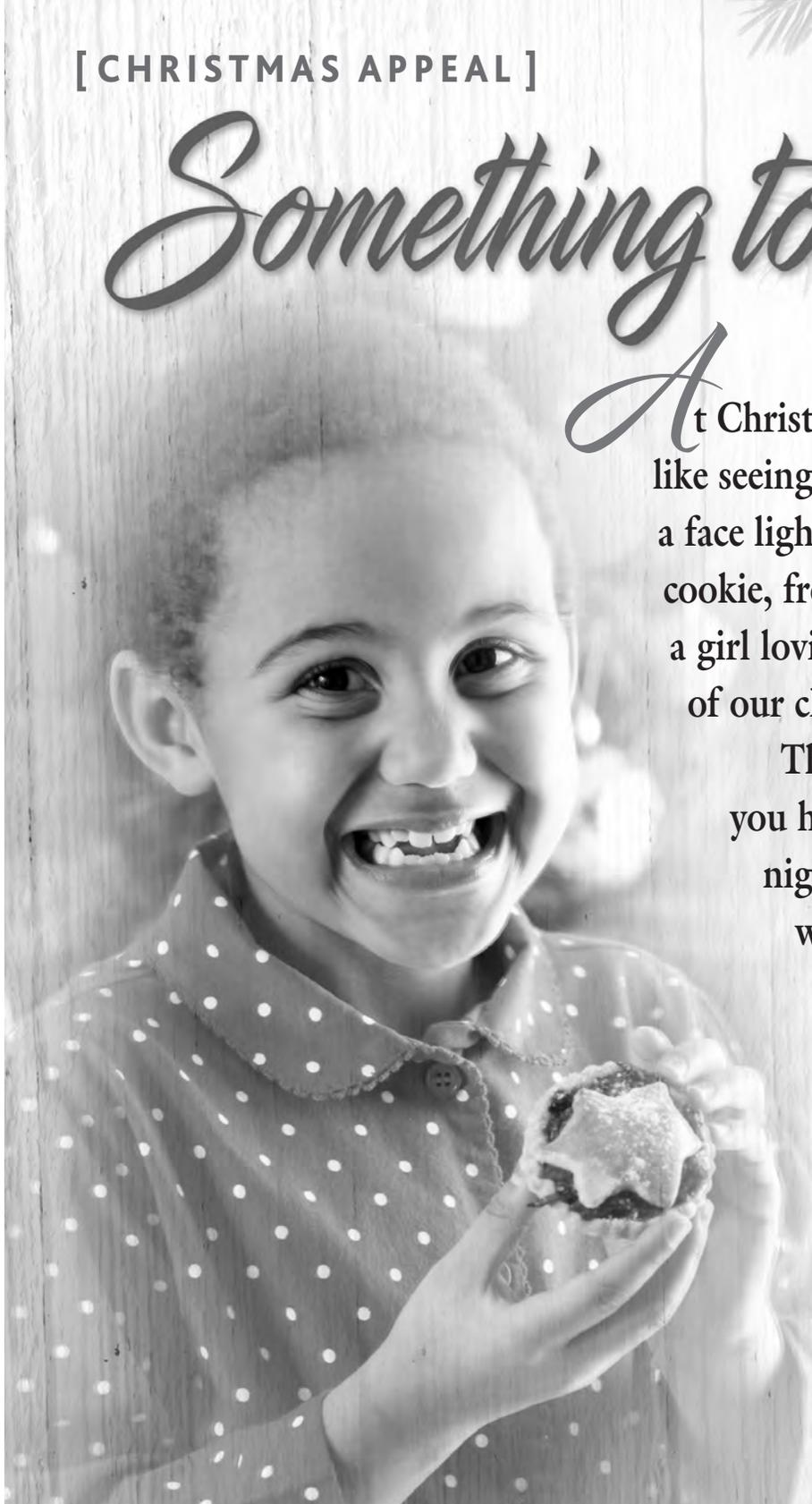
*A*t Christmas, there's nothing like seeing a child's smile. Like when a face lights up as he bites into a sugar cookie, fresh out of the oven. Or seeing a girl lovingly hug her new doll. For many of our children, these are Christmas firsts.

Through your Christmas sponsorship, you help provide children peace and a good night's rest, full bellies, and cottage parents who want nothing else than to see smiles return to faces during Christmas.

Remember, through our \$250,000 matching gift challenge, your investment will double. Your generosity now not only helps at Christmas but will help in the coming year.

Now is the perfect time to bring joy to a child's heart and share with him the only hope that will sustain him—Jesus Christ.

Please give. Thank you!



Hurry! Give now and double your gift's impact

- \$50 Christmas for one child!
- \$100 Christmas for two siblings!
- \$300 A cottage holiday outing!
- \$600 Christmas for a cottage!
- \$1,000 A large gift for a cottage!
- \$ _____ Any size gift!

To make a gift by check, print information below and mail form with your check to: BCH, P.O. Box 338, Thomasville, NC 27361

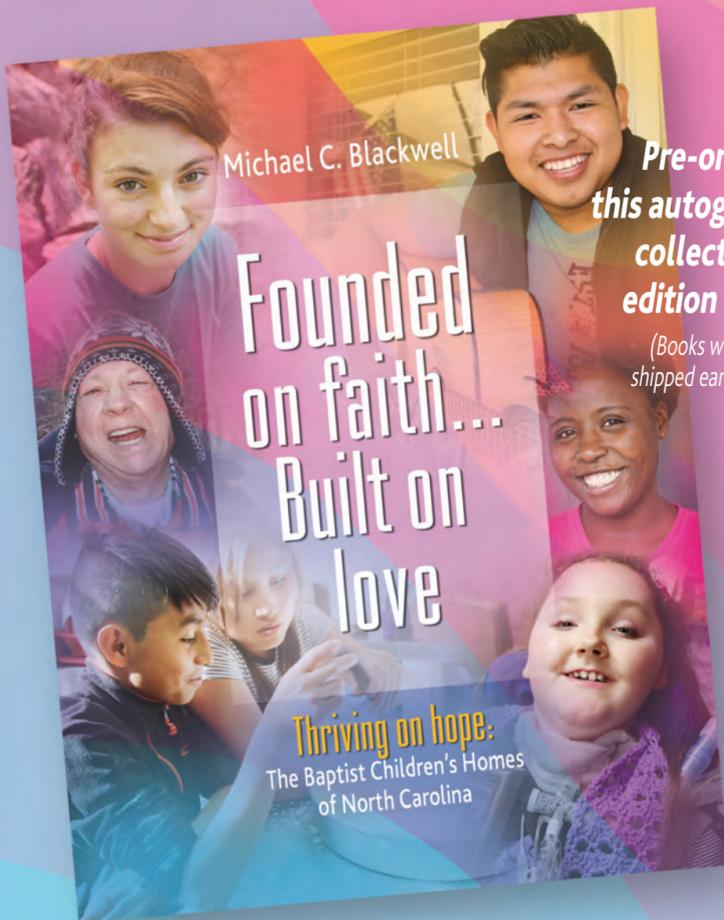
Name _____ Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Phone _____ Email _____

Give online at www.bchfamily.org/givenow or make your gift by phone using your credit card by calling Faith Frazier at 336-474-1312.

- Yes, I would like to receive email updates from Baptist Children's Homes.
- Contact me with information on how to prepare a Christian Will. I have included Baptist Children's Homes in my estate plans.





It's a book for the ages!

Founded on faith... Built on love is the life-changing, miracle-making, hope-sharing history of Baptist Children's Homes of North Carolina. Pre-order your autographed copy or copies to receive in early 2021. Subtitled *Thriving on hope*, this new history book focuses on the last 20 years while summarizing the entire history of BCH from 1885 through 2020 — 135 years of many ministries, beating with one heart. To reserve your book, mail the coupon with payment now. Any questions? Call 336-474-1286.

Pre-order your autographed copy of Dr. Blackwell's new book *Founded on faith... Built on love*. To receive this limited offer, you're asked to pay \$20 to cover the cost plus shipping and handling. Multiple books can be ordered, but be sure to include an additional \$20 for each book. If paying by check, make payable to Baptist Children's Homes of NC. Please send me _____ copies at \$20 per book. Please find enclosed \$_____.

Name _____
 Address _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____
 Phone _____ Email _____

Use the enclosed postage-free envelope to mail this coupon and payment. If sending a check, make it payable to Baptist Children's Homes of NC. **Thank you!**

[INSPIRING STORIES OF CHANGED LIVES]

Christmas is perfect time to remember God's faithfulness

By Jim Edminson, Editor and Blake Ragsdale, Managing Editor

This past year was filled with many challenges. But in the midst of all that happened, stories of hope and victory transpired at Baptist Children's Homes (BCH) and ended up on the pages of *Charity & Children*. God has been faithful. Have your heart lifted while reading a few of the most encouraging of 2020.

Nathen and Tylor arrived at BCH with few belongings and little hope. The brothers were homeless because of their mother's struggles and the boys had no father to depend on for help. Janina DeHart called BCH about the same time the boys arrived. She and her husband, Mark, wanted to become BCH foster parents. A year later, the DeHarts became the foster parents for the two brothers. On October 24, 2019, Nathen and Tylor were adopted by the DeHarts. A short time later on a beautiful sunny afternoon, family and close friends gathered on the bank of a mountain river to watch Mark, assisted by a pastor at their church, baptize his two sons.

God was working all the time to bring this family together.

Cruz and Betty Porter prepare peanut butter fudge—17-year-old Cruz's favorite. A college freshman, he needs to know how to make the treat for himself.

"This is a must," Cruz laughs. "Of all that I need to be ready for college, this may be the most important. You never know when I'll have a craving."

According to cottage mom Betty, Cruz has changed so much since coming to BCH. His confidence has increased. Cruz has grown into a successful young man—a leader among the boys in his cottage, a high school honor

student, and an exceptional musician.

Cruz affirms his growth at Broyhill Home in Clyde. "I had no idea that I would accomplish so much," he reflects.

Cruz auditioned and gained a spot on the "Pride of the Mountains Marching Band" at Western Carolina University where he is a freshman.

"Being here, with Betty and Will Porter and the other boys, I feel like I'm home," he says. "This is my family."

God has worked to give Cruz a bright future and a supportive family.



The DeHart Family



Cruz and cottage mom Betty Porter

Dave and Charlotte Cline serve at Olive Branch Baptist Church in Roxboro where Dave is pastor. The couple felt God leading them to become foster parents.

Weeks of training by BCH's staff members culminated in the meeting between

the Clines and their first foster care children—Kendall, Kassidy, Kayden, and Kailey—sisters aged 10 months to seven years old.

After fostering the girls for a year, the rights of their biological parents were terminated and the Clines adopted the sisters on January 10 of this year. Along with Caleb, the Cline's 12-year-old biological son, they have become a family.

Spiritually, the seeds that have been planted by the Clines are growing.



The Cline Family and Dr. Blackwell

Kailey, their oldest daughter, asked Jesus into her heart while being fostered.

"God wants people to open up their homes and open up their hearts," Charlotte says. "You don't need

anything special, you just need to have the willingness and desire."

God turned the chaos in four little girls' lives into the security they desperately needed.

Teryn fell in love with the beautiful red bejeweled gown. She reached for the hanger and taking it from the rack, she was smitten. It was dazzling.

"I was on the field that night as one of the Homecoming Queen finalists," Teryn remembers. "When the first runner up was announced and it wasn't me—I couldn't breathe. Then my name was called."

When Teryn entered foster care at age 13, becoming Homecoming Queen was far from anything she could have dreamt.

"I never knew my father," she says, "and my mother's life fell apart. This was not what

I wanted. It just happened and I was scared, sad and mad—all wrapped up together."

Teryn recalls when she was told that she was going to live at Mills Home. "All I could think about was 'what is happening to me'."

She says she didn't talk to anyone at first. "I remember everyone being great, but it didn't matter. I was afraid."

Teryn's fears turned to acceptance. "I got into a routine. It was summer and there were activities—fun things to do and I began to make friends."

One day last fall, she came home from school with the idea of running for Homecoming Queen.

Teryn put together a campaign and her cottage parents, case manager, and other staff members pitched in and helped wherever they could.

"It made me feel really good when everyone came together to help me," Teryn says. "To be where I am today—looking back from where I was only a few years ago—it is truly amazing."

Teryn is hopeful and is working hard.

"I never wanted to be in a group home, no one would," Teryn says. "But it has been good for me. God has given me an incredible future. There are days when I need to pinch myself to remind me it is all real."

God has transformed Teryn's life. She credits God for His faithfulness in everything she does.



Teryn

Double your year-end gift from now until January 31, 2021.

See page 12 for more details.

Pastor leads church to begin foster/adopt ministry

By **Blake Ragsdale**, Managing Editor

When Baptist Children's Homes (BCH) expanded its Family Foster Care program to come alongside churches interested in beginning their own foster care ministries, Salem Baptist Church in Dobson was one of the first onboard.

Reverend David Powell, the church's Senior Pastor, has seen Salem's foster care and adoption ministry meet the needs of numerous children in the custody of their county's department of social services. It is an endeavor that is also deeply personal to him and his spouse, Lindsey.

"My wife and I were compelled to pursue foster-to-adopt in our lives personally," Powell divulges. "One of the things we discovered very early in our marriage, and this was something that God impressed upon our hearts, is that foster care and adoption is something we are supposed to be about as Christians."

The couple has one biological son, seven-year-old Noah. They have fostered several children and have adopted two of them—seven-year-old Laylin and five-year-old Ally who are siblings. What started with the Powell family has blossomed into something even greater.

"Along the way, we realized this was not only something God was calling us to do as a family, but something that He was calling us to do as a church family," Powell shares.

North Carolina has approximately 16,000 children in its foster care system—boys and girls removed from their families largely due to abuse and neglect. Powell discovered that just in Surry County, his church's home county, there were not enough foster homes to care for children in their local system.

"As a congregation, we began to have conversations about what can we do within our county to make a difference," Powell recalls. "Knowing how to begin, that's one of the things we struggle with as Christians. We see the need but the need seems so large we don't know how to tackle it."

Reaching out to BCH made perfect sense to Powell whose connection goes beyond his one as a pastor—his father, 83-year-old Harrison Powell, lived as a boy at BCH's Mills Home in Thomasville for seven years. Powell called Keith Henry, BCH's Chief Operating Officer, to ask for guidance to help the church establish its own foster and adoption ministry. Working towards this goal began when BCH staff members shared dur-



David Powell, senior pastor at Salem Baptist Church in Dobson, and his wife, Lindsey, not only felt led to foster and adopt, but Powell's church partnered with BCH to establish its own foster/adopt ministry. The couple have one biological son, Noah, and two adopted daughters, Ally and Laylin.

ing a Salem Baptist Church service.

"As pastors, we must be aware there are people in our pews that God is already calling to this ministry. Some aren't even aware of what God is putting in place until that opportunity is put in front of them," Powell says. "We should never assume that this might not be something for our church because there is a way to be involved."

In the weeks that followed, BCH foster care staff traveled to the church to conduct training sessions for several couples interested in becoming foster parents. As a part of the church's overall ministry, other members supported the couples and their foster/adoptive children by

providing respite, clothing, school supplies, and meeting other essential needs. Most of all, the church is able to show God's love to the children, many who are hearing the Gospel for the first time.

Soon after the couples were licensed, the department of social services called with six siblings needing placement. Three church families were able to take two children each making it possible for the siblings to see each other regularly and attend church together. In Powell's eyes, this is an example of how more can be accomplished when the church comes together no matter the size of the need.

"It's okay if churches and families within a church feel a little nervous or apprehensive when they first hear about the need and how great it

may seem," Powell said. "That's alright because it's not bigger than God."

He encourages other pastors and church leaders to pray about partnering with BCH to begin foster and adoption ministries in their churches.

"I believe what Baptist Children's Homes is doing is helping us as churches do what we are already called to do—do even what I believe churches want to do—but helping us get there."

For more information for churches and couples, including testimonial videos featuring David Powell and foster and adoptive parents, visit www.bchfosteradopt.org.

Cares Act creates incentives for individual giving in 2020

A new deduction for charitable donors who do not itemize when filing their tax returns

If you do not itemize but make a gift to charity, you will be able to take a special tax deduction up to \$300 to reduce your tax liability. Example of this above the line deduction is a taxpayer who takes the standard deduction and makes a \$300 cash gift to a public charity (BCH) in 2020 may claim the \$300 deduction in computing their AGI. The gift deduction is in addition to their standard deduction.

Lifting the cap on annual contributions to public charities (BCH) for individuals who itemize

A provision in the Cares Act provides an increase in the deduction limit up to 100% of a donor's AGI for

cash gifts to qualified charities (BCH). Prior to the Cares Act, the deduction was capped at 60%. Any excess contributions available can be carried over for five years.

Note: For corporations, the new law raises the annual limit from 10% to 25% of taxable income.

Remember, this information is not intended as legal advice. Consult your accountant, tax advisor, or attorney to determine the best strategy for your situation.

Thank you in advance for your investment in the life of a child. There are those who wish they could give at this time, but can't. Will you pray about giving a little extra on their behalf.

Prayer requested for alumni and their families — Alumni remember favorite staff of days gone by

By Lib Smathers Johnson (336) 299-7412 libsjohnson@triad.rr.com

On November 3, alumni who use Facebook communicating with fellow alumni experienced mixed emotions to a note that came from **Thomas Whitt ('55-'59)**.

Thomas graciously thanked fellow alumni for the warm family closeness he has experienced reconnecting with them, but he also gave the sad news that his cancer of four years ago had returned and expanded over his entire body. He informed us that radiation treatment had reduced the size of the tumors in his brain and the doctors have begun three types of medical injections. Friends are requesting prayers to bless the medical professionals now treating Thomas and prayers that Thomas will respond positively to the new meds. Please send encouraging cards to Thomas at 6171 Cedar Lane, Maple Falls, WA, 98266.

Alumni received other sad news on Facebook. **Janice Lewis Doherty** lost her husband **Ed** on Nov. 2. He had been in frail condition for quite some time. Friends can send condolences to Janice at 3971 Cobblestone Bend Dr., High Point, NC 27265.

Evelyn Dagenhart Marlowe mentioned that her sister **Barbara D. Kepley** is very ill. Friends can send cards to her at Lexington Health Care Center, 17 Cornelia Dr., Lexington, NC 27292.

We also received a request from **Virginia Crisp Seifert** to pray for **Emma Jean Crisp Maynard** who had been hospitalized. Sadly, Virginia notified us of her death shortly thereafter on Nov. 2. So many alumni from MH groups 10 and 15 years younger than Emma Jean came to know her through the MH webpage set up by **Sally Beck Ferguson** about 15 years ago. And they stayed in close contact for many years thru Facebook and annual Homecomings. Known affectionately by the webpage and Facebook group as **Ladybug**, Emma Jean will be sorely missed.

Members of Emma Jean's family wrote, "Our mother's faith was instilled at a very young age by her upbringing at Mills Home. That faith was enhanced through membership

of First Baptist Church of New Albany and later Harmony Baptist Church. Mother felt her faith in Jesus Christ had given her the strength to meet many challenges and overcome many obstacles in her life."

The widow of **Charles Maynard and Paul Eugene Harig**, Emma Jean was the mother of six children, grandmother to 10 and great grandmother to nine. The siblings with her at MH were **Virginia C. Seifert and Dorothy C. Lawhun**, now deceased. Condolences may be sent to Virginia at 6579 Portsmouth Dr., Reynoldsburg, OH 43227.

Thanks to several alumni who responded to my question regarding activities they have been engaged in during our COVID-19 restrictions. **Kaye Trantham Mills** wrote, "Gary and I found and 'fell in love with a two bedroom cottage' in Pilot Mountain—an area that we love to visit. It was built in 1948 and we wanted to bring it back to life. During the pandemic, we put in new flooring, painted, installed new siding, and furnished this home. We still need to refurbish the bathrooms, but it is comfortable now, and we spend weekends there. It is on the back side of Pilot Mountain, and from the front window, you can see the peak range of the Blue Ridge Mountains of VA. We often go into Mount Airy which is only ten miles away. It is a beautiful place to be in the fall. MH friends are invited to stop by! We'll go to Aunt Bea's for lunch."

Harry Walls wrote, "Lib, my pandemic time has been spent mostly exercising and getting ready for the Power-Ade Games & Senior Games for next spring. But I do like watching TV, reading, and putting away as many pies and cakes along the way. But all the pastries add pounds, so I have been walking a lot and doing sit ups. Oh yes, I am also back to doing my artwork of 'Pyro and painting' and taking care of stray cats."

Betty Jean Gasaway Hartsell wrote, "I was glad to see the weather finally cool enough to make the leaves change color. Now, I am enjoying the beauty as they fall. I am also enjoying a visit from my oldest

daughter, **Janelle Heise**, who is now retired from teaching music. She and I have been going to thrift and fabric shops in western North Carolina. She walks daily so I have been walking with her on a local trail my neighbors and I cut a few years ago. We visited Chimney Rock and climbed all of the 44 steps up to the flagpole. That was tough walking but great exercise; nevertheless, I let Jan walk alone the next day and I rested."

Flora Hicks Patton wrote that with the construction industry continuing to flourish through the pandemic, she has been fortunate to continue "office managing" at Piedmont Asphalt Construction Company. Despite working full-time, she too has spent a great deal of time in the upkeep of her home. Mainly she has freshened the paint throughout the house and freed up space by purging items she no longer uses. She counts herself lucky that she has also been able to attend church services.

Last June, we received an update sheet from **Patrick (Pat) N. Withers**. Pat's family, comprised of his father, mother, and brother **Mike**, moved to Mills Home in 1953 when his father **J.D. Withers** accepted the position of athletic director at MH. Pat easily fit into life on campus by being active in church, Sunday school, RA's, and the MH Boy Scout troop. His favorite campus worker was **Coach Tom Marlowe**. After finishing high school and college, Pat married **Jane Ella** with whom he reared three offspring. Jane Ella passed away in 2017. A resident of Thomasville, Pat is in charge of Davidson County Schools Maintenance. When returning for Homecoming, Pat enjoys the fellowships he is able to renew.

Ted Marlowe, whose parents were houseparents at Huffman Cottage for many years, also sent an update sheet. Ted came with his parents and his brother **Tommy** in 1951 and lived there until 1963 when he left for college. He admits freely that as a young boy living in the cottage of older girls, he found opportunities to be a pest. He even admits he specialized in getting into trouble. Ted and his wife **Linda** had one offspring who pro-

duced three grandchildren. Now widowed, he is a retired banker and loves time he can spend with the family. When asked about a favorite worker on campus, Ted replied, "**Chris Marlowe**, my mother, of course."

Mr. and Mrs. Marlowe were well liked as houseparents and Mr. Marlowe was very popular as a basketball and softball coach. Mrs. Marlowe returned very faithfully to Homecomings as long as she was able. Ted was pleased to say he was happy to bring her back for the last time when she was 90 years old.

Thanks to **Lewis Franklin Penley** for his update sheet. Lewis came to MH in 1964 with siblings **Teresa, Roy, Joy, Sandra, Delores, Richard and Janet**. He left in 1975. Memorable campus activities for Lewis were basketball, swimming, football, baseball, and working on the farm. **Estelle Crouch** was his favorite houseparent. Lewis married **Cindy** who already had two children and they now have four grandchildren. He is still active in the work world serving as a technician for North State.

Besides the update sheets from two former "scrub orphans" mentioned above, we received one from **Jesse and Linda Crooks**. Jesse and Linda Crooks arrived from Jena, LA as houseparents for Simmons Cottage in 1974 and they served until 1980. They had two sons and added a daughter during their time at Simmons. From those three offspring, they now have five grandchildren and three great grandchildren. They are currently living at 720 Rapp St., Thomasville, NC. Phone 336-476-5775. After leaving the service of BCH, Jesse worked for a while in the Thomasville Furniture Industry and in the Jesse Crooks Christian Ministry. Now retired, he is not as active in his ministry, but he does post sermons on Sermon Central and on Facebook. He is currently adding



touches to his sermons in hopes of publishing a book.

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



**Mills Home in Thomasville
Rainbow creates excitement**

Boys and girls at Mills Home stop from riding their bicycles to admire the rainbow that appeared above the campus grounds. The children were excited at the sight of its brilliant colors.



**Metrolina and First Baptist Charlotte
Baptists donate food and trailer**

Bob Lowman and Todd Jones from Metrolina Baptist Association not only deliver food and supplies collected by their churches, but a trailer as well. The trailer is donated by First Baptist in Charlotte.



**Vehicle Donations
Business owner donates van**

BCH friend and business owner Gayle McCorkle-Havens donated her business van to BCH. She said, "It's just one thing I wanted to do with what God has given me."



**Harcos Chemicals in Thomasville
Company gives second donation**

Dwight Riggs from Harcos Chemicals in Thomasville presented a \$2,500 check to Mills Homes' Regina Keener. They have given a total of \$5,000 in 2020 to help BCH's boys and girls.



**Correction: West Burnsville Baptist
Church provides potatoes**

Editors note: Information ran incorrectly last issue. West Burnsville Baptist led a church-wide effort to harvest potatoes for BCH. Members Mr. and Mrs. Dennis Hughes delivered them to Broyhill Home.



**Cameron Boys Camp in Cameron
Camp ready for holiday tradition**

Boys and chiefs dig the huge hole necessary for burying foil-wrapped turkeys for Camp's "Turkey in the Hole" Thanksgiving tradition. A bonfire will be built over the turkeys to cook them overnight.



**HOMEBASE at Western Carolina
College collects for HOMEBASE**

The College of Business at Western Carolina University donated supplies to BCH's college student outreach. HOMEBASE provides necessities and support to students attending the university.



**Hillcrest Baptist in Raleigh
Sewing group brings blankets**

The "Slip Stitch Sisterhood," an outreach of Hillcrest Baptist, delivered handmade blankets for the children and families BCH serves. The colorful blankets were used throughout BCH's ministries.

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Choir trips and piano lessons make good memories— Annual Christmas luncheon set for December 5

By **John Thompson**, 110 Lee K. Allen Drive, Havelock, NC 28532 (252)671-3515 jthompson117@ec.rr.com

Just a reminder of our Christmas Luncheon at King's Restaurant on Saturday, December 5. We begin at 1:00. Come a little early to fellowship. We will be having King's famous "all-you-can-eat" buffet for just \$13.99 each. You are encouraged to participate in "gift giving" with a \$10 present all wrapped up pretty. Don't forget to wear your mask and we be observing social distancing. Let's have a great crowd. Our president **Katie** and her sister, **Yvonne**, have some great things planned!

In the November *Charity & Children*, I shared what some alumni shared about their Kennedy Home (KH) music experiences and how they have used their talents since. Here are a few more.

Judy Simmons White (66-74), daughter of **Mr. and Mrs. Simmons**, who were houseparents. Judy was very talented with her singing in the church youth choir and especially the Madrigal Singers who met and gave concerts at the gym. She writes, "Now, I can't carry a tune in a bucket. But then, I sang with the Madrigal Singers. We sang songs from musicals. I especially had fun with 'Bicycle Built For Two.' We sang a lot of show tunes from things like 'The Sound of Music,' 'South Pacific,' and many, many more."

Barbara Branch Smith shared this note, "I'm afraid I have very little to offer you regarding my music involvement. **Mrs. Leary** was my piano teacher and I loved my lessons and loved Mrs. Leary. I heard from her a few months back.

"If I recall correctly, I quit piano sometime during the summer and I guess I might have thought it interrupted my fun. That plus getting sand spurs in my feet while walking all the way up to their house. But I do regret quitting. I remember singing in the choir and wearing those beautiful robes. But someone else will need to tell you who our choir director was, I

don't recall. Although I have just a little to add to the topic, I will enjoy reading about other folk's memories."

Donna Wade Daniels shares, "Music has always been an important part of my life. Even before going to KH, my sisters and I would sit on the hill in front of our house and sing. At KH, I not only enjoyed being in the choir, I had the best piano teacher ever—**Mr. Thompson** taught a never-ending group of kids piano. One year, Mr. Thompson got permission to hold our piano recital in Cedar Dell. That was really awesome! Trips the choir made all over the state were equally as exciting—that is after the rehearsals held at the beach cottage! Mr. Thompson encouraged us to not just sing in the choir, but to also sing solos and play the piano during church services.

"Some of my favorite memories are of singing duets with **Mary Thomas** and playing duets with Mr. Thompson or accompanying **Mr. Beacham** when he sang 'He Touched Me.'

"Since leaving KH, I have been involved in music in different ways. During my teenage years, I played piano and helped with the children's choirs for church. Later, after learning a bit more, I played for the Gourmet Dinner Club at the country club in Sanford where I worked. I sang in the church choir and was backup pianist. After September 11, 2001, I wrote my first song when my son joined the Army and deployed overseas. Soon after, I wrote a patriotic song called 'As Americans We Stand.' It was included on an 'indie' album published by a Nashville studio. I didn't do the vocals for that recording because I had not begun to sing as a soloist.

"Through the years since then, I became more comfortable singing by myself as well as with others and have written dozens of songs—some Christian and some secular. I

love hosting karaoke parties, especially with my siblings because they sing, too!"

Donna Duty Weeks shared a word, "Okay, here is a little article about how I loved singing in the choir while living at KH. I'm going to share about how I joined the choir before **Brother John** came as choir director when we were led in choir by **Bonita Leary**, and then I'll share some about being in choir when he was there. Both times were wonderful experiences for me.

"When I first came in 1967, it was the beginning of many new experiences for me, and one such experience was singing in a church choir! I had never sung in a church choir before, so not long after arriving on campus, I joined. Mrs. Bonita Leary was the director. She was so patient with many of us, like myself, who had never sung in a choir. I was a very shy little girl of 11 years old and scared to be in front of people—but I found singing in the choir with my friends beside me was not scary at all, it was fun.

"Choir practice was every week, and then on Sunday, we all wore pretty choir robes and would march into the choir loft. Mrs. Leary always sat at the organ in the choir loft. There were also mirrors on each side of the organ where she could look out at the audience. Her two small children, **Stanley and Emma**, would sit on the front row every Sunday, and she would watch them from those mirrors.

"I thoroughly enjoyed my time in choir under the direction of Mrs. Leary. John Thompson came to KH as the new choir director and I continued to enjoy the choir. We began taking choir trips to different places in North Carolina to sing at churches. We would spend the night in different church members' homes.

"I can honestly say that I learned to love praising the Lord in song first at KH. Now when I

go back for Homecomings, one of the highlights of the weekend for me is singing in the alumni choir with my alumni brothers and sisters!! Thank you Bonita Leary and John Thompson for instilling in me a love for praising God in song. The current church I attend does not have a choir, but I have sung in a few church choirs in the past since leaving."

THANKS SO MUCH to all of you who took the time to write about music at KH and afterwards.

Debbie Lassiter sent information about the death of **Daniel Rick Murray**, 65, of Burlington. He died January 17. He lived at Kennedy Home in the 60s and 70s. He was a native of Wake County. He also served his country in the United States Navy. He was a former employee of Lowes Home Improvement. He is survived by his son **Bruce Murray** and his wife, **Patricia**, of Burlington; four grandchildren—**Skilar Murray, Belinda Murray, Lori May Murray and Christine Frances Murray** and one brother, **Eugene Murray**, of Kinston. In addition to his parents, Mr. Murray was preceded in death by a brother **Curtis Ray Murray**.

Thanks Debbie for sending this information.

Remember, take a few minutes and write something for me to use in my January column and send soon—we go to press early for this issue of *C&C*. I will be writing it near the end of this month. Write about some of your memories, your friends, contacts you have now, what you plan to do at the beginning of 2021.

Becky and I wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a blessed New Year! Hope to see you at the Christmas alumni party at King's.



Always remember that I love you a whole bunch.—jt

John Thompson served at Kennedy Home from 1972-1977. Today, he enjoys a very active retirement.

Give thanks with a grateful heart

By Jim Edminson, Editor

I am in the attic, taking stock of holiday decorations stored in boxes, deciding which to bring down this year. On top are some photo albums, and I stop to remember as this song begins playing on repeat in my mind: *“Give thanks with a grateful heart/Give thanks to the Holy One/Give thanks because He’s given Jesus Christ, His Son...”*

Living on the campus of Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge had its perks for students with families: first-class music compliments of the “Golden Band from Tigerland” fall practice sessions, innovative art shows featuring professors and students, speeches and concerts by world-renowned personalities and performers. In summer, the AgCenter students produced yummy ice cream in true farm-to-table fashion long before it was trendy; and at Christmas time, the forestry students showcased their trees ready for living rooms during the holidays.

Kathy and I took turns pulling the Radio Flyer wagon with infant son Kyle tucked into one of Grandme’s afghans from our apartment at the gates of the university to the opposite corner of LSU near the AgCenter. The tree lot smelled of resin and sap, and the jolly talk and laughter made it festive. The forestry students sorted the trees by height and fullness—prices based on both. In the back, among the shorter gap-branched trees, we chose our Christmas pine. Not quite Charlie Brown-style and not destined for the grand halls of River Road, it was just right for our married student housing apartment.

“Give thanks with a grateful heart...”

The photos in the album tell the real story. The decorated version was a beauty occupying the entire corner of the far wall of our small living room. Crocheted ornaments dominate the decor, and Grandma’s keepsake pieces have center stage. But there is another photo of that tree sitting outside the apartment. The photo shows a perfectly pruned and trimmed

white pine—on the front side only! On the backside, the tree is clearly missing two-thirds of its branches and needles!

“Give thanks with a grateful heart...”

The *Daily Reveille* announced the AgCenter tree sale “for every price-point” and we calendared the event. Before we paid, we told each other it would look perfect tucked into the corner; we smilingly added that our ornaments would look more plentiful since we would only decorate a third of a tree.

“And now let the weak say, ‘I am strong!’ Let the poor say, ‘I am rich!’ Because of what the Lord has done for us...”

My sweetheart and I will share our 40th Christmas together this year, and there are photos of every tree to the present. This year, I mentioned to Kathy my idea of traveling to Alleghany County for a live tree, and her eyes lit up. We reminisced about all of our trees, live and life-like, through the years, and out came more albums. We looked for the ornaments that are now treasures tucked into the branches. We watched our family grow and the houses and apartments change over time.

“Give thanks with a grateful heart...”

As this blessed Season comes around again, we are anticipating a very different kind of celebration, and we wonder, with you all, how the holidays will look and feel in 2020. Maybe more than ever before, the Reason for the Season must remain uppermost in hearts and minds gathered to worship the birth of the Savior Who came among us in simple and humble manner to become the One Who takes away the sins of the world. May our joy be found in no other, and may each of us look to the Author and Finisher of our faith.

Merry Christmas, friends.



Edminson encourages others through the Good News of Jesus. Invite him to preach or speak at your church. Contact him by email at wjedminson@bchfamily.org.



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