

# Charity & Children

The historic publication of Baptist Children's Homes of North Carolina, first to tell the story for 135 years.

f i y t e @bchfamily

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Issue 3

Volume 135

## IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

# Calling all friends!

## Help someone discover their dream job

By Michael C. Blackwell, President/CEO

I'm calling on every reader of **Charity & Children** to help Baptist Children's Homes (BCH) get the word out: "We're hiring!" But we are not looking for people who just need a job; we are looking for people who feel called to serve hurting children and families.



Dr. Blackwell

Currently, we have opportunities for people who love the Lord and are seeking their dream job. There are multiple cottage parent and wilderness camp chief openings. The ever-expanding foster family care ministry needs case managers and licenser/trainer staff. North Carolina Baptist Aging Ministry, NCBAM, needs two regional directors. Our ministry to

intellectual and developmentally disabled adults has multiple opportunities. Even the Weekday Education program in Thomasville needs teachers. (See a complete listing at [bchcareers.org](http://bchcareers.org).)

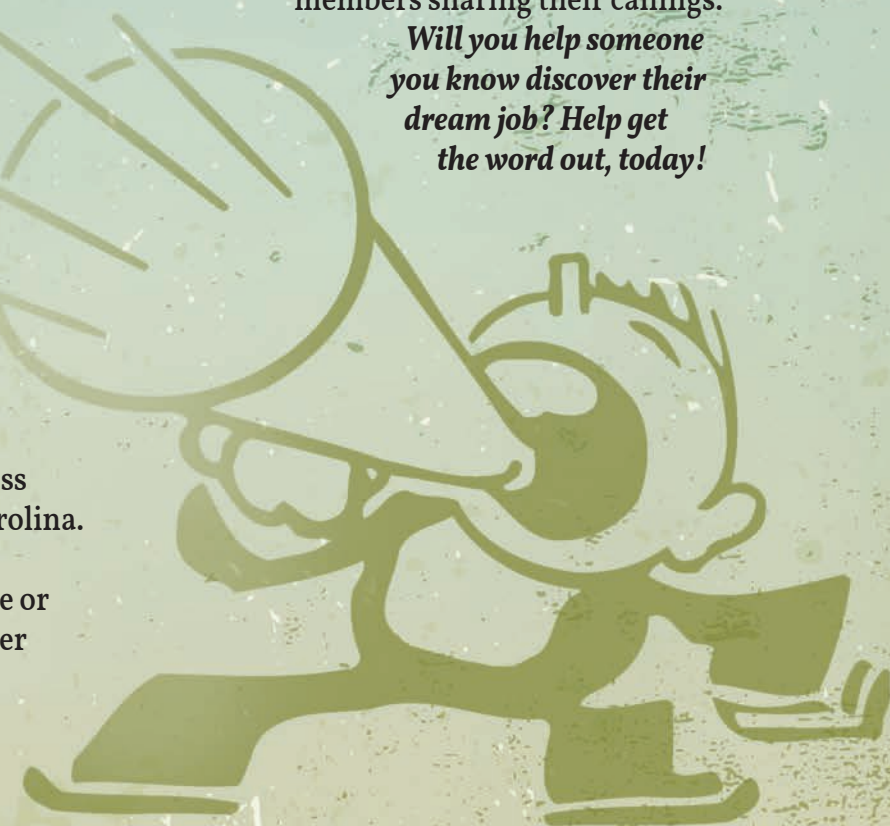
I believe you know someone who needs to know about BCH's wonderful career opportunities, openings at many of our more than thirty locations across North and South Carolina.

When I ask a BCH staff member why he or she serves, the answer is always the same: **"I was called."**

But don't take my word

for it. Read about BCH's Amanda Arrington Doty's personal journey on page three. Or visit [bchcareers.org](http://bchcareers.org) and watch three videos of staff members sharing their callings.

**Will you help someone you know discover their dream job? Help get the word out, today!**





# Fight the fear of getting older, live life with purpose

By Michael C. Blackwell, President/CEO (Chief Encouragement Officer)

Each day in my email, I receive *Merriam-Webster's* "Word of the Day." I credit it for my ever-growing vocabulary. Recently, a word came across my desk, catching my eye: FOGO. It's not really a word, it is an acronym or as *Merriam-Webster* defines: a word formed from the initial letter of each of the successive parts of a compound term. In other words, each letter stands for a distinct word. FOGO is made up of the first letter of four words that together convey a unique meaning, **FOGO—fear of getting older.**

FOGO is widespread. Along with aging, comes a fair amount of misunderstandings, falsehoods, and fallacies about growing older, often paralyzing aging people. Author on aging topics and *Psychology Today* blogger Meg Selig has written about FOGO. The seventy-eight-year-old points out three amazing facts, dispelling myths about getting older:

**1. Older people tend to be happier people.** From age 51 upward, she writes from her research, happiness levels begin to increase. If that's the case, I should be delirious.

**2. Older people tend to be healthier people.** Most older people rate their health as either good or excellent because they can still do the things that matter to them.

**3. Older people are mentally healthier.** Older people have lower rates of near-

ly all mental problems, including depression and social anxiety, as noted in the book, *A Long Bright Future*, by longevity and aging expert Laura Carstensen.

There's another fear I won't talk about and that is **FOLO**. You've probably never heard of that one—I just made it up: **FOLO—fear of LOOKING older.** I'm not going to touch that one. But it is important to grow older with grace and healthy aging.

In fact, I want to encourage those of you of a certain age—and you will know if I'm talking about you—to have a "Plan for Healthy Aging." Ask yourself, "What can I do to make life better today?" Too many people go to their graves with

their music still inside them, with their poetry yet to be written.

Don't let that happen to you. When opportunity knocks, don't knock the opportunity. Grab the brass ring. Hear your music. Play your music before the song is over.

Determine today to be proactive and run from **FEAR—which is just "false evidence appearing real!"** Having an antidote for those suffering from FOGO can turn one's life around:

**1. We may fear physical decline and chronic illness.** Possible antidote: Exercise regularly and live a healthy lifestyle. I was once asked by a reporter about the "Key to Success." My answer was and still is—a heart-friendly meal and a good night's sleep.

**2. We may fear loss of memory and other age-related maladies.** Possible antidote: Acquaint yourself now with the latest research on preventing dementia. Work puzzles. Watch *Wheel of Fortune* and *Jeopardy*. They are staples in our house. Don't call me at 7 p.m.

**3. We may fear loss of money.** Possible antidote: Create a budget, save more, and spend less.

**4. We may fear loneliness.** Possible antidotes: Cherish your friends and connect often. Cherish your family and keep in touch.

Now, if you have any other FOGO concerns, take these words from Andy Rooney to heart, "I didn't get old on purpose. It just happened. If you're lucky, it could happen to you."

And remember, whether you are young or young at heart, you are not alone. God is with you—in you—for you. God is on your side because you are on God's side. When the storms of life come, God is there. When we feel alone and depressed, God is there. **When we feel we don't matter, and we're gripped with fear, remember, God is there.**



**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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# A career change is risky, but for me, it was worth it

By **Amanda Arrington Doty, MEd, PHR**, BCH Recruiting and Staff Development Manager

**H**ave you ever looked back on your life and thought, “Man, if I’d only known then what I know now!”

The decisions I’ve made in my adult life have shaped me into the person I am, and for the most part, I am proud of the huge leaps of faith that I’ve taken, despite the risk I may have felt. My name is Amanda Doty and I serve as the recruiting and staff development manager for Baptist Children’s Homes (BCH).

I grew up in Waynesville which is only a few miles from BCH’s beautiful Broyhill Home. First Baptist Church of Waynesville, where I attended, welcomed and loved the Broyhill children who attended our church. These children were my friends and classmates in Sunday school and at the local public school. I remember admiring the BCH cottage parents as I witnessed the great love they had for every boy and girl. I was impressed by these caring Christians who devoted themselves to making a difference in these young lives. I knew it had to be hard, and sometimes it may have brought a tear. But as I can attest to from my own life, **love is risky**. These childhood experiences planted a seed in my heart for service. It was a seed that blossomed into a mission and career.

Fast forward to married life and the day I became a mom to a beautiful baby girl. It was a joy, but future pregnancy complications proved that one child would be all I would have. Heartbreaking as this was at the time, I knew that God had more in store for me. One weekend, while I was working at the hospital (I was a CT tech for more than 17 years), I was offered the opportunity to become a mother to a newborn baby whose biological mother could not care for her. And in one weekend, I had a new baby to love.

I took a risk. I knew from the start that there would be paperwork, decisions, worry, and obstacles standing in the way. It was a risky decision, but I trusted God to provide the way. And God did. Nine years later, I have another amazing daughter who is full of life and calls herself my “best buddy.” Although **adoption is risky**,

God wasn’t finished.

After becoming parents of a biological daughter and an adopted daughter, God moved our hearts into a mission with children. Family foster care became a passion and we quickly became foster parents to an amazing, but very abused and broken five-year-old girl. Long nights dealing with her painful trauma and us feeling the frustration with bad choices adults make, it was tough. But **foster care is risky**.

I trusted in God’s plan and we were used as stepping stones for this child to find an adoptive family and thrive in a new home. She is now a big sister herself and is living her best life. But God still wasn’t finished.

In 2017, when I felt like I was at the top of my career field and making more money than I’d ever dreamed, God placed on my heart a call to full-time service. I spent more than six months talking with spiritual mentors, praying, and ultimately making big, life-changing decisions.

I laid down my ego and my profession to take my **dream job** as a cottage parent at Mills Home in

Thomasville. Suddenly, I found myself in a cottage with eight teenage girls in a totally new career/mission field and wondering how in the world was God going to use me. Early mornings, sleepless nights, listening and sharing their traumatic experiences, dealing with anger and bitterness, watching them grow and change, experiencing their progress, feeling their pain, receiving their hugs and acceptance, a **career change is risky**.

I was in the front line waging battle and leading the parade of victory both at the same time—it was truly the most amazing place in the world. I remember being told at my interview: “This will be the hardest job you’ll ever love.”

God still wasn’t finished. I later transitioned into the position I have now. This organization has continued to sow seeds of growth into my life, both professionally and personally. I have grown, changed, learned, and experienced the most amazing work culture that exists. **Giving yourself is risky, love is risky, but it’s all worth it.**

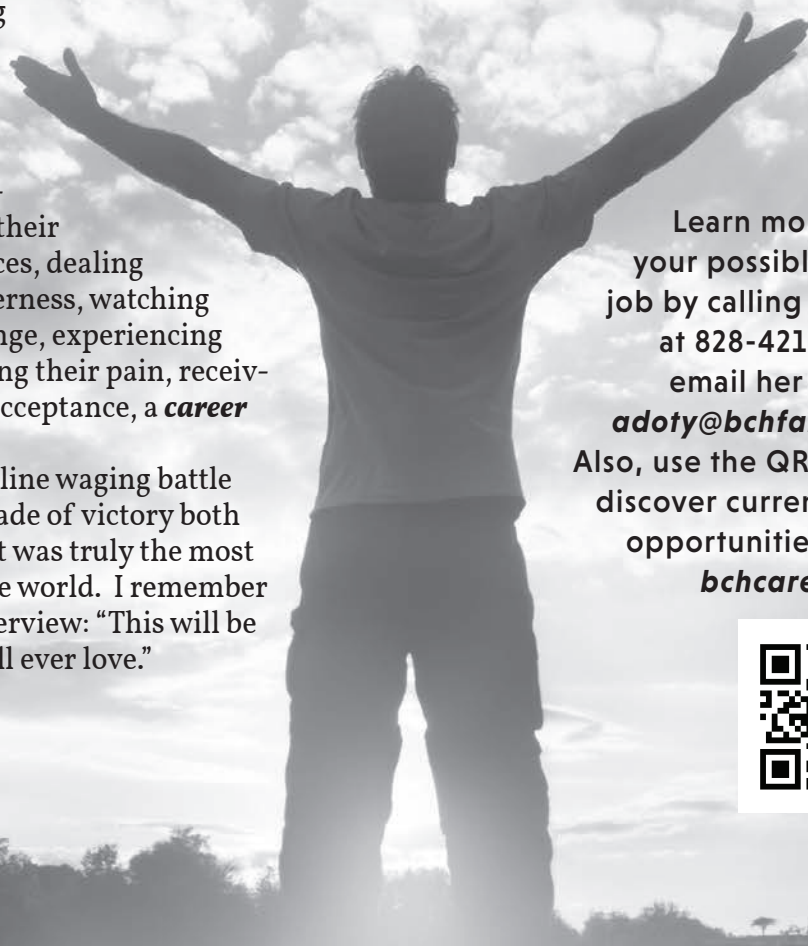
As much as we would like to plan what our lives **should** or **could** look like, the beauty is in the risk. It’s in the unknown that we meet God. And the question, “What if I knew then what I know now?” Well, I would do **even more**. I would look at the risk and jump. I would say **yes** to God more. Because in the end, God provides more than can be imagined to accomplish His will.

The risks I’ve taken have led to a richness in life I cannot explain. Maybe you are right now in one of these decision moments in life where God is asking you to step out on faith and **be a risk-taker**. Maybe you know someone who is seeking God’s direction for their life. I challenge you to share this article with a person who may be looking for an opportunity to serve God and find their dream job. BCH has countless opportunities to make a real difference in the lives of hurting children and families.

Remember, **love is risky**. I am challenging you to be open to God’s calling. I challenge you to say **yes**.



Amanda Arrington Doty



Learn more about your possible dream job by calling Amanda at 828-421-0159 or email her today at [adoty@bchfamily.org](mailto:adoty@bchfamily.org). Also, use the QR code to discover current career opportunities or visit [bchcareers.org](http://bchcareers.org).





# God is calling—will you let it go to voice mail?

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

**A** little over 45 years ago, I walked through the doors of Bellewood Children's Home in Anchorage, Kentucky to become a houseparent to 15 boys ages 13 to 18. Since that time, I have been so very blessed to be a part of "Building God's Kingdom" through a ministry of orphan care, connecting thousands of vulnerable children with the gospel lived out through loving Christians called to care for the "least of these." What a wonderful blessed joy to be able to witness the transformation taking place in the lives of God's precious children. It has been an amazing journey. However, not always easy.

For years I have heard the adage, "Find a job you love and you will never have to work a day." I have not found this to be true. I absolutely love, love, love my job, but because of the trauma filled world we live in, it can sometimes be very hard, risky, messy work. The powerful transformative grace and hope I have witnessed and experienced over the years have been more than well worth the investment of my heart, my calling.

So, what is my "why?" My "why" is my faith walk with Jesus. Because of my experience in and through Jesus Christ, I want to share the love, grace, forgiveness, hope, and peace He has showered on my life. My "why" is my faith in Jesus and his calling on my life to care for His children. I know this is also your "why" as you live out God's calling on your heart to care for "the least of these" as you pray and invest in our ministry in so many ways.

One couple that answered God's calling on their hearts is Roger and Shanell Cook. I love sharing their story with congregations all across the state. Shanell and Roger had talked about having as many as six children. After the birth of their son, Jackson, they were informed they would not be able to biologically have other children. Sixteen years passed. Roger went through a very difficult but successful battle with esophageal cancer. While on this journey, they began evaluating what God wanted for their family. While BCH was in the process of changing banks, they



The Cook family responded to God's call to become a BCH foster family. Beginning in 2018, the family has fostered three girls who have since been adopted into their family. Pictured above: son Jackson, Makayla, Harmony, dad Roger, mom Shanell, and Ashley.

met Shanell, who shared with them her families desire to foster with the intent to adopt. Through BCH, Shanell and Roger became licensed foster parents in January, 2018. On Valentine's Day that year they met a beautiful 6-year-old named Makayla. On April 26, 2019, Makayla became a permanent member of the Cook family. On August 1, 2019, Makayla became a permanent member of God's family when she accepted Christ into her heart. That is not the end of their journey. They tore out walls and added rooms to care for even more children.

Shanell received yet another call from us asking if they would be willing to foster a 7-month-old. Roger was in training that day. Shanell sent him a text explaining the call she had received, to which Roger responded with a "yes." She sent him a second text reiterating the child was a 7-month-old. Roger once again responded "yes." She sent him a third text reiterating it was a baby and they had not cared for a baby in 17 years. Roger responded by sending her a text which simply stated, "God is calling, are you going to answer or let it go to voice mail?" To which Shanell responded, "I am on my way to pick up the baby."

On July 15, 2020, two-year-old Harmony became a permanent part of the Cook family. On June 2, 2020, Roger and Shanell became foster parents to 15-year-old Ashley.

On October 1, 2020, Ashley became a permanent member of the Cook family.

Shanell shared with me they welcomed a 7-year-old boy into their home February 22, 2022. Since beginning their journey with us, they have far exceeded their dream of six children.

I recently asked Shanell about their journey. Her first word to describe their experience was, "Wonderful." Her next quote I will use going forward to describe our ministry. "Their trauma becomes our trauma as we experience this journey with them. It's not easy. It can feel risky. But it is so worth it. It has been wonderful."

Two things that have not changed over 45 plus years. First, the need is tremendous. Over 16,000 children in

North Carolina are in need of a family. Second, people are called to fill the need.

So, I say to you what Roger said to Shanell, "God is calling, are you going to answer or let it go to voice mail?" God is calling us to pray and seek His will. God is calling us to give that others may serve. God is calling some to turn their calling into a career by becoming houseparents, foster parents, counselors/chiefs, or other opportunities within our ministry. God is calling some of you to come alongside us to serve as volunteers.

God is calling, will you answer or will you let it go to voice mail?

I end my thoughts with you today sharing this text I received today from Shanell: "Thank you for making us a part of the BCH family! I am so blessed to be a foster parent and have my forever expanding family! While there are challenges, the blessings far outweigh the challenges! Whether it's one hour, one day, one week, one month, one year, every child will know what love is and know who Jesus is! That is what it is all about!"

There are many ways you can answer God's call to care for His children through the ministry of BCH. For more information on how you can make a difference in the life of those we care for, contact me at 336-689-4442 or [bbgray@bchfamily.org](mailto:bbgray@bchfamily.org).



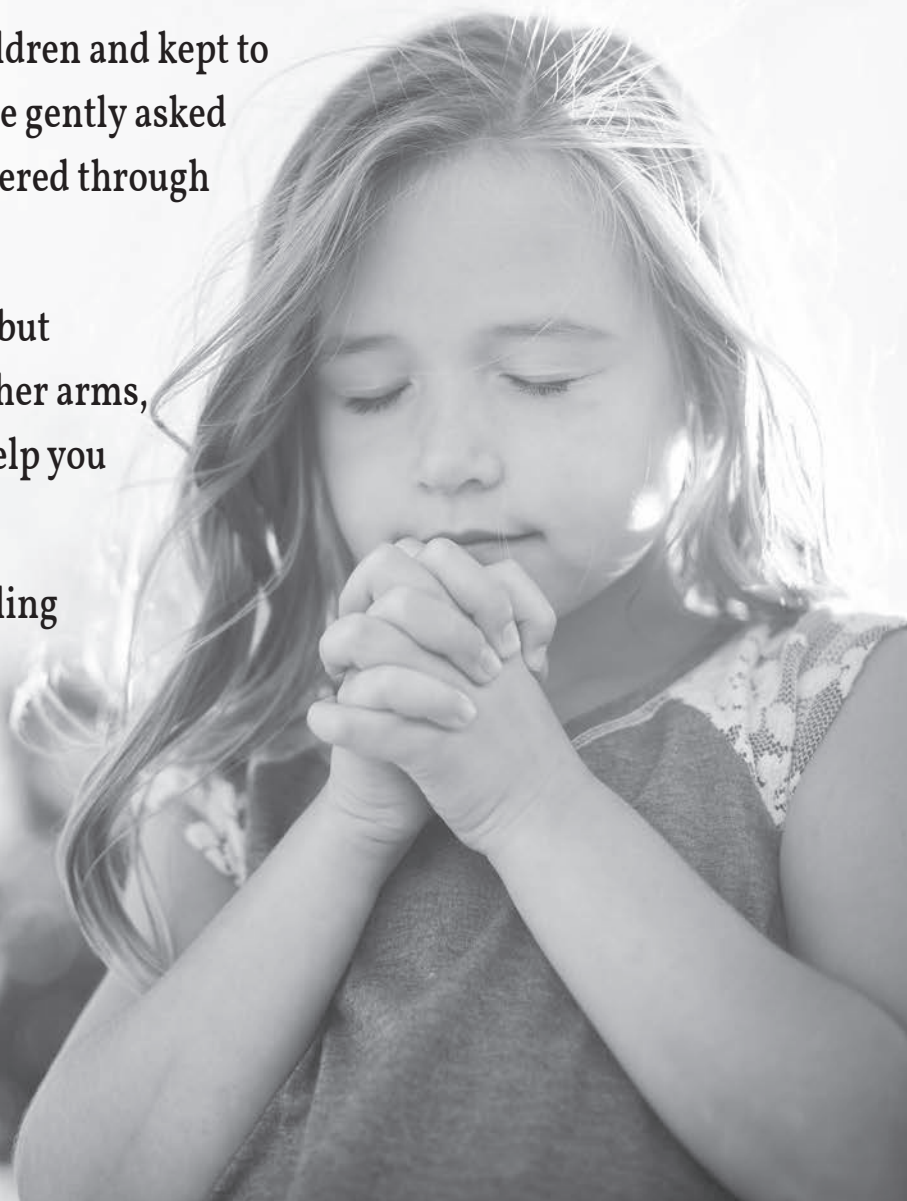
*For many years,* Diane and her husband Richard have been cottage parents. They've learned healing a broken heart is never easy.

Ellie's mother and father was lost in their drug addictions. The last day the eight-year-old said goodbye to her parents, she had no idea it was forever.

Ellie seldom felt like playing with the other children and kept to herself. One day while coloring with Ellie, Diane gently asked why she was sad. "Nobody loves me," she whispered through her tears.

Diane's wispered back, "Not only do I love you, but Jesus loves you, too" Consoling the little girl in her arms, she assured her, "We will be here for you and help you whenever you need somebody."

Diane showed Ellie the love of Jesus. It was healing to the young girl's heart. Because of your generous gift, cottage moms like Diane share a loving God and offer hope. This Easter, Ellie's life is renewed through the Gospel being lived before her. Make your Easter gift today and share the hope of Christ that heals children's hurts, mends hearts, and restores lives.



*Use my gift to heal a child's hurt!*

☐ \$50   ☐ \$100   ☐ \$250   ☐ \$500   ☐ \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Any size gift!

To make a gift by check: Print your information below and mail this form with your check.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

You can make your gift by credit card at [www.bchfamily.org/givenow](http://www.bchfamily.org/givenow) or phone Faith Frazier at 336-474-1312.

☐ Yes, I would like to receive email updates.   ☐ Contact me with information on how to prepare a Christian Will.

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



# Church runs to relay the need

By Blake Ragsdale, Managing Editor

While many people were relaxing during Christmas break or preparing for the New Year, members from Hickory Grove Baptist Church in Charlotte geared up for a radically different end to 2021. A team of one-dozen runners, and their support team, literally took to the streets to raise awareness and support for fostering and adopting vulnerable North Carolina children.

A statewide, relay race dubbed “RUN FAR” (Foster Adoption Run) saw team members begin at the Virginia/North Carolina border on December 29 and run 139 miles to a finish line at the North Carolina/South Carolina border in a little more than 24 hours. The runners divided into teams of four taking turns to complete the 15-leg race.

“I think everything we do we do, it for the glory of God, even a challenge such as running for the cause of foster care and adoption,” says Casey Norkett, Missions Pastor for Hickory Grove and President of the Board of Directors for the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina (BSCNC).

The church is a strong supporter of the EVERY CHILD Foster & Adoption Ministry, a partnership between Baptist Children’s



Twelve runners from Hickory Grove Baptist in Charlotte undertook a 139-mile statewide relay race on December 29 to raise awareness for foster care and adoption. Dubbed RUN FAR, the team’s mission states “We RUN FAR to see every child receive the caring home that he or she deserves through the direct involvement of NC Baptists.”

Homes (BCH) and BSCNC to equip churches and their couples to be involved with foster care and adoption. The RUN FAR team used the race to point towards the reality that there are more than 16,000 children in the state’s foster care system that need caring, Christian homes.

The race not only raised more than \$3,500,

but in the days following, BCH saw an increase in churches and couples inquiring about EVERY CHILD.

“For these men and women runners to point towards the need is incredible,” Norkett shares. “It would be tremendous for every church to develop foster families and respite.”

Learn more at [every-child.org](http://every-child.org).



## Blackwell receives honorary Doctor of Divinity

BCH President/CEO Dr. Michael C. Blackwell received United Cornerstone University’s (UCU) highest honorary award, Doctor of Divinity, on Saturday, January 29 at Mills Home Baptist Church in Thomasville. The award was presented by UCU Founder and President Bishop Dr. George B. Jackson in recognition of Dr. Blackwell’s contributions to the welfare of children and families and for his lifelong support of human rights.



## Hope Harvest

**BARBECUE, BANDS & BAPTIST CHILDREN’S HOMES**

**Saturday, April 30, 2022**  
6 to 8pm at Mills Home

**Campus tours & shopping at Fancy Finds start at 4pm**

An outdoor, family-friendly event giving you an opportunity to make a difference in the lives of vulnerable, Triad children.

- ◇ Joe’s BBQ Dinner
- ◇ Live music with “Guilford” and “Caroline & Company”
- ◇ Silent Auction
- ◇ Children’s activities

Tickets \$20 adults, \$10 children.  
Contact Karen at (336) 307-9464 or visit [bchfamily.org/hope-harvest](http://bchfamily.org/hope-harvest).



# Family fosters by God's grace

By **Blake Ragsdale**, Managing Editor

**B**radley and Kelly Johnson felt compelled to become a foster care family, but were uncertain, from a practical standpoint, how to make it a reality. The couple's schedules stay busy with Bradley serving as senior pastor of Newfound Baptist Church in Leicester in addition to his and Kelly's commitments to their four biological children.

Turning to the *EVERY CHILD Foster & Adoption Ministry*, a partnership between Baptist Children's Homes (BCH) and the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, made the training and licensing process possible.

"Having four children of our own, we would not have been able to go out every week to a special training facility," Kelly shares. "The neat thing about BCH is they send a trainer to our home."

As the Johnsons went through the process, they continued to learn more about the vital need for foster care families. In North Carolina alone there are more than 16,000 children in the state's foster care system.

"We didn't realize there was such a huge need until our training," Bradley shares. "It was then we realized that there were children all around us needing foster care."

Once training and licensing was completed, BCH case manager Michelle Kagan was assigned to help the family with their placements. It wasn't long before Kagan called and asked if the Johnsons would be willing to foster two young sisters. The couple agreed.

"We brought the girls into our home and



Pastor Bradley Johnson and wife Kelly, along with their four biological children, became a foster care family through the **EVERY CHILD Foster & Adoption Ministry**. The couple shares their family's journey in a two-minute video. Visit [www.bit.ly/johnsonec](http://www.bit.ly/johnsonec) or by scan the QR code to watch.

they adapted beautifully. You could tell their momma had done a really good job raising them and teaching them," Kelly explains. "Their mom just needed some time to get back on her feet."

The Johnsons were unsure of how long the sisters would be with them, however, their time together ended sooner than anticipated. In the sixth week of placement, the Johnsons received a call that the judge had ordered the girls to be reunited with their mother that day. At that same moment, the girls were already on a scheduled visit with their mother meaning they would not return to the Johnson's home.

"We didn't have the opportunity to say goodbye," Kelly tearfully shares. "We always

knew they were going back to their mother; it was just such a heartbreaking thing not being able to celebrate with them that they were getting to go back home."

"We were grieving that loss," Bradley adds.

The Johnsons took two months off from fostering to recover emotionally. Not long after their respite ended, Kagan called about a baby needing foster care. Again, the Johnsons opened their home, and hearts, to this child in need.

"As before, it's been a beautiful thing for our family," Kelly says.

"I think if we had not partnered with Baptist Children's Homes, we would not have even attempted a second placement because the way the first one ended was so tough," Bradley divulges. "Thankfully, BCH stepped in and our BCH case manager helped us walk through this."

Kelly agrees. "Michelle said God has called us to do this for today. You have this child for today. So you love her, care for her and give her everything she needs for today."

Despite hardships, the Johnsons are undeterred and have leaned on God.

"I think you need to go into foster care realizing that it is a messy situation and it is incredibly hard, but it is worth doing," Bradley shares. "God has blessed us and helped us by His grace. We can't imagine not doing this."

"We tell everyone if you are considering foster care, consider going through Baptist Children's Homes."

Learn more about BCH and BSCNC's foster and adopt ministry at [every-child.org](http://every-child.org).

## They turned callings to ministry into BCH careers

Watch short BCH staff testimonials and hear their experiences serving at Baptist Children's Homes. Visit [bchcareers.org](http://bchcareers.org).



Adam & Sian Saunders care for vulnerable children as cottage parents at Broyhill Home in Clyde. Watch by scanning the QR code or visit [www.bit.ly/careercp](http://www.bit.ly/careercp).



R.J. Osborne is a chief (counselor) at Cameron Boys Camp—24/7 wilderness program for at-risk boys. Scan the QR code to watch or go to [www.bit.ly/careercp](http://www.bit.ly/careercp).



Aubrey Allen serves as a chief (counselor) at Camp Duncan—24/7 wilderness program for at-risk girls. Watch by scanning the QR code or visit [www.bit.ly/careercp](http://www.bit.ly/careercp).



# Food drive efforts point children towards Jesus

Much has changed in the past two years as individuals, families, churches, as well as caregivers at Baptist Children's Homes (BCH), have all navigated the challenges of COVID-19. In the midst of change, there are some things that unfortunately remain constant: everyday children throughout North Carolina go without eating.

"Our cottage parents and staff see the signs of hunger far too often," said BCH President/CEO Michael C. Blackwell. "Boys and girls arrive in our care needing to eat immediately. It's why the Food Roundup is vital."

When churches, along with NC Baptists across the state, collect food, supplies and gift cards

through the Food Roundup in April, it ensures BCH's caregivers can provide three meals a day plus snacks to every one they serve.

"It is only through being



# FOOD ROUNDUP

BAPTIST CHILDREN'S HOMES



on mission together with statewide associational missions strategists, church leaders and volunteers that the food drive possible," Blackwell said. "We are immensely grateful for the difference they make through this annual effort."

Blackwell shared that as churches are

providing food they are pointing boys and girls towards Christ.

"When the children ask their BCH cottage parents why churches collect food for them, they are able to say, 'It's because they love you, but most importantly, it's because they want you to know that God loves you.'"

A number of resources to help NC Baptists promote the Food Roundup—including flyers, slides, social media posts and a video—are available at [bchfoodroundup.org](http://bchfoodroundup.org).

Questions? Contact BCH's Alan Williams at 336-474-1277 or [awilliams@bchfamily.org](mailto:awilliams@bchfamily.org).

## Updated needs list focuses collecting efforts

### MOST NEEDED ITEMS:

- Paper Products (paper towels, toilet paper, Kleenex, napkins)
- Hand Sanitizer
- Clorox & Lysol wipes
- Household cleaning products (i.e. bleach, Comet, Lysol spray, Clorox spray, Windex, Pinesol, Pledge, Tilex, etc.)
- Canned Fruits
- Fruit Juice (Apple, Orange, Grape, Cranberry)
- Laundry Detergent
- Copy/Printer Paper
- Baked Beans
- Bottled Water
- Dry Cereal
- Spaghetti Sauce
- Pasta (Spaghetti, Lasagna, Macaroni)
- Canned Tomatoes (diced, sauce, paste)
- Pancake Mix and Syrup
- Soups (All types & condensed)
- Sugar (Granulated & Brown)
- Flour
- Splenda
- Popcorn, Kettle Corn
- Apple Sauce
- Fruit Pie Filling (Cherry and Peach)
- Beverage Mixes (Tea, Tang, Kool-Aid, Lemonade, Cider Mix - All Sugar Free)
- Vegetable Oil, Shortening, Olive Oil, Pam Cooking Spray, Bakers Choice
- Canned Sweet Potatoes,
- Canned Yams
- Canned Meats (pink salmon, tuna, roast beef, chicken - packed in water)
- Stuffing Mix
- Gravy Mixes
- Hamburger, Chicken, and Tuna Helper (all types)
- Pickles (Sweet & Dill)
- Refried Beans
- Hot Chocolate Mix
- Snack Foods with & without sugar (Fruit Rollups, Fruit Cups, Beef Jerky, Slim Jims, Pepperoni Sticks, Cheese Nips, Pretzels, etc.)
- Healthy Snacks (Dried

- Fruit, Nuts, Raisins, Cranraisins, Trail Mix)
- Individual Cookie Packs
- Jello
- PopTarts
- Rice
- Instant Potatoes (scalloped, au gratin, mashed, julienne)
- Muffin Mixes
- Bisquick Mix
- Kidney Beans
- Pickle Relish
- Cranberry Sauce
- Mac & Cheese
- Corn Meal
- Jiffy Mixes, Corn Muffin Mix, Hush Puppy Mix
- Peanut Butter
- Jelly, Jams, Preserves (Strawberry is the favorite)
- Pizza & Pizza Dough Mix
- Saltine Crackers, Ritz Crackers, Graham Crackers
- Sauces (A-1, Steak, BBQ, Texas Pete, Cheese, Worcestershire, Soy, Teriyaki, Sweet & Sour)
- Spices and Seasonings (including Salt & Pepper)

- Dishwashing detergents
- Laundry pre-treating products (i.e. Shout, Spray and Wash)
- Brooms, Mops, Scrub Brushes, Dust Pans
- Foil and Plastic Wrap
- SOS Pads
- Fabric Softener
- Dryer Sheets
- Sanitary Pads & Tampons
- Hand Lotion
- Shampoo
- Body Wash
- Soap

### OTHER NEEDED ITEMS:

- Brownie & Cookie Mix
- Canned Vegetables
- Individual Chef Boyardee cups
- Clif brand nutrition bars
- Hot Dog Chili
- Coffee (Regular & Decaf)
- Coffee Creamer
- Sweetened Condensed Milk
- Evaporated Milk
- Dehydrated Food (powdered milk & eggs, dehy-

- drated meals)
- Flavorings (Vanilla, etc.)
- French Fried Onions
- Honey
- Ketchup
- Mustard
- Oatmeal
- Parmesan Cheese
- Puddings, Pudding Cups
- Salsa
- Vinegar
- Paper Products (Cups, Plates, Bowls, Plastic Ware, Dixie Cups)
- Trash Bags (large & small)
- Zip-Loc bags (Sandwich, Snack, Quart & Gallon Sizes)
- Band Aids
- Rubbing Alcohol/Peroxide
- Anti-bacterial ointment
- Razors
- Shaving Cream/Shaving Gel
- Dental Floss
- Hair brushes
- Deodorant
- Conditioner
- Tooth Paste
- Tooth Brushes
- Diapers (all sizes)

- Baby Wipes
- Bug Repellent
- Wasp/Hornet Spray
- Sunblock 30+
- Batteries (AA, AAA and D)
- Disposable Gloves (Latex & Non-Latex)

Gift Cards are appreciated for buying perishables and items not received. (i.e. Wal-Mart, Sams Clubs, Food Lion, Lowes, Ingles, Piggly Wiggly).

We can use all size cans. Some locations prefer #10 cans (family size).

IMPORTANT: Please check for expired dates on food -- we cannot accept expired items.

Please help our volunteer truck drivers by packing your church's donations in small, sturdy boxes.

Pack like items together. Please do not pack chemicals with food.



# Applications for new columbarium now accepted— Ninety-year-old alum treasures school award

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

**A**lumni will be happy to know that the columbarium proposed at Homecoming is now a tangible reality at God's Acre. **Sharon DeHart Stiles**, Chairperson of the Columbarium Committee, reports that she and the committee are ready to accept applications for "ashes" to be placed in a "niche" in the columbarium. Anyone interested in a "final placement" of your or your spouse's ashes in the columbarium at God's Acre, please contact Sharon at this number-704-685-2443. She will supply you with the policies and procedures that govern the use of the columbarium, and she will also supply you with the appropriate form to fill out in application for that purpose.

We received very sad news from **Harry Walls** that **Michael Hazzard** lost his wife **Tammy** on January 21. It was a very unexpected loss which followed lung surgery. Friends may wish to send condolences to Michael at this address: 146 Christopher Lane, Lot #5, Thomasville, NC, 27360. Send condolences also to **Rich Lewis**, Michael's brother, at this address: 601 E. State Ave., High Point, NC 27262. They are a closely knit family.

Please use the following contact information to replace that which is in your Alumni Directory for **Ron Wyatt**: P.O. Box 2919, Thomasville, NC 27361. (336-870-8012 is okay). Email: [ronlewywatt@gmail.com](mailto:ronlewywatt@gmail.com).

We appreciate **David Greenwood** of Melbourne, FL who sent us a write up on his neighbor, Mills Home (MH) alumnus, **Archie Phelps**. David wrote it on the occasion of Archie's 99th birthday in November, 2021.

"Archie entered the MH in 1925, aged two, along with his sporty older brother, **Joseph**, and his two older sisters, **Louise and Thelma**. He remembers the hot pot-bellied stove that heated the Miles Durham nursery, the pastor and

his wife (*probably* **Dr. I. G. Greer and his wife) who sang the old-time music on Sunday evenings, and **Dr. Bernard W. Spilman** who read the 'Br'er Rabbit' stories to the children. When he turned five, he was transferred up to the Durham House and then Mother's Building and finally Hutchinson Building.**

"Archie remembers fondly that in 1935 when he was 13 years old, he was awarded the American Legion School Award, a highly coveted award at Mills Home School. It was a bronze medallion awarded to one student, in every school, in every city that had an American Legion post. Archie still has that medal beside his living room chair to this day.

"Archie also recalled an instance of being a 'bad young man.' He confessed, that when he was 12 years old, he and another resident decided they would run away. (*Every boy thought about running away at some time.*) He and his friend gathered their belongings and each placed them in a square piece of cloth which they tied to the end of a pole, perhaps a rake handle. They carried the pole on their shoulders like hobos they had seen in movies. Off they went. They got to the edge of the property, down by the mule shed, and stopped. Archie asked his friend if he had a plan. The friend did not. Neither did Archie. By this time, they were hungry so they simply turned around and went back for supper. No one had even noticed they were gone.

"Archie left MH in 1940 to join the Air Corps of the US Army and was sent to Illinois for pilot training. The war ended before he was deployed, and he ended up taking a position with a new printing company, A. D. Weise Lithograph Inc, under development at the time in Miami (Fl). Archie worked as a printer for 15 years rising to the position of plant manager and senior printer. He left printing in 1960 to start his own charter deep

sea fishing business. He was owner and captain sailing out of Walker's Cay in the Bahamas for 22 years.

"Archie still lives independently in his own home in Melbourne and wants to say hello to anyone who may remember him. Folks can contact Archie at this address: 1157 Castleberry Rd., Melbourne, FL 32901. Or call 321-400-9022."

I recently enjoyed a telephone chat with **Christine Langley Shelton**, class of 1955. I enjoyed MH life in the Aydlett Cottage with her around 1950. I was always impressed with the loving relationship she was able to have with her father. Christine and her brother **Bruce** came to MH from Fayetteville in 1942. After graduating from Thomasville High School in 1955, Christine matriculated at Campbell (Baptist) College (then a 2 year college and now a University) and later Atlantic Christian College (now Barton). She taught 3rd and 4th graders a short time at Cooper Elementary School and Wilson Christian School. She soon met the man of her dreams, **Donohue (Donny) Shelton** and became a stay-at-home mom for two daughters, **Lisa and Ginger**.

Christine has fond memories of her life at MH and remembers well the great relationship she had with **Estelle Crouch**. It made her feel special that Estelle always requested that Christine be assigned to house duty at the Hutchinson Cottage. She has special memories of **Burl and Clint Moss** and other little boys at the Hutchinson.

She remembers the day when a teacher asked a student, "If a buzzard eats dead meat and a hawk eats live meat, which had you rather be, a buzzard or a hawk." The girl replied, "I'd rather be a buzzard." The whole class laughed as they envisioned her eating "dead meat."

Now a widow of 13 years, Christine has remained especially connected to **Betty Jean Gasaway Hartsell** who left MH several years

before her class graduated and to the late **Regina Passmore Quinn**. They all have returned frequently for Homecoming to enjoy being reconnected to friends from their MH years. She laughs when she remembers the day that she and Regina were returning from the boys' side of the campus to their cottages when a fellow cruising the campus stopped to talk to them. Regina was not used to flirting around with someone she did not know so she asked him if he could play checkers and he said "yes." She quickly told him, "Well, it is your time to move." And he did.

Christine mentioned that she remains in solid contact with her brother Bruce who lives close by in Wilson, NC. She also said "growing up at Mills Home had meant a lot to her and her whole life has been a lucky one." She is grateful that life has connected her to a lot of nice people who have been kind to her.

We were informed that soon after Thanksgiving that **Nell Williams Sheets** suffered a bad fall that resulted in a broken hip. As expected, the injury required surgery. Nell's sister **Ginny (Virginia)** reported that Nell is doing well even though she chose home rehab therapy. Her daughter **Cathy** who lives with her is a nurse and is quite able to assist Nell with physical therapy. Friends can send get well wishes to Nell at this address: 2008 Brushy Fork Dr. Sugar Grove, Ohio, 43155.

Ginny also passed on some happy news from her part of the Williams family. Since August of last year, she joyfully helped her son Dwight and his wife welcome a new granddaughter and a new grandson into the world. She also mentioned that she fully expects to be back at Mills Home for Homecoming in 2022.



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



## Making News Every Day Around the State



Mills Home in Thomasville

### Guatemalan intern serves at BCH

Sophia Orozco from Guatemala served at Mills Home as an intern. Sophia (middle) is pictured with west central director Regina Keener (left) and president/CEO Michael C. Blackwell (right)



Odum Home in Pembroke

### First resident celebrates birthday

Odum Home children greeted Catherine Locklear on her 94th birthday. She and late sister, Josephine, were the first residents at what was formerly known as the Indian Orphanage.



Fancy Finds in Thomasville

### Students volunteer at resale store

Student volunteers from High Point Christian Academy cleaned out a storage area so it could be utilized by Fancy Finds -- the resale store at Mills Home that benefits BCH.



On Mission Together

### Sharing at Discipleship Conference

Staff shared BCH's many ministries at the Baptist State Convention's Discipleship Conference. BCH's Mark Smith led a breakout session on EVERY CHILD Foster & Adoption Ministry.



Christian Adoption Services

### Birth mother home making progress

The home restoration of Emmanuel Home is proceeding thanks to volunteers from Beck's Baptist Church in Winston-Salem and A. M. Haire Manufacturing & Service Corporation.



Village Baptist Church in Fayetteville

### Sunday School class brings gifts

Members of the "Saved to Serve" Sunday School class delivered Valentine's Day goodies for the children and caregivers at Odum Home in Pembroke.



Broyhill Home in Clyde

### Boys and girls ready for the dojo

Boys and girls at Broyhill Home are learning karate skills. Children living at Blackwell Cottage are dressed in their gis (their karate outfits) and ready to attend class.



Community Support

### Sea Trust holds silent auction

Leaders from Sea Trust Mortgage presented BCH's Danny Hawkins (middle) with funds they raised through a silent auction held among their employees



Good Shepherd Ministries in Guatemala

### Former chiefs serve as missionaries

Mike and Arwen Elders are serving as associate missionaries in Guatemala. The former BCH wilderness camps chiefs are helping with church starts and children at the orphanage.

## Can we help? Many ministries beating with one heart.

- Western Area Family Services**  
Linda Morgan, Lead Dir., 828-627-9254
- Central Area Family Services**  
Regina Keener, Dir., 336-474-1200
- Eastern Area Family Services**  
Christopher Allabaugh, Dir., 252-522-0811  
[www.kennedyhome.org](http://www.kennedyhome.org)
- Odum Home**  
Kathy Locklear, Res. Mgr., 910-521-3433  
[www.odumhome.org](http://www.odumhome.org)
- Cameron Boys Camp**  
Drew Scott, Dir., 910-245-4034  
[www.cameronboyscamp.org](http://www.cameronboyscamp.org)
- Camp Duncan for Girls**  
Brad Gearhart, Dir., 910-944-3077  
[www.campduncanNC.org](http://www.campduncanNC.org)
- Family Foster Care**  
Bob McCleary, 828-627-9254  
[www.bchfostercare.org](http://www.bchfostercare.org)
- Christian Adoption Services**  
Kevin Qualls, Dir., 704-847-0038  
[www.christianadopt.org](http://www.christianadopt.org)
- Weekday Education**  
Brooke Child, Dir., 336-474-1201
- Tucker Greater Vision Ministry**  
Sara Becker, Mgr., 336-687-6384
- HOMEbase** at W. Carolina University  
Jim Dean, Dir., 828-293-4660
- Intellectual & Developmental Disabilities**  
Tara Sessoms, Dir., 336-474-1259  
[www.hereismyhome.org](http://www.hereismyhome.org)
- NC Baptist Aging Ministry**  
Sandy Gregory, Dir., 336-474-1221  
[www.ncbam.org](http://www.ncbam.org)
- Good Shepherd Children's Home** in Guatemala  
Keith Henry, COO, 336-474-1215

one ♥



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)



**We have immediate opportunities:**

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- Weekday Education Preschool Teachers

Call 828.230.7133  
or visit [www.bchcareers.org](http://www.bchcareers.org)

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





# Alumni chime in on success of Yuletide party— Richard and Judy Poteat remembered for service

By **JOHN THOMPSON**, 104 Village Court, Havelock, NC 28532

(252) 671-3515

jthompson117@ec.rr.com

**M**arch is already here. But before too much time has passed, let's go back to December and mention the Alumni Christmas party held at King's Restaurant in Kinston. Alumni President **Katie Parker** and her sister **Avon** provided a great party time for us all. We had a very good crowd and were able to share lots of memories from over the years—approximately 40 folks attended.

I was so happy to see **Linda Grimsley**, **Mike's** sister, at the party. This was her first time back since the 70s. She started singing songs like "Pass It On" from a youth musical I had the senior high choir present and take on tour when I served at Kennedy Home (KH). She even remembered that I had a group called the "Madrigal Singers" that sang tunes from "The Sound of Music" in a big concert in the gym. **Mrs. Rae Brock and Mrs. Mary Hamilton** made long formal dresses for all the girls to wear. She says she is looking forward to seeing everyone at Homecoming.

I was also excited to see **Wanda Sue Morris** at the party. We hadn't seen her in a very long time. **Donna Duty** also sent a note stating the Christmas party was so nice and fun!

**Debbie Lassiter** sent me a little note saying how nice it was to have the party and visit with "family." She said it had been two years since she had seen many of the folks in attendance and she had fun sharing time with each other.

**Debbie and Donna** also sends "thanks" to everyone who donated to the "Go Fund Me"—John Thompson Love Offering. More than \$3,500 came in from the alumni with many others sending a financial gift personally. They both said that there is nothing better than to know that we have helped someone in their hour of need.

**Edward Gaston Paft** shared this

on the KH Facebook page.

"While on this ride called life, you have to take the good with the bad, smile when you're sad, love what you've got, and remember what you had. Always forgive, but never forget. Learn from your mistakes, but never regret. People change. Things go wrong. So, just remember the ride goes on."

**Walter Sisk** added, "That's the truth, life will go on. Will you go with Jesus in your life or not?"

**Gary Caulder** fell on some steps in early February and broke his hip and had to have a complete hip replacement. He had just retired from his job and planned to begin working with his son in his chicken business. Pray for him and **Debbie** because he really wants to help his son.

Piano teaching was fun for me at KH. Do you remember **Penny Maready Batte**? She is the daughter of **Earl and Louise Maready**, who were houseparents at KH when I was there. They lived in Williams cottage. Penny wrote me a note recently: "If it had not been for you, John, I wouldn't know how to play the piano today. I enjoyed taking lessons and when I became an adult one of my first purchases was a piano. I still have it today. I love to play the piano to meditate stress away sometimes and I play it loud when no one is around. I didn't carry on my piano lessons beyond your teachings and so I only play gospel music from our church song book. I play the prelude and serve as the back-up pianist at my church when we were having services in the sanctuary, but since COVID-19 we had to make some changes. Take Care, Love and Blessings!"

Thanks Penny for sharing with others for God.

**Hugh Kirkman** lived in CCB and had **Mrs. Cribb** for his housemother. He says he really loved living in her house. He shared: "Mrs. Cribb would give us money and a wal-

let. We had to keep it in a box. She gave us some to go to the gym, put some in an envelope for us to take to church. She said if we took out some of the money in the envelope, we were stealing from God. So, my tithe went to God always. She let us watch Billy Graham in her room with her son **Theron**. He could play the organ at the church. At 9:00 p.m., we had a snack of milk and ginger snaps. Then we went to bed. We had to get up at 5:30 or 6:00 to do our house chores in the cottage before the school bus came. One time she even took the CCB boys to Wilmington to tour the battleship way back in 1976. We had a cook-out at her older son's house and we even got to go on his boat. I loved singing with Mrs. Cribb in church and you, Mr. Thompson—moving your hands to the songs. Boy, I miss those songs and you. One song we sang was "Oh who can make a flower." I was age nine then. Thank you for taking **Earl**, my brother, and me camping back on the farm. We didn't get to go home much. You were our 'blood brother' and we loved you and **Miss Becky**."

**Richard and Judy Poteat** were serving at KH the same time Becky and I were. Judy worked in the main office until she was ready to have another child and then Becky took her place. When we left KH, Judy went back to the office. She kept the office hopping and on the right track. I remember how she took my Becky under her wing. I was recently looking at an old **C&C** from January 1981 and it reported about Richard being elected to the State Board of Dairy Associations. Richard served as the farm manager for KH and was in charge of the huge farm, dairy cows, and the bull named Noah. There was a "pig parlor" and also beef cattle for the people at KH to eat. He also made sure we had plenty of vegetables with a 25-acre garden. One morning, I got up and there were five baskets of corn

sitting there for me to put up and freeze. It took a while but we got it done. Kennedy Home had the oldest registered herd of dairy cows in the state. It won a lot of awards. Richard was not only on the state board but on the local association board. In the local association, which serves some 15-20 counties, Richard served as president for the organization and served on the official board.

Richard and Judy came to KH in January 1970. He has his associate degree in applied agriculture, with a livestock major from the Agricultural Institute Program at N. C. State University. Richard just turned 80—how about that? Both Poteats did many, many important jobs on the campus. Their son **Matthew** and my son **Scott** were the "best of friends."

I encourage all alumni and former staff to join the KH alumni Facebook page—a special page just for our group. This is how we keep up with a lot of old friends. There are several rules that make it work really well.

1. Be kind and courteous in what you print.
2. No hate speech or bullying.
3. This is not a political site.
4. If you fail to follow the group rules, you may be removed.

Come on and let's have a lot of alumni join up. Right now there are more than 400 folks in the group.

Remember, when you are in the Havelock area drop by to visit with me. I even have an extra bedroom in my duplex. What a change! I live at 104 Village Court, Havelock. 28532.

Keep sending me articles to use in my column. Folks in our Baptist Churches love to read about alumni and what's going on at Kennedy Home. Love you all, jt.



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



# Our God encompasses both our grief and our joy

By Jim Edminson, Editor

Our family friend, Brian, died last August a day after passing his best night in the hospital according to the caregivers surrounding his ICU bed. That morning, his wife and family rejoiced in the long-awaited good news, and Lynn sent group messages sharing her joy. She made plans to go in to work after all. Those early morning tidings made the phone call hours later even more shocking: *Come now; Brian does not have long...*

I love words and stories. Imagery is second nature to me as I swirl language with sights, sounds, and smells to evoke places in the heart. In the stark face of grief, however, I have no story nor imagery to conjure the devastation. Standing beside Lynn at the funeral, I can only reach for her hand and let the silence speak.

Those who know me personally can understand the difficulty here. I am rarely out of words, advice, connections to fit most occasions. Quiet is not my natural habitat.

Grief, daughter Mary tells me often, has no normal, and any way a person handles the gut-wrenching pain is alright. Bystanders need to understand that, she says. The journey is lonely and oh, so personal. The struggle for understanding is never over, and sometimes the peace that passes understanding must be walked toward for many, many miles.

A beautiful July morning, day two of a week-long church summer art camp, found my daughter prepping for the day's activities. The director had not arrived yet, and although that was out of the ordinary, traffic or last-minute supply-gathering could spin minutes into half hours; Mary knew she would be there as soon as possible. Meanwhile, class started. The excited children and engaging workshops fast-forwarded time. At the first break, a friend found Mary and, eyes round, asked her if it was true that the director had died.

There are moments when it genuinely feels

like time arrests, that the world stops. Mary sought the negative answer she so desired to the absurd question. But none came. Her dear friend really had died. Mary hit the floor, dissolved into floods of grief, and dear reader, in many ways, my daughter never got up.

Helpless does not begin to describe my sideline view of this stage of Mary's life. Years soften the starkness. She can now say her best friend's name without shaking, voice and body and soul, but the eyes do not lose the heart-break that I see. Paige's birthday was last week, and I struggle every year with how to respond. Do I send Mary messages, reach out with phone calls, or silently pray that God's grace sustains her and all those who mourn the sudden death of a beloved young woman?

Rhetorical questions. No answers necessary. No responses adequate. Again, I ponder that sweet ministry of presence, so essential and yet so difficult. Standing in the gap of another's heartbreak is a gift no one wants to have.

These words tumble from the keyboard on the weekend of Valentine's Day.

I am brainstorming how to celebrate those I love.

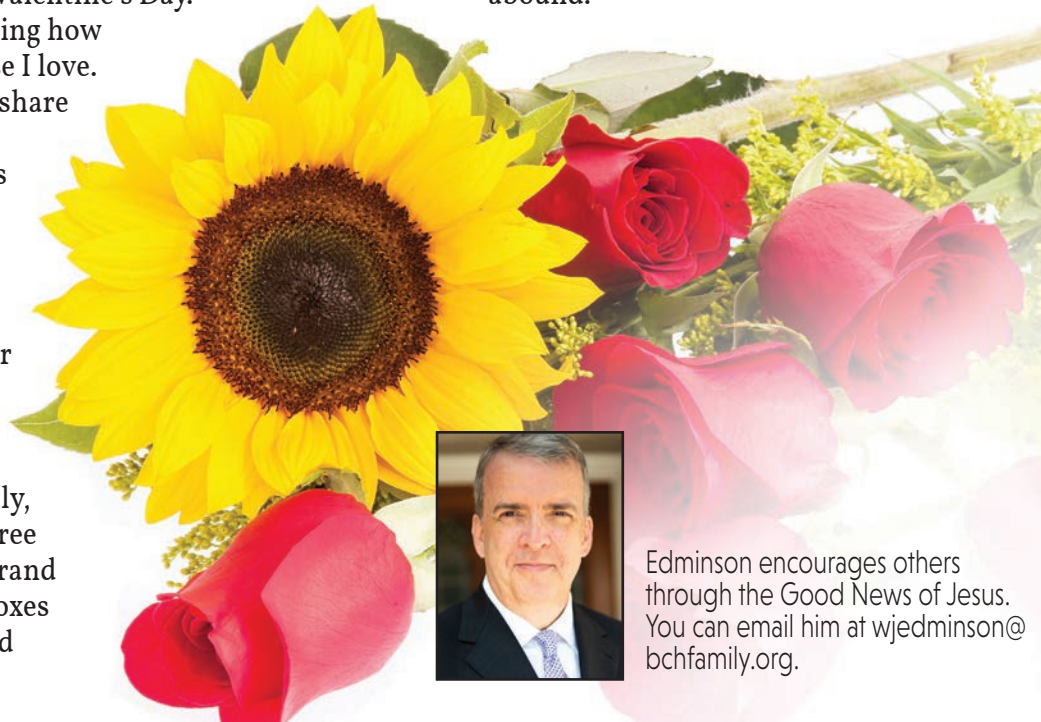
Kathy and I will share a red-and-white dinner. My Texas grands will receive the annual heart-shaped pizzas delivered to their door to remind them of their Pearl and Papa's love. Traditionally, I will visit my three daughters and grand Emmalie with boxes of chocolates and heart-felt hugs.

Brian and Paige have birthdays right around this day of love, and that makes me smile. It seems right for people who brought such love to others to have birthdays in February.

Here are blessings untold: Mary's beloved husband celebrates his birthday on Paige's birthday. Mary calls it a "God thing" to have the two side by side. My friend Lynn found a beautiful way to honor the memory of Brian's birthday—she visited the bakery that always created his cake, and she paid for all the birthday cakes ordered on his day. What joy she brings to others in this way! Another "God thing," surely.

When the Author and Finisher of our faith pledges to walk beside us in all the seasons of life, He truly fulfills His promise: "And lo, I am with you always." Our God is so big that He encompasses all our individual and collective grief, and joy.

I celebrate great love and I remember there is great grief. I pray for all of us as I entrust an unknown future into the hands of my intimately known Savior. May blessings abound.



Edminson encourages others through the Good News of Jesus. You can email him at [wjedminson@bchfamily.org](mailto:wjedminson@bchfamily.org).



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