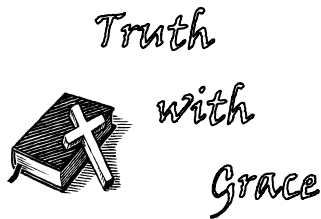


OUT OF THE BLUE

THE NEWSLETTER OF BLUE RIDGE BIBLE CHURCH

APRIL, 2009

VOLUME 10, NUMBER 4



The First Appearing

Look at this list of names and tell me what they all have in common: George Washington, Al Jolson, Margaret Thatcher, Roger Bannister & Neil Armstrong

Do you see the connection? They all have this thing in common: each person was the "first" in some category ... the first person to do something special or unique. Those five people are the first on the moon, the first to run a sub-4-minute mile, the first person's voice ever heard over a "talking picture," the first female prime minister of the United Kingdom, and the first president of the United States. By the way, if you don't already know which is which, you can have some fun family conversation time over the dinner table, trying to find out who can match up those "firsts" correctly. Now I want to add to your list another special first; Jesus' first appearance after the resurrection.

What difference would it make to be the first to see Jesus after the resurrection? Why would it matter? Hundreds of people saw Jesus after His resurrection. Wouldn't each person be equally blessed to see Jesus alive again? Wouldn't every follower be ecstatic with new-found hope and joy to see that Jesus had risen?

Perhaps, but let me ask it this way: how would you feel if YOU were the one who was chosen by Jesus to be the VERY FIRST ONE that he revealed himself to, in His newly risen body? Not James, not John, not Peter ... but you! Not to the soldiers ... not to Pilate ... not even to the high priest ... but to YOU. Of all the people Jesus could have chosen to reveal himself to FIRST, so that for all of history, your name would be at the top of the list of the most significant events that ever occurred. How would that kind of an awesome blessing strike you? In order for you to know what that would be like, you would have to imagine yourself standing

in the sandals of Mary Magdalene, because the first appearance of Jesus after his resurrection was to her.

Who was this privileged woman, chosen by Jesus to be blessed by his first appearing? We know from her title, Mary Magdalene, that she was in some way associated with the city of Magdala. Magdala was a rather populous town on the coast of Galilee about three miles from Capernaum. It was a city of commerce (a port city) and a city known for its textiles and dye works. She could have been called "Magdalene" because she was born or lived most of her life there, or it could have been because she made her wealth there. Luke 8:1-3 tells us that Mary and some other women were helping to support Jesus and the disciples out of their own means. If she were a wealthy woman who had "made her millions," so to speak, in Magdala, then that could explain why

Continued on page 6...

Blue Ridge Bible Church
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www.blueridgebible.org
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Senior Pastor:
Scott Sundin

Associate Pastor:
Paul VanGulick

Pastor of Youth and Family:
Jim Scott

Minister of Worship Arts:
Tom Stolberg

Children's Ministry Director:
Marcia Hopper

Sunday Schedule:

Worship Service: 9:30 am
Sunday School: 11:00 am
Youth Fusion: 5:45 pm
IMPACT U: 5:45 pm
Kids Choirs: 5:45 pm

Wednesday Schedule:

Prayer Meeting: 6:30 pm
AWANA: 6:30 pm
Choir Practice: 6:30 pm

The Mission of "Out of the Blue" is to encourage a closer walk with our Lord, enlighten with information pertinent to today's Christian, and entertain and uplift.

Editor: Angelee True
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KID'S ZONE

With Marcia Hopper, Children's Ministries Director

It's that time again! **Kids Kamp 2009** is right around the corner. This year, we are planning to add three new camps to our list of choices. In addition to the basketball, soccer, cheerleading, and drama that we had last year, we are adding karate, volleyball, and computer programming.

Kids Kamp 2009 will be June 8-12. Check-in will be from 5:30 - 6:00pm, and the camp will run from 6:00 - 8:30pm each evening. Many workers are needed not only as helpers in the various camps but also for the concession stands, registration, security, etc. If you are available to help, please contact Marcia Hopper. Last year almost half of the kids who attended Kids Kamp were from outside our church family. This is a huge opportunity to minister to our community.

ZONE:

Zeal for God

Oneness in relationships

Nurtured with truth

Expressing the Love of Christ

KIDZone (Preschool)

April 5th - The Empty Tomb, "Jesus is risen from the dead" (See Mt. 28:7); I can thank God that Jesus is alive.

April 12th - Easter Sunday (9:30 brunch & 10:45 worship service) Preschool - 2nd grade children will be dismissed from the adult worship service for a short lesson in the Library during Pastor Scott's sermon.

April 19th - The Road to Emmaus, Luke 24:13-35, "Thanks be to God for Jesus." (See 2 Cor 9:15); I can thank God that Jesus is with me all the time.

April 26th - Jesus is alive, Luke 24:36-53, "Jesus said, 'I am alive for ever and ever.'" (See Rev. 1:18); I can thank God for the good news that Jesus is alive.

In The ZONE (Elementary)

April lesson focus: Easter - Covenant Kept
Memory Verse: Luke 24:5-6

April 5th - Palm Sunday Cantata

(no Kids Church - Sunday School only)

April 12th - Easter Sunday: 9:30am brunch & 10:30am worship service (Prek-2nd dismissed from adult service for short lesson during sermon). No Sunday School.

April 19th & 26th - Regular schedule



Upcoming family ministry events:

April 3-4th: BRCS School Play
"The Music Man"

April 18th: AWANA Grand Prix

May 2nd: Lake Day—fishing, biking, and picnic at a local lake

May 13th: Awana Awards Night



OK, by a show of hands: how many of you catch a whiff of cider vinegar and instantly think of Easter egg dye? I remember vividly my mother boiling a large pot of eggs every Good Friday for us to color. It's a tradition I still enjoy.

Like so many holiday traditions, the origin of Easter eggs is somewhat unclear. A search of several internet sites revealed a smattering of fact and opinion; but one common consensus is that the first use of eggs in holy day traditions trace back to Pagan times. Before the egg became closely entwined with the Christian Easter, it was honored during many rite-of-Spring festivals. The egg represented the rebirth of the earth. The long, hard winter was over; the earth burst forth and was reborn just as the egg miraculously burst forth with life. The egg, therefore, was believed to have special powers. It was buried under the foundations of buildings to ward off evil and given to newlyweds to step on when entering their home as a new couple. The Romans, Gauls, Chinese, Egyptians and Persians all cherished the egg as a symbol of the universe. From ancient times eggs were dyed, exchanged, and shown reverence.

As was common practice centuries ago, the leaders of the Catholic church started

Why Do We Dye?

replacing pagan traditions with their own, often adding new meanings to old symbols and festivals in order to further the spread of Christianity. [Pope Gregory the Great](#) (540-604 AD) ordered his missionaries to do just that, and the [Christian](#) celebration of the [Resurrection of Christ](#) seemed ideally suited to replace the [pagan](#) feast of "Eostre." Many of the traditions were adopted into church festivities, beginning the Christian observation of the Easter Holy Day. Pope Gregory was admired by John Calvin, who declared that Gregory was "the last good pope."

The practice spread throughout the world and was flavored by local beliefs. Polish legends surrounding eggs blended folklore and fact. One such tale speaks of when Mary Magdalene went to the sepulcher to anoint the body of Jesus. She had with her a basket of eggs to serve as a repast. When she arrived at the sepulcher and uncovered the eggs, the pure white shells had miraculously taken on a rainbow of colors. Traditionally, Russian Orthodox Easter eggs were dyed red to represent the [blood of Christ](#) shed on the cross. The hard shell of the egg symbolized the sealed [Tomb of Christ](#)—the cracking of which symbolized his resurrection from the dead. Although the omens and the mystery of the egg have disappeared today, the symbolism remains, and artists continue in the old

world tradition of adorning eggs.

The most famous decorated Easter eggs were those made by the well-known goldsmith, Peter Carl Faberge. In 1883 the Russian Czar, Alexander, commissioned Faberge to make a special Easter gift for his wife, the Empress Marie. This special Faberge egg so delighted the Czarina that the Czar promptly ordered the Faberge firm to design further eggs to be delivered every Easter. In later years Nicholas II, Alexander's son, continued the custom. Fifty-seven eggs were made in all, and are today nearly priceless artifacts. In 2002, one sold for a record 9.2 million dollars.

Today, the dying and hunting of Easter eggs is a popular celebration throughout the world. Even the President of the United States gets in on the act every Easter with a White House Egg Hunt. But the big question IS...what do you do with all those boiled eggs afterward? The uses of boiled eggs seem fairly limited to deviled eggs and egg/tuna/chicken salad. I am a fan of the traditional deviled egg; but every now and then, I like to spice things up. Here are a few variations on the old stand-by; why not try one out this year? These recipes and more like them can be found on the website www.allrecipes.com.

—Editor

Each of these recipes is for one dozen boiled eggs. Simply cool and peel the eggs and then slice in half. Spoon out yolks and mash with fork, together with other ingredients listed. Pipe or spoon egg filling back into boiled whites.

Deviled Ham Eggs

Deviled Ham and eggs; perfect together! Buy deviled ham in the canned meat section of your grocery store. Do not attempt to substitute "potted meat product;" it looks the same, but it's NOT.

- 1 (4.5 ounce) can deviled ham
- 1 tablespoon spicy brown mustard
- 1/4 cup mayonnaise
- 1 pinch black pepper
- 24 slices black olives
- Paprika for sprinkling

Creamy Ranch Eggs

Cream cheese gives an extra richness to these zippy eggs

- 1/3 cup Ranch-style salad dressing
- 1/2 (8 ounce) package cream cheese, softened
- 1/2 cup chopped onion
- 1 dill pickle, finely chopped



Bacon and Cheese Eggs

Bacon and eggs...what could be better?

- 1/2 cup mayonnaise
- 4 slices bacon, cooked crisp and crumbled
- 2 tablespoons finely shredded Cheddar cheese
- 1 tablespoon mustard

Sister to Sister

BRBC Women's Ministries Page

I've been thinking a lot lately of the special people God has placed in my life over the years and the friendships that have grown with them. Each one is special and brings something different to my life. Often they have met a particular need in my life and hopefully, I in theirs.

Friendships remind me of the flowers in my garden. There is an incredible variety even within each type of plant. Each is a unique creation and brings wonderful color and fragrance. Some need lots of sunshine, some need shade, others like lots of water and some only a little. Some, like my lilies, bloom only for a day. Others like my impatiens, will bloom (with plenty of water), all summer into mid fall. Some like my hostas come up every year, and others are annuals that bloom for a season and then are gone. All of my plants need to be planted in good soil. They need fertilizer, sunshine, water, pruning, weeding, and watchful care to be healthy and productive. In other words, I must work at having a beautiful garden. But, what joy, encouragement, and even contentment come as I gaze on

that garden from my patio chair.

I have discovered that having a beautiful friendship garden also takes work. I'm sure you have heard the statement "tyranny of the urgent." It seems that the urgent things that must be done in my day often keep me from having the time to pay attention to people who just need to hear a word from me or have me listen to them. Or perhaps have me do something for them. I don't even have time to look for the needs of people around me because of my urgent need to get through my agenda. My flowers don't do well without attention, and neither will my friendships (old or new).

How are your friendships growing? Are you nourishing them with time, encouragement, loyalty, words of grace, forgiveness, gratitude, understanding, prayer, etc? There are a myriad of flowers in the garden and an infinite variety of friendships in life. Take time to consider the friends God has given you. Thank Him for those friendships and then ask Him what He has for you to be and do in each friendship. Because we have the Holy Spirit living

within, our friendship garden can bloom abundantly if we allow Him to lead. The real secret of happiness is not what you give nor what you get, but what you share. As Emily Barnes says, "even sharing a cup of tea (coffee or soda) creates a little space, an island of calm that can be the beginning of a new friendship (or the strengthening of an established one). Think about putting on the coffee pot, getting out the mugs and inviting a friend or two over or put a thermos of coffee, mugs, and maybe some cookies in a basket and strike out to visit a friend you haven't seen for a long time or a neighbor you would like to make a friend. We all need to have someone we know that thinks we are special.

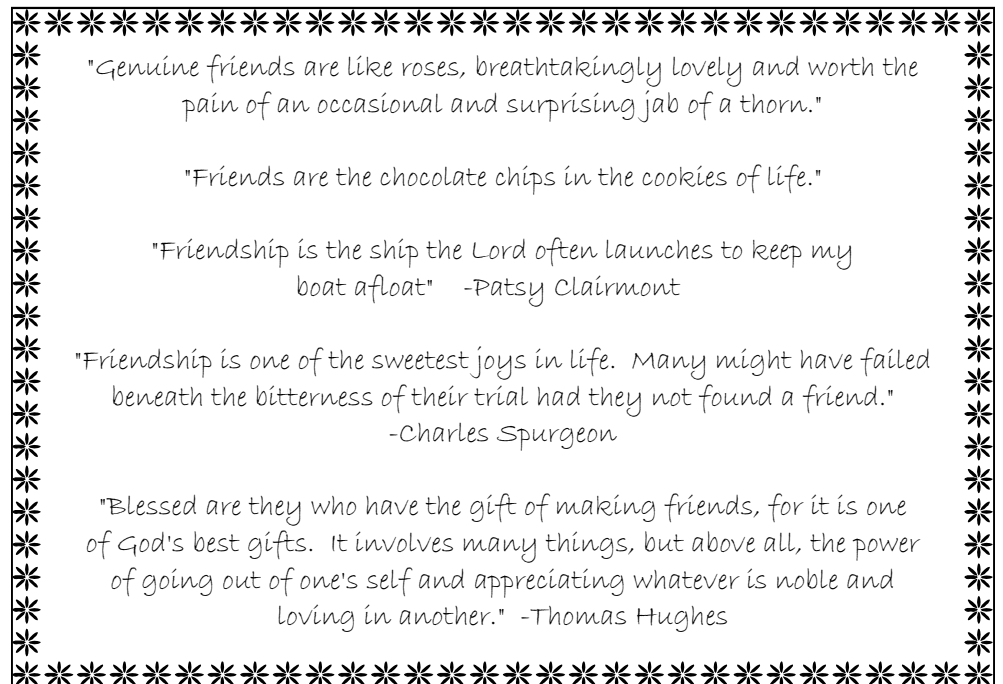
Let's each make a commitment to nurturing every friendship God has given to us, and to always be looking out for new ones He wants to place in our garden. Friendship is love in action.



- Kay Biery



Many in our fellowship over the last few years have gone through a bout with cancer. Getting that diagnosis is a frightening thing; and then what about the treatments and it's effects? If you would like to talk with someone who has been through it, we have several ladies who are available to listen, to pray, to share, and to encourage you. Please call Betty Maier at 816-478-4183.



"Genuine friends are like roses, breathtakingly lovely and worth the pain of an occasional and surprising jab of a thorn."

"Friends are the chocolate chips in the cookies of life."

"Friendship is the ship the Lord often launches to keep my boat afloat" -Patsy Clairmont

"Friendship is one of the sweetest joys in life. Many might have failed beneath the bitterness of their trial had they not found a friend."
-Charles Spurgeon

"Blessed are they who have the gift of making friends, for it is one of God's best gifts. It involves many things, but above all, the power of going out of one's self and appreciating whatever is noble and loving in another." -Thomas Hughes

How God Sees Them

I work with children who are severely disabled. They will never walk, they will never talk more than a few words (if that), and they will never be potty trained. Their bodies, as crippled as they appear, will continue to mature and grow... but their brains cannot keep up. They lack the ability to say "I love you" and "thank you" to their daddy and mommy. They lack the ability to say "I need a drink," or "my tummy hurts."

Every day I walk into a building filled with children who have special needs. In my classroom there are seven: James, Rachelle, Rose, Charles, Ann, Marie, and Elise. Each one is different in their needs, abilities, moods and personalities... but they all have this in common: they were all lovingly created by God. I have the privilege of changing their diapers, feeding them through tubes, and playing with them! Some-

times my heart aches for them and the many things they will never be able to do; but I know that God made them with a meaning and a purpose. Maybe it's to teach *others* something?

Last night I had a dream about some of the kids I work with. Rachelle was running around a back yard playing and smiling and bouncing a ball. No wheelchair, no special shoes to make her feet grow correctly- just her acting like a healthy, growing child. Then there was 7-year-old James, riding down the street on his bike, instead of a wheelchair. He called my name and laughed as he came towards me for a hug.

I believe that God gave me this dream so that I will see the children in wheelchairs the way He sees them. When people see me out in public with one of my students, I get a lot of funny looks. They silently say, "I'm glad I don't have

your job" or "God bless you- I could never have the patience for a kid like that." That's only because they see the outside; they see the chair and the breathing tubes and the lack of response from the child's face. If they could see inside—what God sees—they might feel differently. They might feel blessed to work with a child like this, or even to parent a child like this.

Today I saw my students a little more like God sees them. I could imagine them running, playing, and laughing like healthy non-handicapped children. Without that dream from God, I may have never been able to! I left my job crying today. One day in Heaven, all these dear ones will walk and run and laugh and express themselves in a way they never could on earth. They will be whole in God's presence- the way He has always seen them.

—Kathryn A. True

"Too many professing Christians are so spiritually undisciplined that they seem to have little fruit and power in their lives. I've seen men and women who discipline themselves for the purpose of excelling in their profession discipline themselves very little "for the purpose of godliness." I've seen Christians who are faithful to the church of God, who frequently demonstrate genuine enthusiasm for the things of God, and who dearly love the word of God, trivialize their effectiveness for the Kingdom of God through lack of discipline. Spiritually they are a mile wide and an inch deep.... They have dabbled in everything but disciplined themselves in nothing."

-Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life,
By Donald S. Whitney

Have you ever wanted to learn more about how you can assist families with loved ones in Hospice Care? KC Hospice House will be hosting free training seminars throughout the month of April to help you learn how you can volunteer either at their facility or with a family in your area. Many Hospice families just need someone to give them an occasional break by sitting with their loved one, perhaps reading to them or just chatting; or maybe you would like to do more such as light cleaning, providing meals, etc. ALL levels of help are needed. The Hospice House (an in-patient facility for hospice patients) utilizes volunteers to deliver meals, arrange flowers, greet visitors, and sit with patients. For more information, please call KC Hospice House at 363-2600. What an opportunity to show the love of God and share the Good News with someone that may need it! Volunteer Hospice: Live deeply...Love profoundly...Give freely.

**Happy moments, praise God.
Difficult moments, seek God.
Quiet moments, worship God.
Painful moments, trust God.
Every moment, thank God.**



"He is not here, He is risen..."

Continued from page 1...

she was called Mary Magdalene. In addition, she is not mentioned in connection with a husband, or described as someone's mother, so it is also likely that she was described by the town of Magdala because she did not have a marriage relationship that would otherwise be her "title."

Because Mary Magdalene is first mentioned in Luke 8, right after the story of an unnamed woman of sinful reputation who anointed Jesus' feet, many have tried to say that the unnamed prostitute of Luke 7 is actually Mary Magdalene of Luke 8. The poor reputation of the city of Magdala (a seaman's hangout) and the fact that Mary had once been demon possessed is cited as substantiating evidence that Mary Magdalene was this ex-prostitute; but there really is not enough evidence to make this assumption. There are some legitimate assumptions we can make, though. We can assume that she was most likely well-off, that she was probably unmarried, and that she was definitely a woman whose transformation was extreme, from being a demoniac to a passionately devoted follower of Jesus Christ.

Do we have good reason to speak highly of Mary Magdalene? Can we really know for certain that she was a passionately devoted follower of Christ? Well, let's consider the evidence. Her financial contribution would seem to indicate this in part, since we rarely invest large sums of money with no hope of a financial return, unless we believe strongly in the cause. And her presence at the cross would also speak volumes about her dedication to Christ. How many of the disciples were at the cross as Jesus was being crucified? Was Peter there? Was James there? What about Nathaniel or Philip or Thomas? We have no record of those men being there. John was the only one of the apostles who was there. Along with him, there were a number of women, including Mary Magdalene. But why was she there, risking the damaging association and the possible harm? For this reason: her love for her Savior was no pragmatic fancy. She may not have understood why he died and she may have even struggled with doubts that many of Christ's followers were undoubtedly facing. But nevertheless, she was there. She had faith in this man, Jesus, even as he hung there dying on the cross. She was a passionately devoted follower of Christ.

The example of Mary is quite convicting, I must admit. Do I, like Mary Magdalene, love Jesus without reservation? Do I trust

my soul into his hands, no matter what the future may hold? I must be able to answer this question with a resounding, "Yes!" My eternal future rests on my answer to that question. The direction of my entire life on this earth will unfold with my answer.

Mary Magdalene was there as they nailed him to the cross. She was there and saw him die. She saw the legs of the other men broken, and she saw as Jesus' side was pierced. She was there as Nicodemus and Joseph (from Aramathea) took Jesus' body from the place of crucifixion and carried it to a burial cave that had been recently cut, quickly preparing his body for the tomb. She saw that he was not adequately prepared and that the task would need to be completed later, after the Sabbath. She left the tomb as one of the very few who actually saw his form disappear behind the massive rock that covered his "final resting place." She was a complete witness to his death and his burial. And she made plans with the other ladies to return after the Sabbath, to bring the spices and to give one last honor to Jesus, by completing the preparation of his body for the tomb.

*"I have seen the Lord!
I know He is alive!"*

On Sunday morning, Mary Magdalene was the first to go to the tomb. Other women went to the tomb that morning as well, but Mary Magdalene arrived while it was still dark according to John 20. The other women came soon after the sun had risen, but by that time Mary Magdalene had seen the empty tomb and had gone to tell Peter and John about it. She either did not see the angels or God hadn't sent them yet, because when she returned to proclaim what she saw, she made no mention of angels. Peter and John had a foot race to the tomb, and Mary followed along behind; so far behind that the two men had come and gone before her second arrival at the tomb. The others had received the message of the angels. Peter, John and even the other women had come to the tomb and heard the message of the angels that Jesus was alive. But Mary did not know of this message of hope yet. John 20 tells us that Mary Magdalene, still weeping and crying, stooped over to look into the tomb. At that point, she saw the angels. They were dressed in white and were sitting down, one at the head of the empty death-wrap, and one at the foot. She had seen the cloths lying there herself a couple days earlier, filled with the body of Jesus, but this time they were empty.

The angels who looked like young men said, "Woman, why are you crying?" She answered, "Because they have taken my Lord, and I don't know where they have put him."

Even as she said these words, Jesus was standing behind her. As she turned around, she did not recognize who he was in much the same way that the two men on the road to Emmaus did not recognize the resurrected Jesus. Her heart of love for her Lord Jesus who had died was breaking, and her sadness was now compounded by the thought that someone had hideously and cruelly taken his body from the tomb in which he had been laid to rest in peace. Jesus spoke to her: "Woman, why are you crying? Who are you seeking?" She thought that he was the groundskeeper and asked him, "Sir, if you have taken him away, tell me where he is and I will take care of his body." Jesus then replied simply, "Mary." Jesus once said, "I call my sheep by name and they know my voice." So it was with Mary Magdalene, because when he called her by name she knew it was Jesus, alive and standing before her. She grasped hold of him and cried out, "Rabboni!" meaning "my Master!" Jesus then told her not to attempt to hold on to him, because he was not going to remain on earth, but was going to return to the Father. So she let go and went on her way, again with a message to share. The first message she had earlier that morning was a confused message of despair, but this time the message was an exuberant message: "I have seen the Lord and He is alive!"

And this dear woman was the FIRST ever to utter those words, "I have seen the Lord. I know He is alive!" Before Jesus was done, he would have revealed himself to well over 500 people; but Jesus chose to reveal himself to Mary before everyone else. Why did the Lord reveal himself to Mary first? What could have been his motivation? We cannot speak authoritatively ... to say that we know for sure the reason for this FIRST APPEARING. But we do know that his first appearing was only the beginning. The resurrected Jesus has been disclosing himself to millions of people for thousands of years. His resurrection life has been the symbol of the eternal life, purchased on the cross, for everyone who believes.

This year, as we celebrate resurrection Sunday, consider this question: What difference does the resurrection make? Am I echoing Mary's words, "I have seen the Lord. I know He is alive!"?



— Pastor Paul

YOUTH NEWS



CHECKING IN WITH PASTOR JIM

What is wrong with me?

Do you ever ask yourself that question when you find yourself failing or lacking the strength in the times of difficulties? Proverbs 24:10 says, "If you are slack in the day of distress your strength is limited." The proverb is simply teaching that when we fail during the trials of life we lack strength. Do you find yourself lacking strength? So what's the spiritual solution? Proverb 10:5-6 says, "A wise man is strong, and a man of knowledge increases power. For by wise guidance you will wage war, and in abundance of counselors there is victory." Remember there are always spiritual battles going on around us. We are constantly in a state of war, Spiritual War. Though Christ has given us victory through the cross, we are still called to fight and be faithful through the hard

times. We are called to remain strong to "Fight the good fight" (1 Timothy 6:12). We are called to remain strong because the strength that we are given comes from God. 1 John 4:4 says, "Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world."

If our strength comes from God then why do we still fail under trials? Where does it all go wrong for most of us? Without sounding too simplistic, our lack of strength is attributed to: 1) our lack of God's knowledge and wisdom. James 1:5 teaches us that we are to ask for wisdom when going through difficult times. 2) our willingness to take advice from others that are not following God's Word. Chapter one of 1 John teaches us that if we walk in darkness or seek out the world's ways we cannot have fellowship with God, the source of our strength. How many of

you would fast for one week before a big marathon you wanted to win? You would probably not have the physical strength to even begin the race because the source of your physical strength is food. *Your source of all strength is God.* Without proper fellowship you will be weak and will fail when trials come. Close fellowship with God is the key to your strength. The closer you are with God the more you will thirst for His knowledge and wisdom, and the stronger you will become.

Sin is the cancer that will rob us of spiritual strength and leave us wondering. "What is wrong with me?" If you're caught in the same trap you only need to seek the knowledge of God that says, "If we confess our sins He is faithful and righteous to forgive our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteous" (1 John 1:9).

WHAT'S UP AND WHEN???

Sunday Night Fusion will not meet April 5th and 12th

TMO Dinner: Sunday 19th

Senior High Out-of-School Retreat: May 27th - 29th

This year we will be going to Silver Dollar City

in Branson! Cost is \$45

Please contact Pastor Jim to sign up

Junior High Barn Swinging: June 2nd

Contact Pastor Jim for more details

Teen Missions Outreach:

July 24th - August 3rd.

PLEASE pray for our youth and their sponsors, as they prepare their hearts to minister this summer!

Food for thought:
That which worries
me masters me.



Summer Missions Projects

Anyone planning to be involved in a short term missions outreach this summer and would like assistance should contact John Adams or Dennis Myers from the Missions Committee ASAP.



AWANA Grand Prix!
April 18, 9:00 am,
in Fellowship Hall.



Upcoming Easter Events:

- April 5: Palm Sunday Cantata, 9:30am and "Passover Celebration" by Jews for Jesus, 6:00pm
- April 10: Good Friday Service
- April 12: Brunch at 9:30am followed by the Worship Service at 10:45am.
- There will be a Baptismal Service Easter Sunday. Anyone interested in following the Lord in baptism please contact the church office.

Blue Ridge Christian School presents



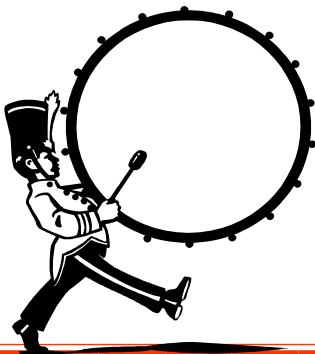
The Music Man

Performances are April 3rd and 4th.

**For ticket information,
please call the school:**

358-0950

**Bring the kids for a fun
family night out!**



TMO Dinners coming up!

April 19 and May 3.

Plan now to join us for lunch immediately after Sunday School. For only a donation toward the TMO, you can enjoy a delicious meal prepared by our TMO teens!

June 28 - July 4:

**Family Camp at Hermit Basin
Camp in Colorado.**

For more information,
contact Les Lemon at
Les.Lemon@noaa.gov

May 7th:

National Day of Prayer



Long Time Missionary to Change Ministry

Many Blue Ridgers have fond memories of time spent at Camp Id-Ra-Ha-Je in Bailey, Colorado. Long-time missionary there, Dennis Gilbert, recently announced he will soon be retiring from camp ministry to take a pastorate at a local church. Debbie also took a new position recently working for a graphic design company.

Here is a portion of an e-mail received recently from them: "We would like to invite you to a reception at Camp, Sunday, April 19th from 2-5 pm. Dennis is leaving Camp to begin a new ministry at Pine Community Church, our home church for the past 25 years. He feels the call to minister to the valley of Pine. I realize that some of you are out of state or country, but wanted you to know what was going on in our lives. Most of all pray for us and the ministry in Pine."

We know that Dennis and Debbie are looking forward to the new challenges that lie ahead; but this change will no doubt be difficult for them after so many years at camp. If you would like to send a card or note of encouragement to the Gilberts, their address is:

142 Pine Drive
Bailey, CO 80421

Does Anyone Notice?

The stock market is on a rollercoaster ride not seen since the 20's. Investments are at an all-time low and some are losing nearly everything. Jobs are coming under the axe and many of us are faced with financial turmoil. It would be so easy to cut down on giving to the church right now, or stop altogether... who'd even notice? Besides, who noticed you when you gave your tax refund to the church instead of buying yourself something you've needed for a long time? Does anyone notice that you keep driving an older, used car so you can have more money to give to His causes? Do people see all the times you go without, make do, and tough it out so more of your income can go to support God's ministry?

No one else may ever take notice when you give; but God sees, and He never forgets. Every time we give back to Him we are building treasure up for ourselves in Heaven. Forget the here and now and all the "stuff" of this world. A Heavenly treasure awaits you; one that will last forever. Faithfulness in giving IS seen, and IS rewarded. Give with a joyful heart, out of however much or little God blesses you with...and *He will give back many times over.* (Perhaps in ways better than money!) That's an investment with untold returns; one that will never fail. "... *your Father who sees in secret will Himself reward you openly.*" Matthew 6:4.

Pray for the Persecuted

Someone living in China or Africa may seem a world away, literally. But for believers, we have family literally all over the world. Many of these brothers and sisters are suffering intense persecution of a type we cannot even imagine here in America. This persecution has risen to new heights and those of us in safer parts of the world must pray, pray, pray for the safety of those affected. Still, Satan cannot thwart the effect the truths of scripture; as is often the case, Christianity continues to spread in these areas despite the opposition.

In February, violence erupted in Nigeria as Muslim gangs attacked Christians and destroyed churches over the results of a recent election. In China, more than 400 Christian college students in Beijing were arrested in November of last year and interrogated about their beliefs. Four leaders of house churches were sentenced to "re-education" through labor for one to one and a half years. A report from Mexico City in December of 2008 shows that as the number of evangelical Christians in southern Mexico has grown, hostilities from "traditionalist Catholics" have kept pace. Especially in indigenous communities in southern Mexico, the prevailing attitude is that only traditionalist Catholics, who blend native rituals with Roman Catholicism, have rights to religious practice, according to news reports. Moreover, the reports indicate the traditionalist Catholic villagers believe they have the right to force others to conform to their religion. Those that do not have been jailed, fined, and threatened with deprivation of basic services such as water and electricity.

Pakistan, India, Iran, Vietnam, Iraq, Belarus, Africa: all across the globe Christians are forced to meet in secret to do what we take for granted every Sunday. To find out more, visit the Voice of the Martyrs website, www.persecution.com. While there, you might want to click the link to the video "Underground Reality." You can read journal entries from a group of teens who actually smuggled Bibles into Vietnam in 2006. You can also check out ways you can help support Christians under persecution in other parts of the world.

Bridal Shower

There will be a bridal shower for Amy Sides, fiancé of Paul Cartwright, on Saturday, April 4th, at 10:00 am in Fellowship Hall.

All ladies of the church are invited to join us for a brunch for the bride-to-be.

Amy and Paul are registered at Bed, Bath, and Beyond. The wedding will be April 25th, 2:00 pm, at Blue Ridge.



April 2009

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 6:30p Missions Conf. NO Prayer Mtg/Awana 7:30p Choir Rehearsal	2 12:30p BRCS presents "The Music Man" 4:15p Ingles GNC 4:30p Santa Fe GNC	3 7:00p BRCS presents "The Music Man"	4 10:00a Bridal Shower for Amy Sides 7:00pm BRCS presents "The Music Man"
5 9:30a Worship Service Cantata: "The Weeping Tree" 11:00 Sunday School 6:00p Jews for Jesus presents <i>Christ in the Passover</i>	6 Church Office Closed 5:30p BRCS Chili Supper and Talent Show	7 9:30a Mentors 7:30p Church Board Mtg.	8 6:00a Men's Bible Study 2:30p Symington GNC 6:30p Choir Practice Prayer Meeting Awana	9 4:15p Ingles GNC 4:30p Santa Fe GNC	10 7:00p Good Friday Service	11 7:45a Men's Ministry Planning Meeting 12:00p Fidelis Potluck
12 9:30a Easter Brunch 10:45a Worship NO Sunday School NO IMPACT/YOUTH/KIDS 6:00p City Union Mission	13 Church Office Closed 7:00p Mission Committee Meeting	14	15 6:00a Men's Bible Study 2:30p Symington GNC 6:30p Choir Practice Prayer Meeting Awana	16 4:15p Ingles GNC 4:30p Santa Fe GNC	17 BRCS Academic Meet (all day) 6:30p Sr. High Youth Event	18 9:00a Awana Grand Prix
19 9:30a Worship Service 11:00a Sunday School 12:00p TMO Dinner 4:00p Elder/Deacon Meetings 5:45p Impact U, Fusion & Kids Choirs	20 Church Office Closed 7:00p BRCS Board Meeting	21	22 6:00a Men's Bible Study 2:30p Symington GNC 6:30p Choir Practice Prayer Meeting Awana	23 4:15p Ingles GNC 4:30p Santa Fe GNC	24	25 2:00p Sides/Cartwright Wedding
26 9:30a Worship Service 11:00a Sunday School 12:00p Homebuilders SS Potluck 5:45p Impact U, Fusion & Kids Choirs	27 Church Office Closed	28 6:00p BRCS Jr. High Spring Concert	29 BRCS "Serve Day" 6:00a Men's Bible Study 2:30p Symington GNC 6:30p Choir Practice Prayer Meeting Awana	30 4:15p Ingles GNC 4:30p Santa Fe GNC		