



## Three New Year's Resolutions ... to Keep



We all know that a list of resolutions can lead to discouragement if the goals prove too difficult to maintain. After all, lasting change begins in a person's heart - not on a numbered list or piece of paper.

The following are three resolutions to consider for the year, but instead of being tasks to accomplish, each resolution below represents an attitude of the heart that people can choose to adopt:

### 1. LIVE GENEROUSLY

A few years ago, a college student visited the university chaplain in his office and noticed that he had very few books on his shelves. But because the student had spent time talking about books with the chaplain, he knew that the man was well-read.

"Where are all your books?" he asked the chaplain. "I know you've read so many, yet there are only three books in your entire office."

"Every time I finish a good book," the chaplain said, "I give it to someone else. If I've enjoyed the book and learned from it, then it's time for someone else to have that joy as well. Then of course, I always like the conversations that I have with people after we've both read the same book."

Living generously, like the chaplain, is a great way to share the Gospel with your life. If people are generous with their time, generous with their money, and generous with their belongings, then it's easy for others to see Christ's love lived out through their lives. And they reap the benefits tenfold through watching joy overflow into other people's lives.

Just as God is always generous with us, so His followers should be generous with others in everything. A story is told of a pastor who led a revival that brought a large crowd. During the service, an offering was collected to cover the expenses of the event; the remaining money from the collection would go to some missionaries that the church sponsored.

But as the crowd passed around the offering basket, a man stole the money and slipped away from the service. Some at the service witnessed this, however, and the man was brought to court.

The pastor attended the trial because the prosecuting attorney asked him to appear in the witness stand to testify the extent of the damages. Yet when the pastor sat in the stand, as he faced the thief, he said, "Most people would expect me to be angry at you, but instead, I would like to offer you a job."

After all the proceedings were over, the thief came to work in the church, at first, doing small errands and tasks, but later, becoming an assistant for the church staff. As he saw Christ's forgiveness and generosity lived out daily, the former thief changed and gave his life to Jesus Christ.

How can you be generous this year ...

With your forgiveness? With your time? With your care for others? With the gifts and talents God Himself has given you? Live generously, and God's love will be evident in your life.

*"Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you" (Luke 6:38, NIV).*

*(continued on page 2)*

Rev. Danny J. Kesner  
Senior Pastor

Rev. Janet Allen  
Associate Pastor

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Website  
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Sunday Services  
Traditional  
8:00 and 11:00 AM  
&  
Contemporary  
9:30 AM

## 2. REFLECT ALL YEAR LONG

A survey taken several years ago asked people in their eighties and nineties what they would do more if they could live their lives again. One of the top responses said that they would reflect more.

If they could live life again, these wise folks said they would reflect on their daily actions, on the words they say, and on the ways they've lived.

Reflections at the end of a year usually turn into regrets. It may seem too late or too overwhelming to reflect at this point, yet if people take time to reflect each day, then they will be able to make small changes in their lives—ones that will make a real difference at the end of a year.

Take a moment each day to spend time in prayer. Ask God to show you the kind of person He wants you to be. It's painful to reflect on one's actions and then try to change for the better, but over time, self-reflection leads to wisdom.

*"Anyone who listens to the Word but does not do what it says is like a man who looks at his face in a mirror and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. But the man who looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues to do this, not forgetting what he has heard, but doing it—he will be blessed in what he does" (James 1:22-25).*

## 3. GROW CLOSER TO GOD

Ruth Bell Graham, who grew up in China, wrote a story about one of the most valuable possessions that she was able to acquire in her life:

*"In China, Miss Lucy Fletcher offered us, her students, \$5 (a lot of money for a missionary's kid) if we would memorize the Sermon on the Mount. Hours and hours of going over and over Matthew 5, 6, 7. When the time came to recite it, I made one mistake and so I got only \$4.50. But I wouldn't take a thousand times that amount in place of having memorized it."*

Memorizing Jesus' words might be a good the first step toward growing closer to Him. If Mrs. Graham could do it as a child, anyone could turn to the book of Matthew, found in the New Testament, and try to memorize chapters 5-7, where Jesus gives perhaps the most famous sermon of all time, known as the "Sermon on the Mount."

A challenge to learn and recall verses from the Bible opens up the opportunity for God's wisdom to take hold in your life; so it's not just raw memorization. Learning Christ's own words follows the Scriptural command to *"Guard my teachings as the apple of your eye ... write them on the tablet of your heart"* (Proverbs 7:2-3).

Many Christians begin a new year with the goal of reading the entire Bible in a year, and it is an admirable goal, one that anyone can accomplish. But reading the entire Bible might seem a little overwhelming.

Billy Graham writes some words of wisdom for anyone beginning to read the Bible, for the first, or fiftieth, time. He writes, "Begin by reading the Gospel of John, for it tells us of Christ, of the 'greatest life ever lived,' and what He has done for us."

Another way to grow closer to God is to spend time with Him daily. A good new year habit to get into is having devotional prayer time every morning, whether that means a few minutes of prayer in the car or an hour of scripture meditation and study.

*"Come near to God and He will come near to you" (James 4:8).*

Likewise, one of the most common new year's resolutions is to help others more. A good way to act out that goal, while growing closer to God, is through acts of service or even intercessory prayer. Intercessory prayer means interceding, or stepping in, to pray for others. Praying for others sets free God's power in their lives—what a beautiful gift!

*"... Pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective" (James 5:16b).*

Enjoy growing closer to God this year as well as challenging yourself to live generously and reflect daily—these are resolutions of the heart.

*By Ann Maire Chilton*

"I'm Away from My Desk ... Leave a Message if You Must ...  
But know that I might be delayed in getting back to you."

An old friend of mine once told me that retirement should be renamed "finishing school." Well, standing at the threshold of this retirement thing, I don't know if I'm ready to call it finishing school. What I am prepared to do is say - very simply - Thanks! Thanks to all of you for letting me be a part of the staff at Great Bridge ... and, a part of your lives. The journey through life is filled with multiple pathways. I'm thankful that I could share one of them with you for the past few years. Walking with you: has caused me to grow; helped me to experience God in many wonderful ways; and has filled me with an abundance of God's love that made its way to me through you - and, has provided me with a few more stories to tell! In return, I pray that a little of the God in me has found its way into your life.

Now, as for endings. Please know that you will continue to be stuck with me in a couple of ways. First, Joanne and I are not moving; nor will we be seeking another church to attend. I happen to enjoy your pastors and the programs and ministries of the church. Secondly, as a portion of my retirement, I will become an ARP (not to be confused with AARP) for GBUMC. ARP stands for "Adult Resource Person!" Your Staff Parish Relations Committee has asked me to assist with some ongoing projects - to which I have agreed. So, the "retirement gathering" on the 11th of December was simply an excuse to get a bunch of good people together.

May the journey continue.

Thom Kinsey



*Join us Sunday, January 1st  
10 a.m. - for a Covenant Renewal Service with Holy Communion  
No Sunday School or Coffee House  
Nursery will be available.*

*With  
Sympathy*

*Rick & Suzanne Smith & family, passing of Suzanne's mother.  
Hal Gastler & family, passing of his wife, Judy.*

## Virginia Advocate

If you would like to subscribe to the Virginia Advocate, go to the Virginia Conference website - [www.vaumc.org](http://www.vaumc.org) - and click on the "Subscribe to the Virginia United Methodist Advocate" button on the homepage.

*Wednesday Night Bistro*

*Dinners will return on January 18th.*

*"Kids" night for kids of all ages.*

*Salad Bar, Chicken Fingers, Macaroni & Cheese, Steamed Broccoli, Baked Chicken, Baked Sweet Potato (limited quantities), Baked Potato with the fixings (limited quantities) & Homemade Cookies.*

*If you would like to bake your favorite cookies to share please contact Andree Butcher at 375 - 4998.*



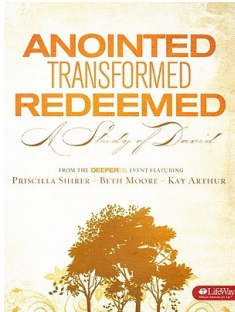
A Special Event for 4th & 5th Grade Students

You're invited to participate in a three part Spiritual Photography Pizza Party! With the wonder of Christmas upon us, what better way to capture the Joy of the Season and Gift of God's Son than through photography. The class begins in the Season of Epiphany - God revealing God's self to the world in Jesus. Part One [Noon on Sunday, January 8th] - Learn some basic photography skills and see how to connect your own photos with John 3:16 - and eat pizza! Part Two [Noon on Sunday, January 22nd] - Bring your photos on a cd/stick to share with the group & receive positive feedback - and eat pizza! Part Three [Coffee House on Sunday, January 29th] - Share your Spiritual Photos with the congregation in an exhibit during Coffee House!

***Beth Moore Bible Study***

*Beth Moore's "James: Mercy Triumphs" is a study of James, Jesus' own brother, who starts out as skeptic, but with one glimpse of the resurrected Savior turns an unbeliever into a disciple. Join this 8 week study that begins on Thursday, January 12th from 9 - 11 a.m. in room 136. Contact the church office at 482 - 1049 to RSVP and purchase a book.*





## *“Anointed, Transformed, Redeemed”*

Beginning Thursday, Jan. 19 from 7 - 9 p.m. in room 132, we will offer a 6 - week study of David, called “Anointed, Transformed, Redeemed.” There is some homework & great DVD sessions by Kay Arthur, Priscilla Shirer & Beth Moore. If you are interested, please contact Kathy Case at 482-4943.

Everyone is welcome - dudes, chicks, young & old.

### *Meals for Get Smart*

The Get Smart program is in need of individuals or groups that would like to provide a meal for the students, families & mentors. Many dates for 2012 are still available & need to be filled as soon as possible. Please contact Dale McClure at 549-9172, if you or your group would like to provide a meal.

**Jan. 3, 24, Feb. 14, 21 28; Mar. 6, 13, 20, 27; Apr. 3, 17,24;  
May 1, 8, 15, 22, 29; June 5th**

Please submit  
bulletin  
announcements by  
Wednesdays at  
12 noon.

The deadline for the  
February  
newsletter is  
Wednesday,  
January 18th.

## **United Methodist Men**

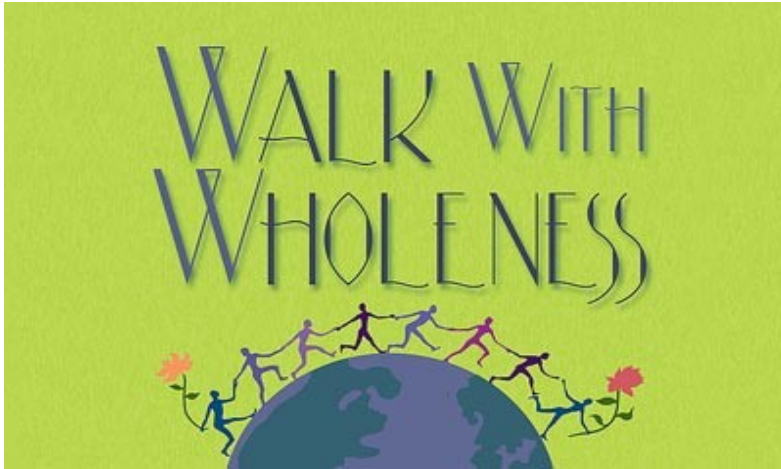
The UMM Installation Dinner will be held on Sunday, Jan. 15 at 6 p.m. in the Social Hall. Everyone is invited. Please RSVP to the church office at 482-1049.

**(There will not be a breakfast in January.)**

UMM hosted Bible Study - “The Thirteen Apostles”

Twelve men personally chosen by Jesus to lead in his ministry of spreading God’s word and love - and later, a thirteenth. If asked, few of us could name them all; and yet, Jesus left his mission and message in the care of this small group of men. Today, their spiritual descendants fill the world. Join us on Wed., Jan. 18th at 6:30 p.m. in room 136 as we begin our journey with the group that walked with Jesus.

### Meeting Dates



## United Methodist Women

The Circle of Grace will meet on Tuesday, Jan. 3rd at 6:30 p.m. in room 136. Refreshments and fellowship will be at 6:30 p.m. and our business meeting will be at 7 p.m. The program will be the annual Pledge Service. All ladies interested in missions are invited to attend.

On Friday, Jan. 6th, our church will prepare lunch for the doctors and staff who provide free health care to the residents of Chesapeake. Please call Sandra Cotten at 439-1050 if you would like to help.

### Upcoming Events

- ~ Saturday, Jan. 28th - Prayer Breakfast at Wesley Memorial UMC.
- ~ Tuesday, Feb. 7th - Unit Meeting.

CHECK US OUT ON FACEBOOK

### **Circle of Faith**

2nd Monday of the month at 7 PM in room 112.

Mission Project: Women's Division of the Salvation Army

### **Friendship Circle**

1st Monday of the month at 10 AM at various homes.

Mission Project: BabyCare

### **Circle of Grace**

1st Tuesday of the month at 6:30 PM in room 136 or at various homes.

Mission Project: CHIP for first time MOMs

### **Circle of Light**

2nd Tuesday of the month at noon in room 119.

Mission Project: Lighting the Way to Education at Linden Elementary in Norfolk

### **Circle of Love**

3rd Monday of the month at 7 PM in various homes.

Mission Project: Great Bridge Food Closet

### **Kay Reel Circle**

3rd Wednesday of the month at 10:30 AM.

Mission Project: Angel's Soldiers

All ladies are welcome to visit any of the circles. Please call the church office to verify meeting locations. Child care can be provided if necessary.



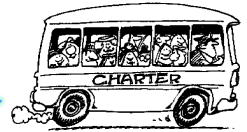
December District Prayer Breakfast hosted by Great Bridge UMW

### SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE-L. PURNELL BAILEY PROGRAM

Are you aware of a high school senior who you think has potential or has expressed interest in the ministry? Please let them know that Randolph-Macon College has several scholarships for high school students who think they may be experiencing a call to the ministry. The Bailey Program offers 1/2 tuition freshman and sophomore years and full tuition junior and senior years. In addition there is peer support and mentoring with the Bailey Advisor. If interested, please contact Margie Turbyfill at mturby576@aol.com or (804) 368-7276.

## Mark your calendars

Speeders will be getting together for lunch & bingo on Wednesday, Feb. 1st at 11:30 a.m. in the Social Hall. Please bring a sandwich and a bingo prize. Entertainment & dessert will be provided. Please contact Ruth Wiles at 482-1481 to RSVP.



**NEST: (Norfolk Emergency Shelter Team)**  
 Please help our church family provide shelter, warmth, food, fellowship, etc. at GBUMC during the week of **February 15 – 22.**  
 More information will be available in the weekly bulletins.



February 22nd  
7 PM



**Join us Wednesday, Feb. 29**  
**6:00 PM**  
**Do YOU have what it takes?**

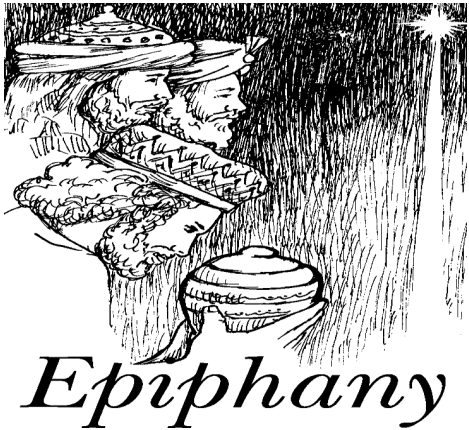
Looking Ahead to Holy Week - We will not have a Maundy Thursday service rather we have contacted Jews for Jesus and they will be sending to us a Missionary, Karl deSouza. He is looking forward to being at GBUMC to present *Christ in the Passover* on Good Friday, April 6, at 7:00 PM. We will be celebrating with a Seder meal that evening!



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**American Red Cross Blood  
Drive here at GBUMC  
Tuesday, January 31, 2 - 7 PM.**

Every man should be born again on the first day of January. Start with a fresh page. Take up one hole more in the buckle if necessary, or let down one, according to circumstances; but on the first of January let every man gird himself once more, with his face to the front, and take no interest in the things that were and are past.

~Henry Ward Beecher

# GBUMC Youth

# January 2012

## Want detailed info?

MS & HS emails go out every week. Please email [gbumcyouth@verizon.net](mailto:gbumcyouth@verizon.net)

Like text messages better? Go to [www.greatbridgeumc.com/youth](http://www.greatbridgeumc.com/youth) and click on the link!

## High School Prayer Breakfast *every other Friday, 7 – 8 AM!*

January 6 @ Addy Hawkins'  
317 Cheshire Forest Dr.

January 20 @ Erin Clark's  
912 Meadow Trail Rd.

## High School Special Events

Work Crew @ Young Life Rockbridge  
– January 27 – 29

Ski Trip @ Massanutten & Camp Overlook  
– February 10 – 12

Mission Trip in Chesapeake, VA  
– June 24 – 30

## Middle School Special Events

Spring Retreat to Rockbridge  
– March 23 – 25 with the Jeremiah Project

Mission Trip in Romney, WV  
– August 5 – 11 with the Jeremiah Project

## MS Girls Refuge

Wednesday Nights!  
– January 4<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> -- 6:30 - 7:30 PM

## High & Middle School Special Events

### 30 Hour Famine!

January 20-21

The 30 Hour Famine gives students a chance to help overcome hunger — by going without food so others don't have to. Students learn about hunger and fundraise to help feed and care for children living in poverty.

On Famine weekend, students get a crash course in global hunger by going 30 hours without food!

### Sock Wars!

January 22

MS Sock War – 4:30 – 6 PM

HS Sock War – 6:30 – 8 PM

All competitors take off their shoes but leave socks on. The object is to keep your socks on as long as possible! There is no standing, so everyone is crawling around on the arena trying to pull everyone else's socks off while trying to defend their own socks.

## Sunday Nights!!

**Middle School Youth**

4:30 – 6 PM

**Feeding Frenzy for MS & HS**

6 – 6:30 PM (Cost: \$1)

**High School Youth**

6:30 – 8 PM

*\*Changes this month:*

No MS or HS Youth activities

January 1<sup>st</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup>

# Disruptions: For Teenagers, a Car or a Smartphone?

The auto industry has a lot of problems. It has to worry about workers' pension and health care costs, too-frequent recalls and the rising cost of gas. I think there is something else that should concern the automakers.

It's the iPhone.

Teenagers love smartphones, and getting one has become a rite of passage. A driver's license? Like, whatever.

It seems unlikely, but at least one auto company is paying attention.

"The car used to be the signal of adulthood, of freedom," Sheryl Connelly, the Ford Motor Company's manager of global consumer trends and futuring, said in a recent phone interview. (The title sounds strange, but many big companies now have executives focused on discerning the future.) "It was the signal into being a grown-up. Now, the signal into adulthood for teenagers is the smartphone."

"Mobile devices, gadgets and the Internet are becoming must-have lifestyle products that convey status," said Thilo Koslowski, lead automotive analyst for Gartner. "In that sense these devices offer a degree of freedom and social reach that previously only the automobile offered."

There are some signs that smartphones, along with social networks and text messaging, have become the expression of liberation from parents that getting a driver's license and hitting the open road once was.

In a survey to be published later this year, Gartner found that 46 percent of people 18 to 24 would choose access to the Internet over access to their own car. Only 15 percent of the baby boom generation would say that, the survey found. "The iPhone is the Ford Mustang of today," Mr. Koslowski said.

The teenager's waning enthusiasm for driving predates smartphones. Statistics released by the Transportation Department note that in 1978, 50 percent of 16-year-olds in the United States obtained their first driver's license. In 2008, only 30 percent did.

Those who get a license now drive less, too. The Transportation Department says 21-to-30-year-olds now drive 8 percent fewer miles than they did in 1995.

Ms. Connelly of Ford has an interesting explanation for the behavioral shift. Driving a car limits the valuable time teenagers could use to text-message with their friends or update their social networks, she said. Although public transportation or waiting for a ride from the parents is slower, it gives a teenager more time to engage with friends on a mobile phone.

By NICK BILTON | November 20, 2011 | <http://bits.blogs.nytimes.com>