

Oak Level Baptist Church

7720 Oak Level Road Bassett, VA 24055
(276) 629-7973 olbc@comcast.net
www.OakLevelBaptist.org

Volume 36

“SHARING THE JOURNEY”

April/May 2013

Real Shepherds Will Smell Like Sheep

When he saw the crowds, he had compassion (spleen, intestines, inward parts) on them, because they were harassed (faint, loosened, melted, broken up) and helpless (scattered, cast down, tossed aside), like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field." - Matthew 9:36-38.

In this one chapter of Matthew Jesus touches many lost and “dirty” sheep. One is paralyzed and burdened with sin. Jesus forgives him and heals his physical need. Another is hated as a tax collector and deemed untouchable by the religious people. Jesus shows him kindness and shares a meal with him. A third is pronounced dead, lost forever. Jesus takes her hand, and she is found. Another has been hemorrhaging for twelve years, discouraged and hopeless. As she touches the hem of His garment Jesus gives her encouragement and she is healed. Two blind men trapped in darkness cry out for mercy. Jesus honors their faith in Him as He touches their eyes and gives them sight. A seventh man has been silenced by the wickedness of a demon. By His authority Jesus commands the demon to leave, and the man can speak again.

In many developing countries around the world it is common to see shepherds tending their animals on open ranges, fields, and even across busy highways. Visitors from the States get a kick out of seeing these hard-working folks dutifully going about their task, because it is a sight seldom, if ever, seen in this country.

During our years in Mexico we became so accustomed to this that it was no longer the rare and interesting sight it was at first, but simply a daily part of life. Goats, sheep, or burros could wander right into our driveway, but received less attention from us than do the squirrels that fill our yard today. However, as a preacher there were some things to be observed and learned, because Jesus had something to say of sheep and shepherds.

I noticed that shepherds spent much time with the flock. It doesn't pay to let the sheep wander about on their own. This invites trouble. The shepherds were guardians and protectors. They saw to it that the sheep were watered and fed, and protected from such things as other animals, thieves, and automobiles racing along desert highways.

These shepherds were also amazingly patient and long suffering. I would head out early in the morning, and when I returned later that afternoon the same shepherd could be found watching over the same sheep who were in turn doing the same thing they had been doing many hours before. The shepherd had no cell phone, video game, radio, or book in his hand, but held instead the same wooden staff as before. He was still watching and herding his sheep, a lesson to me of his tremendous patience and ability to stay to the task.

The shepherd understood the sheep in his care for who they were. He didn't expect what they couldn't be or do, and he never tried to turn them into something foreign or unnatural to their character. False expectations simply weren't an option. At the same time, the shepherd could be gentle or stern according to the need, but always forgiving. He didn't carry a grudge against a particular sheep because of an error or misstep the day before.

Occasionally the shepherd enjoyed the company of another, but this was uncommon. He was usually alone on his field seeing to the needs of the animals that he was personally responsible for. He worked long, hard hours in the sun, day in and day out, unnoticed and unrewarded for his efforts. You can rest assured that at the end of the work week there was no big salary check with his name on it or a group of people gathered around cheering and patting him on the back for a job well done. It just never happened.

Something else I noticed when I stopped to visit with a shepherd. **He was dirty and smelled of sheep.** In other words, he identified "very strongly" with those with whom he had shared so much close contact.

Now don't misunderstand where I am going with this. I know who the true Shepherd is, and I am fully aware of the special calling of a pastor who is called to be a shepherd (or undershepherd) of Christ. But in this present case I use the term shepherd to describe all of us who are Christ followers, whether pastor, teacher, spiritual leader, or servant among the Lord's flock. I hear the words of Christ to Peter as He told him to care for His sheep, if indeed Peter really loved his Lord.

At the end of chapter 9 Jesus looks around and He sees a great multitude, even countless weary souls pressing in from all around. In every town and village it is the same scene; lost and weary sheep without a shepherd hurting and crying for help. But Jesus *really* saw them, and He had compassion (*moved in His innermost being*) on them because they were harassed (*faint, loosened, melted, broken up*) and helpless (*scattered, cast down, tossed aside*), like sheep without a shepherd.

A great number of the folks in our communities have no shepherd. They wander aimlessly and are lost. You might refer to these as unchurched, non-Christians, or unbelievers. They are all around us. Do you *really* see them? They long for someone who will love them, take time for them, care for them, and patiently show them a better way. Many behave badly, make poor judgements, and constantly find themselves in difficult places, because they are ignorant of the good things of God and have had no shepherd to show them safer paths. When you lovingly touch those without a shepherd (the unshepherded) you will likely hear with a surprised and grateful tone, "*I didn't know people did things like that anymore*" They will soon invite you into their lives and enthusiastically receive what you genuinely and unconditionally offer. Be aware of your position as one of Christ's followers sent to be a shepherd among the flock.

Don't be surprised, but many that attend church have no shepherd either. Just because they wander into the stall each week doesn't mean a shepherd touches them. They need invested personal attention from those sitting beside them in classes and worship and from the pulpit, not a distant wink. The genuine shepherd will be more interested in the needs of the individual than in his own needs; he will "*esteem them as better than himself*". He will do his best to identify their needs and where they hurt, and he will feed, water, and apply the right healing oils. He will be sensitive to their ignorance or poor training and take time to properly instruct them. He will do his best to win their trust so they are not afraid to approach him and bare their souls, and above all, he will love them for who they are and not for who he thinks they are or for who he hopes they will become. It should be a "no-strings-attached" relationship. We love because He first loved us, and we love whether they accept our message of hope or not.

Let's be less like the religious professional or hired hand and more the loving shepherd who gathers, feeds and cares for the Master's sheep. Stop judging lost sheep for their outward imperfections and their failure to look and act like our perception of "good" sheep. Understand that under the tangled, dirty, and matted fleece is a heart and soul no less lovely and worthy than our own. Remember that what Jesus Christ has done is for the benefit and salvation of very unlovely and imperfect creatures who have desperately lost their way. Don't be offended by or critical of a sheep without a shepherd because she doesn't walk, talk, look, and smell like we do. We didn't come to smell and look like we do now over night! It was a process, and if you will reach back to a time long ago you will most likely discover a not-so-beautiful sheep that struggled to find its way too.

When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed (faint, loosened, melted, broken up) and helpless (scattered, cast down, tossed aside), like sheep without a shepherd.

Rev. Steve Manuel
Interim Pastor,
Oak Level Baptist Church

APRIL BIRTHDAYS

Apr. 3 Shirley Draper
 April Draper
 Apr. 5 April Gammons
 Apr. 7 Meaghan Poore
 Apr. 08 Christopher Howell
 Apr. 10 Mary Hodges
 Deborah Thomas
 Apr. 11 Brittany Rodgers
 Apr. 15 Alexandra Gill
 Apr. 16 Kim C. Dickerson
 Joseph Pierce
 Jonathan Pierce
 Sherry Y. Stone
 Melissa Thompson
 Jacki Tuttle
 Apr. 17 Dana Young
 Apr. 20 April M. Haulsey
 Virginia Metz
 Apr. 22 Wilbern Meeks
 Apr. 26 Carroll Draper
 Apr. 28 Caroline Snead
 Apr. 29 Bruce Thompson
 Apr. 30 John Wilson

MAY BIRTHDAYS

May 5 Audie Atkins
 Mearl Boswell
 Debra Brown
 May 12 Carolyn Seay
 David Hurd, Jr.
 May 13 Barbara C. Flora
 May 14 Michael Snead
 Hazel Harrison
 Norman Young
 Nancy Felter
 May 15 Erma McKee
 Kasey Viars
 May 18 Patricia Handy
 Teresa D. Seay
 May 19 Regina Atkins
 May 22 Allison Snead
 Jane R. Arrington
 May 23 Logan Coleman
 May 24 Marie Anderson
 Jeanette Crum
 May 25 Tyler Tilley
 May 29 Belva Turner
 May 30 May Seay
 Whittni Wriah

NURSING HOME RESIDENTS

Blue Ridge Manor,
P.O. Box 4904, Martinsville, VA 24112
 Alice Martin - 205

Blue Ridge Rehab,
P.O. Box 4904, Martinsville, VA 24112
 Edna Ashby - 267
 *Glen Young

Blue Ridge Nursing Ctr,
P.O. Box 459, Stuart, VA 24171
 Viola Turner Thelma Love

Fork Mountain Rest Home,
2925 Fork Mtn. Rd. Rocky Mt, 24151
 * Dianne Chitwood *Lillian Forbes
 Howard Hodges Hazel Sizemore
 Angela Mason

Franklin Health Care
 *Betty Turner - 53 Albert Meeks
Hanson Home
162 Krontz Dr. Bassett, VA 24055
 *Betty Sue Sparks

Harmony Hall
P.O. Box 1614, Bassett, VA 24055
 Louise Turner Betty Pagans

Stanleytown Health Care
240 Riverside Dr. Bassett, VA 24055
 Patricia Avers

IN MEMORY

Fund

Name

General Fund Cecil Lee Stone
 Shirley K. Young

Children's Fund Cecil Lee Stone
 Shirley K. Young

FLOWERS

Flowers placed in the Church Sanctuary on Sunday, February 17, 2013 were in loving memory of Nellie Divers and given by Ken & Nancy Turner.

DVD's AVAILABLE

If you would like to receive a DVD each week of our Sunday Worship Service, please call the Church Office at 276-629-7973 and we will add you to our mailing list.



CHANGES IN MAILING OF THE CHURCH NEWSLETTER

To make our Church Newsletter mailings more efficient and up to date, anyone who has internet service can access the **Church Newsletter** through our website at www.OakLevelBatpist.org.

If you would rather continue to have the newsletter mailed to your home as before, or sent to your e-mail address, please call the Church Office at 276-629-7973 or email us at olbc@comcast.net to let us know your preference. Current copies of the newsletter will be available in the Church Foyer and/or Sunday School Classes for our church attendees.

As for our shut-ins or Nursing Home residents, we will mail the newsletter as usual. You can reach us at the Church Office Monday through Thursday from 9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. and Friday from 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.



With Sympathy

Christian sympathy extended to Paul and Erma McKee on the death of Paul's brother, Phillip McKee, who passed away on Monday, February 25, 2013. He lived in Georgia. Please be in prayer for the family.

Christian sympathy extended to Wanda Stone and her family and friends on the death of her husband and to Oak Level Baptist Church on the death of our dear member, Cecil Lee Stone, who passed away Sunday, February 03, 2013.

Christian sympathy extended to Dianne Chitwood and sons, Gary & Jeff Chitwood and their family and friends on the death of their husband and father, Garland Chitwood, who passed away Tuesday, February 12, 2013. Please keep this family in your prayers.

Christian sympathy extended to Dianne Chitwood and her family and friends on the death of her brother, Glenn Thomas McCall, who passed away Sunday, February 10, 2013.

Christian sympathy extended to Talmage, Ira, Marvin, and James Seay and their family on the death of their aunt, Mary D. Holt, who passed away Monday, February 25, 2013. She lived in North Carolina.

Christian sympathy extended to Carlton & Nancy Bousman and their family and friends on the death of Carlton's brother, Jewell Price Bousman, who passed away Wednesday, March 13, 2013.

THANK YOU

I would like to thank my Church Family for all the cards, the wonderful thoughts and prayers, and the Fellowship Meal that was prepared for the family, after Cecil's funeral. Also, thank you, Pastor Steve for the wonderful service and for such a loving and caring church.

We want to thank our church family for the cards, visits, concerns, and prayers that were sent our way during the passing of Golden Stone. Your caring and support has meant so much to us during this difficult time. Elmer Stone & Family

MARTINSVILLE & HENRY COUNTY NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER

DATE: May 02, 2013

LOCATION: Jack Dalton Park & Pavilion

TIME:

Prayer Walk – 11:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Corporate Worship & Prayer – 5:30 – 8:00 p.m.

Contact Person: Russell Buchter
@rbucher@gmail.com



YOUTH NOTES



SPAGHETTI DINNER

The Youth will host a Spaghetti Dinner (eat in or take out) on **Saturday, April 20, 2013 from 4:00 – 7:00 p.m.** in the Church Fellowship Hall to raise money for upcoming Special Events. Cost is **\$6.00** and includes salad, spaghetti, bread, dessert and drink. Please come out and show support for our youth. For more information see Missy Thompson.

April 4 - Youth Meeting - 5:30 - 7:30 p.m.

April 18 - Youth Meeting - 5:30 - 7:30 p.m.

MAY 2013

YOUTH SUNDAY - MAY 5th

Everyone is invited for a wonderful Worship Service presented by the Youth of our church on **Sunday, May 5, at 11:00 a.m.** **Hope to see you there!**

CAR WASH & BAKE SALE



The Youth will host a Car Wash and Bake Sale on **Saturday, May 18 from 11:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m.** Come out, get your car washed, and pick up some delicious baked goods while you are waiting.

May 02 - Youth Meeting - 5:30 - 7:30 p.m.

May 16 - Youth Meeting - 5:30 - 7:30 p.m.

May 30 - Youth Meeting - 5:30 - 7:30 p.m.



A Compassion Revolution

“Operation InAsMuch” is a statewide hands-on mission sponsored by the Virginia Network of Associational Workers.

There will be an organizational meeting **April 11, 2013 at 7:00 PM** at the HCBA office for those churches in the association that want to participate in the **October 12, 2013** event. Please have at least 2 volunteers from your church attend as we organize and form a steering committee for our association.

1. We need everyone to sign up on one of the two posters that will be available at the meeting to volunteer in whatever way (work on projects, pray, feed workers, etc.)

2. We need ideas for projects – **Dream Big** – We would rather have to select projects than hunt around for a project to do.

3. If you know a need – share it with us. If it is something urgent, that will not wait until October; let us know so we can see about getting it done. For more information, see Donna Winebarger.

RA RACER DERBY

MOM & ME 2013

See any WMU member for additional information about these missions.



WMU MEETINGS FOR APRIL & MAY

April 09 - Annual WMU Mtg - 6:15 p.m.
April 23 - WMU Meeting - 7:00 p.m.
May 28 - WMU Meeting - 7:00 p.m.

WMU ANNUAL MEETING

The WMU Annual Meeting will be held **Tuesday, April 9, 2013 at First Baptist Church of Bassett**. Fellowship will begin at 5:45 p.m. with light refreshments. Pre-Service music is from 6:15 to 6:30 p.m. and the service will begin at 6:30 p.m. If you are interested in going, you may meet at the church at 5:30 p.m. to ride the church van and go as a group. All ladies of all ages are encouraged to attend.

During the meeting, an interesting presentation will be made by Ricky Bates, from Mount Vernon Baptist, about his trip to Africa. There will also be an opportunity at the meeting for anyone to sign up to go to Bland, VA to see their ministry at work. A trip is planned for late spring or early summer.

Please see Donna Winebarger or any WMU member for more information.

Give to the
CBF *Offering for*
GLOBAL MISSIONS

OLBC 2013 Goal - \$4,000.00
Offering to Date - \$886.00

You can change lives!

100 percent of your gift to CBF Offering for Global Missions will help people hear and experience the gospel of Jesus Christ.

2012-2013

BLAND MINISTRY CHILDREN'S PROJECT

The Children's Project this year is a cooperative effort to support **Bland Ministry Center in Bland, VA**. Children of Virginia have the opportunity to impact the lives of people in Southwest VA by collecting **paper towels and toilet paper** to send to the Bland Center. If you would like to donate these items, please bring them to the church. Learn more about this project by visiting www.blandministrycenter.org.



SHINE **"Steppin' Out"**

April 13-14, 2013

A group will attend this meeting and are asking for people to donate items for **STANDING ROCK**, they will be collecting **new shoes and flip-flops** for teenagers. Please have items at the church by Thursday, April 11, 2013. See Donna Winebarger for more information.








Engage

April 2013

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|--|--|--|--|---|--------------------------------------|---|
|  |  1 Easter Monday Church Office Closed | 2 |  3 Men's Breakfast - 7:30 a.m. | 4 Youth Meeting . 5:30 - 7:15 p.m. PTS Gathering - 6:15 p.m. Choir Practice - 7:15 p.m. | 5 |  6 Raceway Ministries Weekend Kroger 250 Truck Race |
| 7 Sunday School 9:45 a.m. Worship Service - 11:00 a.m.  Communion | 8 | 9 WMU Annual Meeting 6:30 p.m. First Baptist, Bassett | 10 Deacon's Meeting 7:00 p.m. | 11 PTS Gathering - 6:15 p.m. Choir Practice - 7:15 p.m. | 12 | 13 Fellowship Hall Reserved (Kaysee Short) |
| 14 Sunday School 9:45 a.m. Worship Service - 11:00 a.m. | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 Youth Meeting 5:30 - 7:15 p.m. Business Meeting 6:15 p.m. | 19 | 20  20 Youth Fundraiser Spaghetti Dinner 4:00 - 7:00 p.m. in Church Fellowship Hall |
| 21 Sunday School 9:45 a.m. Worship Service - 11:00 a.m. | 22 | 23 WMU Meeting 7:00 p.m. | 24 | 25 PTS Gathering - 6:15 p.m. Choir Practice - 7:15 p.m. | 26 Mom & Me 2013 /Eagle Eyrie) | 27 Mom & Me 2013 /Eagle Eyrie) |
| 28 Sunday School 9:45 a.m. Worship Service - 11:00 a.m.  Pennies for the Precious | 29 | 30 | Deacon of the Month Betty Metz - 540-483-2106  | | | |

May 2013

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|---|--|-------------------------------|-----|--|-----|---|
|  5 Deacon of the Month - Donna Winebarger - 629-340-5909 |  | | 1 | 2 PTS Gathering - 6:15 p.m. Choir Practice - 7:15 p.m. | 3 | 4 |
| 5 Sunday School - 9:45 a.m. YOUTH SUNDAY 11:00 a.m. | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 Youth Meeting - 5:15 p.m. PTS Gathering - 6:15 p.m. Choir Practice - 7:15 p.m. | 10 | 11 |
| 12 Sunday School - 9:45 a.m. Worship Service - 11:00 a.m. MOTHER'S DAY | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 Gathering - 6:15 p.m. Choir Practice - 7:15 p.m. | 17 | 18  18 Youth Car Wash - Bake Sale at the Church 11:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. |
| 19 Sunday School - 9:45 a.m. Worship Service - 11:00 a.m. | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 Youth Meeting - 5:15 p.m. PTS Gathering - 6:15 p.m. Choir Practice - 7:15 p.m. | 24 | 25 |
| 26 Sunday School - 9:45 a.m. Worship Service - 11:00 a.m.  Pennies for the Precious | 27  MEMORIAL DAY | 28 WMU Meeting - 7:00 p.m. | 29 | 30 PTS Gathering - 6:15 p.m. Choir Practice - 7:15 p.m. | 31 | |