

FLAT BRANCH COVENANT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH NEWSLETTER

130 Darroch Rd., Bunnlevel, NC 28323

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March 2025

Our Identity in Christ

by Paul David Tripp, *New Morning Mercies*

In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory. (Eph. 1:13–14)



You could spend months meditating on the magnitude of what Ephesians 1 says about who you are and what you have been given as a child of God. For now, let's focus on what Paul wants you to understand about what it means to be "in Christ."

Every spiritual blessing. Everything you need in order to live as God has called you to live, in every situation and relationship of your daily life, with every grace you need to do so, along with the guarantee of a glorious future without sin or suffering, are yours because you are in Christ.

He chose us in him before the foundation of the world. Before the world began God set his love on you and chose you to be the recipient of his justifying, sanctifying, and glorifying grace, so that you can stand before him holy and blameless. Because you are in Christ, you are not alone in your battle with sin. God's inexhaustible grace will keep doing its work until that work is complete.

In him we have the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace. We no longer have to be paralyzed by sin's regret or defeated by sin's shame, because in Christ all of our sins—past, present, and future—have been forgiven, by means of his shed blood on the cross.

In him God has made known to us the mystery of his will. Our eyes were once blind and our hearts closed to the life-giving, life-changing wisdom of God's truth, but in Christ these mysteries have been opened and illumined to us. This is why our hearts respond to God's word.

In him we have obtained an inheritance. Peter says that this inheritance is being kept in heaven for us (1 Pet. 1:4). There is glory beyond our ability to conceive that awaits us, which we could have never earned or deserved, but which is ours in Christ.

In him we can live for the praise of his glory. In Christ we are blessed to live for a glory greater than our own, for a kingdom way better than our own, and for the praise of a King who is not us.

In him we were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit. This means that because you are in Christ, your relationship with God is never at risk, never at stake. Your relationship with God and your place in his eternal family have been sealed forever. Your continued obedience doesn't guarantee your standing with God; being in Christ does.

We need to hear again and again the amazing grace that is ours because we were chosen before the world began to be in Christ. This grace is not just a future reality; it provides everything we need to be what God has chosen us to be and to do what he has called us to do right here, right now. We simply can't gather enough, hear too often, or reflect too deeply on the warehouse of blessings that are ours in Christ.

From Pastor Tom:

I closed the 2/23 sermon with comments about taking appropriate risks for the sake of the Kingdom of God. To that end, I interviewed my friend, Rev. Dale Glading of *Risk Takers for Christ* (<https://www.risktakersforchrist.org/>). Here's what he said:

What are some actions God's people can follow in order to take steps of faith?

1. Pray
2. Consult God's Word.
3. Seek godly counsel from trusted Christian advisors.
4. Follow God's inner urging (*i.e.* your sanctified desires) and leave the results to Him.
5. Don't look back or second guess your decision. If you misinterpreted God's leading, He will redirect you.

Why do God's people so often fail to take such risks for the Kingdom?

Complacency, comfort, materialism, fear, and lack of faith.

FINDING YOUR RHYTHM IN BIBLE READING,

excerpted from Pastor Daryl Dash **(Part 3 of 3)**

When You Get Stuck

Here are some ways to handle the obstacles and setbacks that you'll inevitably face.

"I don't understand what I'm reading."

Think of reading Scripture as learning a new language. Not understanding what you're hearing is just part of the process. It's an inevitable step on the way to learning.

"I can't stay consistent."

Don't aim for something ambitious; aim for something small and achievable. Find a good plan that works for you and gives you grace days to catch up if you fall behind. Ask for help from accountability partners. Track your progress with a good habit app or journal. It's better to keep at it and do it imperfectly than not read at all.

"I don't have the time."

It's not so much a matter of time, but a matter of priority. Just look for five or ten minutes a day that work for you and guard that time. Consider using audio formats to listen to Scripture while commuting to work.

FBCPC KIDS CORNER, by Jenna Cox

Join Us for 40 Days of Grace: A Family Prayer Journey!

Flat Branch Kids would like to invite families to participate in **40 Days of Grace: Family Prayers for Lent**, a fun and meaningful way to prepare for Easter together! From **March 5th to Easter Sunday, April 20th**, families can spend just **5-10 minutes a day in prayer, scripture, and interactive activities** to help children grow in faith and experience God's grace. This easy-to-follow journey makes Lent engaging and special for kids and parents alike. For daily prayers and activities, visit flatbranchpc.org and click on the **Flat Branch Kids** page to get started!

Presbyterian Women News

Recently, Flat Branch lost two long-time members of our congregation. As in the past, those on our bereavement teams stepped up and provided food after the funerals for the bereaved families. Both families expressed their heartfelt thanks for the support. Danny Brown sent a Thank You card that reads~ "Flat Branch Presbyterian Women~ Thank you very much for the warm reception and food after the graveside service for my father Neil Brown.... In Christian love, Danny and Kathy Brown."

The Annual Yard and Bake Sale will be held Saturday, May 3rd. Start collecting and pricing items now for the sale.

150th Anniversary cookbooks are still available for sale. The price is \$20 each or 2 for \$35. Proceeds will support activities of the Presbyterian Women.

Prayer Requests

Our Pastor, Church Leaders and Church Family

Our Country (and Leaders) for many reasons

Our Military Personnel & Emergency Services

Western NC

The Family of Lisa Stewart

Brynlee Crawford— daughter of Brittany Bass and Jonathan Crawford in NICU at Duke

Charlie Aslund— Cancer

Donnie Hamilton—health issues

Betty Bain—cancer

Evelyn Bordeaux—illness

Paul & Georgette Dempster— illness

Unspoken concerns

Shut-ins who are alone and lonely

Those who are struggling financially, physically, and mentally.

Those doing Mission work spreading the Gospel of Jesus throughout to World.

The needs are many and these are the ones that we're currently aware of. Please feel free to contact us by the church phone, email, website, or Facebook should you have a specific request.

(Additional updated Prayer Requests are distributed every Sunday at Worship Service)

Happy Birthday

Natalie Adams—3/5

Holt Felmet—3/8

Sara Praeger—3/8

Kyle Wilder—3/9

Garry McArtan—3/12

Warren Bailey—3/14

Nora Backus—3/21

John Midgett—3/29



Happy Anniversary

Yves & Mirene Akam—3/8

Alvin & Charlotte McArtan—3/14

(Congratulations on 61 years!)

Lloyd & Karin Viox—3/15

Memorials

Neil Eldridge Brown

Peggy Hamilton

Mary Lasater

Alvin & Charlotte McArtan

Alice Powell

Carolyn Shaw

Lacy & Ann Taylor

Vickie Wilder

Crystal W. Butler

Jack & Debbie Hanks

Mary Lasater

Alice Powell

Carolyn Shaw

William Thomas Butler, Sr.

Peggy Hamilton

Mary Lasater

Alice Powell

Lacy & Ann Taylor

Wallace & Graham PA

Pamela T. Byrd

Jo Stone-Ash

Peggy A. Hartung

Carolyn Shaw

Norman G. Shaw

Anderson Creek Ruritan Club

A Lenten Reflection...

Give up complaining; focus on gratitude

Give up harsh judgments; think kindly thoughts

Give up worry; trust divine Providence

Give up discouragement; be full of hope

Give up bitterness; turn to forgiveness

Give up hatred; return good for evil

Give up negativism; be positive

Give up pettiness; become mature

Give up jealousy; pray for trust





FEBRUARY 2025



**March 21st from 11 AM—6 PM we will hold a
Carry Out BBQ Fundraiser.**

**Flat Branch Covenant Presbyterian Church
130 Darroch Rd., Bunnlevel, NC 28332**



**\$12 can get you either a plate that contains a BBQ sandwich,
slaw, a bag of chips and a dessert,
or you can purchase by the pound, \$12 per pound.**

**SENIOR CITIZENS PLEASE JOIN US FOR OUR
ANNUAL SENIOR CITIZEN LUNCHEON**

LOCATION: FLAT BRANCH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

130 DARROCH RD.

BUNNLEVEL, NC 28323

DATE: MARCH 29, 2025

TIME: 12:00 PM