

NEWSLINE

Great Smoky Mountains Church of Christ

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"The Race That Is Set Before Us"

After holding up many examples of faithful service to God, the writer of the book of Hebrews concludes:

"Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith..." (Hebrews 12:1,2)

John Stephen Akhwari is not an athlete whose name has been enshrined in history. Yet, his commitment and determination to finish the race makes him a real hero to his fellow countrymen. He was a marathon runner from Tanzania who finished last in the 1968 Olympic race in Mexico. In fact, no one had ever finish so far behind.

Injured on the course, Akhwari crossed the finish line more than an hour after the other runners had finished. Bloody and bandaged from his injuries, with most of the spectators already gone, he was asked why he continued to run. He replied, *"My country did not send me to Mexico City to start the race. They sent me here to finish."*

Many Christians have a good start but a poor finish. The crown of victory is at the end of the race. The apostle Paul told some believers in Galatia, *"You were running well; who hindered you from obeying the truth?"* (Galatians 5:7). Sadly, many are diverted by *"weights"* and *"sins"* which take their eyes off Jesus. There are always some on the sidelines telling us to give up or to change courses.

The race is *"set before us"*. We cannot stop short. We cannot listen to the distractors. There will always be diversions. Some will come from our *"friends"*. Some from commitments which may seem to be more important at the time. Some will be from family. If we keep our eyes on Jesus, *"seated at the right hand of the throne of God"*, we will cross the finish line...maybe injured...but we will finish! — Al Behel

Other Church Family News Events

Mark Your Calendars: October 4-6—Brad Harrub will be with us for a weekend series on Creation/Evolution and related topics. Dr. Harrub is a scientist who specializes in Christian apologetics. This is a tremendous opportunity to reach out to our neighbors. Guests are asked to take a flyer from the foyer back to your congregation. We hope you will plan to attend. This series would be of special benefit to your students who are being challenged by theories that are designed to discourage faith in God.



Following is the seminar schedule:

Friday—7 p.m.—Atheism's Attack on America

Saturday—6 p.m.—Can We Prove God Exists?

Was Darwin Wrong?

Sunday—9:30 a.m.—Jesus on Trial in 2013

10:30 a.m.—Faith for Life

1:30 p.m.—Value of Human Life

Sermon Topics Today: A.M.—*"In My Father's House, No. 8—In My Father's House We Break Bread Together;* P.M.—*"Great Stories of the Bible Series: Isaiah"*

Our Known Sick

Dez Anderson—multiple health issues, including MS

Andrea Weddington—cervical cancer. Keep praying for her as she is receiving radiation and chemotherapy.

Jan Messick—still cancer free

Bill England—cancer. Has had to stop chemotherapy because of an allergic reaction. Will receive other medications.

Betty Graves—diagnosed with cancer

Joe Bostick now at home in Texas after having a LVAD (Left Ventricular Assist Device) installed to assist a failed heart.

Debby Bryan—Cancer; **Johnny Bryan**—health issues; **Clara Mayberry**—confined to home.

Kathy May recovering at home in Baxter following pneumonia and heart issues.

Chath Haynes is recovering from broken ankle and injured knee.

Larry Valentine—crushed his right heel and fractured his right ankle from step-ladder fall. He will be required to wear a boot for three months and keep weight off his foot and ankle.

Heather Cox—Awaiting test results on unborn baby's heart.

Friends and Family

Christopher Howell (grandson of the Littletons-spinal cord injuries suffered in automobile accident), **Arania Blount** (Brenda Scott's sister)—cancer markers have increased, **Betty Langdon** (Ginny Cliett's sister—mental confusion issues), **Rose Parker** (daughter-in-law of Ray & Faye Parker—suffering from Leukemia), **Robin McCollum and Peggy McCollum** (Al's nieces—both battling cancer), **Shelby Daniels** (medical technologist in clinic with Al—recovering from brain surgery), **Libby and Larry Gilley** (friends of Dwight Grizzell—she has breast cancer); Sue Mercer's sister, **Connie Browning**, is being treated for breast cancer; Beverly Finnell's grandson, **Liam Finnell**, is having health issues. **Susie Cliett**, Rick's sister-in-law (brother Kenny's wife), has terminal lung cancer.

Afghanistan—Major Bryan Darilek, U.S. Army, in a 9 month deployment. He is the son-in-law of Rick and Ginny Cliett and husband of Laura. He is scheduled to return home within 60 days. Please pray for his safety.

Rick Cliett: Will speak by Skype next Sunday night from Malaysia.

Rise & Shine—Every Sunday morning at 9:15. Kids—join us for singing, puppets, and stories.

Sunday Adult Bible Class
The Holy Spirit

Next Book of The Month Meeting—July 30, 7-9 pm
Book: Lamentations

Times of Services

Sunday A.M.

Bible Study 9:30 AM

Worship 10:30 AM

Sunday P.M. 6:00 PM

Wednesday 7:00 PM

Building Fund

Loan balance as of 05/19/13 is **\$1,206,186.91**. Extra contributions to reduce the loan debt are needed and appreciated. Envelopes are available in the pew.

Nursery

Located across main foyer. Closed circuit TV allows viewing and participation in worship.

CDs and DVDs of Sermons are available free at sound booth. Also available on the website at: www.greatsmokymountainschurchofchrist.com.