

NEWSLINE

Great Smoky Mountains Church of Christ

Al Behel, Minister
abehel@ix.netcom.com

Vol. XIX. No. 30

July 26, 2015

"I'll Exchange My Cross"

Contrasting the Christian life with the ancient Olympic games, the apostle Paul said, "Do you not know that in a race all the runners compete, but only one receives the prize? So run that you may obtain it. Every athlete exercises self-control in all things. They do it to receive a perishable crown, but we an imperishable crown" (I Corinthians 9:24, 25).

Have you ever seen a real crown? Housed in a museum in London are many beautiful crowns which have adorned the heads of British royalty over the years. Those gold bands studded with gorgeous gems are worth millions of dollars. They were not given to their recipients because of their accomplishments, but because of their royal birth.

The crown given to the ancient athlete who won the Olympic race was usually a wreath made of ivy or pine. It symbolized many years of training and discipline. It represented a victory over many skilled and fierce competitors. There was only one crown to be won.

God has many crowns for us. Crowns which symbolize the reward He has for us at the end of the race. He promises a "**crown of rejoicing**" for those who bring others to Christ (I Thessalonians 1:19,20) ; a "**crown of righteousness**" for all who fight a good fight, finish the race, and keep the faith (2 Timothy 4:7,8) ; a "**crown of life**" for those who are faithful unto death (James 1:12, Revelation 2:10); and a "**crown of glory**" for those elders who shepherd and set good examples for others to follow (I Peter 5:3,4).

Charles H. Gabriel captured the essence of the successful Christian life:

*"I'll exchange my cross for a starry crown,
Where the gates swing outward never;
At His feet I'll lay ev'ry burden down,
And with Jesus live forever."*

The reward comes at the end of the race. Faithful endurance ensures the victory. Those who stop short of the finish line miss the rejoicing and suffer tremendous loss. Jesus' promise is clear: "*Be faithful unto death, and I will give you the crown of life*" (Revelation 2:10). We must "*keep on keeping on!*"

— Al Behel

Other News & Sick:

-**Bill Valentine** has been diagnosed with cancer of the esophagus. He has begun radiation and chemotherapy. Please keep Bill and Gail in prayer.

-**Bill England** was diagnosed with lung cancer in addition to his bone cancer. Tuesday. His doctors are evaluating him for a surgical option. Please keep him in prayer.

-Prayers requested for Beverly Finnell's daughter-in-law's grandmother, **Hazel Haulcroft** (in Arkansas)-diagnosed with endometrial cancer. Surgery July 9.

-**Patty Adair needs for VBS** - EMPTY Kleenex boxes - rectangular and square - please bring to building and place on labeled table in the fellowship room. VBS is scheduled for August 7-8. Theme: "*Go Tell It On the Mountain.*"

Food Contact For Month: Linda Goodnight. Call her to assist.

Elder Contact for Month: Marc Hayes. Phone: 731-608-4148

Sermon Topics: A.M. - "God's Plan For Revival"; P.M. - "Eyes of Love"

Interpreter for deaf and hearing impaired available for AM and PM worship

Our Known Sick

-**Dez Anderson**— still confined to home with multiple health issues. Keep praying. God is listening and answering.

-**Jim Anderson**—recovering from broken wrist. Healing is slow but progressing. Multiple challenges with himself and Dez.

-**Sheryle Elkins**— is continuing to receive chemotherapy for lung cancer. Please pray fervently for her. Her address is: 1383 Lake Front Drive, Dandridge, TN 37725.

-**Marti Cantrell**—radiation treatment for breast cancer.

-**Estlina Wilson**—had back surgery this week and is now at home.

-**Bill Green**—still struggling with health issues

-**Jean Compton**— surgery delayed because of a growth in her mouth.

-**Kathy May** battling ongoing health issues. She is still in Baxter.

-**Keely Chambers**, granddaughter of Shirley Harmon, is 13 weeks pregnant and is confined to bed due to a serious blood clot.

Friends and Family News

-**Howard Yates' mother**— ill with pneumonia in Chattanooga.

-Coleen Thomason's sister, **Sharon**, suffered a stroke and is slowly improving. She lives in Virginia.

-**Judy Watkins**, Rick's sister in Texas, is slightly improving.

-**Richard Nichols**, Nick Nichol's brother—cancer surgery in Illinois.

-**Mrs. Florence Tolliver** is in Ft. Sanders Nursing Home, Rm 172. Her daughter, Rita Taylor from Kodak, has been visiting with us.

-**Tom Behel**, Al's brother - is experiencing further difficulty and will probably need a PEG tube re-installed to prevent dehydration.

-**Morris Fields** -Leah Turner's uncle, a lung infection.

-**Barbara Copley**, friend of Bill England and Sheryle Elkins— cancer.

-**Brenda Moore**, friend of Leah, has thyroid cancer and is having a very difficult time.

-**Cecil Flowers**, friend of Dwight's, congestive heart failure and diabetes. He was a long-time member of the church in Sanford, FL, before moving to Kodak where currently worships. In Ft. Sander's Knoxville.

-**Megan White**, Joyce Keyser's 24 yr. old cousin from Huntsville, is in NYC awaiting delicate surgery at the base of her brain to relieve pain

VBS—AUGUST 7-8

THEME: "GO TELL IT ON THE MOUNTAIN"

Teachers are needed. Sign up in main foyer

Special Events

Men's Prayer Session
Monday mornings at 8:30

Wednesday Night
Rick Cliett is leading a study
on the Book of Hebrews

Sunday Adult Class

I Thessalonians —Al Behel

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 07/01/15 is **\$1,072,765.95**. Extra contributions to reduce the loan debt are needed and appreciated. Envelopes are available in the pews.

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.