

# Belmont Beacon

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In the middle of October, I'll have been with Belmont Baptist Church for ten years. I am unsure of the exact date that our shared journey began. I do know that my first official Sunday as your pastor was October 23, 2005. No matter how many times I look at those sentences, I am astonished that ten years has passed. I am blown away that the time has elapsed so quickly.

Reflecting on the past decade, which is still ten years no matter how many different ways that you say it, is an exercise that produces many positive memories. Much of this reflection involves looking back at changes over that ten year period. Each day I am reminded of the difference of ten years as I see how much Abigail and Amelia have grown in this period. The majority of their lives have been lived with you in Charlottesville. Melanie and I will celebrate our 20th wedding anniversary in December. Aside from her needing to receive a medal, I am struck by the fact that half of that time has been spent with you. This ten years is the longest that I have lived anywhere other than my home where I grew up in Boone, North Carolina. Beyond consideration of Abigail and Amelia growing up, I am struck by the growth that I have witnessed in you. That growth in some cases has been with physical stature, but the most important changes and growth have been in your lives and our shared life together that we call church.

Belmont Baptist is not the same congregation in 2015 as it was in 2005. New faces have been welcomed along the way. We have grieved the losses of many important individuals who have completed their earthly journeys, and we certainly miss these loved ones who blessed our lives. Others have moved away. These are a part of the changes, but the growth I am describing goes much deeper.

We have grown together in our commitment to love our neighbors in Charlottesville and beyond. *Loads of Love* continues to make an impact in the community and in our lives. Your efforts are evident through the ongoing ministries of providing food to neighbors in the community, collecting clothing and school supplies for students at Clark Elementary, as well as making and providing prayer shawls. You

have hosted two meal packaging events with *Stop Hunger Now* to feed hungry children beyond our nation's borders. Our facilities are used more frequently now than ten years ago. *The International School of Charlottesville*, recovery groups meeting each day of the week and the Central Hispanic Seventh-Day Adventist Church of Charlottesville are utilizing our facilities to educate, to transform lives and to worship God. I could name many other examples of how you are serving.

Arguably, the most telling example of the growth this past decade involves the feeding program with the Pre-K classes at Clark Elementary School. One of the first things I did upon my arrival in 2005 was to meet the principal at Clark and see how we could serve them. Many conversations have occurred in the past ten years. Many prayers have been offered. Through your faithfulness to assisting Clark Elementary, relationships have been built. As a result of those important relationships, we are able to provide meals to 23 families. This ministry has been years in the making. This opportunity has happened because you did not give up along the way. I wonder what ministries are in the making right now that we will be actualized ten years from now.

Your love for the world around us has been evident along with your care for each other. You have not neglected each other while trying to share Christ with those who are not affiliated with the church. I know this because I have witnessed how you have cared for those facing crises in our church and specifically how you have cared for me and for my family. Reflections on this past decade produce the same results each time. Those results are a reality described in a word: GRACE.

I consider it a gift of grace to be your pastor and to serve with you. I can see how far we have come in ten years, and I also see that we have more growing to do as we join God at work in our world. Thank you for allowing me to be your pastor. Thank you for allowing me to reflect with you on the past decade of ministry together.

(Continued on page 2)

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Thank you for your faithfulness to the kingdom of God. As we move forward, let us persevere when things do not happen as quickly as we would prefer and keep trusting in the Christ who calls us to this life together.

Blessings,

Greg

**Belmont Baptist Church WMU  
Needlework Guild Clothing Drive  
Collection Dates - Sunday, September 27<sup>th</sup> -  
Sunday, October 11, 2015**

Please help the WMU and the NGA supply clothing for the needy children in our community.

***UVA Hospital Nursery***

Onsies  
Sleepers  
Socks

Dresses and outfits for both genders - sizes preemies to 12 months

***Charlottesville and Albemarle Schools/  
Social Services***

Jackets  
Sweaters  
Pants/jeans  
Sock and Underwear - all sizes

The coffee and display of all items collected in the Charlottesville/Albemarle area will take place on Tuesday, October 12<sup>th</sup> in the Fellowship Hall at

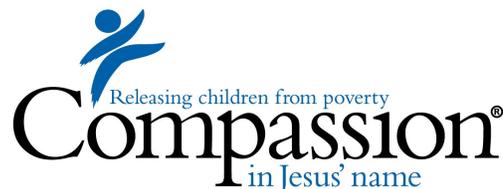
First Presbyterian Church on Park Street from 9:30am - 11am.

**The Spiritual Growth team** is planning to have a children's activity on Saturday, October 31, for the neighborhood. This could be as simple as passing out candy or as elaborate as a Fall Festival with games and treats. If you are interested in helping or contributing to this event please see Becky or Melanie. The number of volunteers will help us determine what activity we can plan.

Dear Sponsors,

I greet you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. I want to thank you for the beautiful and nice letters, pictures, and cards you sent me. Regarding your questions, my answers are : Ariana, I don't know how to swim. I don't like soccer either. Dear Kaitlyn, I do like drawing landscapes of my city. Dear Rebecca, I have two brothers, Symor and Johnatan. I also like the color pink. I am 15 years old. Blessing to you all! I love you all. I also want to tell you that my school starts on March 16 and I will be in the senior year. Please pray for my studies and my family. How do you spend your vacation? What is your favorite Bible verse? I say goodbye with kisses and hugs.

Yeraldin



**To the Belmont Baptist  
Church Family,**

I would like to thank the Belmont Church family for the cards of blessings. Thanks also to Janet Shiflett. Thanks for the beautiful flowers. I am sorry I cannot take care of them. Also, thanks to Becky Bowers and Norman Morris for their visit. I always enjoy it so much.

Thank you and God bless.  
Ressie Bailey



If you use products with Box Tops for Education, please bring them by the church office. They will benefit Clark School.

**Comcast Channel 13  
will Rebroadcast  
the Worship Service  
Sunday at 7:00 pm.**





Currently our Pastor has invited his congregation to meet with him in a gathering he refers to as an experiment. We call this gathering "Dwelling in the Word". The objective is to learn to listen to one another and then learn to listen to the Spirit through the Word.

These meetings have caused me to think about what my experiences are as I read the Bible. I find the Bible to be an incredible and fascinating story packed with historical events. The Word also gives me instructions of how to live my life as a follower of Christ. Including the greatest command of all: Love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your strength and all your mind. And love ALL others.

I am overwhelmed when I think of all the writings in the bible and how it was compiled to create this beautiful book. What an incredible gift from God.

As we share in weekly gatherings, and I listen to how others experience the scriptures, I am developing a deeper, more spiritual way to listen to God's word.

I recently read something that made a connection for me to these weekly gatherings I have been attending, *The more we say yes to God, the more we will live in expectation of seeing God. The more we expect to see God, the more we will. The more you experience him, the more you will trust him. The more you trust him, the more you'll open up your hands in absolute obedience.*

I feel seeking the Spirit through God's word will get us closer to that "absolute obedience".

I encourage everyone to experience God by reading his Word on a daily basis.

I also encourage you to join us as we gather together and "Dwell in the Word" You will be blessed.

Cheryl Rodriguez



Dear Belmont Family,

Fall is my favorite time of year, crisp weather mixed with the smell of wood fires in the air, looking at all of the colors of the leaves and hoping when they fall they blow into the neighbor's yard just kidding). But it really is my favorite time.

My reflections when school started was such a change for me in my thinking at work that it has put me in a different place. Now that I have been in this place it is time to see if this is a good change or a not so good change. Every time I think I have myself figured out I get a "whammy" that says "oh no, you are still under construction and God is not finished just yet". I am planning my hymns much further out with the use of two piano players and I reflected this week on where my heart was when I chose the hymns. By the time you read this, those hymns will be weeks past, but they were very meditative and thought provoking. So once again comes that self-reflecting piece.

We started the "Dwelling in the Word" with pastor a bit ago and spent a lot of time on a passage. We have a couple of Jehovah Witnesses that visit us regularly and Jim is always so kind to them. So why do I find myself going about the day's activities instead of talking with them? They know we are strong in our convictions and they stop anyway. Sometimes just talking nursing with Jim as one of them is a nurse. Oops here comes that self-reflection piece. Why do I become so busy I cannot listen? Are they not offering peace in my house in one way or another?

So am I still under construction? I am not even sure the first floor is built yet. I do know my parents, family, the Word, and a lot of mistakes and successes have given me that strong foundation to build the structure. I pray I know when the foundation is finished, the first floor complete and the furniture overflowing so I can share it all.

This journey is still going and will keep me reflecting for a long time. Ahh reflection is good.

Blessings, Peggy

BELMONT BAPTIST CHURCH  
830 Monticello Avenue  
Charlottesville, VA 22902

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



**WMU Annual Bazaar - Saturday, October 10th - 8am - 2pm**  
**Help support the WMU Mission Projects**

**Drop off items - Friday, October 9th - 8am - 5pm**

**NO WHITE ELEPHANT ITEMS PLEASE**

**Baked Goods - cakes, pies, cookies, brownies, fudge, breads, etc.**

**Jelly, jam, preserves, etc.**

**Pickles**

**Anything homemade**

**If you would like to place an order for Brunswick Stew or Homemade Chili, contact  
Becky Bowers at 434-960-5215.**