



Activities & Service Opportunities of Mayfair Church of Christ

## Stay Safe: A Warning About Internet and Phone Scams for Seniors

By Aaron Clark

In today's digital world, scammers are finding more and more ways to trick people—especially senior citizens—through phone calls, emails, text messages, and even social media. These scams can cost you your money, your peace of mind, and even your identity. It's important to stay alert and know what to watch out for.

### Common Scams to Watch For:

- **Impersonation Scams:** Someone may call pretending to be your grandchild in trouble, a government agent, or a tech support worker. They may ask for money urgently. Don't fall for it—hang up and call the real person directly if it is someone you think you know.
- **Prize or Lottery Scams:** If someone tells you that you've won money or a prize but asks for a fee or personal information to claim it, it's a scam.
- **Medicare and Insurance Scams:** Scammers may ask for your Medicare number or insurance details to "verify coverage." Never share personal information unless you initiated the call.
- **Computer or Tech Support Scams:** You may get a call or pop-up message saying your computer is infected. The scammer will ask for remote access or money to "fix" the problem. Don't let anyone take control of your computer.

### Protect Yourself:

- Never share personal or financial information with someone you don't know.
- Don't trust the caller ID. Scammers can make it look like they're calling from a real organization. Hang up or delete suspicious messages. Don't



click links or download attachments from unknown sources. Talk to someone you trust. If you're unsure, ask a friend or family member before responding.

Remember: It's okay to say no, hang up, or delete a message. While, as Christians, we want to be polite, we must also protect ourselves from those who might harm us or our families. If you think you've been targeted or scammed, report it to the Federal Trade Commission at 1-877-FTC-HELP (1-877-382-4357) or visit [www.ftc.gov](http://www.ftc.gov).

Stay smart. Stay safe. You're not alone—and knowledge is your best defense.

If you need help, feel free to contact the Mayfair Assistance Helpline. Details regarding the Helpline are found below.

### Mayfair Assistance Helpline

If you require assistance with home maintenance, automotive repairs, technology issues (computer, television, or cell phone), or transportation needs, please call the phone numbers below and leave a message and you will be contacted for details:

**256-881-4651 (during church office hours)**  
**256-704-3384 (nights, weekends or holidays)**

## Mayfair Launches Lads to Leaders

By Orry Moody

Proverbs 22:6 says, *"Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it"* (ESV).

What better way to live out this verse than by training our children and equipping them to become the future leaders of the church? Mayfair is excited to announce the kickoff of our Lads to Leaders/Leaderettes (L2L) program, a ministry designed to help our children and teens grow as Christian leaders.

For over 50 years, L2L has equipped young people with the skills and confidence to serve in the Lord's church and beyond. Now, Mayfair families have the opportunity to join this life-changing effort.



**The Moodys, Smiths, and Hollands gather at the Lads to Leaders convention in 2025**

The program offers something for every age group—starting with non-competitive events like oral Bible reading for our youngest participants, all the way through speech, song leading, Bible Bowl, puppets, debate, service projects, art projects, and more. Adults are also encouraged to take part through mentoring, coaching, and non-competitive events. This isn't just about preparing for an annual convention - it's about year-round growth, encouragement, and building lifelong habits of faith and leadership.

Mayfair's official L2L kickoff was held on August 24th, where families learned about upcoming opportunities, event sign-ups, and how training would be conducted. Coaches and coordinators are already in place to guide students and support families; however,



**Declyn Moody places 2nd in Boys' Speech at the 2025 L2L Convention**

er, this program thrives when our whole church family participates—whether through prayer, encouragement, or stepping up to help with training and judging, or encouraging our youngest members to participate.

The highlight of the year will be the 2026 L2L Convention at the Gaylord Opryland Hotel in Nashville, scheduled for April 2–5 over Easter weekend. Over 25,000 people gather each year to participate in L2L at 10 different convention sites. More than 10,000 will gather in Nashville in 2026.

We are excited and thankful that our Mayfair shepherds have given us the blessing to participate in this ministry. We ask for your prayers as we launch this program at Mayfair. May it be a blessing to our children, our families, and our congregation as together we *"bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord"* (Ephesians 6:4 ESV).



**Orry Moody (2nd from left) and Rocky Smith (2nd from right) with L2L Board Members**



# A Grateful Heart

By Jim Smelser

*“Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise; give thanks to him and praise his name. For the Lord is good and his love endures forever; his faithfulness continues through all generations” (Psalm 100:4-5 NIV).*

Sometimes a simple “thank you” can go a long way. Affirmation may not be your love language, but everyone appreciates being valued. God doesn’t need our thanksgiving, but His Word is filled with calls for gratitude.

Thankfully, we no longer have to sacrifice animals like Old Testament priests were commanded to do as an expression of gratitude to God. The New Testament priesthood calls us to continually offer sacrifices of praise, both with confession of our lips and sharing with others out of our plenty (Hebrews 13:15-16). Our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving pleases Him and shapes our hearts. It still amazes me that I, or we, can please the creator of this universe in some way!

In Luke 17:11-19, Luke records the story of Jesus healing ten lepers. Shockingly, only one returned to give thanks—and he was a Samaritan, a despised outsider. Where were the other nine? Their absence speaks volumes, and if we’re honest, we may be guilty of the same ungratefulness at times, both to God and our brothers/sisters.

Perhaps the nine lepers had excuses we know too well:

- **The first leper** was too excited to be reunited with his family. Distractions pulled him away from expressing his gratitude.
- **The second leper** was simply too busy and lost track of time. We are called to “be still” and recognize God’s goodness.
- **Leper number three** thought he’d say thank you tomorrow—delay is one of Satan’s favorite tools. Isaiah 5:12 condemns those who have “no regard for the deeds of the Lord” and “no respect for the works of His hands” (NIV).
- **The fourth leper** assumed Jesus already knew he was grateful. It’s always best to express our thanks aloud and in person whenever possible.
- **Leper number five** didn’t know how to express gratitude and thus chose to remain silent. We don’t have to be eloquent; even simple words to our fellow man or fumbled prayers please God (count on the Holy Spirit to translate your thoughts to the King -- Romans 8:26).
- **The sixth leper** thought, “No one ever thanked me!” A spirit of entitlement blocks thanksgiving.
- **Leper number seven** feared his praise might go to Jesus’ head, forgetting that God alone is worthy. We shouldn’t worry ourselves with the subsequent outcome of our expression of thanks to others.
- **The eighth leper** didn’t like the way Jesus healed him. Pride got in the way, as it initially did with Naaman, who questioned the command to wash in the dirty river Jordan seven times rather than other seemingly better options. We must accept that God is sovereign and walk by faith, even when it doesn’t seem to make sense.
- Finally, **leper number nine** would have returned to thank



Jesus if others had gone with him. Gratitude shouldn’t wait for a crowd; even a note, a card, a call, or a text to others, and a whispered prayer to God are impactful.

Paul repeatedly reminded believers of the importance of gratitude. In Romans 1:21, people were condemned despite having some knowledge of God for failing to thank Him: “they neither glorified Him as God nor gave thanks to Him (NIV).” In 2 Timothy 3:2-3, ungratefulness is listed among the sins of a rebellious generation, alongside other “worse” sins such as slander, unholiness, pride, and abuse/brutality.

Life can tempt us to focus on red lights—frustrations, limitations, and losses—and overlook our blessings. Red lights of adversity can sharpen our view of His faithfulness. With Karen’s recent injury, I’ve been reminded not to take the simple things in life for granted. We are truly fearfully and wonderfully made. Illness, aging, and hardship remind us of the wonders of His creation and His sustaining grace. Thanksgiving helps us recognize the “green lights”—God’s blessings, opportunities, and daily mercies. Let’s not wait until something is gone before we value it and say thanks.

I remember singing from my mother’s hymnal, “Count your blessings, name them one by one.” What a simple, but life-changing practice! Each day, name one blessing before God and focus on that blessing throughout the day. Thanksgiving is a powerful antidote for worry and anxiety – “Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 4:6-7 NIVUK).

Paul says in Colossians 3:17 - “And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him” (NIV).

May we be known as grateful children of God—thankful both to Him and to the people around us. Don’t forget the power of two small words: thank you.

## ***“Gray hair is a crown of glory; it is gained in a righteous life” (Proverbs 16:31 ESV)***

In this issue of “JOY in the Journey,” we continue our series on Mayfair’s Senior Members, who truly wear a “Crown of Glory.” As members age, they are often unable to meet with us due to health issues, but are still near and dear to our hearts. This month, we learn more about one such member, Phyllis Ridley.

### **Phyllis Ridley**

By Diane Brown

Phyllis June Payne Ridley was born on January 11, 1934, in South Pittsburg, Tennessee, the second daughter of seven children born to Garland & Ara Stewart Payne. In an era when many families experienced loss, only four of the Payne children survived past childhood; however, the closeness they developed would bind the family for a lifetime. Phyllis’s siblings and parents remained in Bridgeport, Alabama, throughout their lifetimes, all active members of the Doran’s Cove Church of Christ and the Bridgeport Church of Christ, where Phyllis and her family were well known and visited often.

On December 11, 1953, Phyllis married James O. (“Jim”) Ridley III, also from Bridgeport. Jim’s family owned a working farm that included the farmhouse in which he was born, and the land where Russell Cave National Monument rests. In 1956, the Ridleys sold 310 acres, including the cave, to the National Geographic Society. In the following years, President John F. Kennedy would designate Russell Cave a national monument. The family retained the farmhouse and approximately 100 acres of farmland, adjacent to the cave. Jim, however, enlisted in the Army, and shortly after returning from two years of service in Germany during the Korean conflict, the young couple settled in Huntsville. There they welcomed three children—Janice, Diane, and Jason—and built a life filled with hard work and devotion to family.

Jim was a born entrepreneur, opening a full-service gas station and later Ridley Supply, a heating and air conditioning supply company with locations in Huntsville and Scottsboro. He also farmed the 100 acres in Bridgeport, growing corn and raising cattle. This allowed the family to remain rooted in their hometown and close to extended family. The young couple considered returning to live on the family



**Phyllis Ridley**

farm at some point, but life took a hard turn when Phyllis was widowed at just 44 years old. With the resilience she’s become known for, she chose to remain in Huntsville, raising her children in a community of faith.

Phyllis had a remarkable career of her own. In her early Huntsville years, she worked in the aerospace industry as one of the fastest typists in the pool—back when typing required swapping out keys for symbols. She excelled in shorthand and dictation. Her work ethic carried her through a successful 34-year career at Chrysler Corporation, where she retired while working in Human Resources.

From the beginning of her life in Huntsville, the church was her anchor. She worshiped first at Fanning Heights and Mastin Lake Road Churches of Christ before placing membership at Mayfair in 1969. For more than 55 years, Mayfair has been her church home and spiritual family. Through the years, she has faithfully attended almost every scheduled ser-

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**Jim and Phyllis Ridley in earlier days**

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vice —Sunday mornings and evenings, Wednesday nights, gospel meetings, and revivals. She ensured her children were active in Sunday School, MYA, Lipscomb Lectures, and Camp Ney-A-Ti, which left lasting imprints of faith and friendship on their lives.

Phyllis served as a teacher of the three-year-old class for 15 consecutive years and later found joy and fellowship in the Singles' class and other adult classes. One of her dearest blessings has been her decades-long friendship with Joyce Hall, with whom she has shared countless hours, trips, and many Alabama football seasons—even making a road trip to California in their 70s to cheer on the Tide! Phyllis treasured being part of Lem Tipton's M&Ms (Mayfair Mature Members), and traveling with church friends to the Blue Ridge Mountains, Branson, MO, and as far as Hawaii.

Phyllis has influenced many people through her quiet, steady faith. A touching example was when her housekeeper, Eddie Mae Shealey, attended Fanning Heights one Sunday without telling Phyllis beforehand, and was baptized! Perhaps most meaningful was Jim's own baptism during the last year of his life, performed by their dear friend, Lem Tipton. Though Jim battled a long illness, Phyllis later reflected that their final year together was their very best.

Phyllis's service extended beyond the local church, as she taught World Bible School lessons for over 14 years, sharing the gospel by mail with people across the globe. She has also blessed countless friends and family with encouragement, kindness, and her ever-present "card ministry." She opened her home more

than once to women in need of housing and extended hospitality by hosting parties and meals for her class. She acted as Treasurer for the Builder's Class, arranging for small birthday gifts and a monthly luncheon. Her own thoughtfulness has returned to her many times over as she has reaped an outpouring of visits, meals, and love from her church family— particularly from the Classics' Bible Class's Monday Meals during recent years following her illness.

Phyllis has enjoyed extraordinarily good health, is an accomplished gardener, and is a serious Alabama football fan. She has been richly blessed with seven grandchildren—two in Huntsville and five in Birmingham. She is still considered the matriarch of her family, revered by her children and grandchildren for her gracious spirit, her honesty, and the realization that they have never heard her speak an unkind word about anyone.

In July 2025, after more than 40 years in her Huntsville home (where she planted more than 40 boxwoods and countless flowers on her corner lot, creating and tending "Bellingrath" gardens), Phyllis made a new home at The Goldton at Jones Farm. She continues to watch Mayfair services online when unable to attend services in person, always observing communion with her beloved church family. Faithful, devoted, and full of quiet strength, Phyllis Ridley's life is a living testimony of God's goodness through every season.

## SENIOR LIFE

The mission is to strengthen, encourage, and comfort older members of the Mayfair congregation and provide opportunities to give or assist others as needed.



SeniorHelp is a 501 (c) (3) nonprofit, DONATIONS are tax-deductible and always welcome to further our mission of assisting seniors.

**SERVE ONE ANOTHER IN LOVE**  
— GALATIANS 5:13

Please make checks payable to SeniorHelp.

## Getting to Know Your Elders

We continue our series on getting acquainted with our Mayfair elders by learning about Mark Yokley and his family, their history, and how they came to be at Mayfair.

### Mark Yokley

A little about me: I grew up in the bustling metropolis of Edmonton, Kentucky—a town small enough to have just one flashing light. Our family lived about five miles outside of town, right in the heart of central Kentucky, roughly 50 miles east of Bowling Green. Life on the farm was our norm, and we embraced it fully. We cultivated a large vegetable garden and planted row crops, including corn, soybeans, tobacco, and hay. We raised cattle, horses, chickens, and even hogs for a while.

My childhood was filled with all the joys and challenges that came with farm life. I learned early what it meant to work hard, not just to stay busy, but to see a job through to the end. Those lessons still shape me today.

Our spiritual home was Bellview Church of Christ, a small congregation of approximately 30 to 50 people—many of whom were family members. My grandfather, Robert Bell, was one of the founding members of the congregation. He also played a key role in the construction of the building.

My youth group consisted of my brother and cousin. I was baptized there when I was 13 years old, and it was in that building that I began my walk with the Lord.

My parents are Mary Alice and the late Leroy Yokley. Daddy passed away about eight years ago, but many of you know my mother - she's now part of the Mayfair family. I also have two brothers, Russell and Daniel.

One of the defining aspects of my upbringing was having not just one, but two fathers. Daddy worked hard to provide for us during the day and always made time to play ball with us in the evenings. During the day, though, I worked alongside my grandfather on the farm. After my grandmother passed away, just before I was born, our family moved in with him. Much of what I value and understand about life came from those two men and the examples they set.

I attended Edmonton Elementary School through



**Mark and Lisa Yokley**

8th grade, then Metcalfe County High School. I played every sport I could—and loved every minute of it. (Too bad NIL deals didn't exist back then!)

After high school, I went to David Lipscomb College, graduating in 1981 with a degree in Biology and a minor in Chemistry. I originally planned to enter the medical field, but eventually realized it wasn't the right fit for me. During my time at Lipscomb, I met a freshman named Lisa—who, let's just say, had some skeptical parents when they found out I was a senior! That meeting changed the direction of my life.

Lisa's family had a business and introduced me to a field I hadn't known much about—civil engineering—though in a way, I'd been practicing it with my grandpa since I was a kid. Lisa and I both transferred to Auburn, graduated in 1985 with degrees in Civil Engi-

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neering, and got married. This year marks 41 wonderful years together.

Lisa and I then moved back to Huntsville. I spent 27 years as a civil engineer with GW Jones and Sons before we merged with a larger firm. After a year there, our family shifted focus entirely to real estate development—a world we'd been dabbling in for years and finally embraced as our main business.

We raised our two daughters, Elizabeth and Allison, here at Mayfair, surrounded by incredible families, teachers, and friends. Those are some of our sweetest memories. Today, we're blessed with four grandchildren who fill our hearts (and our home) with joy.

From the moment we arrived in Huntsville, we jumped into serving at Mayfair—starting in the chil-

dren's ministry and later working with the youth, alongside many dear friends. Mayfair has been a blessing in our lives, and we're grateful for the community and love we've found here.

Lisa and I share many interests: we love to travel, garden, camp, and spend time with our children and grandchildren. I also enjoy hunting, habitat management, archery elk hunting in the fall, turkey hunting in the spring, woodworking, beekeeping, and simply soaking in the beauty of God's creation.

Serving as a shepherd is a challenging but rewarding role. The people of this church are supportive, generous, and uplifting in every way. It makes the task much easier.

## The Delusion of Independence

By Dick Savage

On each July 4th, the United States celebrates its independence. It makes sense for a nation to pursue independence, and then to celebrate that independence. But for a follower of Christ, there is no such thing as personal independence. It's all a delusion.

You see this desire for independence in toddlers who resist when their parents tell them to eat their vegetables. You see it in older kids who push the hand away that's trying to help them tie their shoes. You see it in rebellious teenagers who fight against the rules their parents have in place. You see it in an older person who refuses to accept the limits of aging.

In one way or another, all of us cling to the idea of our ability to live independently. But all we need is the first few chapters of Genesis to see that our quest for independence is a grand delusion.

Adam and Eve were far from independent. They were created perfect, lived in a perfect world, with a perfect relationship with God; yet they had no clue who they were or how they were meant to live.

God shared His wisdom with them. He gave them wise counsel for meaning and purpose, structure for their relationship with one another, structure for their relationship with Him, and a moral structure for living. Adam and Eve were completely dependent on God.

They were created with a need for God and things that only God could provide. Their ability to live as they were designed to live would be determined by their willingness to remain in a dependent relationship with their Creator.

Genesis 1 and 2 contain the seeds of the two great commands we learn in the New Testament. These life-shaping commands were not newly created by Jesus but were woven into the very fabric of humanity in the Garden of Eden. People were meant

to live in a community of love for God and their neighbor, both vertical and horizontal.

Everything God created was created with limits. Fish don't do well in pastures, and sheep can't live in water. Elephants are mighty animals, but you'll never see one fly. Wind, water, and ground were all designed with different physical properties that set limits on their function. Even a day has a limited number of hours, and a week has a limited number of days.

In the Garden of Eden, the only entity with no limits was the Creator. Adam and Eve were designed with limits based on gender, strength, wisdom, and talent. Every human has physical and spiritual limits. An essential part of our everyday life is recognizing and living within those limits the Creator has assigned to us.

God has no limits to his strength, but we do. God has no limits of time, but we do. God has no limits to wisdom, but we do. God has no limits to his control, but we do. God does not age, but we do. God has no limits to his knowledge, but we do. God has no limits to his holiness, but we do. God has no physical limits, but we do. God has no limits, but we have many.

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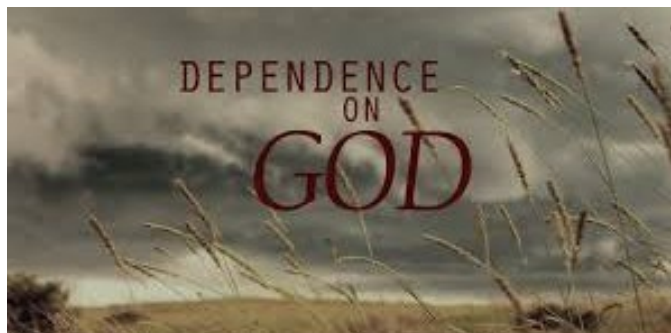
From the beginning, we are called to accept the limits that the Creator has set for us. He designed those limits to draw us to Him, to lean on him with humility, dependence, gratitude, obedience, and worship.

In Genesis 3, Adam and Eve attempted to have their own independence Day revolution, and humanity has been suffering the disastrous consequences ever since. It happened on that world-changing day when Eve had that fateful conversation with the serpent.

*"But the serpent said to the woman, 'You will not surely die. For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.' So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise..." (Genesis 3:4-6 ESV), she ate some of it.*

Do you see the bait the serpent holds out to her? "You will be like God," and "the tree was desired to make one wise." Embedded in the serpent's seduction are two lies that everyone tends to believe at some time, in some place, and in some way. These two lies still seduce us today: autonomy and self-sufficiency.

Autonomy implies that we are independent beings with the right to do whatever we want with our lives. The lie of self-sufficiency says that we have everything within ourselves to be what we are supposed to be and to do what we have been designed to do. Eve ate the fruit because she wanted wisdom that didn't need to rely on God. This lie is at the root of our struggle



to ask for directions, to esteem guidance, to seek counsel, and to submit to instructions.

Genesis 1 and 2 establish God as the only autonomous and self-sufficient being. It paints a beautiful picture of how we were created to live, in complete dependency on God and in devoted reliance upon one another. And it warns of the disasters of sin when we take life into our own hands and pursue independence.

Jesus continually calls us away from independence to dependence. As we grow in grace and become more spiritually mature, our eyes open more to our need for God. Acknowledgment of the need for God will produce greater reliance on God. Greater reliance on God produces an enhanced awareness of His help.

Enhanced awareness of His help produces a lifestyle of humble gratitude, and humble gratitude means we will quit taking credit for things we could never have done on our own and start to give glory to God.

We all depend on God every day in every way.

## Around the Table

### WOMEN'S CONFERENCE

By Liz Smith

Saturday, September 20, the Mayfair Ladies hosted a women's conference with the theme "Around the Table."

Rachel Kellum opened by sharing information about loneliness and how God designed us for community living. She also discussed habits of the early Christians as discussed in Acts 2:42-47, such as:

- "Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts."
- "They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts,"
- "Praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people."
- "And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved."

Later, Olivia Messer and Ali Hall led a panel discussion including questions and conversations from Christian sisters representing various seasons and stages of life from single to young mothers, to empty nesters, and grandmothers.

The ladies closed the event by gathering around their tables, sharing a meal together.





# WELCOME TO MAYFAIR

David, Olivia, Nora, and Noelle Rodriguez

By Don Gardner

It has been an exciting year for the Mayfair Youth Ministry, as two new youth members have been added to the Mayfair staff. Earlier this year, Grayson Tucker returned to Mayfair after leading the Student Ministry at Riverside Church of Christ in Coppell, TX. More recently, David Rodriguez has joined the team after serving as the Youth Minister at the Central Church of Christ in Athens.

David was born and raised in Miami, FL. He talks about how his faith developed during those early years, “I had a fairly unorthodox upbringing in the church and felt the overwhelming presence of God around my junior year in high school. Although I had grown up in a household that preached the need for Christ in our lives, it wasn’t until that stage in life that it became a reality. I experienced something I had been longing for all my life: a family. As my faith grew, my decisions began to align more closely with my relationship with God.”

That commitment to his relationship with God led him to attend Harding University, which he describes as “a space where I believed I could grow in my identity as both an individual and a disciple of Christ.” He adds, “I really didn’t have clarity on who I would become or what career I would pursue, but I knew two things...I wanted Jesus to be at the center of it, and for it to be a positive space to help others grow and be encouraged.”

While at Harding, David met Olivia Tyre, from Kinston, NC. They fell in love and married in December 2018 and now have two beautiful daughters: Nora (3 years old) and Noelle (9 months old).

As he sought a career field that would satisfy his passion, David chose Exercise Science with a focus on becoming a Physical Therapist. However, that changed, as he explains, “I believed that was my call. To help others recover from injuries and push through darker seasons in their life. Until I took anatomy...and realized I didn’t enjoy the science behind the opportunity to help people recover.”

The following summer, after realizing that Exercise Science and Physical Therapy were not his calling, he

felt defeated. He was then asked to serve as a counselor at his church’s annual summer camp. “It was in that space,” he says, “on the other side of Youth ministry, that everything came full circle. All of my passions, all of my experiences in life, had led to the clarity of what God had in mind for my future: To serve and love others through ministry.”



David Rodriguez

When school began in the fall, David switched majors to Bible and Family ministry. He says, “I have loved every minute since.”

After completing his degree at Harding, David accepted a position as the Youth Minister at Central Church of Christ in Athens, AL, and served there from May 2019 to August 2025. “I truly loved every experience God had in store for us through our time at Central,” he commented. “It will always hold a special place in my and Olivia’s hearts.”

Earlier this year, Mayfair reached out to David and shared their vision and passion for Youth. “I felt overwhelmingly called to the amazing work being done here,” he said. “To share ministry with such a wonderful team and congregation, passionate about growing and living life together.”

Since beginning work at Mayfair, I have thoroughly

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enjoyed every moment getting to meet the wonderful people here and listen to how God has actively been at work in their lives through the unity of this congregation.”

David adds, “Olivia and I love youth ministry; we love the opportunity to help students walk through such a vital stage in their lives as they begin to understand and cultivate their identity. It is more than a blessing to walk alongside them and watch as they create this identity, but do it with Jesus at the center of their hearts. We are beyond excited for a lifetime to share and walk with the family here at Mayfair!”

When asked about their initial experiences at Mayfair, Olivia says, “My experience so far has been wonderful!! The church has been so welcoming and encouraging to David and I in light of the transition. We have loved getting to meet so many precious families both in and outside of the youth ministry! Although we are still new, I can feel the love this church has for each other and Huntsville. We are so happy to be here, and can’t wait to meet more and more of the congregation!”

In addition to his love of youth ministry, David is also a huge Miami Heat basketball fan, loves deep-

sea fishing, and enjoys watching movies on the big screen. More importantly, he says, “I love people!”



**The Rodriguez family: Olivia, David, Nora (age 3), and Noelle (9 months)**

## If the Lord Wills

**By Igor Egirev, Saint Petersburg, Russia**

**Editor’s Note: This article appeared in the May 2025 issue of “In Christ” newspaper and is used by permission. “In Christ” shares news from Churches of Christ throughout the Russian speaking area and is published in both Russian and English.**

When our plans fall through, we are reminded that we are not the masters of our own lives. We come face to face with reality. The phrase, “*If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that*” (James 4:15, KJV), begins to sound different to us. These words come from James 4:13–17. The brother of Jesus addresses all who plan without acknowledging that the future rests in God’s hands. James uses a rhetorical device known as a diatribe, directing his words to an imagined audience — likely merchants. In the Roman Empire, travel and commerce were common, aided by the Pax Romana. As we read his message, we see a

businessman with a well-thought-out plan. Every detail is covered: timing—today or tomorrow; participants — we; location — a certain city; duration — one year; activity — buying and selling; expected outcome — profit. Yet one thing is missing — God. He is not mentioned at all. This person lives and thinks as if God does not exist. It is, in essence, practical atheism. The life of a believer must reflect the reality of God’s presence. An unbeliever lives as if there is no God. But what if a Christian does the same? One of the central themes of James is dead faith. A life that ignores God is one sign of such faith. Jesus told a parable about a rich man who planned for the future but forgot that his soul might be required of him that very night (Luke 12:16–21, KJV). Does James oppose planning itself? No — he warns against arrogance. As the old saying goes, “Man proposes, but God disposes.” This truth should not lead to fear or passivity. It should remind us of our complete dependence on God. A wise person always plans with that dependence in mind.



# Caught in the Chaos of Delirium, Anchored by Love

Linnea Pepper, MD

Delirium is a serious condition that frequently affects older adults, particularly those who are hospitalized or undergoing major surgery. It is characterized by sudden-onset confusion, which leads to significant changes in thought, behavior, and movement. Symptoms often begin at home and may signal serious conditions like severe infection, heart attack, or stroke, though “milder” causes such as dehydration or medication side effects are very common.

Up to 25% of older adults on general hospital wards and 50% of those in intensive care units (ICUs) experience delirium at any given time. As a geriatrician working exclusively in the hospital setting, delirium is the number one condition I treat.

The impact of delirium is profound. It increases the risk of death by up to double within six months, leads to functional decline in 30-40% of cases (with many never regaining prior abilities), heightens the risk of developing dementia, often accelerates existing dementia, extends hospital stays, and increases the likelihood of nursing home placement. Early recognition, a key goal of the Age-Friendly Health System (outlined in my April 2025 article), is critical because delirium is dangerous yet often manageable with prompt intervention.

Witnessing a loved one with delirium can be heart-wrenching. Families often feel helpless as their loved one acts out of character—saying or doing things they normally wouldn’t, experiencing visual hallucinations, struggling to walk, sleeping poorly, or eating and drinking inadequately. Severe agitation can make the experience particularly distressing for both patients and families.

Managing delirium requires a collaborative, interdisciplinary approach; geriatrics is truly a “team sport.” Providers, nurses, nursing assistants, physical and occupational therapists, speech therapists, and social workers all play vital roles. The primary goal is to identify and address the underlying cause of delirium, such as an infection or medication side effect, and reverse it when possible. While a thorough, detailed medical evaluation is necessary, I’ve learned that compassion is a critical ingredient in recovery.

Last week, I treated a patient (we’ll call her Ms. Sal-



ly) who had dementia and lived at home with her daughter until a fall resulted in a broken arm. She underwent surgery in the hospital, then was discharged to a rehab facility, where her nighttime wandering—a common dementia behavior—led to new medications for agitation. These medications triggered delirium, and she returned to the hospital labeled as “extremely agitated,” confused, and difficult to manage. She was placed in restraints to prevent falls, and I found her lying alone in a hospital bed, disoriented and unable to move freely. My heart went out to her.

Quickly, her nurse and I worked together to adjust her medications, provide feeding assistance, and remove the restraints. She began to improve, but her true turning point came through simple acts of compassion from another team member, a patient care tech we’ll call Sandra. Sandra combed Ms. Sally’s hair, brought her carrot cake from the cafeteria, fed her, and engaged her in conversation. These small gestures helped Ms. Sally rediscover her sense of self, giving her an anchor in the storm of delirium. Days later, I saw Sandra pushing a beaming Ms. Sally down the hospital hall in a geriatric chair. Where others saw a “problem” patient, Sandra saw a person in need of kindness.

Sandra’s compassion reminds me of the words of Paul: *“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God”* (2 Corinthians 1:3-4 ESV). As we serve others this month, may we “put on... compassionate hearts” (Colossians 3:12, ESV) so that those we encounter caught in chaos may be anchored by love.

# "AGING IS NO LAUGHING MATTER..."

IT'S BETTER TO GROW OLD  
WITH A SENSE OF HUMOR  
THAN TO GROW OLD  
WITH NO SENSE AT ALL.



I STOOD WAVING TO MY  
NEIGHBOR FOR 10  
MINUTES THIS MORNING  
BEFORE REALIZING SHE  
WAS CLEANING HER  
WINDOWS

You know you're grown up when  
a nap is no longer a punishment  
but a reward.



*Aging Gracefully*

Y'ALL BETTER ENJOY YOUR  
20s, 30s, AND 40s.  
BECAUSE IN YOUR 50s,  
THAT CHECK ENGINE LIGHT  
IS GONNA COME ON.



...and this  
one is your  
great-great  
grandmother!



THIS IS RIDICULOUS!  
I'VE BEEN ON HOLD  
FOR OVER AN  
HOUR NOW!



You know you're  
getting old when  
you  
look at the clock  
to  
see if it's late  
enough  
to go to bed.



I'm old enough  
to make my own  
decisions...  
Just not young  
enough to  
remember what  
I decided...



One minute you're young  
and fun...  
The next minute you're  
turning down the stereo  
in the car so you can  
see better.



Stop telling me to act my  
age. I've never been this  
age before so I'm not sure  
how I'm supposed to act!

...OR IS IT?"