



Joy IN THE JOURNEY

Activities & Service Opportunities of Mayfair Senior Adults

A New Home, Same Mission

By Cliff Mann

It's amazing to watch God carry on his kingdom work in so many different ways - ways that we don't always anticipate. In the middle of challenging times, God is at work. He never stops leading us to new opportunities to share the love of Jesus, around the world - and right here in Huntsville.

For approximately 20 years Mayfair has opened its doors to a small group of Latino brethren to hold worship services and Bible classes for our Latino friends in the community. There is now a dedicated, faithful group of about 50 Latino adults and children meeting each week on Mayfair's campus. But we believe God is calling Mayfair to greater outreach to the Latino community in our city.

Our current Latino group is like a seed God planted within Mayfair that has now germinated into a plant that needs to be placed in a larger area to continue to grow. Over the past several years, God has also been working to prepare a good soil for this plant to grow. The past decade has seen a dramatic increase in the Latino population in the Huntsville area. The student population at nearby Ridgecrest Elementary School is made up of some 70% Latino students, and the new Morris Middle School has around 40%, Latino students.

Our Latino brothers believe this area is the ideal location to take Jesus to the Latino community. Each of the kids in these schools, as well as their parents and grandparents, need to hear the Gospel message of Jesus Christ. We believe God is opening the door for our Latino church to grow and flourish right here in their community.

God has provided an opportunity to lease some space in the old Westlawn Middle School, not far from Redstone Arsenal and the Space and Rocket Center. Some of you may remember it or may have even attended there. This property is located on the

corner of Ninth Avenue and Jordan Lane just north of Bob Wallace Avenue. It was recently purchased by a private developer who is renovating it into a multi-use facility with business and office space.

The old school library was previously leased to another church that has outgrown it and moved to a different location. God has now opened the door for us to secure this available space for our Latino brethren, complete with a large meeting room, classrooms, and ample parking. There is even an interior courtyard area to be landscaped for gatherings. This is an ideal facility and an exciting opportunity for our Latino family to have a more permanent and visible presence directly in the community they wish to serve.

This new mission point will be the new Westlawn Iglesia De Cristo!

It is now time for us to join God in the work He has been doing. The costs and leasing will be finalized in the coming days. Then it is time for the work to begin. We will have opportunities to work alongside our brothers and sisters as remodeling and updating of this space gets underway.

Due to the generous contributions of so many during our special giving opportunity back in December much of the money needed is in place to provide a place our Latino family can call their own. Now we will need laborers for the renovation, continued support and prayers to complete this relocation, and encouragement for our Latino brethren to reach more lost souls for Christ.

It will be exciting work! Just like Mayfair's Inner City Ministry and 2820, we believe God is calling us to be the hands and feet of Jesus - right here in our community. What greater way to serve these good people than to go into their community with the Good News!

Thank you, Mayfair, for being a generous and loving family of God - with your help, we will continue to take the gospel around the world, and to the people in our community that need the touch of Jesus.

From the Shepherd's Pen

"Sparky"

By Jamie Neidert



Brenda, Lucas, and I worked with the Manassas Church of Christ in the late 1990s and early 2000s before moving back to Huntsville. This congregation consisted of an eclectic group of people, including an inordinate number of US Government employees – many who worked for “3-letter” agencies, about which they couldn’t discuss publicly.

One of the people whom I hope never to forget was Lee Eugene Sparks. It turned out that his nickname was “Sparky” as I learned years later from his obituary. However, I just knew him as Mr. Sparks.

I don’t recall how Mr. Sparks came to our congregation. I suspect one of our brethren had found him at his assisted living apartment and invited him to join us. He had worked at General Motors in Detroit for 51 years and had moved to Virginia to be near his children. Over the years, many in our congregation took turns bringing Mr. Sparks to worship services, along with his wheelchair - Mr. Sparks had lost most of one of his legs due to complications with diabetes. He was in his 70s and was a sweet, engaging man.

I really don’t think Mr. Sparks ever knew my first name. He only knew me as “Lucas’ Dad!” Lucas was around 12 at the time and struck up a friendship with Mr. Sparks. For Lucas, it was fascinating and incredibly interesting to be able to interact with a member of our “greatest generation.”

Mr. Sparks had grown up in Missouri and joined the Army Air Corps (464th Air Service Group) at 19 and spent much of his service time in Europe (England, France, Germany). Mr. Sparks and Lucas would both bring World War II books and talk about them and he would tell Lucas stories upon stories.

During WWII, one thing that had affected Mr. Sparks greatly was the young children he would encounter who would come to the US GIs and ask for food. They would say the word “Essen” (the German verb for “to eat”) as they held out their hands. He and his fellow soldiers would comply if they had food to share. One day, he even gave Lucas the official

picture of him as a newly minted US Army Private (probably the only non-family photo that hung on our wall for years.)

Mr. Sparks had family, but we never met any of them. It was just him in his wheelchair with his huge smile every Sunday. One day, Brenda asked him if he’d ever been baptized. He said, “Well, no, I haven’t.” She said, “Oh, do you want to be baptized?” He then said something that should resonate with us all: “Well, I do, but I can’t make it up there to be baptized!” Brenda then told him that we certainly could – and would– get him in that water!!

Immediately after service that morning, Barry Bryson (then and current preacher at Manassas) and I carried Mr. Sparks up those few steps and into the baptistery. I might note that Mr. Sparks was not a small man, so it was a (joyful) challenge for the two of us! What happened then would be something Barry and I laugh about to this day: as we immersed him, he held his nose with one hand and his other arm went straight up. Barry looked at the arm, looked at me then



**Lee Sparks, July 1943
as a US Army Private**

summarily and gently pushed Mr. Sparks’ arm down into the water. He was immersed, he was joyful, and we were given a lesson that I hope we never forget!

I am reminded of the miraculous healing recounted in John 5:

“¹Some time later, Jesus went up to Jerusalem for one of the Jewish festivals. ²Now there is in Jerusalem near the Sheep Gate a pool, which in Aramaic is called Bethesda and which is surrounded by five covered colonnades. ³Here a great number of disabled people used to lie—the blind, the lame, the para-

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lyzed. ⁵ One who was there had been an invalid for thirty-eight years. ⁶ When Jesus saw him lying there and learned that he had been in this condition for a long time, he asked him, "Do you want to get well?" ⁷ "Sir," the invalid replied, "I have no one to help me into the pool when the water is stirred. While I am trying to get in, someone else goes down ahead of me." (John 5:1-7 NIV)

We all have our circle of influence – those we know and those we come in contact with throughout life. We should strive – as disciples of Christ – to have a heart for people, for souls, as He did. We should turn on our "radars" and listen and be observant. And, we should be bold - sprinkled with kindness and love.

We are told that Paul "... proclaimed the kingdom of God and taught about the Lord Jesus Christ—with all boldness and without hindrance!" (Acts 28:31 NIV). We are told in Paul's second epistle to Timothy, "For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self-discipline." (2 Timothy 1:7 NIV)

We should each work to cast off our timidity when it comes to telling others about Christ and his Gospel. We should be willing to ask people where they are in their spiritual walk and offer what we can do to help them on that journey.

Mr. Sparks, like the disabled man mentioned in John 5, didn't think he could physically go forward and make it into the healing waters. All it took was someone caring and simply asking him. We don't have the power to heal as our Savior did, but we can help people into the water.

Once we left Virginia for Alabama, we lost touch with Mr. Sparks, but we left with the assurance that he was saved. I share this from his obituary in November 2004 because it tells you about this Brother and, more importantly, it is a tribute any of us might be proud to have written about us:

"Lee represented honor, integrity, and loyalty, along with a huge heart, and will be very sadly missed by his family and friends. He was one of a kind." Yes, he was one of a kind – but, he was also one of God's redeemed children - all because someone was willing to ask him a simple question.



Monday Meals volunteers include Margaret Stone, Joe Carter, Janice Moore, Joyce Lamar, Sandy Moore, Jan Perkinson, and Overton Gibson.

Monday Meals

By Janice Moore

In October 2013, members of the Mayfair Classics class recognized a need for an organized plan to provide meals to members in need of assistance as a result of surgery, illness, or other limiting situations. To meet that need, members of the class set up six teams of five volunteers or more, with one member serving as chair for the team.

For the past eight years, each of those six teams has been responsible for a meal once every six weeks. The team develops the menus which they will cook, plate, and deliver to the selected recipients during their assigned week.

Team members prepare their dishes at home, then bring it to the Mayfair church kitchen, where they are plated and then delivered. Supplies are stored in a closet and are available for teams to use as needed. Funds for these supplies come from generous donations designated for Monday Meals. Team members donate their dish preparation.

The weekly list of recipients is compiled after meal needs are known, varying in number between 12 and 24. This list includes members of the Classics class as well as other Mayfair members. Adjustments to the list are made each week as needs change.

This diligent crew has never missed a week since they started just over eight years ago. In that time, approximately, 6,650 meals have been prepared, plated, and delivered, an accomplishment that has only been possible through the love and continued commitment of many volunteers.

Discipleship in Retirement: Discovering Your “Bucket List”

By Lane Widick,
Discipleship Minister

Have you ever heard of a bucket list? For some, it involves a trip to a place they’ve always wanted to visit. For some, it involves the purchase of something like a sports car or a vacation home. For others, it may simply involve something like retiring with enough wealth to be happy. Regardless of what the bucket list item is, it typically involves something that they long to do before their life is over.

Many people have those bucket list items realized after retirement. That is when a lot of people have more free time, maybe some extra money, or maybe it has just taken that long to realize their dream! Regardless of why it usually happens after retirement.

For Christians, an obvious “bucket list” item would be to go to Heaven. The Apostle Paul wrote about that very goal in Acts 20. The year is around A.D. 58, and Paul knows that he’s living on borrowed time. He’s been through some rough situations, but instead of saying it was time to hang it up, he continues to fight, preach, and teach for God.

Paul has a list, but it does not contain items that a lot of us would think about. Instead, fighting, preaching, and teaching for God are at the top of his list. He longs to tell everyone he can about what God had done for him, and what He can do for them.

One thing Paul never says as he’s getting older and nearing the end is something along the lines of “You know, I taught Sunday School when I was younger, I’ve done a lot for the church, I’ve put in my time. It’s time for someone else to step up.”

Instead, he wants to reach more people for Jesus. In fact, you never see Paul even hint that retiring from one’s mission as a Disciple of Jesus is possible. That’s because it’s not!

Paul sums up his bucket list in Acts 20:24. He says, *“I consider my life worth nothing to me; my only aim is to finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me—the task of testifying to the good news of God’s grace.”*

His bucket list item? He just wants to finish the race and complete the task that Jesus gave him. What was that task? Continue to share the Gospel of Jesus

any way he can.

I think the items on Paul’s bucket list can also push us on to greater discipleship in retirement because these are things from which you can never retire. So outside of volunteering, teaching, and serving at church, here are some simple bucket list items you can easily pursue in retirement.

Item #1 - Live a life of encouragement.

At the beginning of Acts 20, Paul sends for fellow disciples, encourages them, and then sets out to spread the Gospel, and while he’s doing that he speaks more words of encouragement to everyone he comes across.

One way you can be a disciple in retirement is to encourage. Encourage everyone - your family, friends, neighbors, the cashier at the grocery store - because a lot of people do not get encouragement on a daily basis.

Sometimes, Paul’s encouragement isn’t all about lifting spirits and being super positive; instead, sometimes he spends time rebuking others, in order to help and correct their path. Look at how Paul rebuked Timothy - he tells him to fan the flame of the gift of God in him because God did not give him a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power and love and self-discipline. He then tells him - be strong. Don’t give up.

That sort of rebuke is encouragement - it is positive, it is helpful, and it can invigorate the spirit. Who do you know in your life right now that needs this kind of encouragement?

Item #2 - Pray

Paul modeled prayer for us in a way that is fitting for those in retirement - to pray for others. In Ephesians 3:14-17, he says *“For this reason I kneel before the Father, from whom his whole family in heaven and on earth derives its name. I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith.”*

Paul wanted people to know that Jesus can make a profound difference in the lives of anyone who follows him, and he doesn’t want to keep this to himself. So that’s part of his prayer - that people will know Jesus. But he goes on in verses 17-19 to pray for a solid foundation in their lives as well. He says *“I*

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pray that you, being rooted and established in love will have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge - that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God."

The greatest prayer you can pray for people you love is that they will love God, they will know the love of God, and they will share that love with others.

Item #3 - Equip Your Family and Friends

In Ephesians 6:10-18, Paul talks about the spiritual armor of God: the belt of truth, the breastplate of righteousness, shoes of peace, the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit. Paul realized that the greatest battle we will fight on this

earth is not political, based on race, gender, or anything like that. No, it's spiritual. It's a spiritual battle we fight with Satan.

In retirement, what a great opportunity you have to model these very things to your friends and family in order to help fight the demons all around us.

As Paul neared the end of his life, he amped up his work for the Lord. What about you? You can expand your discipleship reach by simply encouraging others, praying for others, and equipping others.

Are these things you think you can add to your bucket list in retirement? What you will learn as you do these things is that a bucket list you fill up before the end of your life is not really all that important. However, taking what you've filled your bucket with all of your life following God can be poured out into others and change someone for eternity.

Mission UpReach

By Jon Stacy

Mission UpReach began in 2009 when the Waldron family, Phil, Donna, and their two teenage children, Harrison and Laura moved to Honduras with the vision to plant one church in each village in western Honduras. Mission UpReach has grown over the years, yet the focus still remains the same.

Santa Rosa de Copán is located in the western part of Honduras and is home to Mission UpReach and almost 85,000 souls. For the last several decades Honduras has swapped places with Haiti as being one of the poorest countries in the western hemisphere. Poverty, corruption, and violence have plagued this society for many, many years. The source for true freedom from these illnesses comes only from one source: Jesus Christ and the message of freedom and salvation that is only found through his name. Providing access to this freedom is the focus of Mission UpReach.

To accomplish this task, MUR has several ministries that are utilized to reach across all generations and socioeconomic levels with the good news of Jesus Christ. The DESEO program is a public school program designed to reach out to the elementary-age children of Santa Rosa and the surrounding communities. The country of Honduras actually has a law requiring that all public schools provide 1-hour per



The Jon Stacy family, Mayfair missionaries to western Honduras.

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How We Got Our English Bible

By Ron Wicks

Many books have been written about how the Bible came to be, especially our English Bible. Some accounts are very sordid, as many people gave their lives so that the Bible could be made available in different languages.

The original language of the Old Testament was primarily Hebrew. But some parts were in Aramaic, the language which was brought back by the Jews after their 70 years of captivity in Babylon.



The "1537 Matthew's Bible" was published under the name "Thomas Matthew" a pseudonym for John Rogers who was eventually burned at the stake for publishing this Bible.

The original language of the New Testament was Greek, a very versatile and precise language. It came into widespread use after the conquests of Alexander the Great around 300 B.C. He brought the Greek language with him to many parts of the Mediterranean and the Middle East area.

In fact, the Greek language had become so widespread that the King of Egypt wanted the Scriptures (Old Testament) in Greek, rather than Hebrew, for the famed library in Alexandria, Egypt. Therefore, a team of 70 Jewish scholars was assembled in Alexandria to translate Hebrew into Greek. The resulting work was completed in about 250 B.C. and became known as the Septuagint, a Greek word meaning Seventy. The whole Bible was now available in Greek.

By about 400 A.D. the Bible had been translated into several languages, but the Roman church wanted

the Bible in only one language, Latin. Therefore, a scholarly priest in Caesarea named Jerome was directed by the Bishop of Rome to provide a Bible in a fresh translation of Latin for use by all the churches. He finished his work in 405 A.D. and that became known as the Latin Vulgate. Eventually, this translation became the official Bible of the Roman Catholic church and remains so today.

For the next several centuries the general population did not have access to a Bible in their own language. Latin was read and spoken in the churches but not by the common people. The conquest of England by the Normans in 1066 brought a change in the language from Anglo-Saxon to Middle English, and then the Renaissance of the 1300s led to a movement to translate the Bible into the language of the people. But this was often met with opposition.

Scholars in England like John Wycliffe pushed for a translation of the Bible into a language the people could read and understand. In 1382, he produced a version that translated Latin into Middle English, a great step toward getting the Bible into the hands of the common people. However, this was a handwritten copy since the printing press was yet to be invented. Wycliffe was so hated by the church authorities that many years after his death his bones were dug up, burned, and the ashes were thrown into a river.

In 1455, Johann Gutenberg invented the printing press, with the Bible being the first book printed. The first printed copy was still in Latin but this was a huge step forward, as it opened the door for mass production of books for the general population, which in turn afforded an increase in learning.

In 1525 another English scholar named William Tyndale translated the New Testament from the original language of Greek into a more modern version of English. Several other scholars and groups followed with their translations of both the Old and New Testaments from the original languages.

The Kings and Queens of England, as well as church authorities, continued their opposition to an English Bible. They issued an edict in the early 1400s prohibiting the translation of the Bible into English. Queen Mary put some 300 people to death by burning them at the stake because they dared read, translate or even own an English Bible. While Tyndale and his co-

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week of religious education. Mission UpReach has been blessed to be a part of that legal requirement by providing that religious education in as many as 15 public elementary schools. The Covid-19 pandemic shut schools down, and all schools are still in a virtual setting, yet we have been able to continue to meet with the children sponsored through the DESEO Project.

The Moses Project is a 120-acre farm dedicated to the education and formation of young boys whose economic reality prevents them from advancing beyond a 6th-grade education. All the boys from the project were sent home at the beginning of the Covid pandemic but will return for the 2022 school year to Mission UpReach's own high school. We have been given the go-ahead by the Honduran government to start our own high school thus allowing us to bring the boys back to the Moses Project where we will continue to train the future leaders of the surrounding communities. The name, the Moses Project is in the hopes that these young men will experience the education and training, similar to that of Moses, and then use that training to lift their communities out of the poverty and corruption and into the full and

abundant life promised by Jesus in John 10:10.

The Moses Project and DESEO programs are designed to reach out to the younger generations of Honduras. We also have Bible training programs that are designed to meet the needs of the adult sector of the local society. Before Covid, we were holding six one-week sessions per year of intense Bible training for leaders from the surrounding communities and church plants. This came to a halt in 2020. We have taken full advantage of this "downtime" to revamp the program and plan to roll out a year-long program of three-day intensive training seminars designed to be given in one's own community rather than having people travel to Santa Rosa for the training. Our hopes and prayers are that this new format will allow more men and women to attend since they will not have to travel from their homes.

The vision and mission of Mission UpReach are to bring physical and spiritual transformation through a saving relationship with our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ to the men, women, and children of western Honduras. Our goal is that through the transformed lives of these individuals their families and communities will in turn be transformed and experience the abundant life Jesus offers.

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worker John Rogers were both burned at the stake in the mid-1500s, the Bible was now well on its way to moving from the pulpit to the people.

Tyndale's English is the English we speak today, so our English Bible we have is only about 500 years old, yet it is the Bible that has been carried around the world and translated into several thousand additional languages and dialects. However, the Wycliffe Bible Translation group says there are over 1500 languages or dialects that still need a translation of the Bible. There are more copies of the popular 400-year-old King James Version than any other book in printing history.

Our English Bible has been the Bible that has been used in so many of the mission efforts by evangelical Christians and churches to carry the Gospel to every corner of the world. No other Bible in any language comes even close to the influence of our English Bible. When we pick up our Bible, we should thank those who have given us the opportunity to own a

Bible in our native language. So many before us did not have that privilege, and many in the world still do not have that privilege today.



The "1572 Bishops' Bible", published by the Bishops of England, was in opposition to the 1560 Geneva Bible published by the English Reformers.

THE LORD IS MY REFUGE

By Dick Savage



PSALMS 91:2 KJV "I will say of the LORD, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in him will I trust. King James Version (KJV)

We all have our ways of controlling our fears. Some carry a defensive weapon, some take classes in martial arts, or some just put it out of their mind and refuse to listen to the news.

The words of Psalms 91:2 tell us the way to control our fears is through the Lord. In Hebrew, the word for

refuge is *machaseh* which comes from a Semitic root that means *shelter or protection*. It is related to the word *chavas*, another related word, which means to *show pity* or have mercy upon someone.

Ancient Semitic men, when they heard the word *chasah* did not just think of *refuge*, but of *atonement* as well. The Psalmist is saying that the Lord is his atonement and his place of protection.

When the writer says "my God", he uses the Hebrew word for God which is *Elohim* which is sometimes used for the word *judge or a judge who is the supreme authority*. The Lord is his supreme judge and His Messiah. Jesus would die for his sins and atone for them so that he will trust in his Judge to free him from his sin

Finding Joy Through Giving

By Carter England

There is a difference between the joy that comes from receiving and the joy that comes from giving. I believe God gives us an opportunity to experience a little extra joy when we reflect His character by giving - by loving others and meeting their needs. Knowing that the Lord can use our physical bodies, minds, voices, and other resources to help the people around us is truly a blessing.

Recently, men in the "Servants at Heart" class had the opportunity to bring joy to three separate situations. First, was a chance to assist Bill and Tina Greer. Mr. Greer was having trouble getting in and out of his house safely and had recently fallen as a result, so a ramp was desperately needed.

With the assistance of Allen Reynolds, some servant-hearted men constructed a ramp at the Greer home and also assisted with moving some furniture inside the house.

Second, was a project at 2820 Governor's Drive, coordinated by Randy Fowler and Rick Norton. The men poured a concrete ramp and replaced broken ceiling tiles inside the building along with setting up the facility for upcoming meetings.

Last, was the opportunity to assist 2820 member, Steve Shelton, by cleaning out his home and preparing it for an upcoming renovation. This project was coordinated by Doug Smith. Steve has a powerful story of redemption for those that have been blessed to hear it and is an inspiration to many.



Workers made accessibility modifications to the home of Bill and Tina Greer. Pictured here are Carter England, Ryan Murray, Leland Sheldon, Tina Greer, Bill Greer, and Cavan Holley.

I am so thankful that we serve a God who has given us the ultimate gift of His Son and who meets our deepest needs. May we all live with joy in that truth, while giving and serving others along the way.

Mayfair Assistance Helpline

256-704-3384

Mayfair has introduced a new helpline for our members who may require physical assistance with home maintenance, automotive repairs, or transportation needs. Call and leave a message regarding your needs and you will be contacted for additional details.