



JOY IN THE JOURNEY

Activities & Service Opportunities of Mayfair Church of Christ



Mayfair Hosts Its Second Walk4Water

By Lane Widick

Walk4Water is an interactive fundraiser sponsored by Healing Hands International of Nashville, TN, supporting the "Clean Water" program. Walk4Water, which began in 2007, hosts events nationwide at schools, churches, and other organizations.

Walk4Water raises awareness about the fact that the average distance to walk for clean, usable water in many impoverished nations around the world is often more than four miles. That is just not sustainable. Walk4Water helps change that by entering local villages and communities and drilling wells for clean water. Since 2001, Healing Hands International has drilled over 1,500 clean water wells in over 10 countries.

On Sunday, September 28, the Mayfair Church of Christ participated in its second Walk4Water. A half-mile course was mapped around the campus, and participants were encouraged to walk as much as they could up to 4 miles (8 laps) so they could further

understand what many families around the world have to do to have water to drink in their homes.

A total of 235 participants from Mayfair and the community participated in the walk, raising \$126,211, enough to build sixteen wells.



"And whoever gives one of these little ones even a cup of cold water because he is a disciple, truly, I say to you, he will by no means lose his reward" (Matthew 10:42 ESV).

“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, Elizabeth Kellett.

Elizabeth Kellett

by Mark McCutcheon

EDITOR’S NOTE: Mark McCutcheon is the son of Elizabeth Kellett and the cousin of former Mayfair member Chris Farber. We are grateful for his willingness to share the story of his mother’s life.

Elizabeth Kellett was born Mary Elizabeth Morris on August 28, 1930, in a small house on the Tennessee River in the corner of Marshall County. She was the third of six children, and the oldest girl (her brother, Arnold Morris, was the father of former Mayfair member Christine Morris Farber).

A few years later, the family moved to a larger house and farm at Lacey’s Spring in Morgan County. There, they farmed and raised livestock, with Elizabeth occasionally picking cotton for her dad and helping her mother with other chores around the house and on the farm. The family regularly attended Farley Church of Christ throughout her childhood.

She attended Lacey’s Spring Elementary School (often walking the three-mile round trip), followed by Cotaco High School, where she graduated in 1948.

That same year, she married Paul McCutcheon, also from Lacey’s Spring, who had just returned from military service. They lived briefly at the old Redstone Park and in the Huntsville metro area before moving into a house they built in Lacey’s Spring just a few hundred yards from her childhood home. Their son, Kim, was born in 1953, followed by their son, Mark, in 1957, their daughter, Jill, in 1958, and finally their son, Brian, in 1963.

Elizabeth attended the North Alabama College of Commerce a few years after her marriage, graduating in 1950. She began working in accounting at Rohm and Haas and later at Micro-Medic before retiring in the early 1980s.

Her husband, Paul, a NASA Contracting Officer for the Marshall Space Flight Center during the Apollo



Elizabeth Kellett

Program, traveled frequently, which required Elizabeth to manage the household and care for the children in his absence, all while working full-time. She brought her children up in the same Farley Church of Christ that she had attended as a child.

Paul died of cardiac issues in 1996. With her children gone, Elizabeth continued living in Lacey’s Spring for a few years before moving to Huntsville, where she attended Twickenham Church of Christ before eventually settling down at Mayfair. There she began a relationship with Mayfair member Paul Kellett, and they were married in 2010 by Mayfair’s Dr. Gary Bradley at Paul’s home.

They attended Mayfair until they were injured together in a freak accident by a mail truck while they were walking in their neighborhood. Paul escaped with bruises, but Elizabeth suffered a broken hip that required considerable convalescence at Redstone Village before she moved to Regency Retirement Village, where she lives now. Paul, who had been living with his daughter, died in 2023 at age 94.

Elizabeth has been a lifelong Christian, and at 95, that’s been quite a life. She remains in contact with

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Mayfair through her sisters in Christ, who visit her monthly. She also attends the Chase Park Church of Christ services that are held at Regency each week.

Her niece Christine says that Elizabeth has lived with "quiet Christian faith and grace", which is a good choice of words, as she has always had an understanding "live and let live" attitude.

Her care providers at Regency regularly comment on how sweet a lady she is, and it's easy to see that they and the residents are genuinely affectionate toward her. Elizabeth and her youngest brother Doug, are the last surviving members of her original Morris family.



Elizabeth and Paul McCutcheon with their four children Kim, Mark, Jill, and Brian



The Shoe That Grows

By Donna Pittman

The Mayfair Dorcas Ministry sews for Mayfair Missions. We sew skirts, shorts, washable feminine hygiene kits, book bags, pillowcases, blankets, and any items that can be sewn for those we serve in our different mission areas around the world and here in Huntsville. One item we cannot make but that is desperately needed is a pair of shoes. We have researched and found shoes that would be a blessing to anyone who needs them.

A 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, Because International (www.becauseinternational.org), has developed "The Shoe That Grows." This sturdy shoe is adjustable up to FIVE sizes. Three years ago, we took a pair to a ten-year-old girl in Ghana, Africa. She is still wearing them to walk to school every day. They protect her feet from injury and parasites that are so common in the soil there, and they still fit!

The shoes are manufactured in Kenya, providing jobs for the people there. Each pair of shoes can be worn for years and then handed down to someone else, and yet, they cost only \$20.00.

So far, this effort has already raised \$18,000, enough to purchase 900 pairs of shoes. We get free shipping on all orders of 100 (or more) pairs of shoes, so we can bless many more with shoes that will protect their feet and general health.

To contribute to this ongoing project, go to mayfair.org/give, select the link to the online giving platform, and select "Dorcas Shoe Project."



Honoring Those Who Serve

We begin a new series honoring our unsung heroes who serve God by serving others. In this issue, we honor Janice Moore. As we honor these servants, we are reminded of these words of the Apostle Paul, *"We ask you, brothers, to respect those who labor among you"* (1 Thessalonians 5:12 ESV).

Janice Moore

By Don Gardner

"Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me" (Matthew 25:40 ESV).

About thirteen years ago, several ladies in Mayfair's Classics Bible Class heard about a ministry at the Granny White Church of Christ in Nashville, where volunteers provided meals for members in need of assistance due to surgery, illness, or other limiting circumstances. For nearly a year, they discussed plans for an organized effort to make that happen at Mayfair.

Initially, no one could be found to organize the effort until Janice Moore volunteered to take the lead. In October 2013, Monday Meals began its ministry of compassion. Margaret Stone says, "She was the perfect person as she used a lot of wisdom in understanding how to get people involved and to respect each person's desire to help. She expected excellence, and therefore, each team member wanted to provide good food. Janice called each person receiving the meal each week, therefore making a personal contact in a most caring way."

Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor (Romans 12:10 ESV).

At first, this effort began in the Classics Class; then, gradually, members from other classes joined. For the past twelve years, six teams have prepared menus and provided meals on a rotating basis, averaging 18 meals a week. During that time, meals have been delivered every week except one. During the COVID pandemic, meals were purchased from a restaurant and delivered to the homes of the members in need.

Joan Allen, who has chaired one of the six teams for the last twelve years and will take over the leadership role, says, "Monday Meals has been successful because of Janice Moore's quiet and calm leadership. She had the foresight to keep the number of teams and the number of meals manageable. Each



Janice Moore

week, she provided a list of those who needed meals to that week's team, who then prepared the meals and delivered them. To date, over 11,000 meals have been provided, with that number growing every week! I look at the meals as a food "card" that is delivered in person by a team member. It will be challenging to follow Janice, and we are so grateful to her for her leadership. My prayer is that Monday Meals will continue for many more years."

"If anyone serves me, the Father will honor him" (John 12:26 ESV).

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)

Understanding Chiropractic Care: What to Expect and How It Can Help

By Sean Wallis, DC

Chiropractic care has become one of the most trusted natural approaches to easing aches and pains, restoring mobility, and helping people return to the activities they enjoy. Whether you're dealing with chronic discomfort, recovering from an injury, or simply wanting to stay active as you age, chiropractic care offers a safe and effective path toward better movement and better health.

How Chiropractic Care Supports Daily Life

Pain and stiffness can make even the simplest daily tasks feel difficult. Many people first seek chiropractic care because they notice increasing limitations—like struggling to turn their head while driving, feeling discomfort when rising from a chair, or being unable to walk for as long as they used to without pain. These challenges often develop gradually and can be frustrating when they start to interfere with independence and quality of life.

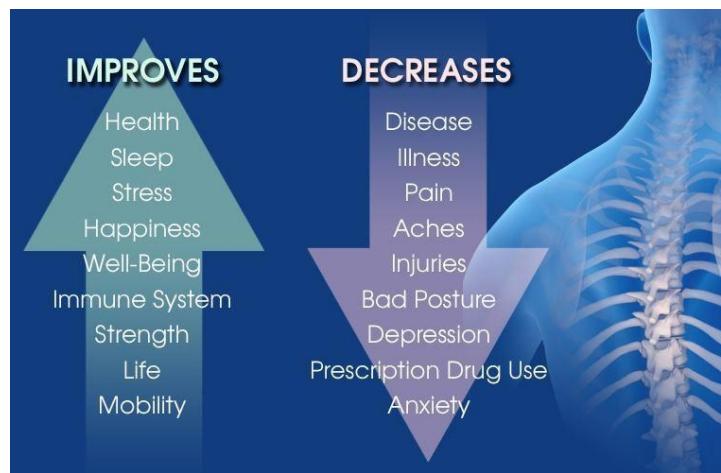
Chiropractic care focuses on improving the function of joints, muscles, and the nervous system. When these areas move better, you move better. Patients often report that chiropractic care helps them:

- Turn their head more easily when backing up a car
- Stand up from a chair with less pain in the hips or back
- Walk longer distances with greater comfort
- Experience fewer flare-ups of stiffness throughout the day
- Regain confidence in movement, which encourages a more active lifestyle

Improved mobility has a ripple effect on overall health. When walking becomes easier, people tend to walk more. When daily movement is less painful, people tend to stay active. This increase in physical activity supports better cardiovascular health, improved mood, stronger balance, and better sleep.

What to Expect on Your First Visit

Your first chiropractic appointment is designed to be both comfortable and informative. The goal is to understand what you're experiencing, what may be causing it, and how to help you recover safely.



You can expect your first visit to include:

1. Consultation

You'll sit down with the doctor to discuss your symptoms, how long you've had them, what makes them better or worse, and how they affect your daily life. This conversation helps form the foundation for your care.

2. Detailed Health History

Chiropractors take medical history seriously. You'll be asked about previous injuries, surgeries, medical conditions, medications, lifestyle habits, and other factors that may influence treatment.

3. Examination

The doctor will evaluate posture, range of motion, muscle tone, joint mobility, and neurological function. This hands-on assessment helps pinpoint the source of discomfort and find areas that need support.

4. X-rays if Necessary

Not all patients need X-rays, but they may be recommended for safety and clarity, especially after trauma, with long-standing symptoms, or if certain conditions are suspected. X-rays help ensure that treatment is appropriate and safe.

5. Treatment if Indicated and Safe

If it is safe to do so, patients may receive their first

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treatment during the same visit. Every treatment plan is personalized, and the doctor will explain each step before beginning.



Gentle and Safe Adjustments for All Ages

Chiropractic adjustments are widely known for restoring movement to stiff joints and helping the body function more comfortably. But one common misconception is that all adjustments are the same. In reality, adjustments are highly adaptable and can be modified to fit the patient's needs, age, and medical conditions.

Patients with osteoporosis, arthritis, fragile bones, or previous spinal surgeries receive extremely gentle techniques, often involving low-force instruments or specialized tables that reduce pressure. Older adults especially appreciate these gentle methods because they improve mobility without the forceful twisting or pressure that people often imagine.

The goal of the adjustment is simple: help joints move the way they are designed to move, which reduces pain, improves flexibility, and decreases irritation to surrounding muscles and nerves.

Additional Therapies That Enhance Healing

Chiropractic care is more than adjustments. Many offices use complementary treatments that work together to relieve pain and improve function.

Dry Needling

Dry needling targets tight or irritated muscles using thin, sterile needles. It helps release muscle tension, calm nerve irritation, and improve blood flow to the

area. Patients often experience relief quickly, especially for chronic muscle knots or tension headaches.

Spinal Decompression

Decompression gently stretches the spine using a specialized table. This technique can reduce pressure on discs and nerves, helping with conditions like herniated discs, sciatica, and chronic low back pain. It is a non-invasive way to create more space in the spine so healing can occur.

Rehabilitation Exercises

Gentle strengthening and mobility exercises help stabilize weak muscles, retrain movement patterns, and support long-term improvement. These exercises are tailored to your comfort level and designed to increase confidence and independence in everyday activities.

What It Takes to Become a Doctor of Chiropractic

Chiropractors receive extensive education and clinical training before becoming licensed. The path to earning a Doctor of Chiropractic (D.C.) degree typically includes:

- A minimum of three to four years of undergraduate coursework
- Four years of chiropractic school
- Over 4,200 hours of combined classroom, laboratory, and clinical training
- National board examinations
- State licensure requirements

Chiropractic education includes anatomy, neurology, physiology, orthopedics, biomechanics, radiology, nutrition, physical rehabilitation, and hands-on clinical experience. This rigorous training ensures that chiropractors can diagnose conditions, determine when chiropractic care is appropriate, and deliver safe, effective treatment.

A Safe and Natural Approach to Better Movement

Chiropractic care offers a natural and evidence-informed way to improve mobility, reduce pain, and enhance day-to-day function. Whether your goal is to walk more comfortably, bend and lift with less strain, or simply enjoy life with more freedom of movement, chiropractic care provides a supportive path forward.

Getting to Know Your Elders

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

Bob Rieder

As I look back over my life, I realize how important faith in God has been to me. I owe a debt to my parents for introducing me to Jesus at a young age. The legacy of faith came to them from their family as well. Both sets of grandparents were Christians. My mother's grandfather was a founder and elder at the Randolph Church of Christ in Huntsville, and her father also served there as an elder. My dad's father was one of a small group of men who financed and established a Christian camp on the Oregon coast, a camp that is still operating today after nearly 100 years.

In my teen years, my family and several others began, with the blessing of our then-home church, a new congregation in a suburb of Portland, Oregon. I was baptized in that church. The closeness of the families in that new congregation made an impression that has remained with me. I sought out the church when I was in college, law school, and the Navy. In each instance, I was "adopted" and included in the family life of individuals in the church. While in Naval officer training, I was even invited to live with the local minister's family during the times I was off the base, an offer I gratefully accepted. Through these experiences, I developed an unfading love for the church and those who were a part of it.

I lived in Portland in my early years and attended Willamette University in Salem. After graduating, we moved to Huntsville, where my mother and several generations before her had lived. My brother enrolled at Lipscomb, and I migrated to Durham, North Carolina, to study law at Duke University. I spent three years there, and then, after graduation from Naval Officer Candidate School in Rhode Island, I served three years aboard several naval vessels homeported in the Jacksonville Beach, Florida area.

Huntsville was to be my home, however, and I moved back here after concluding my military service. I engaged in private practice for several years and then accepted a position as Chief University



Bob and Cindy Rieder

Counsel at The University of Alabama in Huntsville. I found working with senior UAH administrators rewarding, and I enjoyed the legal challenges generated by a growing campus. I remained at UAH for 40 years, retiring in 2016.

During the pre-Huntsville chapter of my life, I was given opportunities to become more engaged in kingdom work, such as teaching teens at the church in Durham, conducting a shipboard Bible study while at sea during my Navy days, and working with teens and preaching in the Jacksonville Beach area. For someone who had never been comfortable in any kind of "speaking" role, this was a major step forward for me! I believe God was nudging me to stretch my spiritual muscles in these ways.

After relocating to Huntsville, I was invited to help with the teens at the Central Church of Christ, which I did for several years. My "spiritual training" continued, as I found myself teaching the youth and young family classes at Central and speaking on Sunday morning at some area churches. In an effort to go "beyond" the church building, I conducted small group Bible studies at home and on the campus for a period of years, and I taught Christian Evidences at the local Faulkner University campus. As anyone who

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teaches a Bible class will testify, the task of studying and preparing is hard but so faith-enhancing. God used these teaching opportunities to give my faith deeper roots, more so than almost any other experience.

At about this time, I was the beneficiary of one of God's greatest blessings to me - dating and marrying Cindy. Time has passed so quickly since then - we celebrated our 50th anniversary in August. She has been my best friend, companion, and partner in any ministry efforts I've undertaken. I cannot imagine my life without her and the light she's brought to our family. God has given us the privilege of having four children. Beth Knott (Dave), living in Franklin, TN; Sarah Bunker (Justin), and their two children, Addison and Brayden, in Memphis; and Maryanne, in Nashville. Our son Andrew died tragically in an automobile accident twelve years ago, leaving a son, Graham, here in Huntsville. Though we are a bit scattered geographically, we're still able to get together during the year and enjoy simply being a family. Of course, our grandkids are a delight to us, and we cherish holidays, vacations, trips, etc., when Cindy and I can be with them, our daughters, and sons-in-law.

Huntsville has been a congenial place to live, and I thank God that we've been able to raise our family here, especially in view of the positive environment Mayfair has provided. During several decades of involvement in youth sports (boys' baseball and girls' soccer), I've had the pleasure of coaching all my children. Working with a small group of other believers, I had a part in establishing a prolife, helping organization (Choose Life), and was involved with several other community organizations.

We all came to Mayfair in the mid-1980s. Our children grew spiritually under the influence of our wonderful Children's and Youth Ministers. It was my great joy to be able to administer baptism for each one of my children. For several years, Cindy and I, along with Tom and Donna Caldwell, worked in the Singles Ministry (Tom as our Singles Minister) - we loved getting to know our adult single brothers and sisters.

In 1995, I was appointed a Shepherd. No greater privilege (and responsibility) has been mine during

my life. The members of our church family have been, in my experience, loving and supportive, and the experience of shepherding has been rewarding for me. The Shepherds I have served with over the years have been such godly and devoted men. I have learned from them all. And I treasure my relationship with the ministers I have come to know.

As I've entered the "sunset season" of my life, I'm more convinced than ever that God is good and worthy of my heartfelt praise. Though there have been times when I've failed him and times of darkness and tears, He has been present with me all the while. There are many kinds of success in this world, but if my part is to have lived in a loving and honorable way in my family and, especially, to have been faithful to my God and my Lord, it will be enough. I have no higher aspiration.

He Lives

By Bob Rieder

"He lives!"

Simple words

for so fathomless a marvel.

I grope for faith-sight

to draw Him out of ancient records
and touch the fuller sphere

in which He moves.

No concept can contain Him.

No analogue can be found.

Yet He lives,

before and after,
beyond,
and within.

I affirm it,

truth,
and mystery.

*"I am the Alpha and the Omega,
the first and the last,
the beginning and the end."*

Revelation 22:13

The Wisdom Psalm

By Dick Savage

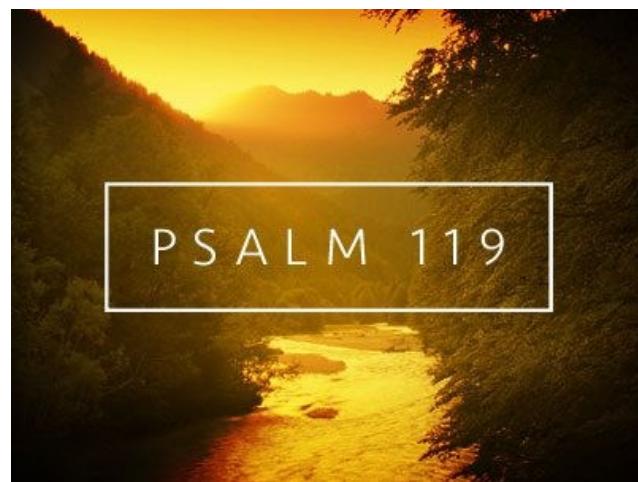
Psalm 119 is an acrostic poem, with 176 verses divided into 22 stanzas of 8 verses each. Each of the 8 verses within a stanza starts with the same letter, moving sequentially through the alphabet from Aleph (verses 1–8) to Tav (verses 169–176). This structure provides a comprehensive treatment of the psalm's theme: the Word of God. This structure is lost in the translation into English.

Psalm 119 is the grand wisdom psalm of the Bible. This psalm is to the rest of the psalms what the Grand Canyon is to all other canyons. Psalm 119 is not only the longest psalm in the Bible, but also the most extensive acrostic in all the psalms. Each of the 22 letters of the Hebrew alphabet is used to offer eight verses of praise. Each of the eight verses under each heading begins with that letter, making it a grand acrostic of wisdom. Even most English Bibles seek to honor the exquisite construction of this psalm by retaining the name of each Hebrew letter at the heading of each of the eight verse sections.

This psalm's intricate plan is designed to aid in memorization and thereby help train young people in the nature and content of God's Law. Like a wise grandfather with his grandchildren at his knee, this psalm seems to gather up all the wisdom of Scripture and turn it into a glorious act of praise, making it one of the great treasures of the Bible. This psalm is like a precious diamond, with multiple facets.

This psalm is a celebration of God's Law. In the Hebrew world, the number seven was considered the number of perfection. So, one might expect to find seven different words for the Law. However, we actually find eight different Hebrew words repeated throughout the psalm. This is because it is an act of praise. Seven may be the number of perfection, but eight is perfection with an exclamation point. It is the addition of joy. It is like a baker's dozen, which is 13, as an added dose of joy to the standard twelve. For the same reason, Psalm 119 is divided into 8 separate meditations. None of the 22 stanzas of this psalm ever contains fewer than six of the eight words, and six of the stanzas contain all eight. Remarkably, only four of the 176 verses do not include (in the Hebrew text) at least one of these eight words for God's revelation.

In reading through the first two stanzas of this psalm, just let the words flow over you and sense the exuberance and joy of this psalm. As Christians, we sometimes see God's Word (one of the terms for law) as burdensome. This psalm is a great liberation from that perspective. It is God's word that allows a "young man to keep his way pure" (vs. 9 *paraphrased*). Notice how he joyfully memorizes and cherishes God's word: "*I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you*" (vs. 11 *NLT*). So, may the grand psalm of 119 transport you to that delightful place of joy. May you find yourself saying with the psalmist: "*I rejoice in following your statutes as one rejoices in great riches*" (vs. 14 *NIV*). The psalm is like a rare and perfectly cut diamond, and all eight of these terms become the various facets or cuts in the diamond, which allow us to see its beauty and majesty.



Psalm 119:1-16 begins the first two sections of the longest chapter in the Bible. This passage focuses on the blessings of following God's law and the desire to live a life that is pure and obedient to His commands. It includes prayers for help to not stray from God's path and the commitment to meditate on, delight in, and hide His word in one's heart.

Verses 1-8 (Aleph): Praises those who are blameless and walk according to God's law and expresses a deep desire to be steadfast in obeying His decrees.

Verses 9-16 (Beth): Addresses how a person can stay pure by living according to God's word. The author reaffirms a commitment to seek God with all their heart, hide His word in their heart to avoid sin, and rejoice in His statutes as much as in great riches.

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Here is Psalm 119:1-16 from the New Living Translation (NLT):

1. of integrity who follow the instructions of the LORD.
2. Joyful are those who obey his laws and search for him with all their hearts.
3. They do not compromise with evil and walk only in his paths.
4. You have charged us to keep your Commandments carefully.
5. Oh, that my actions would consistently reflect your decrees!
6. Then I will not be put to shame when I compare my life with your commands.
7. As I learn your righteous regulations, I will thank you by living as I should!

8. I will obey your decrees. Please don't give up on me!
9. How can a ... person stay pure? By obeying your word.
10. I have tried hard to find you—don't let me wander from your commands.
11. I have hidden your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you.
12. I praise you, O LORD; teach me your decrees.
13. I have recited aloud all the regulations you have given us.
14. I have rejoiced in your laws as much as in riches.
15. I will study your commandments and reflect on your ways.
16. I will delight in your decrees and not forget Your words.

I especially like verse 8. Thank God for not giving up on me.



By Doug Smith

More and more people are going through a divorce. As a church community, we are here to encourage and support those who are going through a difficult time. We often don't know what to say, and the person experiencing this divorce often feels lost and alone. Our goal is to help someone through this difficult time and know they are not lost and alone.

DiVorce Care is a program that runs for 13 weeks. Each week, there is a video teaching element and a discussion element. There is also a participant workbook that you can work with at home throughout the week between our meetings.

We will begin this program on Wednesday night, January 14, 2026, beginning at 6:15 pm, and will run through April 8. If you are viewing this from a digital file, you can click the SIGN UP link at the end of this article to register, or you may register by contacting the Mayfair Church of Christ office at 256-881-4651.

[Sign Up](#)

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.

MAYFAIR CHURCH OF CHRIST

Shepherd's Care and Prevention

by Butch Kinzer

John 10 opens with the phrase “Truly, truly,” which means “you had better listen!” This chapter tells us that those who enter the sheepfold (the church) by any way other than the door are thieves and robbers. The thieves and robbers seek to deceive and steal sheep.

The shepherds at Mayfair want all to follow the Shepherd. As we walk with the Lord, we are ever mindful of our example. The need to encourage, demonstrate discernment, wisdom, and sound judgment.

It is somewhat easy to minister to those who are suffering from illness, recovering from surgery, or injury because you know the origin of the pain. It is more difficult to encourage and counsel those who are experiencing family or personal discord or struggling with their faith. Why are the latter more difficult to encourage?

In my view, individuals are embarrassed, or in denial, not realizing or unwilling to admit they need help. It reminds me that as a physician, I am unable to address an ailment or problem unless the affected person asks about it or a loved one brings it to my attention.

The leadership at Mayfair wants to help, encourage, and admonish when and where needed. Fortunately, we are a diverse group, united by a love of God and the ability to listen. I offer this as an invitation to call upon us in times of emotional or physical need.

When I reflect on my professional career, I realize that I now miss the opportunity to listen. Listening to their accomplishments. Getting to know who they are. Listening to their problems. Drawing on my professional experience and my FAITH in Jesus CHRIST.

I am not good at answering theological questions, but the diversity of my fellow shepherds and our ministers provides ample resources. Through our weekly devotionals, I have come to know and appreciate this group of men. It also leads me to continual self-examination. We consider confidentiality important in caring for the flock.

Often, we learn about some problems very late, when care is a day late and a dollar short. Thus, do not hesitate to talk to whomever you are most com-



fortable with.

Reflecting on my career, I remember one sweet lady who did not want to bother me during the weekend that I was on call. When she did reach out the following Monday, her problem had worsened, making it necessary to admit her to the hospital. I did tell her that if she had called earlier, I would not have needed to admit her to the hospital. I suggested to her that when care is necessary, it is not a bother to call me.

Being deliberately repetitive, my fellow shepherds and I are open to listening to your heartaches, your doubts, your frustrations, or whatever is on your heart. When we are at a loss in lessening your load, we can (with your permission) call on a fellow shepherd or minister to set you on a path that Jesus would approve.

I have been speaking to shepherds' and ministers' responses to acute and chronic issues, that one time or another, plague all of us. The area where shepherds and ministers spend a lot of their time with the flock is in prevention.

The primary prevention in walking with God is to be in prayer and in the Word. In John 6, Jesus tells the Jews and us that we must partake of Him as He is the Bread of Life. He is life-giving and sustaining. The Jews were sustained by the manna sent from heaven while wandering in the desert. In John 6, Jesus says He is sent from heaven to be the bread and drink that sustains us and gives us eternal life.

When He metaphorically spoke to the Jews in John 6:49-59, these Jews began to grumble. They were too wrapped up in how they had interpreted the Word. Letting the enormous amount of time spent studying the Word blind them to what it said. They

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missed the importance of eating His flesh and drinking His blood. Not seeing that when believers eat and drink as commanded, they will gain eternal life with Him.

The point here is to study the Bible, to immerse ourselves in it without preconceptions, always with open minds. With this openness, we will begin to arrive at Jesus' and God the Father's plan for us. With Biblical knowledge, we come to understand why we were immersed in the waters of baptism and then received the Holy Spirit. We also see the Bible as a prevention of the travails of life (an ability to cope with them).

In my brief time as a shepherd, I see parallels to practicing medicine. I would listen to patients' physical complaints at times while exploring their stress. As I listened, I devised a plan to ameliorate their suffering. As shepherds, we need to listen to where a person is spiritually, guiding them to the path that leads to Jesus and eternal life with Him.

Over the years, I repeatedly said the same about a

healthy lifestyle and the importance of compliance with medication in treating and preventing ailments. I would repeat the effect of medications. One time, in frustration with a question concerning side effects, I answered, "It will help you live longer and live better."

I found the most effective way to address this non-compliance was to ask one simple, blunt question. How long do you want to live? An important aspect of this was the implication that in complying with my suggestion, their quality of life would improve.

The spiritual parallel when listening as a shepherd is that, often, in crisis, with personal problems, you find that prayer and Bible study have been neglected. You encourage, advise, and direct these souls in their walk with Jesus. You encourage prayer and reading the Word. Yet they do not listen, continuing in the same old ways, sadly continuing in their neglect of self-examination. Continuing in their neglect of reading the Bible. Continuing in their neglect of prayer. I wonder if I asked, "Where do you want to spend eternity?" what their answer and action would be?



By Doug Smith

GriefShare is a 13-week seminar and support group, with a teaching module designed to help those who have lost a loved one. This ministry has grown and encouraged people from both the community and the Mayfair family.

Losing someone is never easy no matter the circumstances. However, it is amazing how God works through others who have also experienced loss to help heal our pain as we support others through their pain.

During the 13 weeks, the group will watch a video of experts discussing common characteristics of grief that tend to be universal to all. Participants then take the remaining time to discuss the video and their

own personal experiences with loss. No one is forced to talk, but all are free to express themselves.

The next series of weekly GriefShare sessions begins on Tuesday, January 13, 2026, from 11:00 AM - 12:30 PM at Mayfair and runs through Tuesday, April 7, 2026.

If you are struggling with the emotional pain of a loss please join us. If you know someone who could benefit from this seminar, please invite them. It is a great way to find encouragement and realize you're not alone.

If you are viewing this from a digital file, you can click the SIGN UP link below to register, or you may register by contacting the Mayfair Church of Christ office at 256-881-4651.

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