

THE VOICE



February 2025
VOLUME 48, ISSUE 2

ANTIOCH BAPTIST CHURCH
1707 White Cross Road ∞ Chapel Hill, NC ∞ 27516-9715
Tel: 919-929-2230

E-mail: admin@abccommunity.com
Website: www.abccommunity.com

YouTube: [Antioch Baptist Church Chapel Hill](https://www.youtube.com/Antioch Baptist Church Chapel Hill)

Facebook: [Antioch Baptist Church-Chapel Hill /White Cross community](https://www.facebook.com/Antioch Baptist Church-Chapel Hill /White Cross community)



OUR MISSION STATEMENT:

LOVE GOD. EXALT CHRIST. SEEK HIS WILL. SERVE HIS PURPOSE.

REGULAR OPPORTUNITIES FOR WORSHIP

SUNDAY SCHEDULE

Prayer Rally: (Library)	9:20 a.m.
Sunday School	9:45 a.m.
Morning Worship	11:00 a.m.
Sunday Lunch	Noon
AWANA (Sept.- April)	4:00 - 5:30 p.m.
Youth Bible Study (Sept. - April)	4:00 - 5:30 p.m.

WEDNESDAY SCHEDULE

Supper	6:00 p.m.
Adult Bible Study	7:00 p.m.
Youth Group	7:00 p.m.
Missions Journey: Kids	7:00 p.m.
Choir Practice	8:00 p.m.

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS OF OPERATION : MONDAY-FRIDAY / 9:00 – 3:00 P.M. The Voice 1

CHURCH STAFF

Dave Atwater, Pastor
Daniel Howell, Associate Pastor for Student Ministries
Harold Greene, Interim Minister of Music
Denise Lloyd, Ministry Assistant

2024/2025: DEACON MINISTRY

Greg Bronson Dale Hammond Miles Temple
Mike Cherry John McGuire Ray Thompson
Tim Dameron James Parrott Karen Whitfield
Pam Durham Mark Phillipie

A Message From The Pastor:

Back in January of 1986, Scott Adams saw a PBS broadcast on cartooning. He wrote the host of that show, Jack Cassady, and asked his advice. A few weeks later, Adams received a reply with specific answers to all his questions and a warning that, while rejection would be likely at first, he should not get discouraged. Instead, Cassady advised “*Keep trying.*”

Adams’ work was rejected at first, and he did give up for a while. Then, “*out of the blue,*” in June of the next year, he received another letter from Cassady. Again, he encouraged Adams to “*hang in there and keep drawing.*”

Adams recalls that he was “*profoundly touched*” because Cassady had nothing to gain from such a gesture, and Adams had not even replied to his first letter. But as a result, Adams began drawing again and the rest, as they say, is history.

The Bible tells of a similar “*encourager.*” His name was Barnabas, which can be translated “*Son of Consolation*” or “*Son of Encouragement.*” At one time, Barnabas was a partner with the Apostle Paul... on Paul’s first missionary journey, in fact. In planning for the second journey, however, the two men disagreed on whether to include a young man named John Mark who had gotten discouraged and quit during the first trip. Paul refused to give him a second chance. Barnabas insisted. So they formed separate teams and went in different directions.



John Mark, incidentally, did prove worthy of that second chance. Later, he even won back Paul’s confidence. (See Philemon 24, Colossians 4:10, and 2 Timothy 4:11.) He also went on to write the first gospel – the Gospel of Mark!

Some of us could tell similar stories of how our lives were changed by someone who believed in us. We know the lesson from personal experience, ... but we may need to be reminded. All of us need a little positive reinforcement now and then. So never underestimate the power of an encouraging word. Who knows? Just by a simple expression of encouragement, you might just change history!

May God bless. – Pastor Dave

Antioch Calendar of Events

YouTube Channel: Antioch Baptist Church Chapel Hill - 11:00 a.m. Sunday Worship Services

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
The Lord's Supper Special Called Business Mtg. Sunday Lunch Noon 4:00-5:30 p.m. AWANA 4:00-5:30 p.m. Youth Bible Study	3	4 Women's Bible Study 9:00 a.m.	5 6:00 p.m. Supper 7:00 p.m. Missions Journey Kids, Youth, Adult Bible Study 8:00 p.m. Choir	6	7	8 (FHR) prep for fundraiser
9 "SOUP-er Bowl" Lunch: noon Youth Fundraiser 4:00-5:30 p.m. AWANA 4:00-5:30 p.m. Youth Bible Study 6:00 p.m. Business Mtg.	10 ECA: 10:00a.m. Parlor	11 Women's Bible Study 9:00 a.m. Young at Heart 11:45 a.m.	12 6:00 p.m. Supper 7:00 p.m. Missions Journey Kids, Youth, Adult Bible Study 8:00 p.m. Choir	13 Outreach Comm. Mtg. 6:45 p.m.	14	15 (FHR) OUTREACH Guest Speaker 10:00 a.m. Information session on Strokes
16 Sunday Lunch Noon 4:00-5:30 p.m. AWANA 4:00-5:30 p.m. Youth Bible Study	17 7:00 p.m. Deacons' Mtg. Newsletter submissions due	18 Women's Bible Study 9:00 a.m.	19 6:00 p.m. Supper 7:00 p.m. Missions Journey Kids, Youth, Adult Bible Study 8:00 p.m. Choir	20	21 6:00-10:00 p.m. Youth Friday Fun Night (FHR)	22 (FHR) Private Event entire day
23 Sunday Lunch Noon 4:00-5:30 p.m. AWANA 4:00-5:30 p.m. Youth Bible Study	24 7:00 p.m. Budget & Finance Comm. Mtg.	25	26 6:00 p.m. Supper 7:00 p.m. Missions Journey Kids, Youth, Adult Bible Study 8:00 p.m. Choir	27 Ronald McDonald House Meal	28	

SPECIAL CALLED BUSINESS MEETING

February 2nd following Morning Worship

This meeting is to call Harold Greene as our Minister of Music. Currently Harold's position is Interim Minister of Music.



February Nursery Schedule

- Sun. 2nd: Lisa Upchurch, Lucy Upchurch
- Sun. 9th: Lyn Lloyd, Keri Carwile
- Sun. 16th: Pat Cecil, Dawn Blake
- Sun. 23rd: Lisa Upchurch, Cindy Durham



February
 Carol Dawson
 Karen Whitfield



OUR MISSION PROJECTS THIS MONTH:

If you would be willing to assist, please contact Robin Farrell (919) 323-2528, call or text. e-mail: rpf0321@hotmail.com
You may also call the church office at (919) 929-2230.

--Ronald McDonald House Needs --This month our highlight and mission will be the Ronald McDonald House. Antioch has partnered with RMcD since 2006 through preparing a home-cooked evening meal. The house that **"LOVE BUILT"** is also a home of hope and compassion. Its hospitality fills a need for families facing difficult times with their children medically. The house is comfortable, safe, close to medical facilities, and filled with caring people ready to assist as needed. The house is GOD inspired and filled with His spirit to touch each family that enters as they begin their special journey. The volunteers, employees, and everyone that enters the building can feel the connections in the house that "Love Built". Even in difficult circumstances, the outcome ultimately can result in the most wonderful blessings.

Colossians 3:17

"Whatever you do in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father."

Ronald McDonald House is home away from home for approximately 60 people each day in Chapel Hill. They have daily needs the house provides for them to make their stay comfortable and convenient. Listed are items needed. Donations are due: **FEB. 23rd.**

PLEASE PLACE DONATIONS IN CART OUTSIDE THE CHOIR ROOM.

Thank you so much for your contribution to the Ronald McDonald House.

Needed items: paper towels, facial tissues, single serve cereal, ketchup packets, mustard packets, mayo packets, laundry detergent, bleach, Clorox wipes, travel size toiletries (soap, shampoo, body wash, toothpaste, deodorant), feminine products, dish washer detergent, liquid dish soap, \$25.00 Visa gift cards for families to use for gas, food, etc... if short on funds, nonperishable lunch items (canned soups, ravioli, easy mac, spaghetti), individual size snacks (chips, granola bars, Pop-Tarts, nuts, cookies).

-- Ronald McDonald House Meal -- February 27th



WHAT IS A STROKE? ~ Information Session

Arm yourself with prevention tactics, warning signs and quick action information.

Sat., February 15th: 10:00 - 11:00 a.m. Antioch Fellowship Hall

Hosted by Outreach / Guest Speaker

Call the church office if you would like to register for the class, a sign-up sheet will also be available up front in the sanctuary.

Registration cut-off date: February 12th.

News and Opportunities

BE THE ONE. Tell someone about JESUS!

NOTICE: NO LUNCH on 02/09
Come support our youth at their
"SOUP-er Bowl & Salad" Fundraiser!

"Sunday Lunch" / All Are Welcome to Stay!

Most Sundays we celebrate each other by sharing lunch in the fellowship hall following the Morning Worship Service.

If you are able, bring a covered dish and favorite beverage to share, eat a delicious meal and spend time with friends.

If you have any questions reach out to Lisa Upchurch, Judy Tripp, or Robin Farrell.

"Sunday Morning Prayer Rally"

Please join us for a time of prayer. Lifting up the needs and blessings here at Antioch and the surrounding community, as well as our nation, government and leaders.

Along with prayers for international peace.

February 11th

@ 11:45 a.m.

Young At Heart

*Come One,
Come All
& Bring
A Friend!*



MASON JAR CAFE

6956 S NC 87 Highway, Graham, NC 27253

BUSINESS MEETINGS

02/09/2025

Officers and Committee Chairpersons:

We ask that you please send your reports to Clerk, Lyn Lloyd

lnlloyd116@gmail.com

the week preceding the meeting.

If you are an officer or standing committee chair and have *nothing* to report, let Lyn know that information as well.

Every church member and attendee is invited to regularly attend the scheduled meetings, with only church members having a vote on proposals and official church business.

**Meetings play a crucial role in our church,
your input is important to the success of Antioch!**

As always, a copy of the meeting minutes are available upon request from the church office.



**Please help the church office stay updated
with all of your current contact
information.**

CHURCH CALENDAR

Our website has an **EVENTS tab** on the **HOME page** that will link you to current church calendars. View updated dates & times of all activities that are calendared.

Also, see what dates are available for future bookings. www.abccommunity.com



Advice from a SNOWFLAKE™



Keep Your Cool

Appreciate Small
Wonders

Let Your Plans
Crystallize

Take Time to Chill

Sparkle!

Celebrate Your
Uniqueness

It's OK to be
a Little Flaky!

ADVICE BY ILAN SHAMIR
YOURTRUENATURE.COM

NOTES FROM THE CONGREGATION

The Nicholas Winton Story January 10, 2025

Everybody has heard of the “Schindler’s List” story, see the movie, dating back to saving hundreds of Jewish people in WWII. It was amazing that Mr. Schindler used his wealth and his upper-class German prestige to rescue so many Jewish people from his own factories.

More recently, I was watching Cable TV’s Showtime Paramount TV and “stumbled” on a movie entitled “One Life”, starring Anthony Perkins. Mr. Perkins was the perfect age (about 80) to portray this older British aristocratic man with an impeccable British accent and mannerisms. Anthony made you feel like you were in Czechoslovakia in the forties with all the stress, anxiety and death-racing outcomes.

Mr. Winton’s Prague team of several young women and men ended up SAVING 669 Jewish children by sending eight (8) trains across Europe to England. The 9th train was stopped by the German Gestapo and Secret Police and forcibly unloaded ... and most likely all occupants immediately sent to German concentration camps. There were still plenty of British homes ready to welcome thousands more children as orphans; but not enough available trains. There was a total of 6,000 documented children available in Czechoslovakia at this time.

Now fast forward to a week ago ... Pat and I were luckily watching a TV history program ... and we saw Mr. Nicholas “Natty” Winton being honored by the Mormon Tabernacle Choir for all his heroic work in WWII in Prague.

It was an overwhelming tribute that brought the British gentleman to tears. By the way, Mr. Winton lived to be 106 years old, and many of the 669 survivors have visited him in England over the years to pay their respects.

Now, for the next story and project.

A. Gordon Neville,
IP Sales Class of 1965 Containers

From a child's perspective.
 Antioch's Children's Church
 What did you do this week that made God smile?

"I helped my friend Sanders when someone pushed him down."
 Rosie

"Listened to my teachers"
 Madilyn

"Helped my friend with their work."
 Connor

"I visited Mr. John and rode on the Gator to cheer him up."
 Eli

"Obeyed parents, played with Kinsley."
 Jemma

"I helped my Grandma Cindy by getting her a drink and taking her plate to the kitchen"
 Jase

"Listened to my teachers"
 Blake



CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES



Awana

derived from the first letters of
 "Approved Workmen Are Not
 Ashamed"

as taken from: 2 Timothy 2:15

TEACHING CHILDREN ABOUT GOD,
 with scripture, games, music and prayer.

(Age groups: PreK - 5th grade)

Sundays: 4:00 - 5:30 p.m.

February Weekly Themes

2/02: Mustache Night - Be creative - *Psalm 27:7-9*

2/09: Souper Bowl Night - Bring soup for a soup kitchen or food pantry. - *Isaiah: 58-7*

2/16: Valentine Night - Wear pink or red with hearts
 - *John 13:34-35*

2/23: Cow Theme Night - Children dress in black and white - *Genesis 41:25-30*

**Stop in any Sunday or register
 on our website:**

www.abccommunity.com

TAKE YOUR KIDS ON A MISSIONS JOURNEY!

Missions Journey: Kids

Wednesday evenings at 7:00 p.m.

Age group: PreK - 5th grade

Focusing on missions work both here in the US and throughout the world, Missions Journey: Kids will captivate your children's minds and hearts as they learn about the different avenues Christians use to share the gospel with the nations.

Missions Journey: Kids ...

Contact: Carol Dawson

ANTIOCH YOUTH 2025!!!

All youth activities at Antioch are open to students in grades 6th - 12th.

Sunday School:

Our youth gather Sunday mornings in the upstairs Youth Room from 9:45 a.m.-10:45 a.m.

Sunday Bible Study:

Sunday afternoons during AWANA at 4:00 - 5:30 p.m.

Wednesday Night Youth Group:

Currently meets in the upstairs Youth Room at 7:00 p.m.

LOOKING AHEAD: YM360 Camp in July

"Friday Fun Night"
February 21st

**Laser Tag
& a Movie.**

At Antioch

6:00 - 9:00 p.m.

Upcoming Fundraiser:

**Sunday 02/09: noon
"SOUP-er Bowl & Salad"
Lunch**

**Proceeds benefit summer
camp & youth activities.**

payment by donation

Encourage a young person to become a part of Antioch's Family!



From the Youth Pastor's Desk... An Article for Parents to Consider

When you think of today's teens, you might assume they all belong to the Millennial generation. However, while millennials will continue to influence culture for decades to come, if you are now raising teens, they either belong to Generation Z (High Schoolers) or Generation Alpha (Middle Schoolers), a new and emerging generation of teenagers.

Even though research into Gen Z was not done very well, two things are consistently agreed upon by students of culture: 1) Gen Z teens are now among the most significant influencers of culture right now, and 2) they, like all previous generations, will carve out their unique characteristics and have their distinctive values, attitudes, and behaviors.

Researchers have started turning the lens of examination on Gen Z. One recent study by Northeastern University compiled information obtained from surveys of over 1,000 teens 16 -19, and this study may be one of the first to attempt to build our understanding of this new generation.

Here are some characteristics of Generation Z that were obtained through the study:

- Today's teens are concerned about the costs of going to college and the debt that is often part of the college experience.
- Two in three fear they might be unable to find a job after college.
- Four in ten expect to be self-employed during their adult career.
- More than half believe anyone should have a right to become a U.S. citizen no matter how they enter the country.
- Half receive their news online. Only two in ten get news from watching television.
- While technology is simply a part of everyday life for teens, two in three (69%) prefer to interact with friends in-person over interacting online, with only 15% preferring online.
- 70% would not use electronic methods (online, phones, texting, etc.) to ask someone out on a date.

Here are some characteristics of Generation Alpha that were obtained through YM360's research division:

- Generation Alpha was born in 2010 forward, the year that the iPad was invented. This means they do not have an application on the phone to complete a task.
- Generation Alpha has never not known Instagram, Facebook, Snapchat, and social media. They grew up knowing and loving these things like we loved television.
- Social media is now the new lunchroom for social interaction.
- Generation Alpha is bored exceptionally quickly. They only know multiple screens and activities all at the same time. Their brains have been trained to be constantly stimulated.
- Generation Alpha has very shallow friendships but craves deep friendships with mentors, adults, and people who genuinely care for them, even if they don't know how to show it.

From the Youth Pastor's Desk... An Article for Parents to Consider *continued*

- Generation Alpha expects things immediately. If there is any delay, they will leave and find another place that provides the same or a similar thing.
- Generation Alpha learns best through novelty (things they are interested in) and repetition.
- Generation Alpha communicates primarily through images, videos, and media.
- Most of Generation Alpha has no communication or connection with a local church.
- Generation Alpha parents primarily communicate via their phones and text messages. They reflect their children's desire to register quickly and easily and use an app or an online solution rather than a pen and pencil. Reaching and partnering with them requires a different set of tools than previously used in past generations.

Questions for Parents:

1. If your teen is planning on attending college, how can you help prepare her/him to deal with the financial aspects?
2. If your teen expresses concern about accumulating significant debt to attend college, how can you help her/him think through alternatives to amassing debt?
3. How does your teen view today's significant social issues like immigration?
4. What points of tension might you experience with your teen based on their views versus your views of cultural issues?
5. Does your teen prefer to connect with friends online or in person? Why?
6. How can you encourage your teen toward more in-person interaction with their friends?
7. How can you influence your teen toward better integration between life issues and their faith?
8. How can you find ways to reach your grandkids and their friends and be the caring adults they crave to be around? How can that be used to help them find a church?
9. How can we encourage each teenager to place Jesus as the highest priority of their lives in a world of distractions?

Thanks to Doug Fields, Homeword.com, YM360, and Conclave Student Ministers Conference for the research, information, and quotes for the article.

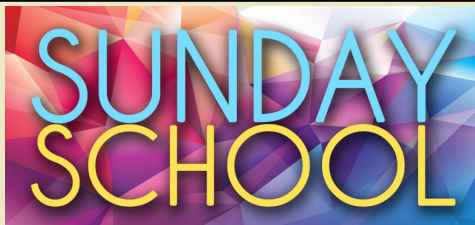
**Join us on Sunday
mornings at 9:45 a.m.**

**Grades PreK-2nd:
Educational Bldg.**

**Grades 3rd - 5th:
Upstairs Ed. Bldg.**

**Grades 6th - 12th:
Youth Room**

**College & Career:
Parlor**



Proverbs 4:11-13

- 11 I instruct you in the way of wisdom
and lead you along straight paths.
12 When you walk, your steps will not be
hampered; when you run,
you will not stumble.
13 Hold on to instruction, do not let it go;
guard it well, for it is your life.

**Classes are offered in a
variety of age groups.**

**Co-ed Adults:
Upstairs Ed. Bldg.**

**Median Adult Women:
Fellowship Hall**

**Median Adult Men:
Basement Ed. Bldg.**

**Senior Adult Faith Class:
Educational Bldg.**

Turning Back the Clock

1/15/2025

Men's Club and Royal Ambassadors

In attempting to continue the great work that has been done by previous historians of Antioch Baptist Church in the White Cross community, it is most important to emphasize the gracious and faithful impact of our LORD. He has enabled and directed the influence of this body of believers from our founding until now, for His eternal praise. My prayer is that as we review any aspects of our past, we will seek to build upon that heritage and discover His will for us as we move forward in the future.

Some of my most treasured memories are related to the relationships developed as a member of the church. Moving to the community in 1963, I soon made friends with children whose families lovingly received me into the fellowship. By 1969, I made my profession in Christ and was baptized in the baptistry of the old wood framed sanctuary by Pastor Harry Goble. As a teenager and young adult, I applied the teaching, guidance and examples of those who help me develop as a believer.

At that particular time, the "Men's Club", essentially the Baptist Men of Antioch, were ministering to young boys through the Royal Ambassador program. Started by the Woman's Missionary Union (WMU) of the Southern Baptist Convention in 1908, this ministry was structured to lead young boys to participate in missions. Through their chapter meetings, mission projects and interest activities, the RAs could become responsible followers of Christ. I joined these men in this work, serving as a chapter counselor. Our chapter meetings were on Wednesday at 7:00 PM. We had several camping events and participated in Mission Fairs with other RA chapters, at First Baptist in Burlington, NC. I am convinced that much of the foundational work of the Royal Ambassadors is being continued by other ministries of the church like AWANA and GAs.

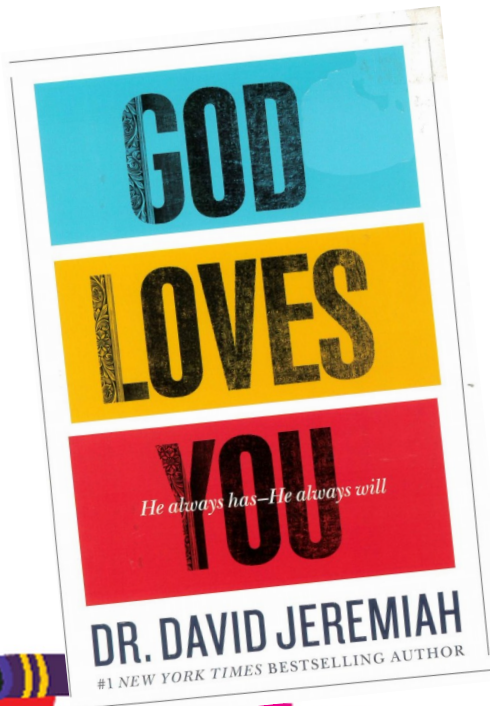
When the "Men's Club" met monthly for fellowship and a meal, included were programs of interest and plans to assist in other church projects. Notable is the ongoing support in constructing disability ramps for our homebound members. They also worked together as a strong team of dedicated servants of Christ in the overall functions of the church ministries.

In Christ, Byron Tripp

Byron Tripp, Antioch Historian

Antioch Library

February Pick of the Month: On the shelf!



That God loves us is the most profound truth in the universe. Experiencing this love has the potential to answer every question, solve every problem, and satisfy the deepest yearnings of the heart. So why are many people who believe this still unable to fully utilize the power of God's love in their personal lives?

In this probing book, Dr. David Jeremiah reveals that not fully understanding and appreciating every critical dimension of God's love can lead to missed opportunities to experience His love. He explains how even the so-called negative dimension of God's actions—hell, prohibitive commandments, pain and suffering in the world—can only be rightly understood by viewing them in light of God's true love.

GOD LOVES YOU will enable you to know God in a way that will consciously connect you with the healing power of His grace so you can experience the life of love you were created to enjoy.

CURRENT BIBLE STUDIES

WOMEN

Leader: *Virginia Ferguson*
virginiaiveyferguson6@gmail.com

Tuesday: 9:00 a.m.

February 4th:
John 11

February 11th:
John 12

February 18th:
John 13

Please come journey
with us and get to know
Jesus better!

ADULT

Leader: *Pastor Atwater*
atwaterd@nc.rr.com

Wednesday: 7:00 p.m.

“What Happens Next”
by Max Lucado, began in mid
Jan. Max describes this as
“an optimistic, accessible,
non-sensational guide to what
the Bible says about heaven’s
time line that will empower
you to face the future with
faith.” He believes God wants
us to be prepared, not scared;
informed, not intimidated.

6-week study:
Join in at anytime

YOUTH

Leader: *Daniel Howell*
daniel.antiochbaptist@gmail.com

Sunday: 4:00 p.m.

Sunday Night Student Discipleship is
done in small and large groups
(D-Groups) led by youth group
leaders, interns, and the youth pastor;
we walk through the basics of our faith,
helping students form a firm
foundation of spiritual disciplines,
apply scripture to their lives, and learn
more deeply about how to interact with
the culture around them. We meet
year-round, minus a handful of holiday
weeks and weekends where camps/
events occur. Currently, our high
school guys are going through a study
on accountability, and our middle
school students are walking through
the basics of Bible Study. This
summer, we will walk through a
discipleship model known as the
3 Arrows. ***Blessings, Daniel***



Operation Christmas Child

"Mama Gump": Her Hugs Went a Long Way

"Brother Graham, I'm Mary. Gotcha some shoeboxes for God. Where do you want 'em?" That's how Mary Damron introduced herself to Franklin Graham, 30 years ago. A coal-miner's wife from West Virginia with a great heart for children, Mary became a global ambassador for Operation Christmas Child during just the second year of the project.

She had seen Graham describing the shoebox ministry on the Trinity Broadcasting Network, and she took it on herself to collect Christmas gifts for children in Bosnia from the impoverished hollers where she lived. Long before Operation Christmas Child shipped shoeboxes by the millions, Mary and her family collected gifts for 1,256 children, loaded them into a cargo truck, and drove them through the mountains to the Samaritan's Purse headquarters in Boone, North Carolina, arriving the day after Thanksgiving in 1994.

Though her life circumstances were challenging, Mary served three decades with Samaritan's Purse and oversaw the collections of hundreds of thousands of gift-filled shoeboxes in West Virginia and surrounding states. She continued to pour her heart and soul into Operation Christmas Child until the Lord called her home on Dec. 26, 2024. She was 70.

Mary's faith and generosity made an immediate impression on Graham way back in 1994, and he invited her to come along on the trip to hand out gift-filled shoeboxes in Bosnia. "I'll go," she said quickly. Mary had never been overseas, and Graham wondered if she understood she would be going into a war zone. She might need a bullet-proof vest. "What fer?" she said. "I got the Holy Spirit of God, young man. I've got holy angels all around me, the Spirit of God in me, and Jesus walking with me every step of the way. I'll be alright!"

In 1995, as the Clinton administration negotiated the Dayton Peace Accord to end the fighting in Bosnia, the President wanted to meet civilians who had served there. His staff found a clipping about Mary and called her home in Ikes Fork, West Virginia.

"Is this Mary Damron?" "Yep." "This is the White House." "No it ain't." "Yes it is. I'm calling on behalf of the President." "No you ain't."



Operation Christmas Child

The caller finally convinced her that this wasn't a prank call—the president wanted to invite her to the White House. Mary's son Tad picked up on a parallel to the 1994 movie, *Forrest Gump*. "You saw Brother Graham on the TV, went out and got some shoeboxes, took 'em down thar to Carolina, you got sent off to Boze-ne-a, and now the Prez-i-dent's done called you to Washington. You're nothing but a Mama Gump."

When Mary met the president, she boldly handed him an empty shoebox and asked him to fill it with gifts for a child. Then she asked him, "Mr. Prez-i-dent, do you care if I pray for you?" Everyone in the Oval Office joined hands, and she prayed a prayer that moved the heart of the commander in chief. The Clintons indeed packed a shoebox, and Mary took it to Bosnia, presenting it to a 7-year-old girl named Zlada who had lost a leg in an artillery attack as she celebrated Christmas in 1993. The president told Graham, "She's the most powerful woman I've ever met. If I had five women like her, I could take Congress."

The Lord rewarded Mary's faith and boldness, and in 1995 she collected five times more shoebox gifts than the year before. That year, she led one of our teams that handed out gifts at a hospital in Croatia that was treating children wounded in the war. In another *Forrest Gump* moment, her team included Grammy Award-winner Ricky Skaggs. In a children's hospital in the war-scarred city of Sarajevo, Mary led the singing of one of her favorite songs, "God on the Mountain":

*For the God on the mountain is still God in the valley.
When things go wrong, He'll make them right.
And the God of the good times, is still God in the bad times.
The God of the day, is still God of the night.*

Everywhere that Mary went with Operation Christmas Child, she always found ways to share God's love with children, even though she didn't know their language. Her hugs went a long way. When Graham asked her how she related so well to them, she said, "Brother Franklin, I see myself in these people. Like them, I grewed up hard; had a tough childhood. We didn't have money. We stayed hungry. In the wintertime, we couldn't keep warm. I know what they're going through."

"We will certainly miss Mary, but I thank God for the impact she had on children all around the world for the Gospel," Graham said. "I know Mary's family will appreciate your prayers"



Operation Christmas Child

How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news, who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings, who proclaim salvation, who say to Zion, "Your God reigns!"

Isaiah 52:7



Mary Damron interacts with girls in Uganda as they discover the treasures inside their shoebox gifts.

February suggested items: Fashion accessories like hair clips and bows, sunglasses, watches, jewelry, hats, bandanas, etc. After Valentine's Day sales are a great time to buy stuffed toys and clothing items.

This year, instead of purchasing the red and green shoeboxes from Samaritan's Purse, we would like to have your empty shoeboxes. We can use any regular size shoebox in good condition (no boot boxes). Please place them on the pews behind the sanctuary.

The boxes we packed in 2024 are on their way to Madagascar, Ukraine, and Peru.



*We want you to
become a part of it!*

The Voice is published monthly to share Christ's love, to keep members and friends informed of programs of the church, and to report news about Antioch's people. *The Voice* is a publication of Antioch Baptist Church, 1707 White Cross Road, Chapel Hill, NC 27516-9715, (919) 929-2230, info@abccommunity.com. Editor-in-Chief: Dave Atwater. Managing Editor: Denise Lloyd.