

# THE TWIG BENDER

November

2011

*Greenwood UMC*

*Counting Your Blessings ...*

## What Are You Thankful For?

*By Steve Stalnaker*

**E**very November, anticipating Thanksgiving, thoughts turn to being thankful. What are you thankful for?

### **OUR MINISTRY OF PRAYER**

*Please pray for these brothers  
and sisters in Christ*

Lawrence Allen, Virginia Agee, Brian Beckley Jr., Jeremy Coleman, Evelyn Daniel, Ashley Draper, Leola Frayser, Thomas Jackson, Jane Gray Kibler, Betty McKee, Pat Moran, Virginia Moran, Pamela Mortenson, Alvin Patteson, Dorothy Powell, Winston Pulley, Betty & Harvey Roach, Rita Robinson, Benjamin Shannon, Tommy Sheets, Lavelle Sheffield, Steve Sheffield, Carolyn Stone, Gloria Slingerland, Johnny Taylor, Mary Walker, Kim Winfrey, Magda Wolff

The other day, as I was walking along in a shopping mall, I was grumbling to myself because my arthritic knees were giving me trouble. As I walked this relatively short distance, I was whining to myself about how my knees hurt, how far I had to walk, wah, wah, wah.

I noticed a couple coming from the opposite direction. The man was walking with what seemed like an odd gait. Then I saw it: his right leg was a mechanical prosthesis. He was walking along as if it was the most natural thing in the world, and that he had no cares or worries. He had a big smile on his face. Life was good for him.

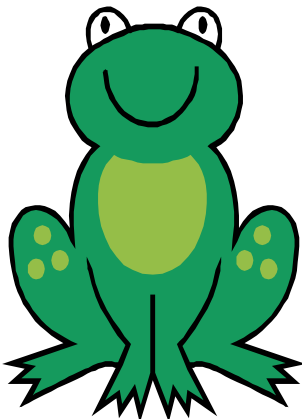
That "odd" gait of his suddenly

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## From The Pastor

### Greetings in the Name of Jesus Christ

As we get ready for a very busy time of the year for the church, I started to wonder how I was going to get everything accomplished that I wanted, and how God could ask me to keep up with everything.



Then I was sent a wonderful story I need to share. The story is called the “Ant and the Contact Lens”. There was this young girl named Brenda who was invited to go rock climbing and, although very scared, she went with the group to enjoy the fellowship. She started up this steep cliff and about half way up her safety rope smacked her in the face dislodging one of her contact lenses.

Now with her sight very blurry, very scared and half way up the cliff, she looked but couldn’t find her contact. Not sure if she should go up or go down, she started to pray to the Lord to help her find her contact.

When she got to the top her friends helped look all through her

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## REV DEAN UPDATE

Dean underwent successful back surgery on Tuesday, October 18. He was recuperating at Sheltering Arms until Sunday, October 30. Dean came home on that day and is doing well and feeling better every day. Please continue to pray for Rev Dean Pittman’s health and Janet Pittman’s sanity.



# Welcome Anita Mays!

Reverend Anita Mays joined the Greenwood-Laurel Park church family as Minister of Christian Education on September 1.

She commented: "I would like to extend my gratitude to Rev. Dean, the Staff-Pastor-Parish Relations Committee, and the members of Greenwood and Laurel Park churches for the opportunity to serve as your Minister of Christian Education, and for the warm welcome I have received. I look forward to getting to know you all, and being engaged in ministry with you."



Holding master's degrees in Biblical Studies, Divinity, and Christian Education from Union Presbyterian Seminary, as well as a bachelor's degree in Communication Studies from Virginia Tech, Anita brings considerable training to this position, including a depth of experience in Christian Education. Anita is a Licensed Local Pastor and Chaplain at The Hermitage. She also has served in a variety of Christian discipleship and education positions at Centenary UMC here in Richmond.

Anita has taught at Virginia Commonwealth University as a member of the adjunct faculty, been program manager of the Highland Support Project and was a Volunteer in Mission in Guatemala for a summer in 2004.

She is a member of the Highland Support Project's board of directors, a member of the Virginia Conference Board of Global Ministries, and was awarded the Martha O. and Fred R. Stair Fellowship of Graduate Study at Union Presbyterian Seminary in 2010.

The *Twig Bender* takes great pleasure in welcoming Anita to the Greenwood-Laurel Park family.

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**Advent Bible Study****"Prepare the way of the Lord"**

These words from Isaiah 40:3 and Mark 1:3 remind us that Advent, the season of preparation for Christ's coming, is fast approaching. Please consider joining us each Sunday evening in Advent for a special study to help us escape all of the hustle and bustle of the Christmas holiday, and to focus on the true meaning of the season.



Our Minister of Christian Education, Rev. Anita Mays will lead this Advent Bible study beginning Sunday, November 27, at 5:30 p.m. continuing each Sunday evening through December 18.

**Charge Conference**

The Greenwood—Laurel Park Charge Conference took place on Sunday, October 23. Look for a full report in next month's *Twig Bender*.

**FUNraisers' Homemade Apple Butter**

Enjoy this Greenwood Autumn tradition: Homemade apple butter in three versions: Made with Bob Stapleton's honey, no sugar and Cider.

1/2 Pint \$3.00, (2) 1/2 Pints \$5.00

Pick yours up at the Community Fair on November 5. Please pay one of the FUNraisers when you place your order on the signup sheet in the Narthex



## Outreach

## Fall Community Fair

Greenwood's Annual Fall Community Fair has something for everyone.

All proceeds from the fair, set for 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturday, November 5 on the church grounds, goes towards missions.

### Fall Fair Features:

**Our world famous Brunswick Stew**, coordinated by Brenda and Harry Shuler — have you ordered yours yet?

**Yard Sale**— other folks' stuff that could become your treasures: Sponsored

by the Willing Workers Circle. If you have something to contribute, please see the Willing Workers article on page 11.

**Bake Sale:** All items guaranteed by the *Twig Bender* nutrition staff to be low calorie, low cholesterol, low sodi-

um, non habit forming and delicious! Head baker: Dorothy Sties.

Volunteers who head up these different areas could use your assistance. Please give these people a call and let them know how you can help:



Come out and help make our  
Fall Community Fair a huge success!

## Fellowship Dinner



**Eat Thanksgiving dinner at Greenwood!**

Our November Fellowship Dinner is set for Wednesday, November 16 at 6:30 p.m. Note that this is the third Wednesday and not the second.

Menu: Turkey, gravy, dressing, mashed potatoes, peas, cranberry sauce, rolls and pumpkin pie. All for only \$5.00, a deal you can't beat.

Please sign up on the flyer in the church bulletin or call the church office at 266-5341 before November 13.

## Glen Allen Day Winners

At Glen Allen Day in September, we invited visitors to fill out cards to win either a Bible or a quart of Greenwood's famous Brunswick stew. The drawing was sponsored by the Just Friends Sunday School class.

Winners were Taqueela Branch of Virginia Center Way and Avery H. of Rudwick Road, both in Glen Allen.

They'll be invited to collect their winnings at Greenwood's Fall Community Fair.



## Christmas Cantata

### ***“Behold Emmanuel” – Love is With Us***

The combined Greenwood-Laurel Park choir will perform this year’s Christmas Cantata by n Sunday December 18; Laurel Park at 9:30 a.m. and Greenwood at 11 a.m.

All of us enter the Christmas season from a unique vantage point. For some, the course of everyday living has been filled with days of great joy and gladness, while others have endured months of hardship and pain. Regardless of the circumstances, perspective often frames one’s Christmas experience.



As Christmas comes into focus for you, the combined choir hopes that this manger-side view of Mary, Joseph and the shepherds will prompt you to develop a clear vision of your life inside a story that begins and ends with Emmanuel, God with us.

Perhaps, like Mary and Joseph, your heart is full of promise and thanksgiving, or you view Bethlehem through a lens of wonder and worship, like the shepherds. Maybe you are searching for a deeper meaning to life, rather than just another annual celebration.

However you find your way into the story, the combined choir invites you to discover the joy that can only be found as you “Come to Bethlehem, and see Him whose birth the angels sing.” Embrace this opportunity to look into the eyes of God’s only Son and see beyond a lowly manger to a cross of forgiveness and an empty tomb.

Behold Hope. Behold Love. Behold Life Everlasting. **Behold Emmanuel!**

## After School Ministry

***Chapel, Pumpkins and Movies***

October has been a busy and fun month at the After School. The weather has been great and we've been able to spend a lot of time outside playing with the sidewalk chalk, Frisbees, basketballs and on the playground. Some of the kids' favorite activities are kickball, dodge ball and the game called "spud."

On Friday, October 21 we visited the Ashland Berry Farm where we picked pumpkins, took a hay ride, and had our snack at Sonic before we returned. We had a great time and we look forward to more field trips!

The kids seem to be enjoying our Tuesday chapel hour where we have been learning about Old Testament Bible stories such as Adam and Eve, Noah's Ark, Joseph and his coat, as well as Moses and his leadership out of Egypt. On Mondays we have "Movie Mondays" and in the past couple of weeks we have viewed the Disney movie *Prince of Egypt*, which is based on the story of Moses. We love singing songs like "Pharaoh, Pharaoh," "Peace like a River" and "Rise and Shine."

On Friday, October 28 we had a Halloween Party with Halloween treats and games. We painted the pumpkins we picked at the farm. On Tuesday, October 25 we welcomed two new children, who joined us after a season of basketball, for a total of 12 – the largest After School ministry enrollment we've had in several years.

All is well at the After School! In the future, we look forward to working with the church, possibly, to gather Christmas gifts for the kids of the program. If you're interested in helping please contact Lyndsey McCall.





# Greenwood Circles

## Willing Workers

The Willing Workers met at the home of Charlene Hawkins for our October meeting. Nancy Yeary opened the meeting with a devotional reading.

We are doing the Shoe Boxes again this year, we are getting shoe boxes together to fill. Charlotte Hodges is heading this project up, if anyone would like to help with this please give her a call.

The Willing Workers are sponsoring the Community Fair's yard sale. If anyone has any gently used items they would like to donate they can leave them in the Fellowship Hall by November 4. We will be pricing the items Friday evening beginning at 5:30 p.m. We will not be able to use clothes, shoes or electronics.

For December we are planning to do the Angel Tree again this year. If anyone would like to make a

donation please call Charlotte Hodges.

Our November meeting will be held at the home of Charlotte Hodges.

## Ruth

The Ruth Circle will be meeting Wednesday November 2 at the home of Carolyn Smith. We will be continuing with our Bible Study.

We will also be packing goody boxes for our college students who are away from home. Anyone is welcome to come, just give Adamarye a call at 266-6364.



# From the Pastor ... continued

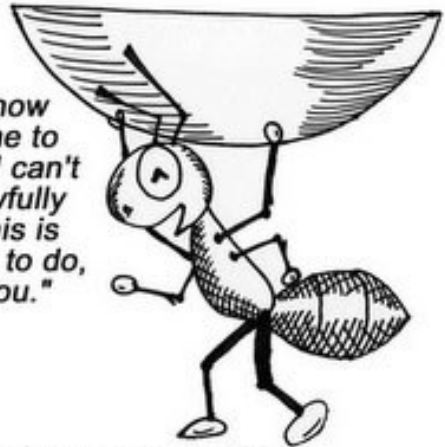
(Continued from page 2)

clothes but no contact lens was found. While waiting for the rest of her friends she prayed again and said, "Lord, you can see all these mountains and you know every stone and every leaf please help me find my contact lens, please help me."

They all started back down the trail and as they got to the bottom another group was starting the climb, when one of them shouted out "Hey anybody lose a contact lens?" They looked and there was this ant carrying a contact lens on his back slowly going over the rocks.

Brenda's father was a cartoonist and when he heard her story he drew a picture of this ant carrying a contact lens on his back. The words under the drawing said, "Lord I don't know why you want me to carry this thing. I can't eat it and it's awfully heavy, but if this is what You want me to do, I'll carry it for you."

"Lord, I don't know why You want me to carry this thing. I can't eat it, and it's awfully heavy. But, if this is what You want me to do, I'll carry it for You."



"I can do all things through Christ which strengthens me." Phil. 4:13

Sometimes our loads might seem heavy and we might question why? However if God needs us to do something, we need to respond and carry that load for Him. Remember these words, "Without Him I am nothing, but with Him I can do all things through Christ which strengthens me." (Phil.4:13)

I was more worried about me than about what God needed me to do. This contact lens is not so heavy after all.

Shalom

*Dean*

# What Are You Thankful For?

*(Continued from page 1)*

didn't seem so "odd." His limp, if you will, wasn't nearly as pronounced as the limp I was putting on because my knees were giving me some little pains, and, let's face it, because I was feeling sorry for myself.

An old Persian proverb came to mind: "I cried because I had no shoes, until I met a man who had no feet." It struck me then that I was indulging in some self-pity, nursing some resentment, when I should have been rejoicing in the blessings the Lord had seen fit to give me. I wasn't doing what the song said: "Count your blessings, count them one by one. Count your many blessings, see what God has done."

I wasn't following the example set by the Apostle Paul when he wrote to the Corinthians: "... in order to keep me from becoming conceited, I was given a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan, to torment me." (2 Cor. 12:7) The "thorn" plaguing Paul was some unspecified obstacle, problem or burden. But what happens to this "thorn?" See the rest of this Scripture passage in the sidebar on page 14.

When you're down and out with legitimate troubles, or just feeling sorry for yourself like I was, remember that it's God's loving grace that sustains us. Whatever our thorns might be, it's always God's grace that is sufficient for us.

So, thank the Lord for you blessings and count them, count them one by one. Be strong in your weaknesses and praise God for His grace.



# Greenwood Church Family Celebrations

## Birthdays

Nancy Lloyd .....	11/3
Betty Henley .....	11/4
Betty Ritchie .....	11/5
Seth Stanley .....	11/6
Kevin Favilla .....	11/8
Dorothy Sties .....	11/8
David Stanley .....	11/12
Frank Miner .....	11/21



## Anniversaries

Mike Workman & Jennifer Friedline .....	11/7
Betty & Harvey Roach .....	11/8

### 2 Corinthians 12:8—10

<sup>8</sup> Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me. <sup>9</sup> But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ’s power may rest on me. <sup>10</sup> That is why, for Christ’s sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

## November Communion Offering

Children's Hospital of  
Richmond at VCU



## October Attendance and Offerings

*“Honor the Lord with your substance and with the first fruits of all your produce”*

— *Proverbs 3:9*

Date	Sunday School	Worship	Giving
October 2	24	43	1,967
October 9	28	66	2,138
October 16	29	59	1,577
October 23	24	48	483
October 30	24	70	2,610
<i>October Totals</i>	<i>129</i>	<i>286</i>	<i>8,458</i>
<i>Weekly Averages:</i>	<i>24.5</i>	<i>47.3</i>	<i>2115</i>

\$2,725 offering needed weekly to meet Greenwood's 2011 operating budget of \$141,712. Your generosity is appreciated

### MARK YOUR CALENDARS:

Community Thanksgiving Service: November 22 at Good Shepherd  
Christmas Cantata — December 18 in the Sanctuary

### *The Twig Bender*

is a publication of Greenwood United Methodist Church

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Sunday School 9:30 a.m.  
Worship 11 a.m.  
Senior Pastor: Rev. Dean Pittman  
Minister of Christian Education Rev. Anita Mays

#### PASTOR'S HOME

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