



MT. PISGAH LUTHERAN CHURCH HONORS GRADUATES — The congregation of Mt. Pisgah Lutheran Church in Bethlehem recently recognized 2018 graduates. Pictured above, left to right: front row – Casey Talley, Emma Farmer, Bailey Tesh, and Meredith Rogers; back row – Emily Mawyer, Karter Peek, and Cody Nussbaumer.



SERVICE PERSONNEL HONORED AT MT. PISGAH CH. — This past Sunday, May 20, 2018, Mt. Pisgah Lutheran Church celebrated with their annual ‘God and Country’ service. The Mt. Pisgah church family enjoys an opportunity annually to recognize our area’s Service Personnel. We joyfully honor those who put themselves in harms way to protect us, and our freedoms, during this especially meaningful service. Guests at this service included the following, from left to right: Tyler Land, Taylorsville Police Dept.; David Cozart—Hickory City Fire; Jeff Davis, Bethlehem Fire & Rescue; Josh Davis—Bethlehem Fire & Rescue; Dylan Jolly, Newton, Bandys Fire, Bethlehem Fire & Rescue, and Catawba County EMS.



PRESCHOOL STAFF HONORED — Pastor Mike Stone (right) honored Mt. Pisgah Lutheran Church preschool staff on Sunday, May 20, 2018, following a singing performance of the preschool students. Also pictured: Director, Linda Bloom (center) and Teacher, Theresa Parsons, (left).

Mt. Pisgah sets Vacation Bible School June 24-28

Bring your family to share all the fun and activities at Mt. Pisgah Lutheran Church’s Vacation Bible School, evenings, Sunday, June 24, through Thursday, June 28. This year’s theme is “Shipwrecked: Rescued by Jesus.” Children go on an adventure to an uncharted island where they are rescued by Jesus.

A light meal will be available from 5:15 to 6:00 p.m. every night. The program will start at 6:00 and conclude at 8:45 p.m. Age-appropriate lessons will be available for children in preschool through sixth-grade and learning will be made fun with storytelling, crafts, music, and games.

Parents can watch their kids venture onto an uncharted island where kids survive and thrive. They will be anchored in the truth that Jesus carries them through life’s storms.

In keeping with the theme, kids travel through field-tested rotations that reinforce relevant Bible Points and immerse kids in new adventures. Every station is designed to reinforce the daily ‘Bible Point’ in a hands-on, interactive way. In addition to these engaging lessons, the fun will keep on coming, as families enjoy hayrides, train rides (both for the young and young-at-heart), games, and a bounce house.

Experience the warm and welcoming community of Mt. Pisgah Lutheran Church, located in front of the Lowe’s Foods shopping center on NC 127 in Bethlehem. For directions and further information, call the church at 828-495-8251; or visit the Facebook page at Mt. Pisgah Lutheran Church ELCA or their website at www.mtpisgahelca.org.



AT VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL — Engineer Rick Walker, from Little Blue Choo (of Cherryville, NC) takes a moment last year at Mt. Pisgah Lutheran’s Vacation Bible School to get serious, as he gives his passengers a train safety review before making them laugh with jokes, stories, and singing.

Bethlehem Baptist to host trip to Ark Encounter

Bethlehem Baptist Church, will host a trip to The Ark Encounter in Williamstown, Kentucky, October 22 through 26, 2018. Anyone in the community is welcome to join the 5 day, 4 night adventure which will include:

- * The Ark Encounter, a one-of-a-kind historically themed attraction, was built according to the Biblical dimensions in Genesis 6; it stands seven stories high and is 510 feet in length. It is the largest freestanding, timber-frame structure in the world.

- * The state-of-the-art Creation Museum allows you to venture through Biblical history, stunning exhibits, botanical gardens, planetarium, zoo, zip line adventure course, and much more. This 75,000 square-foot facility has welcomed millions of guests since opening in Petersburg, Kentucky.

- * Discover the stories of freedom’s heroes at the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center, a museum based on the history of the Underground Railroad.

- * Newport Aquarium showcases thousands of animals from around the world in a million gallons of water. This state-of-the-art facility was named the Number 1 aquarium in the 2012 Readers’ Choice Travel Awards from 10Best.com; the Best Rainy Day Outing in 2006 in Cincinnati Family Magazine; and the Best Aquarium in the Midwest in the Zagat Survey’s US Family Travel Guide in 2004. Cost for the trip is \$520 per person based on double occupancy, and in addition to admission to these four attractions, includes motor-coach transportation, 4 nights lodging, and 8 meals. \$75 is due upon signing, with the final payment due August 15, 2018. For photos, video and more information about the trip visit www.GroupTrips.com/BBCtaylorville. For more information about Bethlehem Baptist Church, call 828-495-7250, visit www.bethlehembc.org, or like them on Facebook.

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Century Furniture honors employees for years of service

Century Furniture recently hosted their annual awards banquet at Catawba Country Club to honor 86 employees who represent over 1,400 total years of service to the company.

Running from 5 through 45 years of service, the annual banquet honors any associate for the completion of a 5-year anniversary with a luncheon and bonus commemorating their longevity with the Century Family. Notably, three employees completed 45 years of service: Bobby Barger, Daniel Byrd, and Debbie Miller.

The program included touching remarks shared by Comer Wear, VP of Marketing, who read from a biographical interview of her grandfather, Harley Shuford, who founded Century in 1947.

“Recognizing the contributions of our associates to our company is one of

the highlights of the year for me,” said Alex Shuford, III, CEO and President of Century Furniture. “It is quite humbling to honor individuals who have worked with Century for

over 40 years. These individuals have worked with three generations of my family. We are privileged and fortunate to count them as members of our Century family.”

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Message to the Class of 2018 (and anyone else reading this)

By Mark Johnson, State Superintendent of Public Instruction

Graduation is here for our high school seniors. I want to take a moment to offer unsolicited advice to the young adults starting off on their next steps (and their loved ones who will hopefully cut this out for the paper or share it on Facebook for them to read).

First, some quick advice on life. It’s short and goes by faster than you can imagine.

Make the most out of every moment. Every bit of time that passes is time you won’t get back. As soon as you read these words, they will be in the past. Whether your next step is starting a career, military service, community college, or university, make the most out of your time to ensure your own future happiness — emotional, spiritual, and financial.

But, don’t ever think it is too late to change course if you aren’t happy.

Get a job right after graduation if you want. It may just be the start of your career. If you decide you want something else, though, seek extra training at a community college or a four-year institution. Or go to college now if that fits. But, don’t hesitate to pivot if you discover college isn’t for you.

Avoid the debt if another path makes you happy.

And, don’t be afraid to pursue the challenges that make life worth living. You can actually enjoy multiple careers over the course of your life.

Join the military or a service corps, become a teacher, or find another way to do something for more than just you. You will likely love it and may even start a lifelong career helping society. Or, you will be grateful for the rest of your life for having worked as part of something bigger than just yourself.

Second, some quick advice for your career. Want to be successful? Follow these easy steps.

Work hard, be kind, and save your money.

Working hard is self-explanatory. Everyone dreams of winning the lottery, but odds are that your American Dream, like almost everyone else’s, will take hard work to reach.

Being kind will help you find happiness in work and in your relationships. Some people can be successful through cut-throat tactics, but you will more likely find success and be happier through collaboration. For example, while being an elected leader entails an unfortunate level of strife and contention,

the best parts of my job result from working with other people to effect positive change. And, those other people very much include folks who disagree with me but engage in productive conversations, working together to find solutions or try new ideas to see what bears fruit.

Lastly, start setting aside your money as soon as possible. The sooner you save, the sooner your money starts making you more money. Thanks to compound interest, starting to save early is as important as how much you save. Even if it seems like just a little bit each month, money that is saved works for you for the rest of your life.

Your strides across a stage may not feel like big ones, but they represent your major steps into the next chapters of your life. Congratulations on finishing this chapter — now make the most out of life. You only get one, and right now, it is yours for the taking.

Mark Johnson is the elected superintendent of North Carolina’s public schools. After teaching school in Charlotte and serving on the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County School Board, he now lives in Raleigh with his wife and their daughter, who will start kindergarten in August.

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