

PERSPECTIVE

THE MONTHLY JOURNAL OF MOUNT VERNON BAPTIST CHURCH

A YEAR AT MOUNT VERNON

A Pastor's
Reflections



Welcome to Mount Vernon!

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SERMON SCHEDULE

July 5 *Live with a Clean Conscience*
Hebrews 9:11-10:18

July 12..... *Draw Near to God*
Hebrews 10:19-39

July 19..... *Biblical Leadership in the Church*

July 26..... *Live by Faith*
Hebrews 11:1-40



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New Members



BERKLEY & MEGAN GRYDER
Atlanta

VERNON & ELLEN HENDRIX
Atlanta



Photo Not Available



TONY, HEIDI, & ABIGAIL HIGGINS
Dunwoody



SUNDAY, JULY 12
9:15-10:15 AM IN THE MOUNT VERNON ROOM

JOIN US FOR A FIRST LOOK AT MOUNT VERNON!
COME AND LEARN MORE ABOUT OUR CHURCH AS YOU
MAKE YOUR MEMBERSHIP DECISION.



On June 23-24, 2009, the pastoral staff attended the Southern Baptist Convention's annual meeting in Louisville, KY. There were a few things that were particularly encouraging you should be aware of and pray for. I want to mention the first few very briefly and then offer a longer explanation of the last one.

First is the leadership in the SBC. There were a number men that led the convention with wisdom, patience, and humility. Second, we were encouraged by the work of younger, gospel-centered pastors. These are young men that are striving to keep the Gospel at the center of their churches and missions. Third, despite some obvious strains still evident in the SBC, we should be deeply encouraged by the unity among the messengers and the future of the SBC. Fourth, what created the most anticipation and conversation at this year's meeting was Great Commission Resurgence (GCR) and passing of a motion by 95% to create a Great Commission Resurgence Task Force. You may be unfamiliar with the GCR, so let me offer a brief history and explanation.

Over the past few years many Southern Baptists have discussed issues of Baptist identity and been growing increasingly uneasy with the way the Gospel has been pushed to the periphery of SBC life in favor of secondary issues. Thus, Dr. Danny Akin, president of Southeastern Seminary, penned the GCR Declaration that lays out ten axioms that seek to make the Gospel the center of SBC life and our cooperation for the Great Commission. They are as follows:

1. **A Commitment to Christ's Lordship.** We call upon all Southern Baptists to submit to the absolute Lordship of Jesus Christ in all things at the personal, local church, and denominational levels.
2. **A Commitment to Gospel-Centeredness.** We call upon all Southern Baptists to make the gospel of Jesus Christ central in our lives, our churches, and our convention ministries.
3. **A Commitment to the Great Commandments.** We call upon all Southern Baptists to recommit to the priority of the Great Commandments in every aspect of our lives and every priority we embrace as a network of local Baptist churches.
4. **A Commitment to Biblical Inerrancy and Sufficiency.** We call upon all Southern Baptists to unite around a firm conviction in the full truthfulness and complete sufficiency of Christian

Scripture in all matter of faith and practice.

5. **A Commitment to a Healthy Confessional Center.** We call upon all Southern Baptists to look to the Baptist Faith and Message 2000 as a sufficient guide for building a theological consensus for partnership in the gospel, refusing to be sidetracked by theological agendas that distract us from our Lord's Commission.
6. **A Commitment to Biblically Healthy Churches.** We call upon all Southern Baptists to focus on building local churches that are thoroughly orthodox, distinctly Baptist, and passionately committed to the Great Commission.
7. **A Commitment to Sound Biblical Preaching.** We call upon all Southern Baptists to affirm and expect a pastoral ministry that is characterized by faithful biblical preaching that teaches both the content of the Scriptures and the theology embedded in the Scriptures.
8. **A commitment to a Methodological Diversity that is Biblically Informed.** We call upon all Southern Baptists to consider themselves and their churches to be missionaries in non-Christian cultures, each of which requires unique strategies and emphases if the gospel is to penetrate and saturate every community in North America.
9. **A Commitment to a More Effective Convention Structure.** We call upon all Southern Baptists, through our valued partnerships of SBC agencies, state conventions/institutions, and Baptist associations to evaluate our Conventions structures and priorities so that we can maximize our energy and resources for the health of our local churches and the fulfillment of the Great Commission. This commitment recognizes the great strength of our partnership, which has been enabled by the Cooperative Program and enhanced by a belief that we can do more together than we can separately.
10. **A Commitment to Distinctively Christian Families.** We call upon all Southern Baptists to build gospel-saturated homes that see children as a gift from God and as our first and primary mission field. 🙏

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...HOW TO REVEAL THE SIMPLE NEWS ABOUT JESUS

WITH GUEST SPEAKER
Mack Stiles

SATURDAY, JULY 18

9:00 AM

PRAGMATICS AND THE GOSPEL

10:00 AM

BREAK

10:20 AM

WHAT IS THE GOSPEL?

11:00 AM

GOSPEL CENTERED LIFE

12:00 PM

LUNCH - \$6 PER PERSON

1:00 PM

DON'T ASSUME THE GOSPEL

2:00 PM

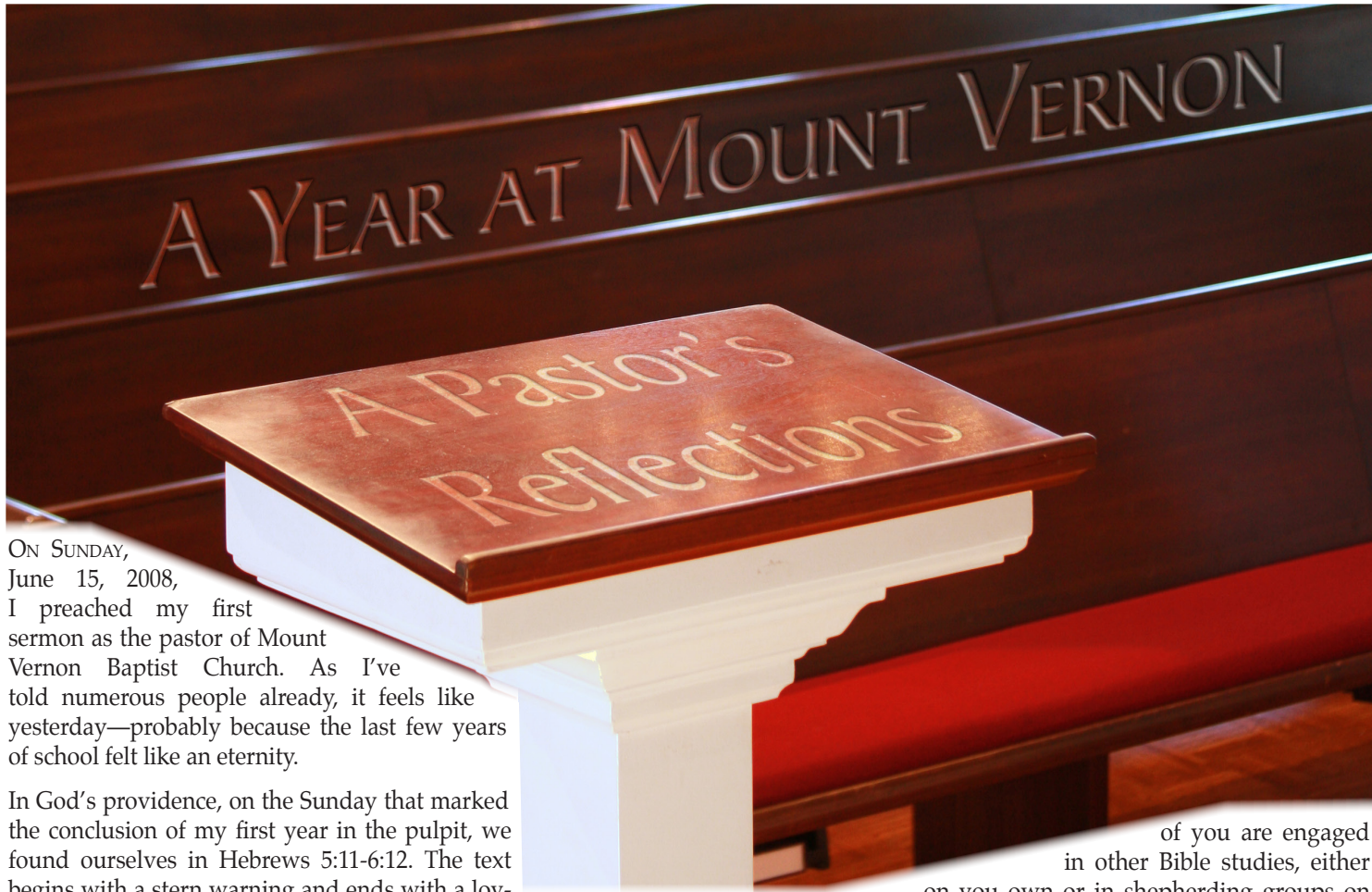
GOSPEL ACTION

SUNDAY, JULY 19

9:15 AM

JOINT SUNDAY SCHOOL

Mack is the author of *Speaking of Jesus: How to Tell Your Friends the Best News They Will Ever Hear.*



ON SUNDAY, June 15, 2008, I preached my first sermon as the pastor of Mount Vernon Baptist Church. As I've told numerous people already, it feels like yesterday—probably because the last few years of school felt like an eternity.

In God's providence, on the Sunday that marked the conclusion of my first year in the pulpit, we found ourselves in Hebrews 5:11-6:12. The text begins with a stern warning and ends with a loving encouragement. The warning has to do with pursuing maturity. Christians are to run the race in such a way that they grow in their knowledge of and affection for Jesus Christ. A lack of growth is a dangerous sign in a professing Christian. The encouragement has to do with the author's conviction that the believers he addressed would mature. He put it this way: "Even though we speak like this, dear friends, we are confident of better things for you" (Hebrews 6:9). In other words, he truly believed they would heed his warning. Perhaps this is similar to warning a child of the danger of running out into the street but at the same time trusting that that child will listen and be safe.

My first year of preaching and teaching at Mount Vernon has been full of lots of warnings. We cannot read the Bible without being confronted by passage after passage that urges us to be holy, to fight the good fight, to press into the kingdom of heaven. But there are also words of encouragement found in Scripture. Think of 1 Corinthians 1:4, "I always thank God for you because of his grace given you in Christ Jesus." Paul encouraged the Corinthians. The author of Hebrews encouraged his readers. Clearly, there is a time for warning and a time for encouragement. So, after having been here for a year, here are some words of encouragement for you. I pray that as you read these words, you would be grateful to God for his work in your life and for the way he has used you in my own life and the life of my family:

First, I have been encouraged by your confidence in the word of God. Every Sunday morning we engage in heavy lifting as we walk through book after book of the Bible. Every Wednesday evening we have had an in-depth study of James together. I know that many

of you are engaged in other Bible studies, either on your own or in shepherding groups on Sunday morning or small groups throughout the week. You believe that the Bible is the bread of life. You believe that God's word, clearly explained and applied, is what you need in order to persevere in the faith. God has given me the unique privilege of delivering God's word to you, and I am so thankful for the way you have received it.

I still remember the first time I delivered a sermon on Sunday morning. I had the opportunity to do some public speaking earlier, but I knew preaching was different. When I spoke as a legislative assistant for a U. S. senator, I represented him. When I preached, I represented the Maker of heaven and earth. What an awesome difference! Thank you for valuing the preaching of the Word. It is one important mark of your confidence that God has spoken.

Second, I have been encouraged by your love for God. I have observed this as we have gathered together to offer our praise to God during our times of corporate worship. I have seen it in private conversations throughout the week. There is a desire to honor God in everything from how we sing, to how we pray, to how we respond to the teaching of Scripture. Your love for God is evident in your desire to hear him in his word and follow him by the power of his Spirit.

With each passing month, I run into more and more people at MVBC who are struggling to know what it means to love God in practical ways. This is exactly the type of church I want to pastor—a church full of people who really care that their love for God is observable and that God's love for them is effective.

Third, I have been encouraged by your love for God's people. I have seen your care for needy members. I have watched various groups in the church (singles, women's ministry, deacons) take it upon themselves to visit our homebound members. I have observed your eagerness to offer words of support and meals to those who are suffering or recovering. I have witnessed and experienced your generosity. I take this to be an indication of your love for the church.

You have shown your love for God's people in less tangible but still important ways. Here is one example. We are presently in the process of refining our membership rolls. Our ultimate goal is to have a membership list that is a rough reflection of those in attendance on Sunday morning. You have welcomed and even supported this move. Your support is an act of love for God's people. We desperately want every Christian to be actively involved in the life of a local church. We think it is what the Bible teaches and we trust it is a good directive. We do not ever want to be thought of as an exclusive club, but we do want to be around each other enough so that we can "encourage one another daily" (Hebrews 3:13). Many of you have expressed to me how excited you are to take membership seriously. I take this to be a practical example of your love for God's people.

Fourth, I have been encouraged by your love for the lost. This summer, we witnessed a cadre of youth head off to New Orleans to invest in children and model Christian service. We saw a group of men travel to Montana to work on a ranch that is going to be used to train church planters. Moreover, since we have begun the Sunday evening service (primarily devoted to prayer) I have witnessed an increasing number of prayer requests that focus not on ourselves but on those we are want to see repent and believe the Good News. Mount Vernon has always been known as a congregation eager to sacrificially support international missions. I am thankful for a willingness to continue to make evangelism, local and international, a priority. It is a sign of your love for the lost.

While I'm on this topic, please make a point of joining us on Saturday, July 18, from 9-3 as we have a mini-conference on evangelism. You'll find more information in this newsletter. Suffice it to say, we need to be encouraged and equipped to bring the gospel to those around us and this time is designed to do just that.

Fifth, I have been encouraged by your humility. You have welcomed a young pastor into your ranks. You have expressed and shown a willingness to partner with me in gospel ministry. You have been patient with me as I grow in the duties to which I have been called. In all of this, those of you who have been here for decades and those who have been here for just a few weeks, have shown a willingness to be led. I am encouraged and humbled by the reception that I have received. I am so thankful that it is, finally, not about me, but about Mount Vernon being built up in the faith and encouraged to bring the Good News to Atlanta and beyond. Thank you for the love you continue to show me and my family. Thank you for your patience as I grow as a pastor. Thank you for your commitment to Christ.

As Moses prayed in Psalm 90, "May the favor of the Lord our God rest upon us; establish the work of our hands for us—yes, establish the work of our hands." 🙏

~ Aaron Menikoff

Deacon Nominees

Church family,

It is a joy to present to you our recommendations for the 2009 deacon class for your consideration and affirmation. We want you to have the names in advance of our **Sunday, July 19**, specially-called Church in Conference that will immediately follow the morning service. Over the next few weeks we ask that you prayerfully consider these men as potential deacons for the next three years. If you have any questions or concerns regarding these nominations, please speak to us or a member of the Deacon Nominating Committee (David Dorsett, Pat Knowles, Brent Reid, Lollie Defreese, Sam Galbraith, Doug Langmack, and Aaron Menikoff).

Tom Ashworth. Tom has been a member of MVBC since 1994. He has served as a deacon before. He is an active volunteer serving our children and youth and leading missions trips. Tom is married to Alice Faye and they have an adult son, Boyd.

Luke Gurley. Luke has been attending MVBC since 2005. He has served actively with the youth and recently on the pastoral search team. He is married to Julia and they have a new daughter, Carrigan.

Jim Heiskell. Jim joined MVBC in 2000. He has served as a deacon at other churches. He presently is the superintendent of the shepherding group hour at MVBC and helps lead in the P.L.A.C.E. ministry. He is married to Connie and has five children: Jamie, John, Catherine, Robert, and Connie.

Mark Henderson. Mark joined MVBC in 2008. He has served actively both as a Sunday School teacher and a volunteer. He is married to Callie.

Mark Lamprecht. Mark has been coming to MVBC since 2006. He is a leader in the men's ministry, a small group leader, and helps to support the youth ministry. Mark is married to Dawn and they have a teenage daughter, Amber.

Von Sheffield. Von has been a member of MVBC since 1979. He has served in several capacities within the church (Finance, RWA) and without (Gideons). He is married to Myrtle and has three adult children: Donna, Mark, and Sharon.

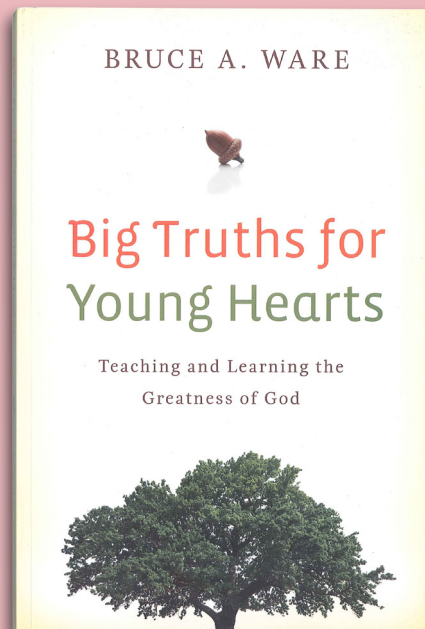
Chad Zimmerman. Chad has been at MVBC since 1989. He serves by teaching the Dave Ramsey seminars twice each year as well as leading on the youth and finance committees. Chad has served MVBC as a deacon before. He is married to Anne and they have two adult daughters: Katy and Betsy.

You will also find these names and pictures published in upcoming bulletin inserts.

Sincerely,

MVBC Deacons

The Bookshelf



Big Truths for Young Hearts

by Bruce A. Ware

Reviewed by Bethany Saunders

GROWING UP IN THE COUNTRY, I often miss things like fields of crops and starry skies. When I return home to visit, I find myself in wonder of all of God’s creation again, and I take time to enjoy my surroundings. We often forget to take time to marvel at God’s greatness. As adults, we forget to live the example of God’s greatness. We focus on the greatness of our worldly lives, i.e. job, family, and even our kids. All of a sudden life is about living in the greatness of ourselves instead of letting God’s greatness live in us. *Big Truths for Young Hearts*, by Bruce A. Ware, is an intelligent, kid-friendly look at theology that is not only for parents but for anyone looking to refocus their life and family towards the greatness of God.

Children learn at a young age that God is great. It is through experience that they learn about God’s greatness and begin to develop a theological base. Webster’s dictionary defines theology as “the knowledge derivable from the Scriptures, the systematic exhibition of revealed truth, the science of Christian faith and life.” In kid terms, theology is what you believe about God. As I began to read the first chapter of *Big Truths for Young Hearts* I had trouble wrapping my mind around the fundamental themes of this book that I thought was written for kids. I quickly realized that this book was not a typical “kid-friendly” book that we are used to seeing in children’s ministries.

Knowing that Ware has a Ph.D from Fuller Theological Seminary, is president of the Evangelical Theological Society, and is a professor of Christian theology at the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, I was able to get a better grasp on his teaching of the great doctrines of Christian faith. Theology is a passion of Ware’s and it spilled

over onto his children. This book was, as Ware says, “an outgrowth of the many bedside theology talks this dad had the joy of having with his precious and much-loved daughters” (14). He began spending ten to fifteen minutes with each of his daughters at their bedside going through the doctrines of the Christian faith during their early years. By God’s grace, his two daughters now love the Lord and their father for sharing the truths of Scripture that has rooted them in their faith with confidence.

As a parent, you might be thinking, “There is no way I can talk with my child about theology. What if they ask me a question I do not know how to answer?” First, do not be quick to disregard your responsibility to instruct your child in the truths about God simply because Ware is a professor of theology. Second, remember that God will use you as He speaks through you to your children about Him. The reality is that much of theology is pretty simple. It is explaining from the Bible who God is, what He does, and who we are in Him through Christ. These are things we want impressed on our children’s hearts and minds at a young age.

In *Big Truths for Young Hearts*, Ware does an excellent job of covering a wide range of theological topics that all adults should understand. For instance, in chapter two, entitled “God as Three in One,” Ware discusses how the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit relate. He begins by saying, “Have you ever noticed that some of the most beautiful music is made up of different parts being sung together? Rather than each person singing the same notes as the others—that’s called unison—instead each singer has a different line of music to sing, but they blend to make a rich and

REVIVE
summer camp

How do I sign up: Contact Jacob Hall at
404.255.3133 ext 228 or
jacobhall@mybchurch.org

What: Revive Summer Beach Camp

When: July 27-31

Where: Laguna Beach Christian Retreat
in Laguna Beach, FL
<http://www.christiancamp.com>

Why: Jesus, Worship God, The Beach

How Much: 300 o.b.o.

What all does that include: 4 Evening
Worship Sessions, A week at the Beach,
and Meals (excluding travel), and a day
at Shipwreck Island Water Park.

Deadline to Sign up: July 12

beautiful song together—that’s called harmony” (54). He later describes how God does most of his work in the world through the Trinity working in harmony. He offers a simple explanation of a hard theological concept for children to understand.

Ware covers doctrines in his book such as sin, pain and suffering, the Holy Spirit, salvation, baptism, and the church. He does a good job of explaining doctrines that children need to know. Let’s face it: most adults do not know the doctrines of Christianity. We often neglect talking to kids about things like pain and suffering and the Holy Spirit because we think that they are too young to understand or we may not know how to instruct them in such doctrines. It is a common fear for a parent and teacher of children.

After reading through *Big Truths for Young Hearts*, I was encouraged that someone is moving forward with the idea that children can grasp things that seem to be beyond their years. It is very important that, not only parents, but members of a church body take responsibility for teaching our children the doctrines of Christianity. That means that we

have to strive to learn and know what we believe first.

Ware states that this book can be used in different contexts. For example, parents may wish to read to their children, discussing the truths together and looking at Scripture passages to enrich their children’s lives. This book may be used for Bible studies or home school settings. Young converts to the Christian faith, no matter what age, can find these teachings helpful to learn more about God. However it is used, what finally matters is best summarized by Ware’s desire for his children:

As much as I longed to convey truth that would help shape their minds and worldviews, I also prayed deeply that God would be pleased to enable them to see the glory and beauty of those precious truths. Mind and heart are both essential in this process, and I knew I must constantly trust God to do this work in them, a work that only he can bring to pass. (14)

The heavenly Father wants this for all of his children, young and old. He desires for our minds and hearts to see His glory and beauty in this sinful world.

Ware concludes by reminding his readers of goal of comprehending big truths. It is about being more like Jesus for the glory of God:

You see, God has made us so that we long to be like what we adore. We want to become like what we love.

We wish to take on the qualities of what it is we consider beautiful and good. So, as we see Jesus for who he is, we are drawn to be more like Jesus in who we are. To glorify God, then, is to enter into the joy of being like God in our character. Here is true happiness. Here is true fulfillment. Here is how the glory of God and the good of his people unite forever and ever. (233-234)

Big Truths for Young Hearts is not just a book about theology; it is not just a tool for parents or a Bible study book. This book is about God: who He is, what He does, and who He is in us. I would encourage everyone to learn more about God. Learning is more than just reading a book. Any parent can tell you that learning comes through experience. However, this does not mean that we should not make every effort to study God’s Word and read books that help us gain knowledge about Him. Whether your heart is young or old, it needs the big truths of God. Let us not forget that we are examples of God’s greatness in this world. May our focus be on allowing God’s greatness to live in us. ☺

2	Cindie Briley	19	Montine Alexander
	Gay Cooper		Hazel Kath
4	Ruth Edwards		Todd Mattera
	Linda Hickerson	20	Sally Hinson
5	Danny Brundage		Vic Moore
	Wink Laney	21	David Carnes
6	Elsie Howard		Connie Moore
	Rob Meadows		Paige Pattillo
	Gloria Sartogo		Pat Walker
7	Lisa Kubes	22	Mark Henderson
	Ann McCallum		Courtney Nash
	Michael Mosby		Rhonwyn Ryan
8	Alton Reddick	23	Tom Howard
	Joel Roberts	24	Andres Rivera
9	Tricia Carnes	25	Jonathan Thurman
	Aaron Henderson		Kevin Vaughter
10	Bob Flint	26	Brandy Meadows
13	Joe Drexler	27	Rita Caldwell
15	Kay Reagan		Dee Linker
	Mel Wakefield	28	Anthony Blalock
16	Cory Blackburn		Lena Hocker
	Jim Fleming		John McCoy
	Yvonne Holtzclaw	29	Joyce Williams
	Janet McCleskey	30	Margot Dawkins
18	Amy Bodor		Sharon Donohue

No RED Zone

There will be no RED Zone for the rest of the summer. We encourage parents and children to worship together corporately in the sanctuary.

We will be celebrating the Lord's Supper in remembrance of Christ's death and resurrection. We encourage members to examine their hearts and relationships with one another in preparation.

The goal of Rockbridge is to use nature, adventure and recreation as tools to build and strengthen our children's relationships with friends, family and, ultimately, Jesus Christ. Brochures with registration details are available on the brochure rack beside the church office.

Join us for a First Look at Mount Vernon in the Mount Vernon Room! Come and learn more about our church as you make your membership decision. Sign-up is available on "The Edge" of Sunday bulletins.

Free ice cream for everyone! Join us after the evening service for some ice cream and fellowship.

A day at American Adventures Amusement Park filled with fun rides and even a foam factory for preschoolers and their families.

We will be hosting a half-day conference on evangelism entitled "Crossing Barriers: How to Reveal the Simple News about Jesus" with guest speaker Mack Stiles at 9:00 am on Saturday and during the Sunday School hour on Sunday 18.

Church family, we are having a specially-called Church in Conference immediately following the morning service to vote on deacons.

Centrikid is an overnight kid's camp for 3rd-6th graders. We are taking a group of kids to experience Jesus in a unique way. Pray for safety as we travel to and from Toccoa Falls College and for God to move amongst the kids that participate.

The Mount Vernon Student Ministry will be going to Revive Beach Camp in Laguna Beach, FL. It will be a time of worship and fun at the beach.

For more information, contact Jacob Hall at 404-255-3133 x228 or jacobhall@mvbchurch.org.



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