

This is one of the Asheville "Before I Die" walls. To see more walls from a variety of cities, both American and international, go to

<http://beforeidie.city/>

See page 9 for a wall in Sweden



Lent Before I Die...

by David McNair

Before I Die is a global art project

originally created by the artist Candy Chang on an old abandoned house in New Orleans after she had lost a loved one. Today there are thousands of these walls around the world. There are at least two in Asheville, one on the side of Haywood Street Church and one on Biltmore Avenue near the Mast General Store. Most that I have seen are made of chalkboard and simply have the words "Before I Die..." at the top and blank spaces for anyone to fill in naming something they hope to do or to share before they die. As you can imagine, the lists range from humorous to profound.

Things like "Feed an Elephant," "Learn French," "Sleep with a harp player," "Slow down and maybe even stop," "Find her and kiss her one last time," "Swim without holding my nose," "see equality," "Travel to all 50 states," "Heal," "Go to a World Series," "Abandon all insecurities," "Tell my mother I love her."

Lent is an annual Christian season when we "remember that you are dust" and in so doing, we heighten our awareness of the precious gift of each moment and so live more intentionally, more gratefully, more ready to seize the day and to live the life of love for which are created. The poet Wallace Stephens wrote, "death is the mother of beauty." There seems to be a strange and wonderful paradox in the knowledge and acceptance of one's mortality and an awakening to receive, see, create and embody beauty and love.

(continued on page 2)

BEFORE I DIE

(continued from page 1)

On Maundy Thursday we commemorate the last night of Jesus' life and we hear again Christ's words to his disciples before his passion and death. In a sense, Jesus filled in the blank after the statement "Before I Die" and communicates to his disciples the parting message that he deems most essential: "Love one another as I have love you." Then, to further impress upon them this message he washed their feet as a servant might do.

I will be leading a confirmation class for our young people in the coming weeks. **As part of that confirmation class experience I am asking our youth (and their parents!) to make a special effort to attend our Maundy Thursday Agape Meal on Thursday, March 29 at 6:00 pm.** This is one of the most beautiful and meaningful services of the year and it is one where we hear and demonstrate to one another what Jesus conveyed as most essential for his disciples – us! – before he died.

For the Maundy Thursday service this year, I am inviting anyone willing to share with our youth and all of us gathered a message gleaned from your own life and experience that you believe to be of utmost importance. Please let me know if you would be willing to share that night: Before I die...

—David McNair

Holy Week Schedule

**Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday
(March 26, 27, 28)
12:00 – 12:45pm**

EACH DAY: MEDITATION ON THE HOLY WEEK GOSPELS AND 20 MINUTES OF SILENT PRAYER

**Thursday, March 29
6:00pm**

MAUNDY THURSDAY AND AGAPE MEAL

**Friday, March 30,
6:00pm**

GOOD FRIDAY SERVICE

**Sunday, April 1
EASTER SUNDAY**

VIGIL . . . 6:45AM
BREAKFAST . . . 8:30AM
EASTER SUNDAY
SERVICE . . . 10:30AM

EASTER EGG HUNT
FOLLOWING THE SERVICE –
ALL AGES WELCOME

March Birthdays

Cal Wilson 5	Tom Moloney 10	Derrick Zeller 23
Julie Larson 5	Beth Mangum 12	Genevieve Burda . . . 24
Teresa Matthews 6	Jim Woodruff 16	Mary Maupin 24
Brit Small-Øie 6	Daniel Trevor 19	Peggy Wilson 24
Kathleen Phillips 7	Connor Caskey 21	Charlie Kilpatrick . . 26
Dave Hollister 10	Bob Carr 22	Erika Schneider 26
Rod Vestal 10	Ann Smith 22	Lee Ann Bogle 31

Healing The Wounds Of Racism

Lenten Soup, Bread and Program, 6:00-8:00pm, Wednesdays

Feb. 28 – We will watch and discuss one episode of PBS’s “The African American, Many Rivers to Cross,” a six-part series exploring the evolution of African American people in this country against all odds, and the contributions they have made to all people through their persistent pursuit of freedom.

March 7 – Building on the PBS historical documentary watched on Feb. 28, we will look more closely at the present – including the work of the Rev. William Barber and the revival of Martin Luther King’s Poor People’s Campaign. Described by organizers as a National Call for Moral Revival, the grass-roots, nationwide movement was introduced to the Asheville area in early February and anticipates forty days of moral resistance and action beginning mid-May.

March 14 – Rima Vesely-Flad is professor and director of peace and justice studies at Warren Wilson College. She holds a PhD in social ethics from Union Theological Seminary and founded The Interfaith Coalition of Advocates for Reentry and Employment. She helped establish a partnership between Warren Wilson College and the Swannanoa Correctional Center for women, which offers credit-

bearing classes to incarcerated women.

Rima Vesely-Flad will be discussing her recent book *Racial Purity and Dangerous Bodies: Moral Pollution, Black Lives, and the Struggle for Justice*.

March 21 – Rev. Bill Buchanan will take us on a musical tour of the history of the Blues. From its earliest forms to its more modern incarnations, we will learn about the spiritual and historical roots of the genre. Serving as both a lament and a socio-political commentary, knowledge of the Blues will give insight into the struggles of a specific people while connecting to the universal narrative of finding solace in the midst of pain.

Rev. Bill Buchanan is one of the founders of Asheville Youth Mission. He currently serves as the Executive Director of Youth Mission Co, which includes Asheville Youth Mission, Raleigh Youth Mission, and Memphis Youth Mission. He is an ordained pastor in the Presbyterian Church USA, a husband, father, and an avid fan of soul, blues, and classic R&B.

Previously on Feb. 21 – The Rev. Jim Abbot was our guest leader. Jim describes himself as a “recovering racist” who is still in the process of discovering what all it means to be a person of faith and a would-be ally in the on-going quest for racial healing and social justice.

Christ and the Animals: A New-Old Vision

Presented by Oasis of Wisdom

Friday, March 235:00 pm – 9:00 pm

Saturday, March 249:00 am – 4:30 pm



Quaker Meeting House, 137 Center Avenue, Black Mountain, NC

A weekend retreat for indepth study and reflection on the relationship of Christianity and the animal world.

The retreat will explore the Biblical witness, the cosmic vision of the ancient and medieval world including the writings and wisdom of the Desert Fathers and Mothers, Isaac the Syrian, Francis of Assisi, and Hildegard of Bingen.

The retreat focus will move from the ancient and medieval time into modern times and the works of Teilhard de Chardin, Matthew Fox, and Ilia Delio. Along the way, participants will reflect on how to apply these lessons to spiritual development in relationship to the other sentient beings with whom humans share the earth.

Registration Deadline is March 2. Space is limited to 15 participants — please make sure you can attend all sessions.

Cost: \$140 per person *due no later than March 9*. Participants from outside of Asheville are responsible for their overnight accommodations.

The retreat guide Pamela Hedrick has an MA in Religion from Wake Forest and a PhD in Biblical Studies from Baylor University. She is an active advocate for compassion toward all sentient beings. She teaches biblical, spirituality, and pastoral care courses in the online Graduate Theology Programs at St. Joseph's College, Maine. Her most recent book, ***Do You Now Believe? Reasonable Faith in Mark and John***, is available from Wipf & Stock.

For more Information and Registration: contact Pamela Hedrick at pamela.hedrick@gmail.com

You Can Help With Our Annual Parochial Report! Here's how:

Many members of our parish are involved in ministries outside the church. This year the Diocese and the National Church want to see how each parish contributes to its respective community.

Please take a minute to look at the list below!

1. Food pantry, soup kitchen, or meal projects
2. Sustainable food garden/cooperative.
3. Cash, vouchers, or help with rent/utilities.
4. Day care, preschool, before or afterschool programs.
5. Tutoring or literacy programs.
6. Health programs (parish nurse, clinics, health education, etc.)
7. Community organizing, organized social issue advocacy.
8. Job placement, job training, employment counseling.

Then let Martie know if you are active in any of these ministries. The questionnaire also asks how many people were helped or served each month by the ministry. Thanks in advance for your input!

—Martie Carson, Administrative Assistant

9. Building projects (such as Habitat for Humanity).
10. Support groups (bereavement, divorce, job loss, 12-step, etc.)
11. Programs for the elderly and homebound persons.
12. Clothes closet, thrift store.
13. Homeless or no-freeze shelter.
14. Overseas sponsorships, microloans, Heifer Project, Haiti relief.
15. Other, not listed.



HAPPY BIRTHDAY, VIVIENNE!

In our February issue, we made a boo-boo. We incorrectly listed Vivienne McCullough's birthday as February 8. But it's **February 28!** Let's all take the opportunity to sing a loud and hearty HB to her!

See page 2 for the list of March birthdays.

First Sunday Offering Recipient for March

CHURCH OF THE ADVOCATE will receive the first Sunday offering in March to benefit its outreach programs, programs such as an onsite mental health counseling free of charge to those who are in need.

Please consider giving generously to Church of the Advocate, the only diocesan mission in WNC and serving a huge population. Church of the Advocate provides an Episcopal-based Sunday worship service in Trinity Episcopal Church at 1:30pm. The doors open at 12:00 noon for a time of quiet reflection. In addition to music, there is a spiritual activity prior to worship such as collage making and coloring. Refreshments are also available. Typically, an average of 100 to 150 people attend this service.

Immediately following the service, volunteers serve Sunday lunch, prepared with food provided by MANNA Foodbank.

Both before and after the service the Nurse's station is open, staffed by a parish nurse. It provides treatment for minor ailments and dispenses foot care products, soap, shampoo, toothpaste feminine hygiene products, etc. The homeless who live on the streets find it difficult to obtain good usable shoes. Church of the Advocate meets this need through its Sole Mates closet filled with gently used and sometimes brand new athletic shoes and boots, along with new tube socks.

—John Zeller

For more info:

<http://www.advocatechurchasheville.org/>

Neighbors Helping Neighbors

**Project Happening March 24,
10:00am-3:00pm**

Be a neighbor and sign up to help a local Madison County family in March via a Community Housing Coalition project. One week before the scheduled event, Stephanie McCullough will send out an email to all who've signed up. The email will include directions to the worksite, where the group will meet, as well as details about the project. Typically projects might involve safety repairs such as repairing broken deck boards and handrails, cleaning, decluttering, etc.

The specifics won't be known until the choice of the client. That choice doesn't happen until the last week of the previous month. CHC supplies all materials such as tools, safety glasses, gloves, along with drinking water. Everyone does need to bring their own sack lunch.

If you have any questions or want to sign up for the project, email Stephanie:

VolunteerCoordinator@CHCMadisonCountyNC.org

Our Dear Memorial Garden

Join the Merry Band of Weeders and Diggers!

by Regan Burnham

(On behalf of the Memorial Garden Committee)

A small band of dedicated volunteers is tending to the Memorial Garden with great affection. To work there is to appreciate again those who have gone ahead. For those of us who intend to join the Communion of Saints in this place, it is a sacred honor to plant and weed and nurture this sweet space.

The more time I spend in the garden, the more I feel an eternal connection. Some days I hear the cows and the birds; but most days I am alone with the breeze and the sky and, as Wendell Berry says, "the Peace of the Wild Things." A quiet joy overtakes me. I may stop and meditate. My anxieties and busyness melt off in the sun. The winds blow away my troubles. The sky reminds me of the limitless opportunities in life, and the recognition that I am a small part of the rhythm of life and the songs of many spirits.

In my relatively short time at Holy Spirit, I have known and loved several people whose ashes remain in this place. I miss them. But I also feel the presence of those I've never met and am comforted by the knowledge that their songs are in the wind, too.

Plans are underway to make enhancements to the Garden without encroaching on its peace and comfort. Many red and gold tulips and yellow daffodils will appear soon. They are welcome signs of new life beginning. We hope to have a simple railing rise from the parking lot up to the level territory to make the access a little easier and safer. More seating will come in the form of two all-weather simple benches with backs, but overall very little will change. Most of the work needed is feeding the soil, weeding the garden and protecting the slope.

My hope is that some of you reading about the Garden will want to join this merry band of diggers and weeders. If you are interested, let me know. You can work alongside others or solo.

On Saturday, March 3 we'll have a meeting in the Garden for 20 minutes. I'll review the Spring Plan for this year, and we will set the schedule for some workdays that the whole parish can participate in. Our goal is to keep the Garden healthy, inviting and unencumbered.

Holy Spirit's Memorial Garden is both simple and serene. May we be likewise!

SHAPE NOTE SINGING

Saturday, March 3, 10am ~ 3pm

**Center Community Center,
Madison County. All are welcome.**

Four-part harmony, traditional singing unaccompanied by musical instruments. No experience is necessary! Loaner books are available.



“Welcome Spring” Concert with Guitarist / Songwriter Ben Phan Sunday, March 25, 3:00pm at ECHS!

Benefitting Appalachian Barn Alliance

Come celebrate spring by hearing the smooth sounds of guitarist and songwriter Ben Phan. Ben’s music evokes memories of the folk music of the 70’s and has been described as a blend of gypsy jazz, bluegrass, classical, and folk music.

“A beautiful merging of fiery instrumentals and expertly crafted songwriting,” with his own compositions “written from the heart and speaking to the soul.”

To learn about his work, go to <https://www.benphanmusic.com/>.

For a quick listen, link to <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DMnWq7-aLmE>

Tickets are **\$ 10 WHEN RESERVED IN ADVANCE; \$ 15 AT THE DOOR .**

Reserve by emailing info@appalachianbarns.org
Or call Sandy at 828-380-9146.

Proceeds benefit the Appalachian Barn Alliance, with a portion also going to the Village Initiative. The Appalachian Barn Alliance is a nonprofit organization working to preserve the rural heritage of Madison County and surrounding areas by documenting barns through photos, oral histories, and architectural drawings. For more information: <http://www.appalachianbarns.org>.

Cold Mountain Music Fest

THE FEST IS BACK AND BETTER THAN EVER!

Mark your calendars: On **Friday, June 8,** and **Saturday, June 9,** Lake Logan will host the second annual Cold Mountain Music Festival. That's right, it's a two-day event this year, with camping!

Cold Mountain Fest raises funds and awareness for Lake Logan and Camp Henry. It features top-notch musical talent, amazing local food and drink vendors, a kids' area, and much more — all in one of the most pristine settings imaginable.



The centerpiece of the 300-acre property is a mile-long lake surrounded by the Shining Rock Wilderness Area of Pisgah National Forest.

<http://www.coldmountainmusic.org>

Happening At Mars Hill University

March 8, 6:00 – 7:00pm

Ramsey Center of the Renfro Library

“The View From Home: Images of Appalachia and the Rural-Urban Divide”

Join Tim Marema, editor of the **Daily Yonder**. He will discuss how the contemporary communications system affects the way we and others perceive Appalachia.

Is there a national rural-urban divide? If there is, where does Appalachia fit in that picture?

–Debra Alexander
Campus Ministry Associate, Mars Hill University



Here is a “Before I Die Wall” in Malmo, Sweden. Someone wrote on this wall, “Before I die, I want to make a patchwork quilt.”

Shall we invite that person to Holy Spirit Church to join up with our quilting group?