

# THE LINK

RiverView Baptist Church

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## Rejoice

A group of young Navy recruits were undergoing a course in combat swimming. The program included jumping into a pool from a twelve foot high diving board.

One of the recruits walked tentatively out to the end of the board, but he froze there, and could not jump. "You had better jump, boy!" his drill instructor ordered. Still the young recruit hesitated. "What would you do," the drill instructor yelled, "if that diving board was a sinking ship?" "Sir" the unnerved recruit yelled back, "I'd wait until it sank about ten more feet."

Certainly life has its challenges. Often it seems that we find ourselves confronted with the old adage, "swim or drown." This really seems to be true as

the New Year rolls around. Poor economy with lost jobs in a "no job market" sure makes one feel like they are diving into a pool of uncertainty. Truly no one knows what the outcome of this year will be, but if the outgoing year is any kind of an indicator, things do look bleak.

In the seventy-third Psalm, Asaph looks intently upon the circumstances of his life. To him it appeared that those who lived wickedly seemed to prosper, while those who lived righteously had great difficulty. He even confesses that such a prospect almost made him stumble in his faith. If the faithful are filled with trouble and the wicked prosper, why live for God? But then he remembers that this life is as good as it ever gets for the wicked. While it

seems that they prosper and are always miles ahead, it's only temporary. Eternity awaits us all. Asaph also remembers that trials in the hands of God are tools that shape us into what God desires us to be. He uses life's circumstance to help fit us for eternity.

It's a foolish thing to blame God for what He uses to mold and shape you into what is spiritually desirable to Him. So if this New Year finds you staring down into a pool of uncertainty, remember that God can conquer all your fears, and the very fact that there are uncertainties in your life means that God is at work. Spiritually this could be your greatest year.

Pastor Ricky



## Youth Going Snow Tubing

The Youth are going Snow Tubing on January 23.

Have a great time!





## Happy New Year

The beginning of the new year has been welcomed on different dates throughout history.

Great Britain and its colonies in America adopted the Gregorian calendar in 1752, in which January 1st was restored as New Year's Day. Ways of celebrating differ as well, according to customs and religions of the world. People in Moslem societies, for example, celebrate the new year by wearing new clothes. Southeast Asians release birds and turtles to assure themselves good luck in the twelve months ahead.

Jewish people consider the day holy, and hold a religious ceremony at a meal with special foods. Hindus of India leave shrines next

to their beds, so they can see beautiful objects at the start of the new year. Japanese prepare rice cakes at a social event the week before the new year.

Whatever the custom, most feel the same sentiment. With a new year, we can expect a new life. We wish each other good luck and promise ourselves to do better in the following year.

The federal holiday is January first, but Americans begin celebrating on December 31. Sometimes people have masquerade balls, where guests dress up in costumes and cover their faces with masks. According to an old tradition, guests unmask at mid-

night.

At New Year's Eve parties across the United States on December 31, many guests watch television as part of the festivities. Most of the television channels show Times Square in the heart of New York City. At one minute before midnight, a lighted ball drops slowly from the top to the bottom of a pole on one of the buildings. People count down at the same time as the ball drops. When it reaches the bottom, the new year sign is lighted. People hug and kiss, and wish each other "Happy New Year!"

### Prayer for the New Year

Slow Me Down, Lord,

Lord, this year teach me the art of taking minute vacations—of slowing down to look at a flower, to chat with a friend, to pat a dog, to read from the Bible.

Remind me each day that the race is not always to the swift, that there is more to life than increasing its speed. Let me look upward into the branches of the towering oak and know that it grew slowly and well.

Slow me down, Lord, and inspire me to send my roots deep into the soil of eternal values, that I may grow toward my eternal home.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
Amen.



**Christmas Dinner**  
 More than  
 enough food and  
 a Precious Soul  
 was saved.

## Prison Ministry

Thank you so much for helping and providing food for the Christmas dinner at the prison. We have always had the help of our local churches during this time of year, but because of the economy we wondered if we would have as much support as

we have had in the past. Our God is so faithful! He stirred the hearts of our churches and you were able to help provide over a thousand pieces of chicken, enough of two meals! Praise the Lord God Almighty!  
 If that was not enough,

because of this dinner we were able to lead a young man to Christ that day. Please continue to pray for Lincoln County Prison Ministry and those incarcerated.

Danny Martin

## Church-wide Breakfast for our church family

### Coming ...

Sunday February the 3<sup>rd</sup>  
 Our whole church family is invited to breakfast. The special guest speakers will be Dewey and Kathie Aiken. They are a husband-wife team of Mission Service Corps missionaries commissioned by the North

American Mission Board (NAMB) to the state of Vermont. We are inviting everyone to come eat and listen to how God is working in Vermont. If you remember how much you enjoyed the family breakfast in December, you will be

blessed at this one both physically and spiritually. A sign-up sheet will be provided for this event. If you plan to attend, please sign-up so that we will know how much food to cook.

Danny Martin

## “Marriage” - Bible Study and Retreat Coming Soon

**“Fireproof Your Marriage”**  
 This Bible study will begin on January 15, 2009. This is a 7-Week study for couples and/or spouses. The movie “Fireproof” will be shown during the study.

Danny and Sherri are leading the study at their home. The cost of materials are \$15 each or \$22

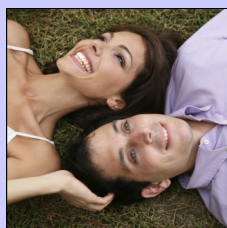
per couple. Please sign up if you plan on attending this Bible study.

**Retreat Coming...**  
 Also a marriage retreat, “Marriage Refined in 2009” is scheduled for March 6-7 at La Quinta Inn in Boone, NC. Speakers are Bob & Phyllis Foy.

The cost is \$150 per couple. The payment is due by February 15th.

Make your plans to attend and sign up on the list in the hallway.

Danny & Sherri Martin



**Lottie Moon Offering**  
 Our church set a goal of \$4,000 for International Missions. The offering was \$5,012.10 through December 21st and additional offerings are expected on Sunday, Dec. 28.

## December Recap

I believe that most of you would agree that December is a very busy month. It seems like we try to make up for all the events we left out over the course of the year. No wonder by Christmas day we are all worn out. Nevertheless, as we say goodbye to December, and 2008, we reflect upon a very good month. December was kicked off by setting our goal for the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering (\$4000.00), and the week of prayer for International Missions. A number of us also met on Friday, December 5 for a special prayer service for missions. I am also glad to report that we have surpassed our offering goal. Thank you for your faithfulness to those who serve

our Lord around the world. December also presented us with a number of Christmas gatherings and fellowships. Our men served breakfast and our ladies exchanged ornaments. A wonderful meal was served to our "Happy Hearts" and a number of you helped to provide Christmas cheer for the inmates of our prison ministry. Our youth entered a float in the Lincolnton Parade and our worship choir presented the musical, "Christmas Is Jesus." A number of Sunday School Classes came together for fun and fellowship, and the deacons and their wives came together at my house for an appreciation meal. Carolers went singing, treat bags were

assembled, and diets are now needed for everyone who joined us for the church-wide fellowship meal. Needless to say December is a busy month.

As I close these thoughts I do hope that all of you have a very merry Christmas and a blessed New Year. It has been my blessing to be with you this year. All the Christmas cards, kind remarks and the Christmas bonus are deeply appreciated. Each of you have made Alison and me feel truly welcomed at River View. Thank you for all that each of you do that help to make this church a blessing.

Pastor Ricky

## Youth Ministry News

Our Wednesday night Youth group has continued to grow thanks to the Carpenters running the van ministry. We have been having twenty and thirty youth **in attendance**. Jeff **Gavin** has **joined our** youth ministry team. He has been preparing us for Bi-

ble study by leading our worship music.

Please pray for our youth as they head to Winter Extreme December 27-28th. Marsha Ross along with Alison Brown, Mark and Dana Carpenter will be taking over twenty youth to this conference.

Last year the hearts of our youth were moved by the preaching and worship. Pray that God will prepare the hearts of our youth for His service.

By His Grace,  
 Danny Martin

*Winter*

*Extreme*

Over 20 youth will be attending the conference this year.