



# THE BEACON BEAM

March 2026



## SPRING HAPPENINGS

### The Privileges of Mercy

**There is therefore now  
no condemnation.**

**Romans 8:1**

Come, my soul, think about this. Believing in Jesus, you are actually and effectually cleared from guilt; you are led out of prison. You are no longer in chains as a slave; you are delivered now from the bondage of the law; you are freed from sin and can walk around as a free man—the Savior’s blood has procured your full acquittal. You now have a right to approach your Father’s throne. No flames of vengeance are there to scare you now—no fiery sword; justice cannot strike the innocent. Your disabilities are removed.

Once you were unable to see your Father’s face; now you can. You

could not speak with Him; but now you can approach Him with boldness. Once there was a fear of hell upon you; but now you have no fear of it, for how can there be punishment for the guiltless? He who believes is not condemned and cannot be punished.

And more than all, the privileges you might have enjoyed, if you had never sinned, are yours now that you are justified. All the blessings that you would have had if you had kept the law are yours, because Christ has kept it for you. All the love and acceptance that perfect obedience could have obtained belong to you, because Christ was perfectly obedient on your behalf and has imputed all His merits to your account, that you might be exceedingly rich through Him who

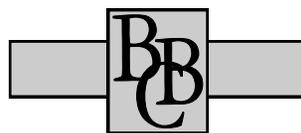
for your sake became exceedingly poor. How great the debt of love and gratitude you owe to your Savior!

*A debtor to mercy alone,  
Of covenant mercy I sing;  
Nor fear with Your righteousness on,  
My person and offerings to bring:  
The terrors of law and of God,  
With me can have nothing to do;  
My Savior’s obedience and blood  
Hide all my transgressions from  
view.*

Taken from *Morning and Evening*,  
written by C. H. Spurgeon,  
revised and updated by Alistair Begg  
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You may view The Beacon Beam on our website—[beaconbaptist.com](http://beaconbaptist.com).



#### Beacon Baptist Church

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Gregory N. Barkman, *Senior Pastor*  
Michael R. Karns, *Minister of Christian Education*  
Robert F. LaTour, *Minister of Pastoral Care*  
Gregory L. Phillips, *Minister of Music*  
N. Hunter Strength, *Minister of Youth*

#### Sunday

Morning Worship.....9:30 AM  
Sunday School.....11:10 AM  
Evening Worship.....6:00 PM

#### Wednesday

Prayer Meeting.....7:00 PM  
IMPACT Clubs.....7:00 PM  
Teen Ministry.....7:00 PM

# BEACON AND ZIMBABWE

by Greg Barkman

By the time you read this, I should either be in Zimbabwe or already back home. Why Zimbabwe? Where is that, anyway, and why is it significant? Zimbabwe is a beautiful landlocked country in southern Africa, with South Africa on its southern border and Zambia to the north. It was formerly called Southern Rhodesia as an English colony, but since independence it has returned to its original African name. Our church has had a long and fruitful relationship with Zimbabwe, and I am thankful to be able to minister there once again.

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**HOW IT ALL BEGAN.** Around 1980, our church added missionaries Stuart and La Verne Waugh to our missions budget, which was expanding significantly after the inauguration of a Faith-Promise Missions program. La Verne Waugh was born in Rhodesia, and Stuart's family moved there from Cape Town when he was two because his father, Lawrence Waugh, had become head of the Rhodesian stock exchange. The Lord brought Stuart and La Verne under the power of the gospel as young

adults, and they soon left their teaching profession to answer the call to gospel ministry. They started working in Rhodesia, but the revolutionary war drove them to safety in Durban, South Africa, along with thousands of others. There the Lord used them to plant two thriving Baptist churches. My first visits with the Waugh's were in South Africa, where I was privileged to preach in both of these churches, observing the hand of the Lord upon their fruitful labors. However, as the situation in Rhodesia settled down somewhat after the war ended, Stuart and La Verne felt a strong desire to return to their homeland where the need for the gospel was even greater than in South Africa. They settled in a rural area of Zimbabwe and began gospel proclamation in their native land among the poor, agrarian population. The Lord richly empowered His Word, and a church was soon established and several promising young men expressed a desire to preach the gospel.

In the meantime, the turmoil in Zimbabwe had brought significant and undesirable changes to the Waugh's home church in the city of Salisbury, now called Harare. The inroads of the Charismatic movement necessitated that they secure a new home church in keeping with their own doctrinal position. Stuart approached us as one of his supporting churches which he considered best aligned with their convictions and we agreed to assume a new relationship. Beacon became the Waugh's "sending church" rather than simply one of several "supporting churches." This constituted a much greater responsibility on our part but one we took gladly and which began a long and beneficial partnership which im-

mersed our church in the work of the gospel in Zimbabwe.

**MANY TRIPS.** I've lost count of how many trips I've made to Zimbabwe over the years, some by myself, and others accompanied by my wife, Marti. Stuart and La Verne settled on the farm owned by the previous Rhodesian Prime Minister, Ian Smith. Their house was originally occupied by the farm's superintendent across the road from the home of Mr. Smith. In time, Ian Smith moved to South African for reasons of health but he appointed a manager to operate the large and productive farm which employed scores of native workers. Marti and I lodged more than once in Ian Smith's home, and somewhere, I have a photo of myself sitting at his desk. Gospel proclamation birthed a thriving church and a lovely building was constructed on the farm. However, revolution was still in the air, and the new government began a systematic program of confiscating farms from white farmers and turning them over to black ownership. One obvious consequence was a vast reduction in farm production. A country which had successfully fed its own citizens for many years and exported surplus crops to other countries no longer produced enough food to feed its own people. Poverty and starvation stalked a land which previously enjoyed great bounty. Unemployment which had been low for decades rose to staggering proportions, and the constant devaluation of Zimbabwean currency added to a desperate economic situation. And what happened to the beautiful church building constructed on the Smith farm? It was turned into a

*(Continued on page 3)*

*(Continued from page 2)*

chicken coop by the new owner. Stuart Waugh decided to stop investing in buildings which could be taken away at a moment's notice. Instead, he concentrated on evangelism and training pastors. The Lord has greatly honored this commitment with abundant spiritual fruit.

**STUART'S HEALTH.** After several years in Zimbabwe, Stuart was diagnosed with liver disease requiring that he live in Johannesburg, South Africa, for appropriate medical care. Although his doctors recommended a liver transplant, his medical insurance would not support that decision, declaring that his condition was not yet serious enough to require a transplant. Stuart stayed in close contact with the work in Zimbabwe, and visited as often as possible. The Lord raised up several committed and capable men who pastored various churches scattered around the country, most but not all, in rural locations. Stuart gave himself to training and mentoring these men, but his deteriorating health sharply curtailed his ability to conduct in person training. He continued mentoring from afar through daily telephone conversations, but he needed others to conduct classroom teaching. After several years of suffering, Stuart entered the presence of the Lord on January 26, 2021. He loved the Lord fervently and served Him faithfully. I have no doubt that he received the Lord's "Well done, thou good and faithful servant. Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

**OUR INVOLVEMENT.** Stuart's declining health made the involvement of Beacon more critical than before. He requested that we conduct pastoral training conferences twice a year, one in the Spring and again in the Fall. I took responsibility for one of these, and Pastor Michael Karns the other, often with the aid of capable men who were willing to help teach as needed. This continued

for several years. The trips were demanding but immensely rewarding as we taught eager pastors how to prepare sermons, conduct Biblical counseling, and many other aspects of pastoral ministry. Eventually, my own health interfered when my hip began to make international travel difficult. After several years of gradually increasing pain, I had my left hip replaced and recovered sufficiently over the next several months to be able to travel again, but then Covid struck, shutting down international travel for a couple of years.

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In the meantime, Providence Baptist Church in Asheboro, NC, assumed a gradually increasing role in the Waugh's ministry. Pastor Bob Boyd shouldered a significant load in organizing a three-year curriculum, and he traveled several times a year to Zimbabwe to conduct classes designed to meet the needs of these particular pastors. The urgency of our involvement was now greatly re-

duced, which explains why I have not been to Zimbabwe for about eight years.

**SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENT.** The work has continued to prosper over the past four years since Covid, and two milestones have been achieved. First, Reflections Baptist Church, faithfully pastored by Juma for many years, has constructed a church edifice from bricks meticulously hand-crafted by hard working church members. This is the first church established from the Waugh's labors to acquire a permanent building of their own. The formal dedication service is scheduled for Sunday, March 1, 2026. At the same time, twenty-four men have successfully completed the three year curriculum of the Stuart Waugh Memorial Pastors Training School and will participate in a graduation ceremony for the first graduating class. Truly this is a time to celebrate the goodness of God and the faithful endeavors of many committed laborers.

I am honored to have been invited by Juma to preach the dedication service for Reflections Baptist Church on Sunday, March 1. I thank God for restoring my strength sufficiently to be able to represent Beacon for this momentous occasion. It is wonderful to survey all that God has done over these past forty-five years through the dedicated efforts of the Waugh's, labors that are now multiplying through many indigenous workers. "All praise to Him who reigns above in majesty supreme!"

# GOD IS MY STRONG SALVATION

by Greg Phillips

Although he is not frequently mentioned in modern hymnals, Paul Gerhardt (1607–1676) is one of the most influential hymn writers and pastors of the Lutheran tradition. Gerhardt's early life was shaped by the turmoil of the Thirty Years' War (1618-1648). He studied theology at the University of Wittenberg, the same institution where Luther launched the Reformation in the previous century. After years of struggle to secure a pastoral position, Gerhardt became a pastor in Berlin in 1657, where his sermons and hymns quickly gained popularity.

Gerhardt followed Luther's legacy by making faith accessible through music, writing in the vernacular, in his case German, so that his congregation could participate fully in worship. Gerhardt's works emphasize God's love and providence, encouraging believers to find trust in adversity. He was eventually forced to leave his post in Berlin due to religious disputes, but he continued to serve as a pastor in Lübben until his death in 1676. During his life Gerhardt wrote over 130 hymns. His texts reflect his steadfast confidence in God amid suffering and loss, including the loss of his wife and all but one of his children. In addition to our hymn printed here, two other hymns are in our hymnal: *A Rock that Stands Forever* (404) and stanzas 2-4 from *All Glory, Laud, and Honor* (11).

Although this hymn is not a new or unfamiliar hymn, it is a solid text and robust tune, memorable and full of truth. We don't observe a "hymn of the month," but I'd like to encourage you to take this text and tune and make an opportunity to commit this hymn to memory. Parents, your kids can learn this if you will sing it with them! I have memories of singing this hymn in the shower with one of my very young sons, and I can recommend it as suitable there as well as in other places in your home! You will find the dividend to be worth the investment.

Here's a link to a pdf for downloading:



## God Is My Strong Salvation

ST. THEODULPH • 7.6.7.6.D.

Paul Gerhardt, 1607-1676

Melchior Teschner, 1584-1635

1. God is my strong Sal - va - tion, no en - e - my I fear;  
2. I ful - ly am per - sua - ded and joy - ful - ly de - clare  
3. The ground of my pro - fes - sion is Je - sus and His blood;  
4. Should earth lose its foun - da - tion, He stands my last - ing Rock;

He hears my sup - pli - ca - tion, dis - pel - ling all my care;  
I'm nev - er left un - aid - ed, my Fa - ther hears my prayer;  
He giv - eth me pos - ses - sion of e - ver - last - ing good;  
No tem - poral des - o - la - tion shall give my love a shock;

If He, my Head and Mas - ter, de - fend me from a - bove,  
His com - forts nev - er fail me, He stands at my right hand;  
To me His Spir - it speak - eth full many a pre - cious word  
I'll cleave to Christ, my Sav - ior. No ob - ject, small or great,

What pain or what dis - as - ter can part me from His love?  
When tem - pests fierce as - sail me, they're calm at His com - mand.  
Of rest to him who seek - eth a re - fuge in the Lord  
Nor height, nor depth, shall e - ver me from Him sep - a - rate.

# On the Feminine Side

by Marti Barkman

## Summer, 2001

From the back porch I have a clear view of a natural area in the side yard, a welcoming spot with a healthy crop of pineapple mint, a lilac tree propagated from one my parents brought to North Carolina from Wisconsin, a fountain surrounded by purple iris, and a rather wild stand of English lavender. The planting is anchored by a large pine tree which has been there for more than forty years. We never planned to plant this bed, but we had no choice.

We had, for months, been busy preparing the yard for the wedding reception for one of our daughters, and on a morning just six weeks from the event, I stood on the porch surveying our work and was horrified to see a large sludgy pool near that pine tree. The septic tank!! Something to which I never gave a thought, the unpleasant item was making itself known. Could there be a worse time for a problem like this?

By noon that day all those lovely plantings were replaced by two huge holes which combined would have been the size of a small swimming pool. By 2 pm the holes were filled and replaced by fresh dirt. Not even any grass remained. Needless to say, this was not in the overall plan. Fortunately, a dump truck load of mulch had been delivered the week before. What a lifesaver that turned out to be! We covered the dirt with mulch, forming a pleasing shape, borrowed potted trees from a friend, added a bench, several yard ornaments, and there was our natural area, looking quite natural again. It was not what had been, not what we planned, but it 'was what it was'.

## Summer, 2010

Looking from that same spot on the porch last week, thinking how nice the area looks and how the disaster turned out to be a thing of beauty. Now, if I look at it critically, I think of what I would have done differently, curving it to the right instead of left. But at that moment, curving right was not an option. We had to use the plan dictated by the problem. The experience makes me think of a phrase from a book I read years ago, entitled *Thirty One Days of Praise*. I can't reproduce the exact quotation, but the thought was this: "Where you are today is exactly where God planned for you to be, even if you got there through your own disobedience. God weaves our sins into his plan to draw us to Himself and to accomplish His purpose for our lives." God's mercies, which never come to an end but are newly supplied every morning, mean that our sin, no matter how grievous, doesn't have to doom us to failure for the rest of our lives. God, in mercy, can bring beauty from ashes, and joy from disaster.

## Late winter, 2026

It's been nearly twenty-five years since the morning of the septic tank discovery. We've hosted three wedding recep-

tions in the yard. A family count of six has grown to nineteen with the addition of four good men and nine grandchildren, all grand! We've traveled through the years, aging but finding ways around the things we can no longer do. I wish I could describe how that natural area has weathered the changes, but it is long gone. The deep dark woods that surrounded us for our first decades here at Minor Manor have been replaced by concrete and asphalt, townhomes and apartments. As do many of you, we live in a different world now. But that was God's plan for us long before we were.

**I wrote these words in 2010:** It's been nine years since the planting of the natural area and it is now well-grown and ready to be thinned out. It needs constant attention, and cannot be left to grow on its own. Poison ivy has crept in, and every spring dozens of tiny maple seedlings spring up and have to be pulled out of the lavender. The fountain must be hosed down and the pineapple mint, insistent on owning the whole area, must be reigned in. Just so, our hearts need constant attention from our kind and loving Father.

*Who is a God like you, pardoning iniquity and passing over transgression for the remnant of his inheritance! He does not retain his anger forever because he delights in steadfast love. He will again have compassion on us. He will subdue our iniquities. You will cast all our sins into the depths of the sea.*

*Micah 7:18-19 GREAT IS GOD'S FAITHFULNESS*

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## Great Is Thy Faithfulness

1 Great is thy faithfulness, O God my Father;  
there is no shadow of turning with thee;  
thou changest not, thy compassions, they fail not;  
as thou hast been thou forever wilt be.

Refrain:

Great is thy faithfulness!

Great is thy faithfulness!

Morning by morning new mercies I see:  
all I have needed thy hand hath provided--  
Great is thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me!

2 Summer and winter and springtime and harvest,  
sun, moon, and stars in their courses above  
join with all nature in manifold witness  
to thy great faithfulness, mercy, and love.

3 Pardon for sin and a peace that endureth,  
thine own dear presence to cheer and to guide,  
strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow,  
blessings all mine, with ten thousand beside!

—Thomas O. Chisholm

# It Didn't Start in the '60s

## Industrialism, Cohabitation, and Sexual Distortion in the West

by N. Hunter Strength

America's sexual confusion did not emerge out of a black hole in the late twentieth century. What appears to be a rapid moral collapse was, in truth, the public unveiling of habits cultivated in private for decades beforehand. One of the most formative, yet underexamined, forces in this shift was the rapid industrialization of American life and the quiet reconfiguration of the home that followed.

Before industrialization, American communities, being especially shaped by Protestant Christianity, were undeniably communal. At the center of these communities stood the household. The household existed within a thick web of relationships made up of extended family, the church, neighbors, etc.

In this relatively communal society, marriage was not merely a private arrangement between two individuals but a public, covenantal act, witnessed and reinforced by the community. Now, before I go further, let me articulate that sin *certainly* existed, including sexual sin, but it was taboo, hardly normalized, and rarely celebrated. Practices such as cohabitation carried social, ecclesial, and often legal consequences.

Industrialization has altered this ecology woefully. As work moved from the home and farm into factories and cities, families were dislocated from inherited structures of accountability. With the increase in mobility came the fracturing of these formative communities that made up much of American society.

With this rise in industrialism and

consumerism, the Churches struggled to maintain discipline over increasingly transient and consumptive-minded congregations. The home, once embedded in communal life, became privatized. From this arose a physically separated and socially insulated people.

*Scripture presents  
marriage as a  
visible, binding  
covenant that  
reflects Christ's  
faithful love for  
His Church.*

Now, this shift did not immediately produce a moral revolution. Rather, it created *conditions of concealment*. The sins that were once restrained by shame and oversight could now be practiced quietly without fear of discovery. Cohabitation, in particular, benefited from this new darkness. This sin did not need public approval to grow, only privacy and time. What had once been impossible to sustain socially could now persist without confrontation.

While these practices brewed beneath the surface, the conscience of society

was slowly deadened. This repeated private transgression dulled the culture's moral sensitivity and, over time, what was shamefully hidden became a societal commonality. By the time cohabitation emerged into public visibility in the mid-twentieth century, it no longer felt scandalous.

This helps explain why the sexual revolution of the 1960s and 1970s moved with such force and speed. The culture did not suddenly abandon covenantal sexual ethics; it had already been living without them. When cohabitation was finally defended as "responsible," "honest," or "realistic," it was less an innovation than a rationalization.

At the same time, marriage itself had been subtly redefined. Industrial and romantic modernity reframed marriage away from covenantal obligation, filled with fruitful duty, and began to depict it as simply emotional fulfillment. Once marriage was no longer understood as a public vow before God and community, sexual union could be imagined apart from it. Cohabitation did not merely break a rule; it embraced a new anthropology in which intimacy could be openly severed from permanence.

Scripture presents marriage as a visible, binding covenant that reflects Christ's faithful love for His Church. This union, therefore, is an embodied giving of self patterned after Christ's self-giving. When that vision is lost, the body itself becomes unmoored from meaning.

It is crucial to state that the remedy  
*(Continued on page 7)*

(Continued from page 6)

for our condition is not nostalgia or moral panic. We cannot simply re-create pre-industrial communal pressure. The answer lies in the free and gracious re-proclamation of Christ Himself. As a people, the West has rejected the lens through which we gazed at the world, relationships, community, etc. The result of this epistemological rebellion is a society

that parades in the inconceivable sin that would have made our ancestors blush.

Our societal rejection of the Christian worldview has brought forth her children, and they're putrid, fruitless, and destructive.

Only when marriage is recovered as a grace-shaped covenant, rather than

a restrictive contract, will chastity appear again as something other than repression. Sure, cohabitation was not the beginning of sexual distortion in America, but it was the moment instability was allowed to feel normal. And once that lesson was learned, it did not stay confined to the home.



*Everything that happens to you is for your own good. If the waves roll against you, it only speeds your ship toward the port. If lightning and thunder comes, it clears the atmosphere and promotes your soul's health. You gain by loss, you grow healthy in sickness, you live by dying, and you are made rich in losses.*

*Could you ask for a better promise? It is better that all things should work for my good than all things should be as I would wish to have them. All things might work for my pleasure and yet might all work my ruin. If all things do not always please me, they will always benefit me.*

*This is the best promise of this life.*

—Charles Haddon Spurgeon



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## THE BEACON BROADCAST

### Monday thru Friday

WNAH 1360 AM (Nashville, TN)	2:00 p.m.
WITA 1490 AM (Knoxville, TN)	9:30 a.m.
WBAG 1150 AM (Burlington, NC)	12:15 p.m.
WBAG 105.9 FM (Burlington, NC)	12:15 p.m.
WTRU 830 AM (Winston-Salem, NC)	2:00 p.m.
WDZY 1290 AM (Richmond, VA)	6:15 a.m.
	10:00 a.m.
WDZY 103.3 FM (Richmond, VA)	6:15 a.m.
	10:00 a.m.
WSKY 1230 AM (Asheville, NC)	7:15 a.m.
WYYC 1250 AM (York, PA)	5:00 p.m.
WYYC 98.1 FM (York, PA)	5:00 p.m.

### Sunday

WCRU 960 AM (Charlotte, NC)	9:30 a.m.
WBAG 1150 AM (Burlington, NC)	10:30 a.m.
WTRU 830 AM (Winston-Salem, NC)	10:30 a.m.
WDRU 1030 AM (Raleigh, NC)	10:30 a.m.
WLES 590 AM (Richmond, VA)	10:30 a.m.

WGNQ [mixlr.com/wgng-radio](http://mixlr.com/wgng-radio) (M-F)  
8:45-9 a.m. & 4:45-5:00 p.m.  
(Internet station based in Greenville/Washington, NC)

### Saturday

WNAH 1360 AM (Nashville, TN) 2:00 p.m.

### Monday thru Sunday

WXTH-LP 101.7 FM (Richwood, WV) 10:05 a.m.  
10:05 p.m.

# BEACON HIGHLIGHTS FOR MARCH

## CALENDAR

- 01 ESL (English as a Second Language)
- 03 Coffee n' Courage
- 04 IMPACT Clubs
- 07 The Forge (Men's Bible Study)
- 08 Daylight Saving Time *begins*  
Lord's Table  
ESL
- 10 Coffee n' Courage  
Elders/Deacons Meeting
- 11 IMPACT Clubs
- 15 Members Meeting  
ESL
- 18 IMPACT Clubs
- 19 Silver Saints
- 22 ESL
- 25 IMPACT Clubs
- 29 ESL

## MEMBER BIRTHDAYS

- 08 Amy Papaneri
- 09 Gena Boswell
- 12 Traci Bowes
- 15 Mary Ellen Crumpton
- 17 Scott Haizlip
- 19 Thad Boyd  
Caleb LaTour  
Gloria Hendry
- 22 Nathaniel Speight
- 23 Lenny Braley
- 26 Ethan Sausville
- 29 Walt Atkins  
Ken Delorge
- 31 Micah Lowe  
Alison Newton  
Ragan Strength

## MISSIONARY BIRTHDAYS

- 01 Mike Webster
- 06 Jamie Vahala
- 11 Hannah Vahala\*
- 12 Cheri Giuliani
- 13 Carol Bunyan  
Clara Jensen\*

\*Children of Missionaries

*We express our heartfelt sympathy  
to the families of:*

Brooke Faust  
Dorothy "Dot" Isley  
Deborah Renigar Prince  
Doug Underwood

*The Beacon Beam*  
Beacon Baptist Church  
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