

January-December 2021 Recap

We have been in a whirlwind for the past 15 months and would like to apologize for not keeping the newsletters going. In our November 2020 issue, we were in the process of moving and the world was still in chaos from the Covid mass confusion. Our efforts to reach out and help those who are hurting has continued, and we have directly placed some and have referred others to First Contact Addiction Ministries. We are still in covid chaos, and our hearts go out to all who have been affected by it. We, ourselves, have lost loved ones who had comorbidities which included a covid diagnosis.

Heath and I took a sabbatical at the end of 2020 & into 2021. We spent some much-needed time with family and friends. In the course of this time reconnecting, we were stirred to the outer banks of North Carolina. Upon arriving in Stumpy Point, we were graciously offered time on the sound to relax and seek God's will. Heath was called to pastor Manteo Faith Baptist Church on February 22, 2020, as a part-time pastor while the church was in search of a full-time pastor. It turns out that Heath is the one the Lord was calling to be their full-time pastor, and we have been so blessed to be a part of this congregation of loving people.

While Heath began his calling as Pastor of Manteo Faith Baptist Church, I completed my Master's in Christian Apologetics at Liberty University. During this time, as we continue to seek the Lord for direction, a prominent theme has continued to invade our thoughts and there is burning within us a new passion. We have seen firsthand the impact this culture is having on the children of our day. And while caring for the children has always been within our hearts, we've not been sure what to do about it. Some of you may even remember that we considered being house parents for Baptist Children's Home, however that path was detoured, and we are thankful for it as we were able to learn and serve at Bethel Colony of Mercy.

As we continue to minister to local families, we consistently see the challenge the parents are having in teaching their children biblical values while the public schools are moving away from those values more and more. This is not to say anything about the teachers within the schools, it is about the agenda that is being pushed on them and on our children and grandchildren. We commend those who have stepped into the world of home schooling although some haven't made that decision on their own, but the current environment perhaps has been the main factor. Whatever the reason, we commend you. But some have stressed that they are overwhelmed with trying to manage work and home-schooling. Those parents are the ones that have been the impetus in pushing our hearts toward a solution.

Heath and I have been exploring the possibility of starting a school in partnership with *Association of Classical Christian Studies (ACCS)* through *Classical Christian Education (CCE)*. With that said, we have expanded our ministry to include Christian education and are re-registering the nonprofit accordingly. While we are still committed to help those who struggle with addiction, we have seen the ministry redirected to post-rehab discipleship, ministry within the local church, and reaching the next generation with the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Please stay tuned as we work through the intricacies of proceeding in this fashion.

Sincerely,

Heath and Barbara Benfield, Co-Directors

Mourning Dove Discipleship and Christian Education

.....becoming who you were created to be