

THE

Able

LIFE



SPRING 2020

Stories of ordinary people in the Carmel family cultivating lives which abide in Christ to build relationships and live the Gospel with everything.

GO every day
in big & small ways

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SPRING 2020

Carmel Friends and Family,

If you have a lawn - or a child - you are no doubt are familiar with the dandelion. This widely distributed member of the daisy family displays bright yellow flowers that transform into downy heads of feathery seeds. In our culture, dandelions are often seen as a weed and a nuisance, however, dandelions are known in many cultures for their nourishing and healing properties.

How many dandelions does it take to cover your entire lawn?

Only one, given a little time. Dandelions grow from seeds, have a single deep taproot and, rather than relying on other flowers to reproduce, multiply on their own by spreading their own sustainable seed far and near. By the time you see a dandelion plant it is already well established and has a new generation in the works. One tiny, whimsical seed becomes an almost impossible-to-defeat army of sunny flowers marching from yard to yard.

Dandelions are a picture of what we are meant to be as Christ Followers: deep-rooted, resilient, bearing nourishment and healing, and spreading seeds of gospel truth and love both near and far!

Our mission to make disciples - the Great Commission (Matthew 28) - beckons us to places BEYOND our campus and church family (Acts 1:8).

The Able Life is a celebration of all the ways seeds of gospel truth are spread and planted. A celebration of how God is at work in and through the lives of the Carmel family.

Enjoy pausing to celebrate how God is at work. And as you do, take time to pray and ask God how He wants to use you today in big and small ways for His glory.

Love you Carmel,

Pastor Alex

THROUGH JESUS...

We are deeply rooted & resilient.

Before we can visibly blossom, we must concentrate on growing our deep taproot by abiding in Jesus Christ. Being secure and rooted in our identity as children of the Living God and disciples of Jesus allows us to be resilient, even flourishing and multiplying in hardship.

We effectively seed & stick.

While dandelion seeds blow where the wind (or a five-year-old) takes them, as believers, we rely on the Holy Spirit to send us where He wants us to go. On arriving, we send our roots down deep into Jesus as small, sunny blooms begin to appear on the surface for all to see.

We uniquely nourish & heal.

Just as the dandelion is food for pollinators and people, we, as disciples, are meant to be the embodiment of the healing and hope found only in Jesus.

SHARE YOUR STORY

How is God at work in your life?
Share your story with a member
of our team or email it to
communications@carmelbaptist.org.

THE SWEETEST GIFT

PRAYING FOR PEOPLE IN YOUR EVERYDAY

By Ashley Speight



I am not an eloquent pray-er. I am not a biblical scholar. I am a mom... who loves the Lord and her son. And as a mom, I take seriously the charge in Deuteronomy 6: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children..."

So how does prayer play out in the life of a 3-year-old? In a pretty sweet way!

Fridays at our house are "Momma/Son Donut Date" day. Every Friday, since its opening in December 2017, William and I have headed to Dunkin' in Weddington for a donut, milk and LARGE coffee - I am a mom, remember? As Fridays passed, we got to know the staff - and they got to know us. One morning, the manager, Ms. Barbara, was wearing a boot and my son wanted to know why. She shared she would be having surgery in a week. I asked if we could pray for her... she said yes. So right there, in the store, William and I prayed for her and we continued to pray for, and with her, during her recovery. Over time, we learned about Barbara's family and how to pray for them, too.

One morning, when Ms. Barbara was absent, she thoughtfully left William "his usual order" with a note atop the donut box telling us she was having an unexpected surgery that morning and was going to be out for two weeks. William asked to pray for her that morning - so we did. We took the box top with the note home and put it on our kitchen table to remind us to pray for Ms. Barbara each day. As she recovered, we would remind her we were praying for her and missed seeing her.

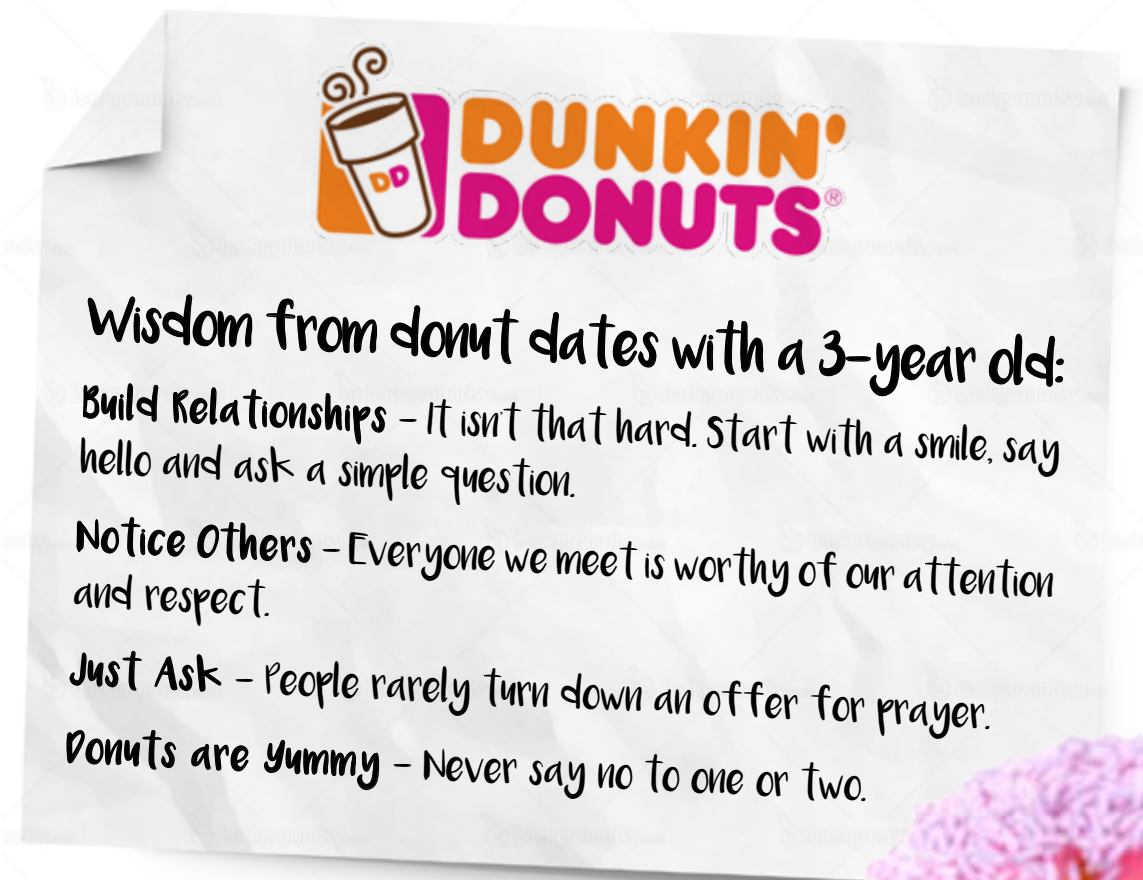
"When I became a mom, I felt God telling me my mission field was my home and prayer was my tool."

We are honored to pray for our friend and I am honored to have the opportunity to show William that prayer is not just about asking God for things or about praying for those in our "immediate" circle... but rather, it is the sweetest gift we can share with others, in our lives, in our neighborhood and in our world.

I pray William continues to grow in his prayer life, that he knows the prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective (James 5:16). I hope he always remembers our Fridays - not just the donuts, but our friends and our prayer opportunities - and that he finds ways to pray for others in, and around, his life with boldness and humility no matter his age.



Lord, we celebrate how You use even the ordinary moments in our lives to make them extraordinary by connecting hearts.



Prayer Tips for Young Children

- Use cues to spark prayer - visual or auditory reminders help us remember to pray even on busy days (i.e. the donut box top or hearing a siren).
- Use your routine to teach about "praying without ceasing" (1 Thes 5:17) - if we know a staff member's name I may throw them into a bedtime prayer or as a general prayer for them to have an encouraging and productive day.
- Encourage every prayer at a young age - while I didn't think I would be ok with thanking God for toys, I am glad he is beginning to grasp that everything we have is from God.
- Highlight when God answers prayer - when we pray for Daddy's headache to get better and he feels better, we thank God.

Prayer Resources:

- *The Bible* - This assures my prayers are aligned with God's word.
- *Power of a Praying Parent* (Stormie Omartian)
- *The One Year: Praying Through the Bible for Your Kids* (Nancy Guthrie)
- *Million Praying Moms* (millionprayingmoms.com)



ABOUT ASHLEY SPEIGHT: Ashley has been part of the Carmel family for 11 years. She is passionate about prayer, the preborn (and their moms) and Starburst Jellybeans.

SMALL YES'S TOOK US TO FRANCE

GOING GLOBAL ONE "OUI" AT A TIME

By Ryan & Michelle Hallahan



A few years ago, we began studying discipleship as a couple, kicking it off with reading *Radical* by David Platt. Little did we know, that simple step would lead to such huge life changes. As we continued to study (and practice) discipleship, we felt like God was preparing our family for something. Step by step we were trying to be faithful with what He revealed, bit by bit with a lot of small "yes" moments.

First, Ryan felt God prompting him to go to seminary, then we felt God leading us into new habits as we studied discipleship and went on a mission trip as a family. Finally, we began pursuing missions specifically. We wanted to be sure this was God's leading and not an idea we'd cooked up on our own. We prayed about the decision and tried to be obedient to what God had revealed to us.

Our pastor had once used the analogy that if you're driving from one city to the next, the headlights don't illuminate the entire journey; rather, they light up the patch of road a few feet in front of you, and it's not until you move into that space that the next section of road becomes visible.



Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship.

- Romans 12:1



Lord, stir our hearts so that we will answer "Yes!" to You every time you ask, no matter how big or how small the request may be.



So, we proceeded in this manner, taking one step, one "section of road" at a time. Now, we've been on the field for 6 months, but the whole process has involved a series of reaffirming God's call and a commitment to keep moving forward.

As you can imagine, leaving behind our life in the US and moving to another continent has its ups and downs. There have been many times when we needed to re-confirm our "yes" to missions. We face the long-term task of learning the language and culture, navigating the bureaucracy of living in France, and simple daily stresses that add up over time - like having to buy a voucher to use a public restroom!

There are simply days when we're sick or overwhelmed and can't help but remember through rose-colored glasses how much easier life was in the U.S. In those times, it requires a continual (sometimes daily) commitment to say "yes" to God's plan in us and for us here in Lille.

As Tony Evans has written, the problem with living sacrifices (Romans 12:1) is that they have the tendency to crawl off the altar. For all of us, saying yes to God looks like a daily commitment to stay on the altar and trust in God's faithfulness.



ABOUT THE HALLAHANS: Ryan & Michelle Hallahan, along with their two kids, are Carmel-supported missionaries serving in France since August 2019, currently learning French language and culture. What began with a discipleship study and praying over a world map each night at dinner led them to rediscover their God-given love for Europe and move to Lille, France as church planters. You can follow the Hallahans' life and ministry here: <https://www.hallahansinfrance.com/blog>



opportunity ~~DISASTER~~ DOWN THE STREET

HELPING OUR NEIGHBORS IN BIG & SMALL WAYS

Widespread damage impacted our neighbors when an EF-1 tornado touched down in several areas of Matthews on Thursday, February 6. In the days that followed, dozens of Carmel volunteers hit the streets serving our neighbors by meeting as many needs as possible in the name of Jesus. We came out with work gloves and willing hearts, doing everything from cutting up and hauling away fallen trees to making and delivering lunches to workers and families affected. What a privilege to be the hands and feet of Jesus in our neighborhoods.



Missy Stokas is at Carmel Baptist Church.
February 6 at 4:04 PM · Matthews, NC

Today was one of the scariest days of my professional career as we spent almost 2 hours hunkered down during multiple tornado warnings, with one tornado touching down very close to our campus. Thank you, God, for protecting all of our precious little ones and thank you to all of our teachers and staff for the way in which you handled today. You guys are rockstars!

Pictured below is our awesome Music Teacher leading our whole 2's hallway in Music Time! We sure will miss you, Ms. Jenna! And yes, that's my child dancing. 🥰

Angela Williamson - Schlotman
February 7 at 12:10 PM

For those of you that don't drive through Matthews on a daily basis, this is the aftermath of yesterday's storms. We will definitely need some more help this weekend. Be on the lookout for additional requests for help. And if you have chainsaws, let us know.



Christ Covenant Church
February 10 at 7:30 AM

Thank you to Carmel Baptist Church for hosting us last night! We are so grateful for you!

Carmel Baptist Church
February 13 at 3:20 PM

#throwback to last Thursday when so many of our neighbors were impacted by the tornado that traveled down Hwy 51. We're continuing to mobilize teams to serve our neighbors here in Matthews and have 5 serve sites planned for THIS Saturday (2/15). Join a team by signing up here: <http://carmelbaptist.org/update/> #loveyourneighbor NOTE: Youth are welcome if accompanied by an adult.

12:26 pm



Feb 6

Feb 7

Feb 10

Feb 13

Feb 15

Carmel Baptist Church
February 6 at 9:18 PM

Today's weather downed lots of trees. We are mobilizing this morning in the back parking lot at Carmel on Friday (2/7) at 9:00am to go help some of our neighbors who were impacted. Come join us and bring your wheelbarrow, chainsaw, gloves and safety glasses. Not chainsaw savvy? There are other tasks you can help with! Teens welcome if accompanied by a guardian.

Carmel Baptist Church
February 7 at 4:11 PM

A big THANK YOU to all who came out today to serve neighbors along Hwy 51 impacted by yesterday's tornado. These pictures don't do justice to ALL that was accomplished by the multiple teams! If you served on a team - post a picture from your crew in the comments! There is lots more to do - so stay tuned for the timing and details of our next mobilization!

Carmel Baptist Church
February 8 at 11:35 AM

A shout out to the service crews working to remove trees and restore power to our neighbors! The Carmel parking lot served as a staging area this morning for crews and trucks. We pray a hedge of protection over these men and women - as well as the 30+ Carmel volunteers and numerous neighbors working today.

Hema Hopper
February 13 at 9:21 PM

So glad to see our church being "hands & feet of Jesus". A great clean up effort after the Tornado hit the nearby area! Love what you do for the Lord Angela Williamson - Schlotman & love Carmel Baptist church for their love for the community! ❤️🙏

CHURCH HELPING FAMILIES CLEANUP STORM DAMAGE

WBTVCOM
Matthews church is clearing neighbors' fallen trees at no cost
Neighbors in Matthews are some of the hardest hit by last Thursday's...

Carmel Baptist Church
February 16 at 3:04 PM

Today we mobilized 32 people (as well as a lunch prep + delivery crew) who served at 6 homes to help neighbors with tornado clean up. We have a NEW location we'll serve tomorrow - Sunday, February 16 at 1:00. Come join us! Details here: <http://carmelbaptist.org/update/>



SOUTH CAROLINA



Lord, thank You for turning our disasters into opportunities to serve each other by putting the love that You have given us into action.

HARD WORK AND ENCOURAGEMENT

AN OUTPOURING OF THANKS

Praise for so many who stepped in to be the hands and feet of Jesus to our neighbors impacted by the tornado on February 6. The stories of encouragement, love, hard work and true demonstration of Christ's love have been happening all around our community. God is at work!



Why would you help people you don't know?

- Neighbor on Lakenheath Ln.

We are so grateful for the volunteers from your Disaster Relief Crew. It is truly a great gift to do something like they did, for a complete stranger, just because it is part of who they are. Our wonderful volunteers embodied the values of kindness and good will to men, and they made the world a better place. With deep gratitude -

I've never seen a community work together like this so fast.

- Duke Energy contractor

The volunteer crews are moving the Settler's Landing residents to tears. Tears of relief. One neighbor sobbed into the men's arms. She told us not one neighbor came to check on her. Yet, all these strangers came to her house and put it back together for her. What an amazing day where people are showing God's love to each other. I really can't describe it in words.

- Settlers Landing crew leader



While serving alongside my dad and others, God showed me that when people come together they can accomplish big tasks. The dads in our group were hauling these humongous trees. The other kids and I loaded sticks into a truck. We all had different jobs but they all worked toward the same goal - loving our neighbor.

- 11 year old Carmel crew member

Carmel's relief team was such a good witness to our neighbors. They were extremely puzzled that a Christian church would help a Jewish family they don't even know.

- Neighbors on Bubbling Well Rd.

Seeing the church come together in this way has brought me to tears - it is the way it is supposed to be and unfortunately sometimes we don't see it play out till we have a tragedy or disaster. Having this opportunity to work side by side with common cause and purpose - what an honor it has been.

- Carmel crew member



Our prayer is that people in the community will know they are loved and valued through this effort.

- Carmel Outreach Minister

An impacted homeowner invited our crew and other neighbors over for dinner to say thank you. Originally from the Middle East, they prepared a wonderful traditional dinner for us. Although we come from different cultural backgrounds and practice a different faith, our act of service in helping them after the storm led to new friendships that we will surely enjoy in the future.

- Carmel crew member

Thank you for going above and beyond for Christ Covenant during the tornado. Seeing the body of Christ at work always brings me such joy! Thank you!



No words to express our thanks for the volunteers today. Saved us thousands of dollars and untold stress. They were amazing!

- Neighbors on Bubbling Well Rd.



Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ: I thank God for your generosity that enabled our body of Christ to worship and praise God for the great things He has done as our Refuge and Strength in the midst of the storm! We were so blessed! You truly displayed kindness and compassion in loving your neighbor! To God be the glory!

- Christ Covenant church member

MY STORY IN 3 WORDS

BIG MOVES BY A BIG GOD

By Joel Allison

Chosen: I was born in Russia in a small town called, Armavir. I was found when I was three years old and placed into an orphanage for two years before I was adopted. It blows my mind to think that God knew me before I knew Him and that He cared about me before I knew who He was.

Saved: I am so blessed that I was placed into a great family and that I was taught what it means to know God and all that He has done for me. After knowing what God did (through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ) for me in my life and for all of humanity, I made the decision to have a personal relationship with Him.

Loved: Looking back at my life I can see how God has been there and taken care of me through some of the hardest times in life. God is so loving and He has full control of our lives and loves us even when we do not deserve it!



GOD CARES FOR OUR HEARTS

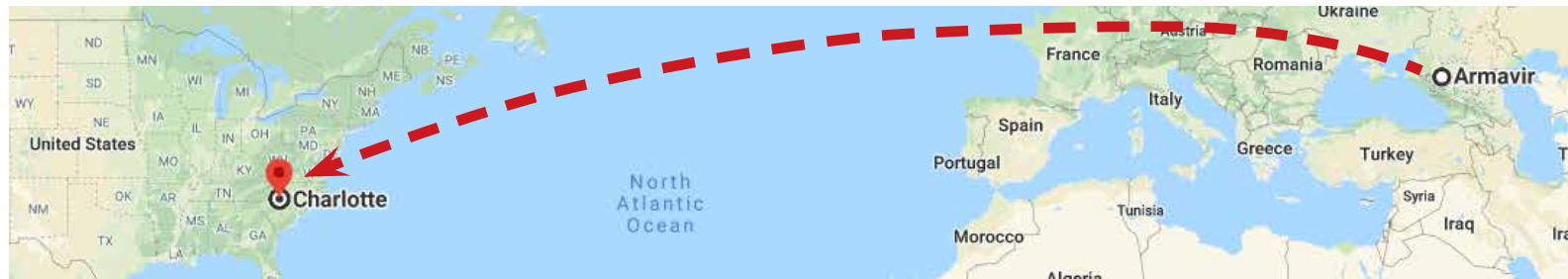
A WINTER GATHERING REFLECTION

By Raeleigh Wetherbee

I firmly believe that God delights in reminding us who He is and who we are.

I heard about the Carmel Winter Gathering from several godly mentors in my life, and despite my exhaustion from working the night shift, decided to attend. As a recent college graduate, now a labor and delivery nurse, the speaker's introduction discussing the measurements of little ones caught my attention. When a momma goes into labor, I measure them. I measure their pain, their contractions, their progress. When the baby comes into the world, I measure its length, its weight, its head circumference, and its color. I see mommas and daddies begin to measure themselves, wondering if they are doing the right thing, if they have the right crib and have bought the right car seat. As a new nurse, I too measure myself. I want to provide the best care, to know all the answers, to be perfect.

The speaker proceeded to list from scripture, who we are in Christ and what we have in Christ. We were asked to get to know the women at our tables and discuss which attributes of God from Ephesians 1-2 meant the most to us. I learned that one of the women at my table happened to work for the same healthcare system as me. We bonded over similar desires as nurses to remember that we are chosen by God and that we are created for good works. I had been praying that God would remind me of this truth, and the following day, this woman ended up being my instructor for an emergency course I was taking! While this may seem a mere coincidence, in this moment, I was reminded that God is sovereign and cares about our hearts. He wants us to rely on Him and He places fellow believers in our lives to strengthen us to do what He has "chosen" us to do.



SMALL THING - BIG IMPACT

God can use the small things we have to make an impact on people! I've worn a wristband for the last 3 years. This small thing has been a great conversation starter through which I've been able to share the gospel. We tend to use the term "small" in a derogatory manner but our small choices are an opportunity for God to do BIG things!



Lord, we are awed by the way you bless our lives with a sense of belonging by connecting us to people - whether across the globe or the table.



ABOUT RAELEIGH WETHERBEE: Raeleigh, a recent college graduate, is now a labor and delivery nurse. Raeleigh has been connected to Carmel for 23 years and is thankful to be a part of the Carmel family.

THE IMPACT OF DISCIPLE-MAKING COVERED IN THE DUST OF THE TEACHER

By Rock Schultz

I have heard it said more than once that a disciple is one who follows so closely behind the teacher intending to copy them that the dust the teacher kicks up actually gets on the disciple. Jesus tells us in Luke 6:40 that, "A student is not above his teacher, but everyone who is fully trained will be like his teacher." As a teacher wanting my students to be like The Teacher, it is critically important that I am endeavoring to live life in God's presence so there is "something in the well" to draw out.

When students see the Fruit of the Spirit in their teachers, coaches, mentors, and peers, it draws them in. They see something genuine and powerful... and they want that! In Hebrews 10:24 we are to "consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds." The most powerful and effective means of contagious discipleship is daily living it out. If mentors and teachers are genuinely living out their relationship with Christ, their students and those they are discipling will be drawn into a deeper relationship with The Teacher as well.

As we are being used by God to disciple and encourage others in the power of the Holy Spirit, not only will we see God shaping their life, we will also be energized from within as God simultaneously shapes and discipled us as well! God assures us of this in Proverbs 11:25, "A generous person will prosper; whoever refreshes others will themselves be refreshed." So, out of your love for God, build yourself up in your most holy faith in Him and watch God work through you and for you.

Colossians 1:28-29 says, "So everywhere we go we talk about Christ to all who will listen, warning them and teaching them as well as we know how. We want to be able to present each one to God, perfect because of what Christ has done for each of them. This is my work, and I can do it only because Christ's mighty energy is at work within me."

From this text we see these discipleship principles:

1. Proclaim Christ everywhere you go in action and word.
2. Share Christ (disciple) with wisdom, which comes from living in the presence of God. Be in the Word and pray daily.
3. Persevere in praying for those God puts in your path
4. Press on in the struggle of challenging relationships because God promises that it is His energy and power at work within us.
5. Talk with the Holy Spirit and submit to Him as your Counselor and Comforter as you disciple others.



ABOUT ROCK SCHULTZ: Rock teaches 6th and 7th Grade Bible with our Carmel Christian School ministry and has been a part of the Carmel family for 10 years. Since the age of 5, Rock has enjoyed creating Christ-centered art. As he draws, he feels a special "soul tie" to the Lord.



Lord, may we be ready and willing to proclaim Christ everywhere we go, in action and word - may we be covered in the dust of our Teacher.

Ways to celebrate & learn this Spring!

Learn more at carmelbaptist.org.



HOLY WEEK

April 10 - Good Friday

April 12 - Resurrection Sunday

Join Carmel for worship as we reflect on the death of Jesus and celebrate His resurrection, our hope - with a Tenebrae service on Good Friday, April 10 and worship services on Resurrection Sunday, April 12.



CELEBRATION SUNDAY

May 10 • 8:00, 9:30 & 11:00am

We'll celebrate how God has worked in and through Carmel this past year and unveil the BIG goals He is calling us to in this new decade!



MENTAL HEALTH CONVERSATION + FILM SCREENING

March 18 - Depression

April 15 - Addiction*

Join us from 6:15-7:30pm in Room 309/310 in the Student Center to continue the conversation on mental health.

**Parental Guidance: For those 14 years+.*



Carmel is committed to making disciples of those Nearest, our Neighbors and the Nations.

1145 Pineville-Matthews Road / Matthews, NC 28105 / 704.847.8575 / carmelbaptist.org