

## Merry Christmas from Icthus Ministries and the Dingles

Hello to all of you - Friends and Family! What a great year it has been! God has proven His faithfulness over and over, with abundant grace and provision – much of which was provided through you all. Brothers and sisters in Christ have joined us in the mountains to serve in so many ways. Some have painted the center's kitchen, some have remodeled the barn's chapel, some have donated supplies, some have led youth groups, and some have sent gifts. All of you have kept us in your hearts, and we are so grateful. Your prayers for us have been answered by a loving and strong heavenly Father. Please continue to remember our family and our work here in the coming year, and if you get a chance, give us a call or drop by!



All of the churches we hosted for retreats in 2018 were a blessing and joy! We also provided the Haven House again for many families in ministry. We are excited that the new ministry house across the creek, called the Creek House, is now fully operational! Late this past spring Icthus experienced a flash flood which damaged some of the meeting room at the center. After hiring carpet cleaners and purchasing all new furniture, the center has never looked better – or more up-to-date. Many thanks to all of you who helped in so many ways after the flooding. We are continually amazed at how God has poured out His Spirit on guests, staff, and the hundreds of visitors that we have at our farm, the Haven. One of the biggest adventures the Dingles experienced in 2018 was milking their cow, Beulah. For about 4 months she gave over 4 gallons a day! Neighbors have been enthusiastic and pleased to join us in a kind of “Haven Co-op,” and we are blessed to steward such a productive land, both in the natural and in the spiritual!

**Emma** is enjoying her senior year at Swain Co. High School. She has lettered in track, cross country, and academics. She enjoys vocal ensemble, creative writing, her church youth group, and of course, clogging. She and Edith recently competed with their clogging team at the National Championships. After auditions, Emma was offered a spot on the Bailey Mountain Cloggers, a highly decorated team out of Mars Hill University. If it is God's will for Emma to attend this private university, we know that God will provide for her!



**Reah** is loving everything about football season, but mostly marching on the field with the band. Hanging out with friends and having hot chocolate at half time are just the bonus features. She still reads more books than anyone we've ever known, with Christian mystery and archeology coming in at the top. Reah jumps in the triple jump and long jump for Swain, and she's fairly certain she wants to pursue early childhood education.

**Lydia** has had an exciting year with art. At the Swain Co. Arts Festival she was voted "Best Emerging Artist". As a result she has seven of her original pieces for sale in the Gallery Zella of Bryson City. She has had the pleasure of selling some of her paintings, and she hopes to sell many more! Lydia still loves the farm animals, and her dad calls her the "chicken whisperer." We continually pray for God's guidance over her extraordinary talents.



**David and Elijah** are growing everyday! They are also a huge help around the farm. David has become very adept at building fires in the woodstove, frying his own pancakes for breakfast, feeding the animals, and splitting wood for kindling. He still loves playing baseball and has found a new love of squirrel hunting. Elijah spends hours playing with his lego sets and "building" stuff in his dad's shop. He likes to spice up his mom's cooking, since hot sauce is one of his

favorites. He also loves to fish and squirrel hunt with his dad.

**Bill and Edith** are so blessed and honored to raise their family in God's service, and to live close to the land as their ancestors did. Thanks for praying, and we love you all!