

Aren't we all so blessed to live in such a beautiful place? Blowing Rock is indeed one of the premier towns in our state and country. We see beauty and abundance all around us. Unfortunately, a lot of folks who live in our community are not as fortunate as we are. Did you know that Watauga County has a poverty rate of over 30%, making it one of the poorest in the state. The town of Boone is ranked 5th among the poorest towns in North Carolina and 16% of the student body at Blowing Rock Elem. School is on free or reduced lunch/breakfast. I say that to emphasize what a unique opportunity we have here at Rumble to be a shining light in our community and all across Watauga County and to truly make a difference in the lives of people. My favorite Bible verse in Matt: 25:40. Jesus tells us that "In as much as we have done it unto the least of these, we have done it unto Him". This is in reference to what He had said earlier. He said, I was hungry and you fed me. Thirsty and you gave me drink. Naked and you clothed me. Sick and you visited me. A stranger and you took me in. The opportunity we have to fulfill Jesus' commandment is through our Mission program here at Rumble. Programs like Blowing Rock Cares, (hungry and you fed me) which is housed downstairs in our building. Programs like The Health and Hunger Coalition, (Sick and you gave me medicine, hungry and you fed me, naked and you gave me clothes) Hospitality House, (a stranger and you took me in. Hungry and you fed me) OASIS, Habit for Humanity, Food for Hunger and the list goes on and on. We can support these programs and others like them at an even higher level and full fill Christ commandment to serve Him by serving and attending to the needs others. That's why stewardship campaigns are important and that's why I hope you'll join Sylvia and me in pledging. If you didn't bring your pledge card today, you'll find extras in the pew rack. Rumble has a wonderful, caring and responsive congregation. We can be more. We can be better. We can do more. We can as I said be a shining light in our community and be assured that by serving the least of those among us, we are serving Christ. It has been said that the evidence of whether we belong to God is how we respond to the needs of others. Mother Teresa said, "At the end of life we will not be judged by how many diplomas we have received, how much money we made or how many good things we have done. We will be judged by I was hungry and you gave me to eat. I was naked and you clothed me, I was homeless and you took me in". Pledge. Please. Thank you.