



2020 Thanksgiving Offering MISSION MOMENT

Psalm 31:24 – Be strong and take heart, all you who HOPE in the Lord.

Over a 100 years ago, churches began providing for needy children in Western North Carolina by supporting the Mountain Orphanage. Because of their compassion and generosity, children had love, protection, and an opportunity to learn about Jesus.

Over the years, the orphanage expanded to care for more children. Known today as Black Mountain Home for Children, Youth and Families, the ministry remains committed to its mission of glorifying God by caring for children and families.

In the last ten years, the ministry has grown from serving about 30 or so school-age children on a given day to now serving over 70 youth, and at times as many as 100. The ministry has also expanded its programs and now serves children from newborn babies to college age young adults.

Black Mountain Home meets the needs of children through community-based and on-campus family foster care, transitional living and life skills coaching for teens, and independent living and apprenticeship programs for high school graduates.

They recognized a gap in the foster care system and were one of the first programs in the state to provide foster care past the age of 18. All too often, teens who lose their foster care placement after they turn 18 become homeless, addicted, and/or pregnant. Only about 50% graduate from high school and only 2% ever earn a bachelor's degree. Because of Black Mountain Home's expanded continuum of care, youth continue to be supported after they turn 18.

Since opening the Ray Campbell Independent Living Village in 2009, over 88% of the teens at Black Mountain Home have graduated from high school. Nearly half of the youth who earned a high school diploma or GED continued their education. Fourteen youth have completed a post-secondary program and one has even earned a master's degree. Black Mountain Home helps youth realize that God has planned good for them, too.

However, meeting the physical, academic, emotional, and spiritual needs of children who have experienced difficulty, separation, and trauma takes a wide array of resources. This year's Thanksgiving Offering is especially important because all their regular 2020 fundraising events were cancelled due to COVID-19.

Unfortunately, abuse and abandonment increase during times of stress, so your gift helps ensure that children have a safe, loving Christian home. The board, staff, and youth send their gratitude, love, and prayers for our congregation during these trying times.

Tom Campbell, President