

# DOWNTOWN WITH THE BROWNS



**TEN+ONE! TEN+ONE!**

**October 2024**

## FALL RETREAT 2024!

We often mention that Fall Retreat is one of the most pivotal things that we do the entire year: if students attend, the likelihood that they will become involved in the ministry through evangelism, fellowship, Bible studies, socials and mission trips multiplies exponentially. Last year we had around 70 students attend: this year we welcomed OVER 100 from Liberty, Randolph College, Roanoke College, Sweet Briar College, CVCC, and University of Mary Washington!



In all our years of ministry we had never experienced the degree of spiritual warfare around fall retreat as we did this year: students getting sick, breaking bones, and even a hurricane (with a tornado warning the first evening of the retreat)! The clincher was that two days before the retreat our speaker, Holly Melton (podcaster and author of *Follow My Lead*) had to cancel due to the weather. We have known Holly since an LA Summer Mission in 2010 and were looking forward to seeing her and having students learn from her. ***But we know that ALL things work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to His purpose. (Romans 8:28)***



Thankfully, our pastor friend Chris Jordan from West Lynchburg Baptist Church was able to fill in for one session, and two of our staff took the other sessions. Andrew also gave a short message about taking next steps after the retreat. It wound up being wonderful! After weeks of rain and dismal weather the sun came out Saturday, enabling us to enjoy paintball, an escape room (Yes they had one and it was a lot of fun!) volleyball and ziplining during the free time, as well as staying dry for our evening bonfire, where we had a session of praise and worship and open fellowship. During the evening, students shared about burdens they were currently carrying and how the Lord was meeting them, and we were able to pray and encourage them.

At the end of the retreat, we counted up the number of decisions that students had made in beginning a relationship with Christ over the weekend -- YOU GUESSED IT, TEN!!! This is more than the past five years of fall retreats combined. God is doing an incredible work in and among students! What a joy to be a part of it! AND IN ADDITION, Holly texted me over the weekend the following:

*[My daughter Briella's best friend Shay] spent the night last night. The girls were talking about if good people go to heaven. I explained the gospel and [her friend] wanted Jesus in her life. She just prayed to receive Christ! She's so excited. Maybe this is why I stayed home!!!*

**We praise God for His sovereignty! Ten new brothers and sisters in Christ, plus one in Holly's hometown!**

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## PRAYER REQUESTS

- Praise God for what He did at our Fall Retreat and for 10+1 new believers! Please pray that we will have the opportunity to follow-up with and disciple them.
- Over 80% of our students had interest in mission trips either during Spring Break and/or Summer. Pray that many would go to the nations as a result.
- Pray for our upcoming mission trip to Japan in December that the right students would go and we would continue to build the partnership with the staff in the country.

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