



# FOOTPRINTS

## NEWSLETTER

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## Food, Fellowship & Fun - 5th Sunday at St. Andrews

On Sunday March 30, 2025, the men of the Bryan Clay House attended St. Andrews Global Methodist Church for Sunday School, Worship, and Lunch. Ruben Phillips, one of the men of the Bryan Clay House taught Sunday School, and did a wonderful job sharing his faith and teaching from the Word of God. Following Sunday School, the men then attended the 11:00 am service. After the service, the men were blessed with a luncheon in their honor in the Fellowship Hall. The food was wonderful as was the fellowship! Thank you, St. Andrews for a wonderful day. Everyone thoroughly enjoyed themselves and look forward to the next 5th Sunday.



### The Bryan Clay House

*Our transitional home is not a handout, it is a hand up, and a way forward for those that truly want to re-start their lives. Our first Board of Directors meeting was held October of 2017. From that first board meeting we have not stopped, opening our first transitional home for men in Cullman, Alabama on April 1, 2018.*



11 am service at  
St. Andrews



The St. Andrews Van  
coming to pick up the  
men for church



Jimmie Batemon with St. Andrews member  
James Laminack



St. Andrews Van



Luncheon at St. Andrews



Ruben Phillips  
teaching Sunday School  
at St. Andrews

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## Growing Stronger Day by Day

I would like to start this article first by giving thanks to my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and for his continuous and divine work in my life. Without Him, my life would be at a standstill, and I would like to furthermore give him all the glory. Through Him, I will continue to grow stronger in my faith, and trust that He will continue to be my strength and guidance.

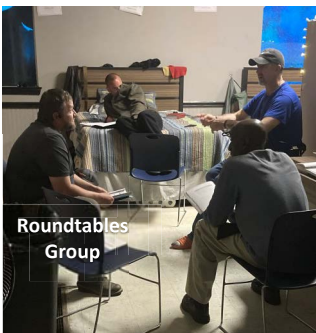
My name is John Topps. I was blessed to be allowed acceptance into the Bryan Clay House in Cullman Alabama. I don't know why or even how I was accepted into the program so quickly, but I am grateful to have been given this opportunity. Since being here, I have been able to grow in my faith, and learn more about myself through the studies and experiences with the people here, who I now consider as my brothers. Being around these guys has made my day to day challenges a lot easier, than if I would have stayed out in my regular neighborhood.

I've accomplished so much in such a short period of time that it is hard to believe. I've got a job, opened a bank account, got my ID, my social security card, and even got health insurance with the help of these guys. Every day is another learning experience and learning is a benefit and blessing in itself. I've learned how to set goals and establish boundaries and how to be a better human being. In my first month here, I became the resident of the month. I was appreciated by the staff here, as well as congratulated and honored with a certificate and a gift card for my efforts. I want to thank everyone here who has contributed to my personal growth.

Sincerely speaking, and thankfully yours,

**John Topps**

# Around the House...



Roundtables Group



Pastor Rob cooking in the kitchen



Transportation Manager Jimmie Batemon and Driver Wayne McKleroy with the CREAA Vans



Roundtables Group



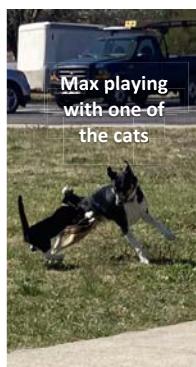
Garden & Birdhouses



Max & John playing in the front yard



Max playing with one of the cats



Evangelist Dan Miller speaking to the men



Executive Director Albert Pugh hard at work cutting the grass



Antonio cooking on the grill



# Thank you to Black Sheep Backyard



We want to say thank you to Tyler Wyatt of Black Sheep Backyards for his expertise in safely removing the old church steeple from the top of the Bryan Clay House. Once the steeple was removed, we were able to repair the roof area where it was leaking into the house. We thank God for always providing valuable resources as we continue to make the needed renovations and repairs to the Bryan Clay House.



# Thank You!

# Thank you to JAMZ Construction



A big thank you to JAMZ Construction for restriping our parking areas around the Bryan Clay House. We want to say a special thank you to Michael Voigh, the owner of JAMZ Construction, for providing the materials and allowing the use of the equipment. We also want to thank Ronnie and Blake for doing a great job and for all of their hard work. The parking areas around the house look great!





# Congratulations

Executive Director Albert Pugh proudly congratulates these outstanding residents



**FEBRUARY 2025**  
RESIDENT OF THE MONTH  
**Peter Herman**



**FEBRUARY 2025**  
MOST IMPROVED RESIDENT OF THE MONTH  
**Cody Hyde**



**MARCH 2025**  
RESIDENT OF THE MONTH  
**John Topps**



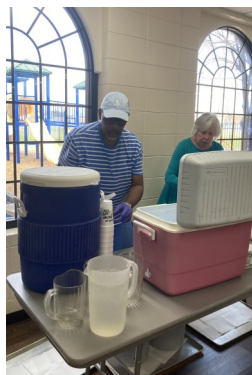
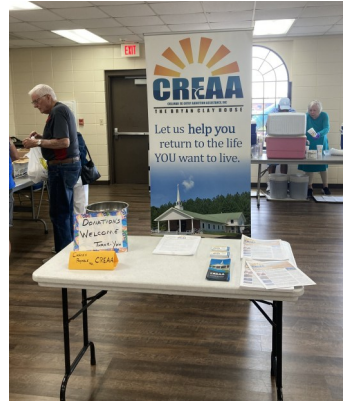
**MARCH 2025**  
MOST IMPROVED RESIDENT OF THE MONTH  
**Ruben Phillips**





## | Fundraiser Success

On March 28, 2025 several residents from the Bryan Clay House joined with several volunteers from St. Andrew's Global Methodist Church in Cullman to host a Swamp John's supper. The fundraiser was held in the fellowship hall at St. Andrews, and 300 plates were sold, raising \$2000.00. That, in and of itself, would have constituted a very successful event. Yet, more than the money, every man involved thought that the most valuable part of the night was the opportunity to reach out into the community as well as working side by side with "those nice people from the church". Thank you, Swamp John's for the great food, and for all of your hard work! It was a fun day and a great event! And thank you, once again, to St. Andrews for supporting the ministry of the Bryan Clay House and for loving on the men with the love of Christ. What an incredible example you are! See you at the next Swamp John's!





## My name is Chris.

I have been a resident of the Bryan Clay House since October 7, 2024. Before I came to the Bryan Clay House, I was incarcerated in the Alabama Department of Corrections. I had problems with both my hips and I had to use a cane to walk. While incarcerated, I was injured and then had to use a walker to get around. I needed a full hip replacement, but ADOC said I didn't have enough time to get it fixed while I was there.

I don't have any family support. My life long friend Mike called several places and as soon as he mentioned I had a walker, they ended the conversation. My release date was coming up 4-12-24 and I had nowhere to go. Mike called Mr. Pugh and after several conversations, Mr. Pugh told Mike to get me here and we would make it work. I had detainer warrants from Cullman County, so when I was released, Cullman County picked me up and I was there for six months. My name was called for court on October 7, 2024 and I was released. I then called Mike and he called the Bryan Clay House and they said they had a bed open.

Mike picked me up from jail and brought me to the Bryan Clay House. I was shaking because I was so nervous. I didn't have anything. All I had was state boots, state pants, a state shirt and my walker. I had no money. John Means and the House Manager did my intake and helped me so much with my worries. They clothed me, gave me hygiene, and fed me. The Transportation Manager helped me get my state ID, SS card, and my birth certificate. I was taken to the Social Security Office and applied for disability and SSI. I was so nervous about not having any money. Mr. Pugh said let's get your hip fixed and let's go from there.

I was then taken to the Good Samaritan Clinic and I'm now being treated for my hip and hopefully, I'm about to have surgery to fix it. Without God, Mr. Albert Pugh, Mr. John Means, Jimmie, and all of the guys who have been so supportive in helping me stay sober, and to grow spiritually; being given the chance to get fixed, and to live a normal life, there is no doubt, I would be homeless and most likely dead by now. God is so good. I'm glad I got this opportunity to thank the Bryan Clay House and everyone involved whom are actively helping me reclaim my life, and making me feel comfortable and confident in taking the next step in life.

May God bless you and endless thanks to everyone,

Chris



## A PLACE OF REFUGE

I thank God for Albert Pugh and all the staff at CREAA. When I came to the Bryan Clay House in March of 2023, I was coming straight out of prison. I did not have anything but the clothes on my back and a bad attitude. After being there a couple of weeks, I could feel the warm welcome I got from everybody, and the sincereness they had, to help me and guys like me. They got me a job and I started working and slowly learned to develop a better attitude towards life. They taught me core values and the right way to think about things. Albert and John Means really inspired me because they too had once been to prison and have been redeemed.

After being there a year, I decided to get some whiskey and ended up messing up and going back to jail. After getting out of jail, I did okay for a while, but eventually my choices began to catch up with me and there were many consequences for my actions. I finally got to my breaking point and realized that I needed some help.

Just recently, I have come back to the Bryan Clay House and they all welcomed me again like I had never left. Jimmie Batemon has been a key factor in getting me back this time. He goes out of his way to help the guys and myself. And so does Wayne McKleroy. So, a big shout out to them. I love St. Andrews Church and all they have done for us. I don't know where I would be right now if it wasn't for Mr. Pugh and the Bryan Clay House.

Ruben Phillips



# The Road to Emmaus: How Jesus Joins Us on the Journey

*Now behold, two of them were traveling that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was seven miles from Jerusalem. And they talked together of all these things which had happened. So it was, while they conversed and reasoned, that Jesus Himself drew near and went with them. But their eyes were restrained, so that they did not know Him. And He said to them, "What kind of conversation is this that you have with one another as you walk and are sad?" (Luke 24: 13-17)*

The story of the Road to Emmaus, found in Luke 24:13-35, is one of the most moving and beautiful accounts of Jesus's post-resurrection appearance. It takes place on the day of His resurrection, when two of His followers, distraught and confused, were walking along the road to Emmaus. Their hopes had been crushed by the crucifixion of Jesus, and they were struggling to understand how the events of the past few days fit into God's plan.

As they walked, a stranger—whom they did not recognize—joined them. This stranger, of course, is Jesus, though their eyes were kept from recognizing Him. Jesus asked them what they were discussing, and as they shared their grief and uncertainty, Jesus patiently explained the Scriptures to them, revealing how the Messiah had to suffer before entering His glory. When they arrived at Emmaus, Jesus seemed to be going farther, but they urged Him to stay with them. Then, in the breaking of the bread, their eyes were opened, and they realized that the stranger was indeed the risen Christ. Their hearts, once heavy with sorrow, were now set on fire, blazing with hope.

The Emmaus story captures several profound themes, particularly how Jesus joins us on our journey of faith, even when we don't recognize Him. It also reflects the transformative power of His presence, which brings clarity, hope, and renewal. This theme of Jesus meeting us on the road resonates deeply with the work of the Bryan Clay House, a place dedicated to supporting men navigating difficult life journeys, such as incarceration, addiction, and recovery. Much like the two disciples on the road to Emmaus, the men who come to the Bryan Clay House find themselves walking a difficult and uncertain road. Whether due to coming from incarceration, addiction, or other personal struggles, these men often feel lost, isolated, and disconnected. In these moments of pain and confusion, it can be difficult to see the hand of God at work in their lives.

Yet, just as Jesus joined the two disciples on their journey, He is present with us in our struggles, whether we recognize Him or not. Jesus walks alongside us during our suffering, offering not condemnation, but companionship. The ministry of the Bryan Clay House embodies this truth by providing a safe,

supportive place where the men are not judged by their pasts, but are met with understanding and love. In many ways, the Bryan Clay House mirrors the Emmaus story by becoming a place of

spiritual and emotional renewal; where those who are lost can find hope, healing, and a renewed sense of purpose.

The Bryan Clay House serves as a beacon of hope for men who are struggling with overcoming addiction, facing uncertainty after incarceration, or dealing with the aftermath of personal trauma. Like the disciples who encountered Jesus in the midst of their confusion and despair, those who come to the Bryan Clay House are often at a crossroads, feeling broken and unsure of what the future holds. But just as the disciples found new clarity when Jesus explained the Scriptures to them, the men who come to the Bryan Clay House find new purpose and direction through helping them obtain their ID, social security card, and birth certificate; through helping them obtain a job; through the support of the staff, volunteers, and fellow residents; through weekly bible study and church services; through weekly Roundtable Small Groups; and through life skills classes offered to help prepare the men to live a successful life beyond the Bryan Clay House.

At its core, the Bryan Clay House embodies the truth that we are not alone on our journey. The staff and volunteers at the Bryan Clay House take on the role of the "fellow traveler," walking alongside those in need, offering not only practical assistance, but also spiritual guidance. They, like Jesus on the road to Emmaus, listen to the stories of pain, suffering, and loss, offering compassion and hope. Their presence reminds the men that there is always the possibility of transformation, even when the road seems impossibly long and difficult.

In this way, the Bryan Clay House is not just a place of shelter—it is a place of encounter with the Risen Christ, where divine appointments occur. Just as the disciples' eyes were opened when Jesus broke the bread, the men often experience moments of spiritual awakening that help them to see their lives—and their futures—in a new light. It is in these moments of clarity and understanding that real healing begins to take place. The transformation for the disciples on the road to Emmaus is not just an event in the past, but a model for how God works in our lives today. When Jesus revealed Himself to them, they were immediately filled with hope and a renewed sense of purpose. Their journey from confusion and despair to joy and clarity was only the beginning of the spiritual journey that many people experience: a journey from darkness into light, from despair into hope, from brokenness into wholeness.

This transformation is at the heart of the work done at the Bryan Clay House. Just as the disciples were empowered to go out and share the good news of Jesus' resurrection, individuals who come through the doors of the Bryan Clay House are given the tools they need to rebuild their lives. They are not only given the practical support needed to overcome addiction or the mistakes of their past, but they are also encouraged to deepen their faith and reconnect with their spiritual identity. The mission of the Bryan Clay House reflects the message of the Emmaus story: that Jesus is present with us on the journey, and that through His presence, we can be transformed.

The road to Emmaus is a powerful reminder that Jesus walks with us in our struggles, our doubts, and our pain. Even when we do not recognize His presence, He is there, offering us the promise of renewal and transformation. The ministry of the Bryan Clay House, in its commitment to walking alongside those who are suffering, echoes this message of hope.

Just as the disciples were changed by their encounter with the risen Christ, so too are the men served by the Bryan Clay House given the opportunity to experience spiritual and personal renewal. By walking together, side by side, through the difficult roads of life, we are reminded that we are never truly alone. With Christ as our companion, there is always hope for healing, restoration, and a new beginning. Just as the disciples' hearts burned within them when they realized who Jesus was, so too can our hearts be set on fire with a renewed sense of purpose, love, and faith. The journey to Emmaus is not just a journey of the past—it is the journey of every person who seeks healing, transformation, and the grace of God's presence in their lives. ***May the grace of our resurrected Lord Jesus Christ be with each of us as walk together in this journey of faith.***



**JOHN MEANS**

CREAA Program Director



"How far you go in life depends on your being tender with the young, compassionate with the aged, sympathetic with the striving and tolerant of the weak and strong. Because someday in your life you will have been all of these."

George Washington Carver  
Innovative Scientist, Educator, and Inventor

"Service to others is the rent you pay for your room here on earth."

Muhammad Ali  
American Professional Boxer and Social Activist

"Only those who will risk  
going too far can possibly find  
out how far one can go."

T. S. Eliot  
Author, Playwright,  
Poet, and Critic

"Almost every  
successful  
person begins  
with two  
beliefs: the  
future can be  
better than the  
present, and I  
have the power  
to make it so."

David Brooks  
Cultural  
Commentator,  
Author, and  
Columnist

"What matters is not necessarily the size of the  
dog in the fight, it's the size of the fight in the dog."

Dwight D. Eisenhower,  
34th U.S. President

"I keep a sticky note on my  
computer that says 'Delegate.'  
It's a reminder that you can't do  
everything yourself. Ask yourself:  
What's the one thing only I can do?  
Everything else is an opportunity  
to help someone else grow."

Tabitha Stine  
Nucor Executive

"Change is the end result of all true learning."  
Leo Buscaglia, American Author and Motivational Speaker



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PLEASE  
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