

WESTSIDE

story

Church Events

- **April 8** Easter Cantata
- **April 16** Central Region Conference - Ft Wayne
- **April 23** Movie Nite: ABCinema in Decatur, Paul, Apostle of Christ
- **April 25** Last AWANA night for the season
- **April 28** Women's Bowling & Board Games
- **April 29** Hunger Fundraiser Meal
- **April 29** Puggles and Cubbies AWANA Awards
- **May 6** Sparks and T&T AWANA Awards; Turn in VBS Registrations
- **May 13** Happy Mother's Day; No Eve Service
- **May 27** Memorial Day Service; No Eve Service

Turkey Calls Evangelism an Act of 'Terrorism,' Charges American Pastor

Written by: Emily Jones (CBN article)

Andrew Brunson, an American pastor who's been locked up in a Turkish jail for more than 500 days, could spend the rest of his life in prison.

Until now, he's been held without charges, but last week, a Turkish court approved a 62-page indictment against him. The charges include membership in an armed terrorist organization and military espionage.

The American Center for Law and Justice, which is helping Brunson's Turkish attorney, says the charges effectively make sharing the gospel an act of terrorism.

"Turkey has literally taken the position that Christianization is terrorism," ACLJ Senior Counsel Cece Heil told CBN News. "They have no specific evidence that Pastor Brunson has committed any crime. The fact that he is a Christian, and specifically a Christian pastor, is what they are equating as terrorism."

"They use terms that he 'acted as an agent of unconventional warfare while under the mask of being in an evangelical church pastor.' Some of those activities that they claim are terrorist acts are humanitarian aid, education, and training," Heil added.

The attorney prosecuting Brunson is asking for a total of 35 years, which would effectively give the 50-year-old pastor a life sentence.

Brunson was one of many other Christians who was arrested or deported from the country following the 2016 failed coup that left at least 161 people dead.

"President Erdogan basically had a purge getting rid of anyone he deemed was not on his side, which of course would include Christians when it's an entirely Muslim country," Heil explained.

"Pastor Brunson was one of the Christians that was snatched up in this purge. Most of the Christian pastors had been deported and Pastor Brunson was not."

Heil also believes Brunson is being used as a political pawn.

"President Erdogan himself came out at the end of last year and demanded a swap between Pastor Brunson and the cleric Fethullah Gulen, who is living in Pennsylvania," she said.

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Turkey Calls Evangelism an Act of 'Terrorism,' Charges American Pastor continued

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Gulen is a Muslim Imam who President Erdogan believes was responsible for the latest coup. The Turkish president has repeatedly called on the United States to arrest and deport him back to Turkey.

Meanwhile, the Trump Administration has been working aggressively to free Brunson.

"The administration has taken a very engaged position with this case. President Trump has brought this situation up multiple times with President Erdogan directly and Foreign Minister Cavuslogu. This is something that is really unprecedented in these types of cases that the president of the United States is bringing this situation up every time he speaks to the president of Turkey."

Heil asks that believers pray fervently for the pastor.

"Pray first just for peace and comfort...He's missed out on major life events with his family. He missed the wedding of his daughter. He's missed graduations, birthdays, things he can never get back," she said.

She also encourages people to take action by signing an ACLJ petition, "Free Pastor Andrew," which has more than 400,000 signatures so far.

Vena Hare Captures the Beauty of God's Creation

Vena Hare has always had an eye and love for God's creation. After she retired, she decided to capture His creation through photography. She primarily photographs birds, but will also photograph other wildlife, plants, and landscapes.



Vena Hare

Vena has several bird feeders around her house, attracting a variety of birds. When she has a bird or animal in her sight, she uses a telephoto (500 ml) lens to capture the perfect shot. A telephoto lens, in a sense, acts like a telescope by magnifying far away things. This prevents the animals from being disturbed by allowing Vena to zoom in on her subject while maintaining her distance.

Vena is able to take some shots through the window of her home, while for others she is out in nature. Some of the more common birds can be easily and quickly photographed, while other birds such as the hummingbird, require her to sit and wait. The process can vary depending on what she is photographing, but always requires multiple shots in order to capture that perfect picture. The most interesting animal and favorite photograph she recalls capturing was the small Easter Screech Owl.

Vena considers this her hobby and does it purely for enjoyment. She is simply thrilled to be able to observe the beautiful work of God and preserve it through photography.

Photos taken by Vena Hare



get to know *The Swygarts*

AJ and Deserae have been married for four and a half years and reside on a hog farm just outside Monroe. AJ works as a full time electrician for Bleeke Electric in Decatur and also runs their hog nursery daily. Other livestock include beef cattle and egg laying chickens. Deserae is a registered Dietitian and works for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), a program that provides nutrition and breastfeeding education.



AJ and Deserae have a two year old daughter Capri who loves animals, cleaning, playing with her baby dolls, and being active with Mom and Dad. Capri will soon be a big sister! They are expecting their second child the beginning of May. Their pets consist of two outside dogs and one small inside dog.

As a family, the Swygarts love to travel and be outside. They have been slowly working towards their goal of visiting all 50 states! One of their favorite places to visit is Matteson Lake in Bronson, Michigan.

The Swygart's favorite family verse is from Jeremiah 29:11; which is a reminder for them to trust God in their lives.

3-Ways Spring Cleaning Can Grow Your Faith

(excerpt from Crosswalk.com | Veronica Neffinger)

1. De-cluttering and organizing can help you simplify your life and prioritize the things that really matter.

So often in our busy, 21st century schedules we allow things to distract us from what Jesus called "the good portion" and the "only one thing worth being concerned about" (Luke 10:42). Simplifying our lives by downsizing and decluttering may run contrary to the "get, get, get" mentality that the world shouts to us, but getting rid of distractions allows us to have more focus on the things that really matter.

2. Having an organized and de-cluttered home can open up opportunities for hospitality.

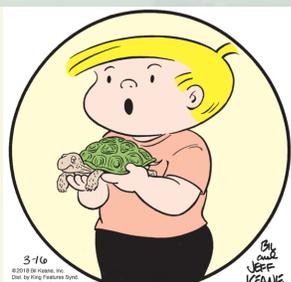
Now, let me first say that God can work in messy spaces as well as organized ones if He desires to, and for those with young children, keeping a spotless home probably can't (and shouldn't) be your first priority. Nevertheless, organizing and cleaning

the spaces in which we live when possible can open up great opportunities for hospitality, which can lead to other ministry opportunities.

3. Having a clean and organized home can help you save time.

While this may seem like a purely practical concern, it too has spiritual implications. How many times have you wasted time digging through your dresser drawer to find the right pair of socks while getting dressed in the morning? Oftentimes it is the silly small things, which could have been so easily prevented, which use up the time I had intended to use for a few minutes of Bible reading in the morning or a few minutes of prayer before bed. Having a clean and organized environment also makes me more likely to be in the right mindset to read my morning devotions or to have a time of prayer.

Belly Laugh



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"Which do you think got to Noah's ark last - turtles or snails?"

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LAUGHTER
COMING FROM
A JOYFUL
HEART IS ONE
OF THE
SWEETEST
SOUNDS ON
EARTH AND
GOD LOVES IT..
CHUCK SWINDOLL



www.christianfunnypictures.com

Sundays

Sunday School: 9:00am

Morning Service: 10:00 am

Nursery and Children's Services Available (am)

Unity 66 Youth Group: 6:30pm

Evening Service: 7:00 pm

Wednesdays

AWANA: 6:30pm

Unity 66 Fellowship: 6:30pm

Bible Study: 7:00pm

Nursery Available

FLASHBACK



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