

The Quiet Place NC – A Peaceful Retreat for Body and Soul

Stress and burnout are epidemic in America today.

Most working adults rarely take breaks during work, often working through lunch, and through nights and weekends too. One survey by Morar Consulting found that 40 percent of office workers in the United States and Canada feel burned out. In our fast-paced, connected, and noisy world, it is difficult to find a place where your soul can be still, rest, and listen to God.

Quiet. Serene. Peaceful.

These words describe The Quiet Place NC, a spiritual retreat center where weary souls find rest, solace, and a touch from God. Nestled in the Blue Ridge Mountains outside of Bakersville, North Carolina, The Quiet Place is

a sanctuary for body, soul, and spirit. Souls seeking communion with God find it easy in this beautiful place, surrounded by towering trees, a bubbling stream, cascading waterfalls, and a nature trail. People come to seek solace, healing, direction, and rest and leave having experienced the presence of God.

In 2001, Michael and Cecilia Gallery, long-time Columbia residents, felt the Spirit stirring in their hearts. After almost 30 years practicing law – Michael as a domestic law attorney and Cecilia as a paralegal – this couple sensed God was leading them to a new work. One night, Cecilia had a vivid dream featuring three mountains with winding streams and waterfalls. She told Michael the dream, and he knew this was God telling them to purchase land in the mountains.

The next day, Michael called a realtor friend in the North Carolina Blue Ridge Mountains and asked her if there were any properties

listed for sale that had a stream and a waterfall. She told him she did not have any such listings at the moment, but that a new estate was coming in that day. That new estate featured a stream and waterfalls.

Following God's leading, Michael and Cecilia purchased the five-acre property. While the land had a beautiful stream and waterfalls, the place had fallen into disarray and was filled with trash. In 2003, Michael stopped practicing law, and he and Cecilia moved from Columbia to North Carolina and began to clean up the land. The property sported a four-room house built in 1941 that became their new residence.

As they cleared trash and reclaimed the natural beauty of the place, the plan began to unfold. Through prayerful contemplation, they received the vision for The Quiet Place – one piece at a time. As Michael and Cecilia walked each piece out in obedience, God revealed the next step in the plan. In time, the couple began to understand that they





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were to create The Quiet Place NC to be a sanctuary where the unity and beauty of the relationship between God and his children could be restored.

Knowing that cabins built for a spiritual retreat needed to be free of distractions so guests could commune with the Spirit and hear from God, Michael and Cecilia set out to build their first cabin on the property in 2006. They knew they couldn't build a traditional cabin with running water in close proximity to the mountain stream, so they created environmentally-conscious cabins that leave the smallest footprint possible upon the Earth. Each cabin contains an odorless, self-composting toilet and a water dispenser with hot and cold water.

Upon completion of the first cabin, The Quiet Place hosted its first official guest. A nurse on the verge of burnout and in dire need of a touch from God came to the retreat center, confirming the Gallerys' vision that this would be a place to heal and reconnect with God.

That same year, they completed the second cabin on the grounds, opening up more

space for individuals. A third cabin was added in 2015. The main house—where meals are served and guests can relax, browse the library, and use the shower facilities—was remodeled in 2016.

The three simple cabins at The Quiet Place are perfect for sleeping, sitting, and praying. Michael and Cecilia open and close each day with prayer in the main house. Guests are invited to join them. Mornings are spent in quiet contemplation.

Michael and Cecilia believe God speaks to every man, woman, and child on Earth, every day. Over the years, the couple has provided a peaceful place where hundreds of individuals have received healing and reconnected with God. People come to The Quiet Place from as far away as California and London. Michael and Cecilia feel especially blessed when they watch exhausted ministers and chaplains renew their connection to God and passion for their work. "Too often these people become so busy *doing* God's work that they forget to *just be* with God," Michael said.

Guests of The Quiet Place attest that the veil is thin and the presence of God is palpable at this place of rest. The land has long been a place of God's presence. The previous residents of the property were God-fearing people who opened their home and ministered to anyone who showed up on their doorstep.

Michael and Cecilia feel honored to be called to carry on the tradition of ministering to weary souls in this sacred place. "I had to get rid of the old and allow the new in to do this work," says Michael. "Law is all about judgment, but The Quiet Place is all about love." Everyone who comes to The Quiet Place experiences the love and care of God through Michael and Cecilia.

Next up for The Quiet Place is the construction of a chapel. The Gallerys feel that erecting a chapel to mark the grounds as a place of prayer is important. They envision a small structure where guests can spend time in contemplative prayer and meditation and be able to commune with God.

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Michael and Cecilia Gallery



By Sarah Bolme

Sarah Bolme is an award-winning author and the Director of Christian Small Publishers Association (www.christianpublishers.net). Through this organization, Sarah provides assistance to small publishers and independently published authors marketing books to the Christian marketplace

For more information on The Quiet Place, visit www.theQuietPlaceNC.org.

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As the year came to a close at the end of April, one student told the team he was spending his final weekend attending a funeral. Two friends had committed suicide. The moms know a free cookie wouldn't have saved those students' lives, but maybe a group of moms showing them they mattered might have given them enough hope to choose life one more day. And one day can make all the difference.

On April 30, 2018, the team's final day of the spring semester, *Ask a Mom* closed the book on the school year the same way they'd begun – with Steve, their first student. Steve grabbed a cookie and took pictures with them, as did many of the other regulars. But new students stopped by for the first time. "I have a question," one said. "How do you make friends? I've been here a year and still don't have any."

This is why 38 of the moms' friends baked cookies and prayed for the students. And this is why, rain or shine, humidity or frost, *Ask A Mom* gathers outside the Russell House and asks God to send them students to encourage with home-baked cookies and his love. **ROC**

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Michael and Cecilia have quietly built The Quiet Place one step at a time as the Spirit has led and provided. God is their financial foundation. The Quiet Place is a 501(c)(3) Public Charity. No fees are charged for retreats; the center operates on donations. The Quiet Place is open to anyone seeking a spiritual retreat. It's a place to set yourself aside and rest, a place where your spiritual gifts are magnified, resurrected from the shadows, to shine in the Light. All you have to do is be willing to be still and make the sacred journey within, to the core of your being, to sit with God. **ROC**