

## GraceLife Baptist Church Community Profile\*

The New River Valley, just a few minutes away from the Blue Ridge Parkway and the Appalachian Trail, nestled between the picturesque Blue Ridge and Allegheny Mountains – with Montgomery County, Virginia as its center, offers the finest in all facets of living.

Recently designated as a Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), Montgomery County is home to 99,121 residents and Virginia Tech, the largest state university and a top 50 research university. The Virginia Tech Corporate Research Center, which comprises 29 buildings, has more than 150 companies employing 2,600 people.

From world class dining, fine shopping and cultural activities, to a beautiful rural setting, and unique recreational opportunities, the U.S.'s oldest river, the New, gently oversees life in the New River Valley.

Two of the state's four largest towns, Blacksburg and Christiansburg create a high-tech community strategically located on the Interstate 81 corridor. Transportation options include public bus, commercial air, rail and freight. Roanoke is 40 miles to the east; Washington, D.C., is 275 miles to the northeast; and Norfolk is 291 miles east.

Montgomery County traces its origin to 1776 when it was formed and named after General Richard Montgomery, an American hero of the French and Indian War and the American Revolution. The first settlement, Draper's Meadow, was established in the 1740s but was destroyed by Shawnee Indians during the French and Indian War. Christiansburg, the county seat, was incorporated in 1792 and named in honor of Colonel William Christian.

As the retail hub of the County, Christiansburg is host to several shopping centers and restaurants. Major chain stores include Kohls, JCPenney, Target, Wal-Mart, Home Depot, Lowe's, TJ Maxx, Barnes and Noble, Best Buy and Grand Home Furnishings. Restaurants include Ruby Tuesday, Outback Steakhouse, Five Guys, Red Lobster, Applebee's and Cracker Barrel.

Graduates from area colleges and universities add to the abundant, educated workforce to make a pro-business community with a solid mix of high-tech, manufacturing, retail and professional services - including a variety of Fortune 500 firms.

\* Information taken from the Chamber of Commerce websites - <http://montgomerycc.org/virginia-chamber-of-commerce/montgomery-county-virginia/new-river-valley/>