

## Mess...continued from Page 1A

The legislation, Rep. Collins said, is still being interpreted in Washington.

He said that the more than 2,000-page document had no instructions on how the plan would be implemented when it was approved on Christmas Eve 2009.

"You're not going to be able to pick your own insurance plan," Rep. Collins said. "That, is a lie. All the regulations and implementations are still being written."

Rep. Collins also told the group that money isn't the problem in Washington.

In fact, the federal government is collecting more revenue than at any other period in U.S. history, more than \$2 trillion annually to be exact, he said.

Bottom line, there's no way to have a balanced U.S. budget the way things currently work in Washington, because what the country brings in barely covers mandatory spending costs, Rep. Collins said.

"It ain't going to happen, it can't be balanced," Rep. Collins said. "We've got more than \$2 trillion in mandatory spending (Social Security, food stamps, welfare programs, Medicare, Medicaid) and we've got just enough to cover it. Defense is not a mandatory spending item."

"We have to deal with mandatory spending," Rep. Collins said. "Our budget is \$3.57 trillion. We do not need more revenue. We have to become responsible stewards of the money we take in."

## Prayer

...continued from Page 1A

"Gracious Heavenly Father, you have taught us that Your guidance and gifts were always intended to flow from our lives into the lives of our neighbors," he prayed. "May we also continue to receive a peace of mind that only you can provide."

Pastor Jeff Deaver, chaplain for Blairsville Police Department, said sometimes we take our local law enforcement and emergency services folks for granted.

"I don't think we intend to do that, and we don't realize that these folks don't really know what their next call is going to be," Deaver said. "We realize that not long ago, we lost Derrick Whittle, who left behind a wife and kids while serving this county."

"As we speak here tonight, in our sister county, Towns County, we have a sheriff's deputy, Lt. Brian Wilson, hanging on for dear life at Northeast Georgia Medical Center," Deaver said. "We pray tonight for Lt. Wilson and his family, at a time when they need it most."

Pastor Fred Lodge of First Baptist Church, led the prayer for our nation.

"Lord we thank you for the United States of America, a nation founded on Christian principles," Lodge said.



The community's pastors who took part in the National Day of Prayer. Photo/Charles Duncan

"Lord we thank you for a nation that humbles itself and prays to You. We cry out that Your Perfect Will will be done in this nation."

Lodge thanked God for those who serve, from the military to law enforcement to firefighters and first responders.

He then spoke of the problems our nation faces now on a daily basis. This nation has cut God out of its schools, its judicial system and in some places, cut God out of its military, Lodge said.

"We must confess, this nation has slid on our watch,"

Lodge said. "Lord, there is more good about our country than bad. The glue that holds this nation together, are the souls that believe in You. Those who believe in families, faith, communities and courage."

"Oh precious Jesus, heal our land," he prayed.

"We believe that you hold the course of nations in Your Hands. We cry to You for forgiveness," Amen.

As the evening of prayer concluded, the masses came forward on bended knee, and prayed for a nation that continues to struggle to accept the Word of God as the law of the land.

## Gunter...continued from Page 1A

tioner in private practice in Union County before being elected District Attorney of the Enotah Judicial Circuit. He served in that capacity for three terms beginning in 1999. After that, he was the Executive Director of the Prosecuting Attorneys' Council of Georgia until his appointment to the bench in June of 2012. Judge Gunter is admitted to all

courts in Georgia, including the United States Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit.

Judge Gunter served as a past president of the District Attorneys Association of Georgia and served as a council member of the Prosecuting Attorneys' Council of Georgia for six years.

He is a member of Leadership Georgia, Class of 2003.

Judge Gunter is past president of the Blairsville Rotary Club and the Blairsville/Union County Chamber of Commerce. He is an active member of First Baptist Church of Blairsville and serves as a deacon in the church. Judge Gunter and his wife, Rita, have been married for 31 years. They have two grown sons and a granddaughter.