

THE

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BIBLICAL METHODIST

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the joy of
FAMILY

From the Editor



The word family and its connotations create varied mental narratives. For some the word creates thoughts of warm loving relationships that have offered affirmation. Others bear scars of misdeeds, poorly chosen words and even abuse. History offers a variegated pattern of appreciation for and affirmation of family. Some cultures consider family an integral part of the cohesion that allows people to function and influence the culture. Other cultures denigrate family and attempt to build social structure without the influence of parents and siblings.

For people, who have made a commitment to live by faith in Jesus Christ and in obedience to the Word of God, how we view and interact in family matters. The concept of family is perhaps the earliest institution created by the Lord God as recorded in Scripture. In fact interaction between the highest creation and interaction between people began with the interface of husband and wife.

The Book of Genesis 1:26-27 NKJV says, *“Then God said, ‘Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.’ So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.”* Again, Genesis 2:28 NKJV says *“And the Lord God said, ‘It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him.’”*

It is evident through Scripture that the structure and interaction of humanity was on the mind of God from the beginning. How you understand and cooperate with the structure of relationship has a bearing on your relationship with other people and with the Lord God. In other words, family is an important component in the whole scheme of Divine interaction with the people He has created.

Embracing family and learning to live with, love and enjoy each member of family matters. It is important to the health of the parents; it impacts the life of each child and influences the future of the family. In the larger world the strength of family and the influence of that structure on society is almost beyond our ability to measure. There is an interesting little fact about family and children without family. Here is the math. “There are 145 million orphans worldwide. Nearly 236 million people in the United States call themselves Christians. From a purely statistical stand point, American Christians by themselves have the wherewithal to house every orphan in the world.”¹ The point is, we can all be involved someway in family life, either by biological family,

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EDITOR

Rev. G. Clair Sams

gcsams@biblemethodist.org

SUBSCRIPTION MANAGER

Melba Sams

2235 Cale Switch Rd, Durant, OK 74701

melba_sams@hotmail.com

LAYOUT

Shane Muir

smuir@gbs.edu

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BIBLE METHODIST CONNECTION OF CHURCHES

CONNECTIONAL CHAIRMAN

Dr. Michael Avery

3739 Moorhill Drive, Cincinnati, OH 45241

mavery@gbs.edu

MISSIONS DIRECTOR

Rev. Timothy Keep

4473 Forest Trail, Cincinnati, OH 45224

tbkeep@yahoo.com

GREAT LAKES REGIONAL
CONFERENCE PRESIDENT

Rev. Blake Jones

Box 5, Cedar Lake, MI 48891

bjones@nethawk.com

HEARTLAND REGIONAL
CONFERENCE PRESIDENT

Rev. Chris Cravens

16346 TR 166, Arlington, OH 45813

chriscravens@biblemethodist.org

MID-AMERICA PROVISIONAL
CONFERENCE PRESIDENT

Rev. Darrell Stetler II

1116 SW 57th St, Oklahoma City, OK 73109

darrellstetler2@gmail.com

SOUTHERN REGIONAL
CONFERENCE PRESIDENT

Rev. John Parker

40 Skyview Lane, Pell City, AL 35125

johnparker@juno.com

SOUTHWEST PROVISIONAL
CONFERENCE PRESIDENT

Rev. G. Clair Sams

2235 Cale Switch Rd, Durant, OK 74701

gcsams@biblemethodist.org

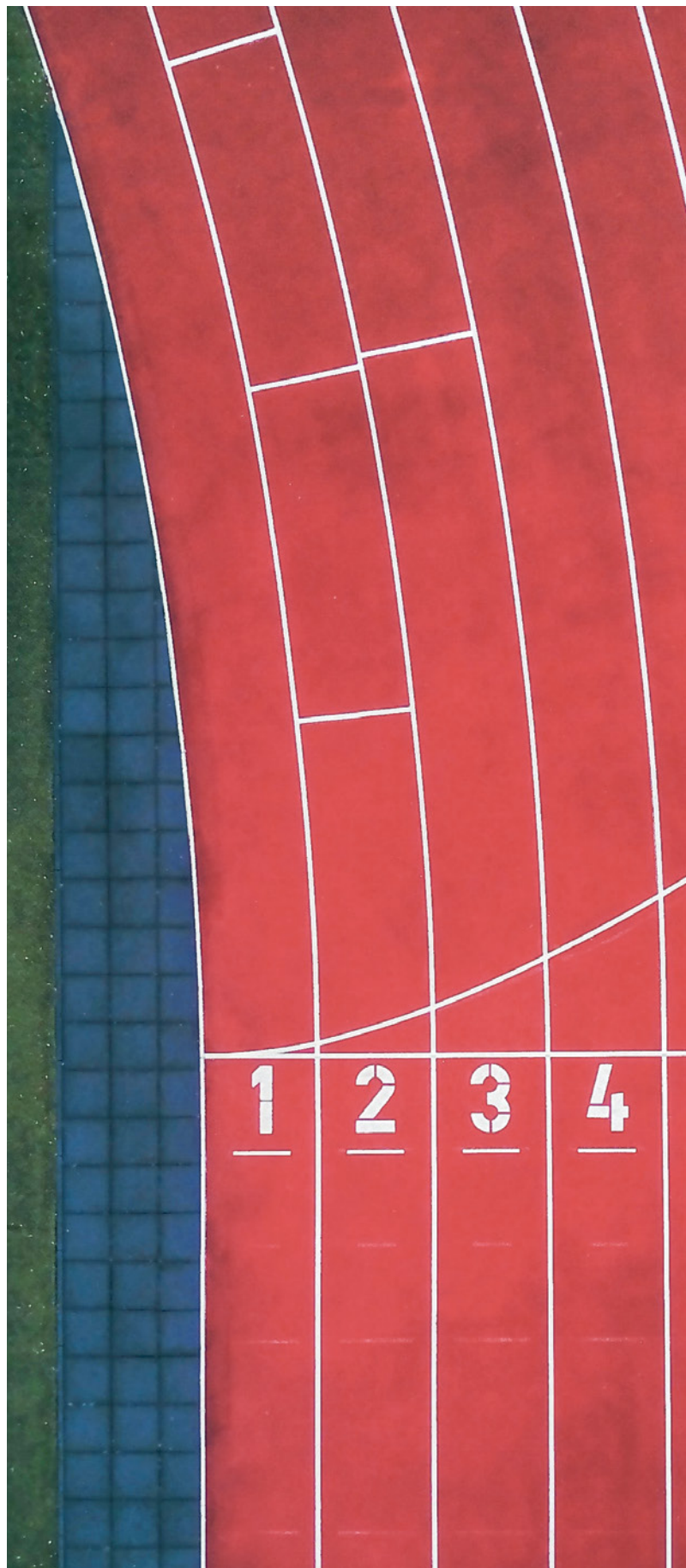


PASSING THE BATON

By **Blake Jones**

I sat alone in the garage looking at our twins' loaded truck. The next day they would leave for God's Bible School and begin a whole new chapter in their lives and ours. Sure, they would be back, but nothing would be quite the same again. I was feeling pretty heavy that evening, but I sure didn't want anyone to find me sitting there. Later, we gathered in the dimly lit living room to pray together. Again, my spirit was deeply pensive. Had I given these young men everything they needed to walk faithfully with Christ? Had I prepared them for a life of integrity and purity? Had I given them a spiritual legacy that would hold them? Was the baton of spiritual reality firmly held in their hands?

In a relay race, one of the most crucial moments occurs in the passing zone where the baton is handed from one runner to the next. It is for this moment that the teams practice and rehearse. The new runner enters the twenty meter stretch of this passing zone just ahead of the previous runner. At a



special cue, this new runner reaches back and, without looking, grasps the baton as he sprints to the next relay point. It is called a blind pass.

It is but a brief moment that the two runners hold the baton together before the first runner releases his sweaty grip and becomes part of the cheering sidelines. And, in our lives, our work of passing a spiritual baton to another generation is but a brief and passing moment. In one sense, it is the rapid years of our children's childhood. In another sense, it is the hurried years of our lives that pass so quickly. And, so often, we do not even realize that we live in the passing zone! We are in this relay with eternal consequences but we have never rehearsed this blind pass! In fact, we hardly even know the rules of the race. How sad if we drop the baton and disqualify another generation of ready runners!

When Joshua's noble leadership in Israel ended and he and his peers had passed away, we read that "there arose another generation after them who did not know the LORD, nor yet the work which He had done for Israel." (Judges 2:10 NAS95) The baton that was missing in the hands of this new generation, was the vital and personal knowledge of God. It was more than facts and stories; it was an intimate acquaintance with the Almighty and a personal awareness of His powerful work that was missing!

Friends, the passing of a spiritual legacy does not happen by mere accident or by a casual approach to spiritual mentoring. It is first embraced by making salvation and Godly living the highest and most urgent priority of our lives. The baton we are passing is not a great education, a great job, social ease, sports skills or even a great reputation. It is that the next generation, and our children in particular, know God for themselves. There is no greater joy than helping a child pray a simple sinner's prayer. There should be celebration in our homes and churches when one of the next generation finds Jesus Christ. And that should be true however young they may be!

Holding the baton is our children's true grasp of present spiritual reality. Yes, there will be a lot to learn. Yes, the Bible should become their highest law as they grow and pursue godliness. But, in all reality, they are not part of the race without the "baton!" They are only on the sidelines until they truly embrace Jesus for themselves. And remaining on the sidelines will create unthinkable changes in spiritual moorings in just one generation! The baton of a real relationship with Jesus Christ is the next generation's only hope for final victory! Without it they will be disqualified from Heaven by the eternal judge!

Friend, may I press my point with some candid questions? What is the highest priority of your life? Is earning a living and making material gains more important than your children's spiritual welfare? How important is church and camp meeting to your family? Do you go out of your way and even suffer a little inconvenience for the spiritual well-being of your family? Do sports events control your schedules? What are you allowing to shape the minds and habits of your children? What media venues are passing some kind of a "baton" without your knowledge? In our call to a careful, separated holy lifestyle, are those issues more urgent to you than that your child really knows Christ? Is your pride and

church status a bigger deal than your child's salvation?

Some of you with tiny children will find that, in the blink of an eye, you will be identifying with my heavy pensive moments as I sat alone in my garage. Pass the baton well. With St. John, you will "have no greater joy than to hear that my (your) children walk in truth." (3 John 1:4) And remember that, truly, our entire lives are but fleeting moments in the "blind pass!" May God help us not to fumble the baton! ■

Continued from page 2

adoptive family, or by supporting those who have no family.

Your family life has a bearing on the strength of your church. One of the core values of the Bible Methodist Connection of Churches is titled **Family Focused**.² The understatement is "we partner with families to model and perpetuate Christian faith from generation to generation." None of us are islands. Each life and the strength or weakness of those combined lives has a telling effect on the structure, worship and longevity of a church. How you and your family understand and embrace faith and the Christian doctrines are of great importance because they speak of your righteousness and eternal hope, but, they also inform the next generation regarding those things that are critically important.

There are vibrant and growing churches where families are influenced and thrive by clear Biblical teaching, Scriptural worship and wholesome family life. Those churches have used the families that compose their congregation to build strong children and reach others in their communities. On the other hand, some churches are a shell of what they could have been but because of incorrect orthodoxy (Christian doctrine) and orthopraxy (practice of Christian doctrine) there has been an exodus of people particularly, young people. In some of these churches whole generations are missing because someone taught incorrect doctrine or misguided practice. The church influences the community around it! Whether we are aware of it or not your family lives and interacts in its community. That living influences others toward Christ and the church or away from them both.

You will read in this issue of The Bible Methodist articles from two authors who challenge us to live as family in confident and gracious love. ■

G. Clair Sams

Editor

¹ *Out Live Your Life* Max Lucado – page 6

² Bible Methodist website – biblemethodist.org/aboutus/corevalues

GOD'S INTERVENTION IN FAMILY

By **Mark and Charity Mullins**

Like so many young couples, we thought we had it all figured out. We had both earned bachelor's degrees and were ready to start life. My husband was embarking on his software development career and we had purchased our first home on the edge of town. After we had a whole year settling into married life, we thought it would be time to add a sweet little bundle to our happy nest. That was our Plan A.

Infertility

Infertility was NOT in our plan. BUT it was in God's plan. The grief. The loneliness. I (Charity) remember the times when it seemed that every woman I met was expecting a baby. And my arms felt so very empty. There were so many of these times. But these challenges were all part of the path God led us down to lead us to HIS plan A. (God's plan for this life isn't always easy, but it is GOOD.)

Adoption

Our adoption journey was almost 3 years from start to placement. Our emotions were all over the place... Part wanting the process to be done so we could meet the baby at the other end. Another part was wary and uncertain: would we connect with birth mom and extended birth family? What if she decides to parent at the last minute? We came to realize



there were so many variables outside our control. After the home study, background checks, fingerprints, book reports and profile creation, the result was really in God's hands, not ours. We knew somewhere out there, a birth mom was going to make an adoption plan, and we were praying for her and her child. When the time was right, God would connect us. The learning. The preparation. And the waiting... waiting... waiting... All of this teaching us how precious life is and what a beautiful gift.

Adoption is beautiful, yet often awkward and sometimes messy. The need for adoption is born of pain and brokenness for everyone in the adoption triad – the first family, the child and the adoptive family. The beauty is that God does not shy away from our brokenness. He draws near to it and chooses to turn it into something beautiful. He comforts and heals. Psalm 34:18 says, "The Lord is near to the brokenhearted, and saves those who are crushed in spirit."

It is amazing how God will prepare your heart for the plan He has for you! One October night, I (Charity) had a dream that we were adopting a baby girl with a head FULL of beautiful dark hair. In that dream, God even gave me part of her name... a name that had more and more meaning as we got to know her! Then just a couple of short weeks later we received...

The Call

Finally, after years of preparing and waiting, The Call finally came. I (Mark) was at work on a Tuesday morning when our social worker called to tell me we'd been chosen by a birth mom making an adoption plan for the little one she carried. This call spurred a flurry of last minute preparations. Then the birth day arrived and an early morning drive to the hospital! Finally, a sweet baby girl with a headful of dark hair was placed in our arms.

The next forty-eight hours were a roller coaster of emotions and waiting. After a short but beautiful ceremony at our adoption agency, Emma's first mother got in her car and drove away alone. I'm still amazed by her strength – a strength I see every day in the child she chose us to raise. And her name? Emma Caroline. It means "Universal Song of Joy!" Anyone who has met her knows what a fitting name it is. She spreads joy everywhere she goes!

A Miracle

Two and a half years later, God chose to answer more prayers and dreams for our family. Those that, frankly, we had given up on praying. He sent us a miracle – a child that this time, I was chosen to carry. Our sweet, gentle Adeline Grace.

Our family journey has certainly had its share of ups and downs. Many times it's hard to know if we're getting it right. There are days when our 3-year old "borrows" her big sister's prized purse, our 5-year old dissolves in tears, and managing the drama takes its toll on our household sanity. Then there are the times we catch a glimpse of who God wants them to be and it fills us with JOY! Like when we discretely hear Emma singing to herself "I Cast All My Care Upon You" and realize how blessed we are to raise two precious girls – a treasure and a miracle. We've learned how special the gift of a child is, how God treasures children. And that no matter what way they come to your family, they belong. Each child's story influencing her unique personality and character.

There are still struggles. Emma still copes with the loss of birth mom's presence in her life. Sometimes we remind her how birth mom loves her and wanted what's best for her, even when that meant making an adoption plan so we could be her Mommy and Daddy.

Infertility. Brokenness. Waiting. Adoption. A gift. A miracle. These are all a part of God's plan for our family. Teaching us the patience of unanswered prayer as we waited for His timing. Filling the void of month after month of watching other young families raise their kids while our arms were empty. Then guarded anticipation as our birth mom's due date drew nearer giving way to joy as the nurse placed Emma into our arms for the first time. Then, just as we were beginning the discussion of our next adoption, the surprise of our biological daughter. While God's plan usually isn't all laid out for us up front, it comes from the heart of a Heavenly Father who loves us more than we can imagine and desires His glory be made much of even in the hard places of our lives.

"Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised; And His greatness is unsearchable. One generation shall praise Your works to another, And shall declare Your mighty acts." Psalm 145:3-4 ■





AN INTERVIEW WITH RANDALL CROTTS

In this issue we are interviewing Randall Crotts, who pastors in Glencoe, Alabama.

The Bible Methodist: Please tell us a little about your early life.

Randal Crotts: I was born and raised in and around Lexington, North Carolina. My early childhood our family attended the Free Pilgrim Church.

Please tell us about your conversion.

I came know Christ as my savior in 1970 at the age of 11. I attended Carolina Christian School from grade 6 through 12 and then attended (graduated in 1982) Carolina Christian College.

Would you tell us about your call to preach?

The knowledge of a call of God on my life for ministry grew from early teen years and became most pronounced during my college years.

Where did your pastoral ministry begin?

Well, I began pastoring in Enterprise, Alabama under Dr. V.O. Agan in August, 1982. Then in October of that year I married, Jenny Thomas. That was obviously a busy year, graduation, pastoring and marriage.

What might you describe as a highlight of your life?

Relationships are what move me. I love helping people who are in need. The purpose that most powerfully moves me is knowing I can help some one who is in need. A while back

I knew a family in need. The church gave about \$300.00 to allow me to shop for groceries for them. It was a special joy to realize I would run out of things to buy before I ran out of money. The great joy of life is preaching to and offering help for people in need.

I enjoy preaching and feeling like I am meeting the needs of the people in my church. The love of my ministry is ministering to real people in the real world.

If you could change anything in your ministry what would it be?

I wish I had known how to disciple new Believers earlier in my ministry. I wish I had been more patient with new Christians. I would like to be able to offer discipleship with greater wisdom.

If you could give a message to The Bible Methodist family what would it be?

Thanks to the Bible Methodist family for letting me see diversity. As Brother Hedstrom says, "our elasticity." The balance and refusal to react negatively to difference has been a blessing. I appreciate the hunger for truth, relevance and authenticity that is evident among the Bible Methodists. There seems to be a sense that our administrative work is not primarily about the "Company" but is it simply a tool for the larger work. I trust that we can be a tool in God's hand as other organizations are His tools as well. May we be able to offer our strengths to others and receive from their strengths as well. I trust we will be a blessing to other Christians. ■

WORLD MISSIONS

NEWS UPDATE

TIMOTHY KEEP | MISSIONS DIRECTOR



Is Anything Too Hard for God?

The Lord continues to bless the Bible Methodist Church in Paris, France, and our family was greatly privileged to see confirmations of His grace while on a recent trip there. Sister Daisy Comilang leads this congregation with the heart of a servant, and the Lord is using her and the leadership team in Paris to cultivate a loving, worshipful, spiritual fellowship and to bring lost souls into the Kingdom. Benny is an example:

Becky and I remember seeing Benny from time to time when we lived in the Philippines over a decade ago. He operated a hair salon in Villiasis (near our Shepherd's College), and in those days seemed far from God. Today Benny is a vibrant Christian with a ministry of prayer. I so wish you could meet him.

Due to great financial hardship, and the need to help support their large family, Benny was only able to attend school through the 3rd grade. Poverty and a lack of education became a source of pain and shame in his life, contributing to feelings of worthlessness, and making him more vulnerable to sinful relationships and choices. For many years he tried to fill the emptiness in his life with everything but God and chose a lifestyle he is now ashamed even to speak of. But Benny had a brother, Bible Methodist pastor, Rev. Eddie Agbunlog, who wouldn't quit praying for him. Benny is confident that his brother's prayers are the reason he is a child of God today.

In 2008, Benny was offered a job in Paris, and soon after he landed, a "friend" tried to pull him into the night life of the city. "I just couldn't do it," Benny told me. "Instead, I found myself drawn to the Bible Methodist Church, and the presence and love of God I felt on my first Sunday made me hungry for spiritual things." That's where Benny's spiritual journey began and in 2009, he was baptized as a new creation in Christ Jesus! Since then Benny has continued to grow in his faith, his personal confidence has grown, the outward hints of his previous lifestyle have faded away, and he lives a life of faithful service to the Lord. "After I got saved, I used to think so much about my lack of education and didn't think that God could use me in ministry," Benny said. "Whenever I was asked to lead worship or to do anything in the church, I would always tell Sis Daisy that I just couldn't do it. I felt so inferior...so unworthy. But today I realize that God shows His power through weak people like me! I stopped limiting God and now He has given me a ministry of prayer. I believe that prayer is my calling. God is so good!"

Tears flooded my eyes as Benny shared his testimony with Becky and me. The intensity and sincerity of his public prayer was personally challenging and convicting. The sense of God's presence in Benny's life is strong, and his story reassures me that God is still changing lives today. There is nothing, and no one, too hard for God!



First Ever Shepherd's College Choir Tour in the Philippines

In May, 2019, Bro. Judah Yucaddi graduated from God's Bible School and College. This year, under his leadership and with the encouragement of Shepherd's College Administrator, Rev. Jeff Lucena, and our missionaries, the college has launched their first music program. And now its first choir tour. This is an exciting development for our Filipino young people as well as our entire ministry in the Philippines. To God be the glory!



Great Lakes Conference Purchases New Vehicle for the Philippines

About two and a half years ago during the Sunday missions service at Great Lakes Camp meeting about \$8,000 was spontaneously pledged for a new vehicle in the Philip-

pines. This was to be a replacement for the jeepney which was involved in a tragic accident several years ago in which many of our people were hurt, and one young man lost his life. There was a thought that a 4x4 would be best (especially for the mountainous regions of Gospel Light), but it was finally decided that a van would be most suited. We appreciate this wonderful gift from Great Lakes Conference, and believe that it will be a great blessing to our Shepherd's College ministries for years to come.



GREAT LAKES REGIONAL CONFERENCE NEWS

BLAKE JONES | CONFERENCE PRESIDENT



Rock Lake Bible Methodist Church

The Rock Lake Church won the “best float” prize in the local potato festival parade. The Kids’ Church “flying” theme was transferred from the children’s sanctuary to the float. Pastor and Mrs Byer lead Kids’ Church during the Sunday morning preaching time.



Pilgrim Bible Church

Pastor Ward and his people at Pilgrim Bible Church have started a bus ministry. Rev. and Mrs. Thomas Raicsh lead the ministry with the help of Esther and Rachel Ward.



Ironwood Bible Methodist Church

Pastor Jason Lindahl is the bus driver for the Ironwood Bible Methodist bus route. There is “electricity” in the air when the children arrive!



Evart Bible Methodist Church

Mrs. Lisa Bailey leads the Sunday evening bus outreach service at the Evart Bible Methodist Church. Since announcing their new Fall theme, they have 68 children on their attendance list. They are looking for another bus.



Dawn Valley Bible Methodist Church

Pictured here is a wonderful group of children on of Dawn Valley's special outreach Sundays. In the picture below, Pastor Joe Krohn is baptizing a church teenager, Elizabeth Colvin with the help of her father.



Vandercook Lake Bible Methodist Church

This picture of children getting off the van at the Vandercook Bible Methodist Church wonderfully depicts the life and energy that arrives to be shaped for Jesus Christ.



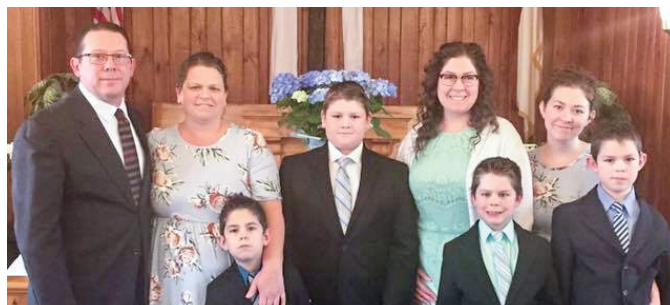
HEARTLAND REGIONAL CONFERENCE NEWS

CHRIS CRAVENS | CONFERENCE PRESIDENT



Pastoral Installations

Pastor Michael Johnson was installed at Calvary Bible Methodist Church in Gas City, IN. Pastor Joey Ratcliff was installed at McDonald Bible Methodist Church in McDonald, PA. Pastor Randy Brown was installed in Connersville, IN.



Franklin Bible Methodist Church Holds Baptism



Men of Integrity

A large number of men gathered at Beulah Grove for the annual Men of Integrity Retreat. There were about 150 men there. Tim Keep and John Parker spoke powerfully on spiritual formation. Pictured here is a delegation from Kenwood Bible Methodist Church.



Heartland Conference Welcomes Webster Pike

President Cravens attended the re-dedication of our newest church in Grafton, WV pastored by D.J. Maley.



Port Clinton Looks to the Future

Pastor Deron Fourman, pictured here with Braden Jeffries and President Cravens, unveils plans for a new building at Port Clinton, OH.



Bathhouse Project at Beulah Grove Underway

Demolition has begun on the old bathrooms at Beulah Grove. President Cravens presided over the groundbreaking ceremony.



SOUTHERN REGIONAL CONFERENCE NEWS

JOHN PARKER | CONFERENCE PRESIDENT



Debra Paul

On October 13th, Debra Paul, a member of Ada Chapel Bible Methodist Church, went home to be with Jesus after a three-year battle with cancer. Debra was an inspiration to everyone she met. Her steadfast faith and infectious laugh was noted by all who knew her. Her overriding joy in life was the faithfulness of God. She grasped on to this aspect of her heavenly father and never let go. Through days of much pain, the faithfulness of God sustained her. Debra was a vital part of the ministries of the church, no matter what they entailed. Ada Chapel will surely miss this fine saint but also rejoices that heaven just got a little sweeter. ~ *Pastor Doug Eads*



Karen Turner Watson

Karen Watson was a wonderful companion to Rev. Harold Watson, an outstanding mother of three children and a precious grandmother to her grandchildren. Karen lived a consistent disciplined and godly life. She was a true example of a pastor's wife, working diligently in the church and for others without mummer or complaint. She worked as a secretary in secular employment, received certificates of recognition for her outstanding work and character as secretary.

Karen put her heart, soul and mind in the Spanish work in Dalton, GA the last several years. She kept outstanding records, she gave her time and energy to mature the work of the Kingdom. At her funeral, there was a fine choir of Spanish young people that sang with the anointing and exemplifying the life and spirit of Jesus. She was a mentor, she played games with the youth and adults and was one of great hospitality. The Spanish church today, still has definite signs of her touch in nearly every room as well as in the lives of the people. She not only gave the church her finances, her gifts but also untold hours and miles she drove to see the Kingdom advance not for her glory but for the glory of God.

She also assisted her mother in gathering shoes and sending shoes to Haiti. When God calls all His children home, Karen Watson will give God all the glory when she sees the Haitians, Spanish and American youth and adults that she impacted that have served Christ and loved the Holiness way. ~ *Rev. Walter Hedstrom*



Tuscaloosa, Alabama

A grand celebration and dedication was held on September 22, 2019 at the newly renovated and new location of our Tuscaloosa Church. Pastor Mark Potter welcomed us to this beautiful, large church facility now named, Faith Bible Church. The new facility is located in the Coaling Community on the growing side of town, not far from the massive new Mercedes Manufacturing. They are truly poised for growth!



Intercollegiate Ministerial Fellowship

The Southern Conference is blessed to host the Intercollegiate Ministerial Fellowship each year in our facilities here on our Campground. This year's event was September 27 & 28. Mid-America Conference President, Rev. Darrell Stetler II, is the director of the event which involves the ministry majors from all our Bible Colleges. Conference and Denominational Leaders are invited to attend and recruit!





Joint Conference Delegation Visit Rincon Marquez Holiness Mission

On September 7, 2019, Representatives from Mid-America and Southwest Bible Methodist Conferences visited the Rincon Marquez Holiness Mission. Started in 1968, this mission is so remote early missionaries had to get here by horseback. For the past 51 years, the workers at Rincon Marquez have quietly been shining the light of Christ in the middle of the Navajo Nation.

Stephen Archibald, the current pastor, and his wife, Rebecca, have been faithfully serving for more than four years. Their story started in 2013 when they felt led to close down their business in North Carolina and go into mission work. They figured the work God had in store would be related to mechanics since that's where Stephen's expertise lies, but God had other plans. In March, 2015, Stephen and Rebecca arrived at Rincon Marquez to serve as caretakers. After a couple of months, the missionaries who were there had to leave, and Stephen suddenly found himself in charge. Stephen said "I wasn't intending to be a preacher, but that's what I am now." Besides providing evangelism and discipleship, they hire people to work around the mission simultaneously building relationships and earning opportunities. They also have a laundromat, tire shop, and Stephen provides EMS services to the community. Whether spiritual or medical support, Stephen is there. He's been there for those suffering overdose, sickness or injury. He's even been there for the dead by providing transport services and grave digging. How many pastors do you know who have dug a grave?

Since leadership from both conferences were going to be in the area, it was decided to visit the Archibalds and their work at Rincon Marquez. After a tour of the place, we sat down to a meal and spent the evening sharing stories of God's work, playing catch with the boys and holding babies. Nothing is wasted here: shipping containers are turned into dorms for the kids to use during youth camp, a mud-walled shed is turned into a very comfortable bedroom space, old tires become playground equipment. There's an artesian well nearby, a spring in the desert. It's very appropriate that it is near the mission where the Archibalds have endeavored to share Living Water with the community. We were sorry to leave the wonderful people and this beautiful high desert, but we still had to visit Rock Springs Holiness Mission. Please, keep Stephen, Rebecca, and their children in your prayers. They are looking for the Lord's guidance in the future of this important ministry.



Moberly, Missouri

Mid-America welcomes Moberly Bible Methodist Church in Missouri to our conference. They are actively looking for a pastor!



Living Hope, Salina, Kansas

Living Hope Church enjoys a potluck at the local Pumpkin Patch.



Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

Diversity is a hallmark of OKC Bible Methodist Church. These young men from our youth group reflect that beautifully. We love spreading the Gospel to "every tribe."



SOUTHWEST PROVISIONAL CONFERENCE NEWS

G. CLAIR SAMS | CONFERENCE PRESIDENT



New Mexico Ministry

On September 7th, Pastor Mike Covington, Mr. Mark Russell and Conference President Clair Sams met with men from Mid-America Conference, Conference President Darrell Stetler II and Darrell Underwood on a trip to New Mexico. We visited two missions, Rincon Marquez Holiness Mission, in Tijeras, New Mexico and Rock Spring Holiness Mission in Terrion, New Mexico.

Rock Spring Holiness Mission is a ministry among the Navajos. Rev. Calvin McCasland is the pastor and overseer. He and his wife, Martha have invested some 20 years among the people they love. The mission was birth by Missionary Joni Phillips about 30 years ago. Sunday morning about 30 people gathered for the service. There were children, middle aged people and some older people. Rev. Darrell Stetler II preached a graphic message about God's power to enable us as Believers.

Following the service the ladies served a special meal they had prepared for the event. Meeting and fellowshiping with the people of the community was a rich time.

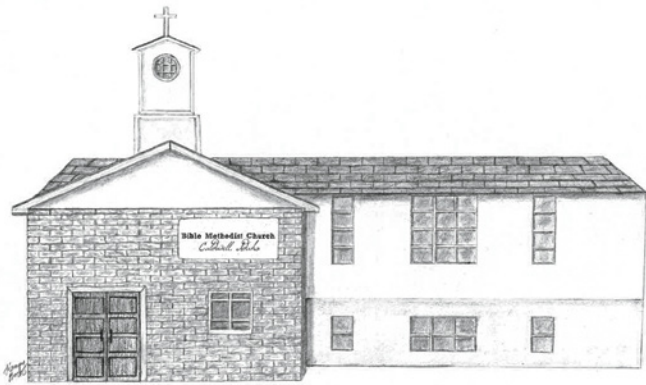
Rising from this trip is the possibility of a partnership in ministry. The Southwest Conference and the Mid America Conference traveled together and are discussing the possibility of this interaction. Along with that the Conferences together plan to continue discussions with Calvin and the lay leaders of the church regarding the future.



Caldwell, Idaho

We feel so blessed to have finally closed on our property and building here in Caldwell. It's been one month of almost non-stop paint brushing, rag rubbing, hammer flying, work. And we've loved every minute of it. Well, almost.

We'll relay just one of many answers to prayer here. It involves an old oil tank buried under the cement parking lot. It was discovered only a week before closing and we were told by the bank that for environmental reasons it had to go before any papers could be signed. We were told by the owners that if we couldn't make the sale, they'd sell it to a cash buyer instead. There were a few stressful moments as we scurried to accomplish this task. A good friend was able to come and cut the concrete, and when all excavators were booked weeks out, God gave our pastor and "young" men the muscles needed to uncover that 500 gallon fuel tank. Then, when it looked like there would be no one who could get there in time to remove the tank and test the soil for contaminants, God sent us someone who could do it much sooner and at less expense than we had anticipated. The bonus here was that after he was paid, he sent a portion of it back to the church as a donation. We are privileged to pray for this kind man who is suffering from cancer. Much work remains and much will need to wait for spring as we are experiencing winter here already but we are warm and rejoicing; so all is well. Keep us in your prayers! We appreciate it so much as we try to love others to Jesus.



Lakewood, Colorado

Our church in Lakewood, Colorado has an active Spanish ministry. They recently hosted a neighborhood outdoor Sunday afternoon service with special music, preaching and fellowship. The Lakewood church and Pastor Aaron Johnson mentor Hector and his family as they actively lead an exciting group of Spanish speaking people.



CHRISTMAS CARDS

FOR MISSIONARIES

Each year we encourage everyone to send a Christmas card and a small love gift to each of the Mission Department personnel. This annual project has proven to be a great help to them for many years. Let them know that we support and appreciate them!

Tim and Becky Keep
4473 Forest Trail
Cincinnati, OH 45244

R.G. and Sarah Hutchison
PO Box E
Port Clinton, OH 43452

Paul and Esther Troyer
4473 Forest Trail
Cincinnati, OH 45244

Brennan and Ivon Muir
PO Box E
Port Clinton, OH 43452

Maricka Herrero
4473 Forest Trail
Cincinnati, OH 45244

David Martinez
PO Box E
Port Clinton, OH 43452

Deron Fourman
Missions Treasurer
PO Box E
Port Clinton, OH 43452

