

COLUMNS

Service Station Theology

By: Tim Patterson

FENTON, MI - What I am about to tell you will certainly date me but I can distinctly remember filling automobile after automobile with gasoline at my father's Fina Service Station for the mere price of 19.9 cents per gallon for regular. Ethyl sold for the astronomical price of 24.9 cents per gallon, and was purchased by the guys who owned high-powered hotrods. On a Friday or Saturday night most of my business consisted of the teenagers in town pulling in and asking for a "dollars worth". If it happened to be a motorcycle they would usually flip me a quarter and say filler up.

To say the least, things have changed. A dollar will only purchase a third of a gallon of fuel and a quarter won't even buy a candy-bar much less a gallon of gasoline.

I worked in that service station for several years, and as a result learned a great deal about discipline, people and a small amount about running a business. My dad was a hard working man that provided well for his family, but to say he was a really good businessman would be a bit of an overstatement. Because of this, the service station never really produced much tangible income, but in reality cost my family more than it brought in. Many times my friends would want me to give them gasoline at no cost. Of course, they always had a good excuse or they would ask me to fill it up now and they would pay me later. My dad was very soft hearted and created a credit account for several in the community, and when we finally extricated ourselves from the business the family was left holding thousands of dollars of delinquent accounts that were never collected. They all wanted something for nothing. It was a learning experience, to say the least.

I came away from my "station days" with a new perspective on people and for that matter life. I don't believe I was really jaded by those encounters, but I did become more discerning. My time there also helped me to be a better judge of people and their character. My gullibility level went down, but I still inherited the "softy" gene from my dad. People in need still get to me, and I would probably give away the farm if my wife would let me. I have also learned the actions and character of people today are very little different than those people in that day and time. People are people, no matter when or where they exist. I have learned those human characteristics that are common to all of humanity transcend into the spiritual realm as well.

I have found many people want to have a full and meaningful relationship with God, but they don't want to pay the price for it. They just want God or someone to hand it to them with little or no sacrifice on their part. Many are well intentioned when they try to make deals with God, and reason with Him that they will do much better in the future, if He will just meet their pressing need right now. They want the blessings of God now, but on credit.

I have even seen some display the same actions and attitude of one fellow I remember that pulled into our Fina Station in a monumental hurry. He was in a mad dash and didn't even wait for me to come out and start the pump and put fuel in his vehicle for him (In those days they were actually service stations and we actually serviced their cars for them! What a concept!). By the time I got out to the pump he shoved \$5.00 in my hand, jumped back into his truck and told me to hurry and finish it up. Before I was half finished, he thought for some reason that his tank was full and he cranked up the motor and peeled out of the drive as fast as he could. The nozzle was still inserted in the filler neck of his truck and gasoline was still flowing as he pulled away. The hose came out and fuel was spewed all over the pavement because there were no automatic cut-off valves on pumps at that time. He was in such a big hurry that he never really filled up and left me with a mess to clean up.

Too many people today believe they can be spiritually filled without ever slowing down and stopping in the process. They are in such a hurry that they believe in a sort of "in flight fueling system" that doesn't require a reduction of activity or actions. In order for us to get filled and full we must first get close enough to God for Him to provide what we need. We also must slow down and wait until the process is finished or we will go away with only a small portion of what we need or worse, still empty. Besides, running away from the work of God in you life before it is complete will always result in a mess. That is usually when you rely on the service station attendant (Local Pastor) to help clean up the mess.

The price of filling up today may be exorbitantly high, but the cost of running on empty is not something anyone can afford.

November's Diamond Anniversary

By: Tony Lynn

Diamonds. American tradition says that a 60th anniversary means diamonds are to be given as gifts. Could you imagine if all of us showed up at the 60th anniversary of the Baptist State Convention of Michigan (BSCM) at Middlebelt Baptist Church in Inkster, MI on November 7-8, 2017 ready to contribute jewelry so that we could move boldly forward into the future???

Watches? Rings? Necklaces? Coin collections? Gems? In Exodus 35-36, we see where Moses invited the community to give so they could build a tabernacle. The tabernacle was the mobile worship center of the living God. That mobile worship center reminded the community and their unbelieving neighbors that God was in the center of their daily lives.

Read chapter 35:5 and you will see the call was issued to those with "generous hearts." Read further and you will see in verse 21, those who responded were those "whose hearts were stirred and whose spirits were moved." Throughout the account the ones who gave were described repeatedly as the "willing." As the collection came in, designers designed, sewers sewed, craftsmen crafted. The event was community-wide.

Everyone with a “willing heart” was involved. They gave tribute. They gave time. They shared their talents.

The achievement is recorded in Exodus 36:6-7 (NLT) where we read, “So Moses gave the command, and this message was sent throughout the camp: ‘Men and women, don’t prepare any more gifts for the sanctuary. We have enough!’ So the people stopped bringing their sacred offerings. Their contributions were more than enough to complete the whole project.” Wow! Can you pause long enough to let that sink in? It said, “Their contributions were more than enough to complete the whole project.”

Where are the willing hearts today?

I am going to the annual convention at Middlebelt Baptist Church in Inkster, Michigan on November 7-8 because I want to praise God for what God did through the people of the past. I am also going because I want to respond with you, as a community, to the invitation God issues for our future. I want to go with a willing heart. Will you?

Do we understand as a people of God what that means, what it looks like? Let’s begin with -What Makes Us a Convention of Churches?

There are three simple traits that make us a united convention of churches:

1. We believe together
2. We give to the same priorities
3. We cooperate to achieve God’s desires

Believe Together

Back in 2000, our national convention reissued a confession of faith that expresses our beliefs. It is called the “Baptist Faith and Message 2000.” You can read the confession in one of nine languages: <http://www.sbc.net/bfm2000/bfm2000.asp> -

Same Priorities

Back in 1925 our national convention of churches created the Cooperative Program, which, today, is a unified system of giving and distributing funds from 45,000 churches to our highest priorities. You can see how large that love spreads by looking at this “Heart Chart:” <http://www.sbc.net/cp/loveinaction.asp> -

Cooperate to Achieve

Our churches can cooperate in many ways. Locally, within the state, and on a national level as we mobilize and act for different reasons. Some are continuous and other initiatives are special efforts such as the heroic ways in which Southern Baptists acted for those in need during the Hurricanes, and still are. Each church member and each church selects when and where they want to participate.

60th Anniversary

When you and I attend the annual convention at Middlebelt Baptist Church in Inkster, Michigan on November 7-8 let's remember it's more about "willing hearts" than anything else – out of willing heart come the contributions that change the world.

1/3 Are Missing a Blessing - One last word, check with you pastor, church treasurer, or leadership team and ask how often and how much your church contributes to the Cooperative Program through the Baptist State Convention of Michigan. I did some research and discovered that 1/3 of our churches have not given to the Cooperative Program during 2017.

If that is your church, you're missing out on changing the world. It has never been easier to give. Contributions can be made securely, online by going to www.bscm.org and clicking on the "online giving" button. Individual contributions or repeat contributions can be set-up within minutes.

May we give as those in Exodus gave. Let's look forward to the day when we hear, "Their contributions were more than enough to complete the whole project" (Exodus 36:7, NLT).

"Let Not One Go There Unprayed For"

By: Mike Durbin

During a time of personal study recently, I ran across a quote from C.H. Spurgeon that captivated my thoughts. The eloquent preacher wrote: "If sinners will be damned, at least let them leap to Hell over our bodies. And if they will perish, let them perish with our arms about their knees, imploring them to stay. If Hell must be filled, at least let it be filled in the teeth of our exertions, and let not one go there unwarned and unprayed for."

Every phrase of this picturesque quote has much for reflection, but I was particularly challenged by the words, "...let not one go there... unprayed for." It dawned on me some people have no one praying for them. I wondered what it would be like to live an unprayed for life. I'm glad I don't know because there are people praying for me, but some people have no one lifting their name before God. No one asking the Father to use them, protect them, guide them, comfort them, or strengthen them through trials. And, the greatest tragedy of all, no one is praying for their salvation!

I asked myself, "Is there someone in my life who has no one praying for them?" There's no way to know for certain, but several names came to mind as I thought about that question. I decided to pray for those people - and specifically ask God to show them their need for Christ.

Salvation is the work of God. We are totally dependent on Him to draw people to Himself. At the same time, we can earnestly pray for our loved ones knowing that God is "...not wanting any to perish but all to come to repentance" (2 Peter 3:9). Intentional prayer for people to be saved needs to be a part of our prayers as we bow in God's

presence. Let it not be said that someone in our lives perished that had no one praying for them.

The people of Michigan need someone praying for their salvation. It is estimated that four out of every five people here do not have a personal relationship with Jesus. Many of them have never heard a clear presentation of the Gospel. They hear bits and pieces about Jesus, but not enough to understand His saving work. Often, the "information" they have is "misinformation" and not a Biblically faithful presentation of Jesus.

The Apostle Paul is a vivid example of someone misinformed about Jesus. The information he had moved him to reject Jesus. It wasn't until his encounter with the resurrected Christ on the Road to Damascus that Paul experienced Jesus personally. It was this encounter with Jesus that totally transformed his life. From that moment forward, Paul dedicated his life to Jesus.

Paul's transformation by Jesus is so complete that he desperately wants all people to know the Christ he once rejected. You can feel his passion as he writes, "Brothers, my heart's desire and prayer to God concerning them is for their salvation!" (Romans 10:1). Paul wants all people to know Christ, but in this passage, he is praying specifically for his nation. He wants his people to know Jesus more than anything, and this burden moves him to earnestly pray for their salvation.

You and I need that same burden for those who do not know Jesus - especially for those who are closest to us. Like Paul, we need to make it our "...heart's desire and prayer to God concerning them is for their salvation!" Could there be someone in your life no one is praying for? You can change that.

“If you're not in the flow, you're not gonna go”

By: Mick Schatz

“Bambi Lake Life” – This is the phrase we use here at Bambi Lake Retreat and Conference Center to describe the experience of being at Bambi. It embodies peace, love, joy, fellowship, renewal and personal time spent with God. It also alludes to being aware of how God's grace sustains and strengthens us when we humble ourselves in His presence. Bambi Lake has a way of showing us how small we are compared to God's majestic creation while also reminding us of how extravagant His love has been poured out on us. Personally, I need those reminders.

Recently I was reminded, by Dr. Tony Lynn, just how important grace is in our lives. At Bambi Lake we are in the middle of finishing construction on a new slide scheduled to be open next spring. The slide is in place, however, there is no water gushing down the inside of the tubes. Dr. Tony, upon seeing the slide, decided he wanted to be the first to go down the new Bambi adventure. He got into the slide and then proceeded to “scoot” down the tube by pushing himself. All the way down you could hear the sound of him “scooting” along the bottom of the tube. Eventually he made it to the bottom of the slide and fell into the water which was quite cold. It was a very funny event to witness, and

many have seen it on Facebook as it was also captured on video. I was very honored to have Dr. Lynn be the first down our new slide, it was extremely, belly laughing funny.

Nevertheless, this funny event served as a reminder of how grace or the lack of grace can work in our lives. How? As naturally selfish individuals we constantly strive to be number one. We want to be seen first. We want our needs met first. We want our “rights” acknowledged first. We want to be the center of the universe. This selfishness can keep us from experiencing God’s Grace and disrupt our everyday lives by creating “friction” in our relationships. If we are not in the flow of God’s grace it cannot flow out of us to others. Our abrasive reactions and attitudes ebb and flow out of pride instead of humility and grace. We need God’s Grace everyday to move us along and keep us from getting stuck in the slide. Grace is like the water in the slide – “If you’re not in the flow, you’re not gonna go.” If you are not in the flow you are not gonna go anywhere spiritually and your witness will be handicapped. When we are in the flow, it lifts us, sustains us, strengthens us and delivers us from our selfishness. It allows us to interact gracefully with others. It allows us to forgive because we have been forgiven. It allows wounds to heal, and hope to grow. It’s a lot easier to navigate the hazards of life and relationships when we humble ourselves and allow grace to carry us along.

It takes a lot of work to “scoot” ourselves along in our own strength. It can be hard to overcome the friction we create with our pride. Maybe we should humble ourselves, rest in His embrace, and be carried by His grace. A water slide works best when there is water flowing through it. Our lives and relationships work best when His grace is flowing through them! This is - Bambi Lake Life!

STARTING

Can you imagine?!

By: Kevin Armstrong

DETROIT - Coming into my freshman year of college at the University of Michigan back in 1999 I felt like I was at a Crossroads. Up until this point in my life I had four worlds that I juggled: school, church, the social scene (which quickly became the party scene), and sports. I injured my knee in high school and knew with that injury I pretty much had no chance at making it in collegiate athletics, so I was down to three. However, I was so anxious to do well in school I knew I would have to choose between the party scene and church. That year I walked into a university auditorium, Angell Hall auditorium B, to be a part of a church service right on my college campus. Over 100 college students worshipped Jesus and heard an authentic sermon that morning, and I knew this is what I wanted and what God wanted for me. Later that freshman year, at a Winter Retreat, I heard a pastor share Philippians 1:21 which begins, “To live is Christ.” In a moment I knew that’s what I wanted, and I made the decision to push all of my worlds into one world: Jesus.

My story is a lot like that of many college student. College is a crossroads for many young people. College often is treated as our American rite of passage into adulthood. It is a time when young men and women are making decisions that will influence the next several decades of their life. All of which, along with a passion for the inner city that God developed in both Meghan and I from our childhood, are reasons that God used to lead us to plant a church at Wayne State University in the heart of Detroit. Can you imagine the impact of seeing the nearly 40,000 Detroit college students have the opportunity to hear about and experience Jesus? Can you imagine the impact these students will have as they take this faith into the world? Can you imagine the impact on this city for those for those who stay?

We planted back in the fall of 2013 and God has grown us to a church of more than 100 college students and many city members. We believe God has more than numbers for us in the future, though. We believe He wants to see every member of our church, every Detroit college student, and every Detroiter know that He is dependable and can redeem every hurt. We want Detroiters to worship Jesus, and we want His kids mobilized here to tell the Good News, that the Kingdom of God is here. As a church, we want to tell this news and to live out Kingdom values in a city that Satan has tried to claim as his own. We believe that the church of Jesus Christ in Detroit will bring healing and hope to not only our campuses and our city, but an entire nation that has a legacy of sin in racial division and oppression. We are believing Jesus to build His church in a powerful and needed way, and we would cherish your prayers to our Father, asking for His guidance, help and protection.

Bio

Kevin Armstrong is a pastor, church planter. He lives, along with his wife, Meghan, in Detroit, MI where they started the New Life Church of Detroit, a campus church.

Following God's Road Map

By Michael Gates

WAYLAND, MI - My wife, April and I married 24 years ago have four children, from the beginning we were following God's road map and didn't even know it. For the first 11 years of our marriage, we lived in Grand Rapids and did not attend church. I had been raised Catholic and April was not raised in church at all. I stopped going after I graduated from high school. In 2003, we moved to Mancelona, Michigan where my family is from and we were invited to church by a coworker of mine. My wife really loved the church. It was new and different, inviting and real. We went back a couple of weeks later for their Fall program. We each received Jesus Christ as our personal Savior a week apart in 2004. This was a life/eternity changing event, and we were baptized a few weeks later.

Shortly afterwards I was called to the ministry and enrolled in Baptist College of America where I received my Master's of Ministry. I became the Assistant Pastor in my church where my training continued until 2009. I was then called to be the Lead Pastor of Abundant Life Baptist Church in Midland, MI. In 2014 we moved to Wayland, Michigan in order to help take care of April's parents while they were going through some health

problems. We rented a trailer in a trailer park, because it was close to her parents' house, with plans to move out and buy our own home after a year. However, God worked on our hearts and we fell in love with the residents of the trailer park, so we stayed.

Our ministry is to reach the underserved residents of the trailer parks in the Wayland area. These residents have a wide variety of economic conditions, varying from retired people to young single parents that can barely pay their bills. One thing they all have in common is feeling hurt from being marginalized by society. This hurt and marginalization has resulted in the trailer park residents having some of the lowest attendance in church.

Wayland is a small town with only 4,206 people living inside the town lines. However, there are 13,500 people that live within a 5-mile radius of Wayland. Within that 5-mile radius there are over 1000 homes in 4 separate mobile home parks. Since door knocking is not allowed in mobile home communities we plan on reaching the community through missional communities and family events such as BBQs and block parties. Our goal is to find a "person of peace" in each of the parks and begin a small missional Bible study group. It only takes one person to start.

Once we have established 3 small groups in a community we will rent a space for group worship services. Our ministry is a missional style of church which fits perfectly with the trailer parks. This style allows us to build relationships first to overcome the lack of trust the communities have for churches.

We fully intend to be co-vocational for our entire ministry. By doing so, it will help us build relationships inside the community and help us to show that we not only preach the word of God, but we live it every day. Our jobs give us the freedom to have church and study groups at night and on the weekends. Amazed by God's timing and leading we are where we know He wants us, serving in communities that need the Good News.

It's a long way from where we started as a unchurched, young couple, but we can see now that we are exactly on the road where God sent us.

Michael Gates is the Outreach Pastor at Anchor Community Church. He has served as an associate and lead pastor, and has a Masters of Ministry from the Baptist College of America. He and his wife, April have been married for 24 years.

What is Church Planting Assessment

By Andrew Parsons

FENTON, MI - This past September I had the great opportunity of being involved in the Church Planter Assessment. Over the course of 2-and-a-half days, a group of 25 people participated in this process at the Colombiere Conference and Retreat Center in Clarkston, MI.

What is the Church Planting Assessment?

Church Planting Assessment is a process organized by the Church Starting division of the Baptist State Convention of Michigan (BSCM), consisting of Tony Lynn and our Church Planting Catalysts (CPCs): Dan Ghramm, Tim Shrader, Darryl Gaddy, Jason Robinson and Darren Greer. Our CPCs made connections over the past months with pastors and their wives who feel called by God to plant a church in Michigan so that we might partner together in the Gospel and be able to support them. Our Catalysts sought out 6 different people to be assessors for the assessment. Our Assessors were: Josh Tovey, Steve Long, Shar Durbin, Thomas Pettus, Tom Price and Larry Allen. I was blessed getting to meet and spend time with all of our Assessment Staff and Assessors.

The process of Church Planter Assessment can actually be quite rigorous and personally invasive (particularly for our church planters) because it consists of the pastors sharing so much information, and also being asked many questions during our group exercises and break-out sessions. Despite this, our staff did an excellent job in creating a comfortable and friendly atmosphere for our church planters. There were many of our church planting candidates who went into the assessment feeling nervous and not knowing what to expect, but then came away from the whole experience feeling spiritually enriched and encouraged. During this process, the BSCM and the North American Mission Board (NAMB) must assess whether these Pastors are equipped and ready to plant a church, but also want to come alongside them for encouragement and to help provide support.

Why do we do Church Planting Assessments?

My favorite part of being able to attend and experience this assessment retreat was getting to see all of our different candidates share their hearts with us. We had 5 different pastors take part in this assessment. What was enjoyable was their lives and ministry backgrounds differed in various ways. It was equally interesting listening to their stories as well as learning of their passion and call to church planting. A common theme with all of our candidates was that they all had been through past trials and sufferings in both their lives and their ministries, but what was great to see is how God brought them through that and is using them now in church planting to spread the Gospel. I can confidently say, I believe God will use these 5 pastors as strong Gospel witnesses to their communities through their churches.

The positive news to share is that all 5 of our church planting candidates were approved. Now they will be partnering in the Gospel with the NAMB and the BSCM. I would love to share with you these Pastors and their wives' names as you might see or hear of them in the near future.

They are:

Jason & Andrea Allmon (allmon.jpg)

Kevin & Meghan Armstrong (armstrong1.jpg)

Seth & Taylor Springs (springs.jpg)

Mike & April Gates (gates.jpg)

Robert Lodge (lodge.jpg)

Please be praying for these planters as the process of church planting is busier and crazier than one might be able to imagine. Pray that God would use them and their churches to be an effective Gospel witness in their communities, and to make His will be done on earth as it is in Heaven.

Bio: Andrew Parsons works as a Ministry Assistant at the Baptist State Convention of Michigan under Tony Lynn (State Director of Missions). Andrew also serves as a Pastoral Intern at Onelife Church in Flint, MI.

STRENGTHENING

Discipleship for Church Leadership

By: Kevin Ezell

Pastors & church leaders,
You crave dedicated help. You told me so. Here is an online and very affordable discipleship training program created and launched by the North American Mission Board. Churches at every size can enroll. It's located at:
www.namb.net/pipeline

There are three levels of training for those within your church.

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1. Inspirational video
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4. Frequently asked questions
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The online training has the latest resources and allows the pastor and his people to gather when it is best for them. Get started as soon as you can by clicking on "Get Started" at www.namb.net/pipeline

Author: Kevin Ezell, president of the North American Mission Board, SBC

FIRST PERSON: A boring testimony? No such thing

by Alex Sibley

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP) -- "I have a boring testimony," one student said when we shared our testimonies in a Sunday School class I co-lead for a group of high school guys. What he meant is that he made a profession of faith at a young age in response to his parents' Gospel presentation.

He was, therefore, not saved out of a life of drugs; he did not overcome a shattered life; and he did not find Christ from a prison cell, then share the Gospel with his fellow inmates through a Spirit-led prison ministry. Perhaps the student's testimony would have been more interesting if any of those things were true. So, from a human perspective, maybe he was right when he said he had a "boring" testimony.

Then there's the instance of three students here at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary walking along the sidewalk and a teenage girl who walked toward them after getting off a school bus. The team had an opportunity to engage her in spiritual conversation, with one member sharing his testimony along with the Gospel. When the girl responded by expressing her desire to profess faith in Christ, another team member led her in prayer. The girl, who had stepped off the bus a lost person, simply heard the Gospel, responded by confessing Jesus as Lord and went home a Christian.

Perhaps these two individuals -- and perhaps you as well -- have a "boring" testimony. But maybe we shouldn't view our testimonies from a human perspective. Jesus said there is joy in the presence of the angels of God when one sinner repents (Luke 15). Apparently, regardless of how "boring" our testimonies may seem to us, heaven hasn't heard a boring testimony. Now there's something to think about.

Perhaps, then, we should reconsider how we articulate our testimonies. Consider the story of the teenage girl who stepped off the bus. Biblically speaking, she was a spiritual orphan but now is an adopted child of the King; she was empty and enslaved by sin but now is indwelt by the Holy Spirit of God; she was dead but now is alive. When put in those terms -- when the reality of salvation is made clear -- the story is anything but boring.

Let's consider this point another way, this time from your perspective. The Creator of the universe, who sits enthroned above all creation as King over all, out of the 7 billion people on this planet, knows who you are. And in spite of knowing who you are and all the sins you have committed, He loves you so much that He sent His Son to die in your place, taking your sin upon Himself, and with it, the punishment that that sin deserves,

so that you, an unworthy sinner, could be forgiven and freely receive by faith (not works) eternal life with Him in paradise.

In other words, God wants to spend eternity with you, and He made a way for you to do that -- to bask in His glorious presence for all eternity. This instead of what you actually deserve, which is eternal fire in hell, separated from Him. He spared you from this by paying the ultimate price of His own life. This is the furthest thing from a "boring" testimony.

Every testimony tells this story. Every testimony is an indication that God is loving, merciful, gracious, holy, mighty, awesome, powerful, humble and indescribably, incomprehensibly big yet considerate, compassionate, concerned about His people, hearing our cries, looking upon the lowly and opening His hand of provision to every creature. Our testimonies are a story of this God.

From a human perspective, some testimonies may be more compelling than others. But biblically speaking, every testimony is an affirmation of who God is and what He has done for us. And when our testimonies are articulated in this manner, they should inspire lost people to seek the Lord through faith, and they should inspire saved people to praise the Lord for what He has done for them, for who He is. Indeed, every testimony -- including the student in my small group who came to faith at a young age, the girl who stepped off a bus and yours -- is a story of how great and good God is. Think on these things and realize: There is no such thing as a boring testimony.

Alex Sibley is associate director of news and information for Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and editor of *Everyday Parenting*, a parenting anthology released by Seminary Hill Press, the publishing arm of Southwestern Seminary.

Frances Brown Set the tone for Bambi

By: Bill Livingston

(The following excerpts are from *The Golden Chain* (2002, 2007), chapter 1 (1958 and 1961), by Bill Livingston.)

BAY CITY - Frances Brown was well-suited to the challenge she faced. She grew up in Illinois, at that time a pioneer missions state. She served in inner city missions and graduated from the Carver School of Missions at Southern Seminary in Louisville. Frances went on to directed educational programs at a Kentucky church before coming to Michigan. Her strong-willed character and sense of calling made her an ideal candidate for the task ahead of her:

"I worked with Frances Brown at her first GA camp at Bambi. Each of the kids kept their money with the counselors so it wouldn't be lost or stolen, but Frances was reluctant to give the kids their money! 'You'd better spend it on missions!', she said..."- Peggie Dye

"I was the camp pastor for the GA camp in 1961. Frances Brown was organized and had a working heart. I can still remember her walking by with girls out to the "prayer shack", where she would lead them to the Lord."- Marion Sherrill

A major financial gamble in mid-1958 resulted in the acquisition of a major asset and ministry site that continues to serve Michigan Baptists in increased numbers- the campground at Bambi Lake. The Laurel Gun Club had a large tract of land for sale in the Roscommon area, where Fred Hubbs frequently went hunting:

“When we obtained Bambi, it was a sinkhole lake...We bought it on a lark; they wanted \$44,000 for a 14-acre lake, 240 acres, and 4 buildings. We thought it was a steal, but we had to ask “what if”, because the state was in a recession and many of our churches were already struggling financially. We needed to know that our people were behind it...so we organized a car caravan on a Saturday (June 21) to form a prayer circle on the property. We had hoped for 100 people to come; when we formed the circle on the property, there were exactly 100 people there...

We could come up with about \$3000 immediately, but we had to have the \$14,000 down payment in about two weeks...We were still \$8000 short when I approached Bob Bowman, one of the members of Eber Memorial and owner of a gas station, for a loan of \$7000 so that we could meet the deadline...We had the money the next day.”- Fred and Shirley Hubbs.

How ironic that Frances Brown should be called to serve in Michigan within just a couple of months of the decision to purchase Bambi Lake in 1958. This writer never believes in coincidences...the calling of Frances Brown and the purchase of Bambi Lake led to incredible growth of RA and GA programs across the state in the 1950s and 1960s. Within a decade, GA state conferences drew nearly 800 girls and leaders. I was an RA camp pastor in 2001. Throughout the decades, Bambi Lake has provided a place where thousands of boys and girls...men and women, have come to a personal encounter with Jesus Christ.

For less than the price of an SUV, the impact upon the lives of our churches through Bambi Lake has been inestimable. Without question, Frances Brown was led by God to see that Bambi Lake would become a haven for evangelism, encouragement and inspiration. My wife, Anne, and I certainly encourage all of our members and friends to invest in the Frances Brown State Missions offering, and believe you will see a return on your investment that will last for eternity.

Authored by: Bill Livingston has been a graduate college professor, military contractor, Southern Baptist pastor, and historian. He has written about a dozen histories for Crossway Christian Church, the Bay Area Baptist Association, and the BSCM. He lives in Bay City, Michigan with the lovely Anne. His four kids, their spouses, and lots of grandkids are scattered around the globe; two are currently on active duty with the US Armed Forces.

God's got jokes!

By: Gayle Jones

ALLEN PARK, MI - Wow! I am a pastor's WIFE? Who among you know that God has a strange sense of humor? Some say His ways are foolish! (1 Cor. 2:14) I wholeheartedly agree! How else would you describe the process of taking this teen unwed mother, pantheistic, bar-hopping, aspiring country music singer and transforming her into a God-loving, gospel-sharing, child of the Most-High God? Yep. God's got jokes!

Thanks to a pastor who unashamedly shared the Gospel with our family, and a church who lovingly disciplined us; thanks to God for allowing us to stumble and grow, my Pastor/Hubby Tim (PH) and I watched Him conform 'our' dreams into His plan. (Jer. 29:11)

I was "in the zone" when I wrote the above.... I just returned to finish my article 24-hours later. Where have I been? I'm glad you asked! I paused to help facilitate a workplace Bible Study downtown. I went to the home improvement store for my PH. I painted the first coat of polyurethane on the new floor. I ran a visiting evangelist, who is also a Pastor's Wife, and my BFF, (check out allenministries.com) around town on errands. I rushed back to the church to give food to a hurting family. I lay down for a nap, but the doorbell rang as a neighbor returned items she borrowed. I ran back to church to give food to hurting family number two. I applied the second coat of poly while I made dinner for our visiting guests. I hosted girls' night for a movie, prayed with a few people over the phone, then went to bed.

I blinked and it was time to wake! Today's activities included morning errands, applying the third coat of polyurethane and helping prepare for Saturday's memorial service. Our Manna Ministry delivered over 600 loaves of bread to a senior apartment complex and two food pantries. After a quick (HA! 2+hours!) trip to the store, I made it home and helped arrange food for an impromptu cookout. Somewhere in there I did three loads of laundry, and other household chores. I helped format and print promotional material for our ministry friends as they prepared to hit the road again. After a relaxing dinner, my BFF and I are here watching a movie while we each work on our computer. Michelle is catching up on the family's bills, and I am preparing this little article. But I digress....

I am Gayle Marie Jones, and I am a Pastor's Wife. As I was saying, God has a GREAT sense of humor. The last 24 hours have been awesome because I have spent it helping my husband, my neighbors, my best friend and her family's ministry. I fed the hungry, comforted the widows and orphans, cared for the lame, and even had a bit of time to relax.

Beloved, I love my job! God simply asks me – and YOU - to show up.! Then He uses me – and YOU "... to comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God. 2 Corinthians 1:3-5."

I won't lie – there are days when I feel overwhelmed, but those days are few. I'm blessed with a PH who gets it when I need to stop and recharge. But I get going again because

people have to know about Jesus (Acts 4:20). Sometimes I think God is kidding when He chooses to use me and I gotta laugh and trust Him. Yeah. God's got jokes.

Author: Gayle Marie Jones is the First Lady of The Road Church in Allen Park Michigan. She is wife of Tim, Mom of 5, Grandmother of 12 and "Momma Gayle" to countless others.

See the Future – Seize the Future!

By Billy Walker

SOUTHGATE, MI - I heard this line today while watching a webinar. "The One who Sees the Future, will Seize the Future! I think it might be our theme for 2018! This past Sunday we talked about the richness that heritage can bring, and that reminded me of my parents and my parents' parents. I have nothing but wonderful memories of my grandfather. He drove a great car – usually pretty fast – and one day he set me in his lap and let me drive it. At some point I swerved a little and took out a trash can that was set by the side of the road. In those days, all trash cans were metal – and it made a lot of noise. Unfortunately, a policeman had pulled in behind us and was probably thinking "Drunk Pastor!" Sure enough, the lights came on, and the officer came walking up, long before my grandpa could put me back into my seat. Grandpa just laughed and told the officer he was teaching his grandson how to drive. I think he was able to get out of the ticket, but he might have had to replace that trash can.

Anyway – my grandfather started a church 63 years ago, and when he passed away, they asked my dad to become the Pastor. He said he'd do it until they found somebody else. 31 years later, they found me. I live in the shadow of a heritage they provided.

I carry the same name as 5 generations of William Walker's before me, but with 2 daughters, it looks like that one stops with me. Unless there is some type of Abraham & Sarah miracle that takes place (Just kidding, Laura – "Father of the Bride 1 & 2"). At times - just being real - that has been a heavy responsibility; but for the most part it has been a joy and privilege that benefited me far more than I deserve. But here's the deal – while heritage has its place, if we simply look to the past, at what has happened, and we are not planning and preparing for what God has in store for the future, we do those who have come before us a great disservice. More importantly we stand to miss out on what COULD BE while we look at what HAS BEEN. And that's when we (people, organizations, churches, athletes) become HAS-BEENS!

In Matthew 16:18 – Jesus said to His disciples, "on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hell will not overcome it." When I was growing up, we had a gate about halfway up our driveway. While it swung open to allow us access in and out, it was permanent, and not meant to be moved. So, it would seem to me, that gates being a defensive measure, must mean the church is on the offensive. And be honest – it is so much more fun to be on offense (Batting, shooting, passing, dribbling, throwing, scoring). We are the ones moving forward, seeking to make a difference in the next generation and beyond. That means new ideas, new ways of doing things, and new methods of outreach.

While the message of the Gospel remains the same, the approaches we use today are a lot different than they were at the time of Acts 2. But the same God who delivered miraculous results for those early believers, still desires for His Church to be on the move and to see those same results! And His promise still stands, too. Nothing will be able to stop it. There is nothing wrong with remembering, but we must not endeavor to relive it. Whatever happened during these first 6 + decades at Calvary has been awesome, but it happened while the church was moving forward. To relive it, means to head backward and the Church doesn't have time to do that.

We must

- Raise the Bar of Expectation
- Raise the Bar of Personal Discipleship
- Raise the Level of Outward Focus

For it is the church that Sees the Future, that will Seize the Future!

Author: Billy Walker is the lead Pastor of Calvary Church in Southgate, MI. He serves as the President of the BSCM Pastor's Conference, and the Vice President of the Billy Walker Evangelistic Association. He lives in the downriver Detroit area with his wife Laurie. You can read more at www.billywalker.org

Breakthrough at the Church Equipping Conference

By Lisa Johns

ROSEVILLE - The theme for the 2016 Church Equipping Conference was "Breakthrough", and the goal was to strengthen Michigan Baptist churches to breakthrough to new levels of service.

As soon as the doors to Cornerstone Baptist Church opened on Saturday, September 16th, God began showing off. Hundreds of Christ followers packed the conference to learn how to best equip their local church to grow and reach their community better. As attendees entered the lobby, the excitement began to build as everyone gathered in fellowship. It was overwhelming how people showed up eager to hear what God had prepared for them.

The conference began with worship led by State Director of Spiritual Enrichment and Retreats, Mick Schatz. It was a powerful moment where as a community attendees came together and praised the Lord. The room was filled with the passion for Christ as the musicians and attendees shared praise together.

The Holy Spirit continued to work through keynote speakers, Dr. Richard Land and Curtis Woods. Land is the president of the Southern Evangelical Seminary in Charlotte, NC. He gave an honest look at the state of our country, and the importance of holding onto the Word in this climate. Woods is the Associate Executive Director of Convention Relations for the Kentucky Baptist Convention. He reminded each believer that they are just "decorated dust." Woods said, "We are nothing without Jesus". Baptist State Convention of Michigan (BSCM) Ministry Assistant, Lisa Johns said, "It was so humbling

to be in a room with so many other people who have committed their lives to Christ and are dedicated to expanding His Kingdom. I was moved by the words spoken by both Dr. Land and Curtis Woods, but even more I was moved because I knew those words weren't theirs alone. Jesus knew what each of us needed to hear that morning and He used those speakers to reach us. What an amazing thing it was to experience."

After gathering as a big group for worship time and messages by the keynote speakers, it was time to split into the various breakthrough sessions that were offered. More than 25 speakers from around the country had prepared sessions that would equip attendees with ways to better strengthen, send, and start local churches. Everything from children's ministry to guest relations were covered.

Johns added, "When I got home, I couldn't sit still. I wanted to tell everyone about my weekend and the things that I had encountered. I wanted everyone to know how God had showed up at this event, and how I knew He was in the building with us. I left the event exhausted, but so pumped up spiritually! It was a day full of fellowship, worship, and spiritual truths."

Author: "Lisa Johns is the Ministry Assistant at the Baptist State Convention of Michigan in the Church Strengthening/ Evangelism Department. Lisa received her BFA in Dance from Oakland University and spends her weekends teaching dance, and serving as the Preschool Ministry Lead at Mile City Church. She is excited to be a part of the launch team for Grumlaw Church, a new church plant in Grand Blanc, MI launching in January of 2018."

Team Essentials: The Shepherd

By: Alan Hirsch

Link to original article: https://www.namb.net/send-network-blog/team-essentials-shepherd?utm_campaign=Send%20Network%20Newsletter&utm_source=hs_email&utm_medium=email&utm_content=56723986&hsenc=p2ANqtz--UZcxz5cn-z_A8LY22XjsBa6zSav2d_rkJKu3Nyn2ZpCDIwl-mZGH3W0P0U-2wpZA8LCg6KM61gfltNKhsS2wWJvsnA&_hsmi=56723986

I am absolutely convinced that there has never been a genuine missional movement—the kind that has both exponential growth as well as transformational impact across a wide domain—that does not have APEST ministry. APEST, which stands for Apostle, Prophet, Evangelist, Shepherd and Teacher, comes from Ephesians 4, and I strongly believe movements need all five APEST functions active and engaged in order to make any lasting impact for the cause of Jesus. Below is a description of the Shepherd component of the APEST model.

The Shepherd

Exposes disciples to the need for self-awareness and understanding, philosopher, systematizer, translator

The ideal of a good shepherd is widespread throughout the Bible (Psalm 23) as is conversely the image of a bad one (Jerimiah 21). The shepherd, the one who cares for his sheep, symbolizes one of the ideal forms of political dominion in Israel. Following the many archetypal biblical cues, fulfilled and exemplified by our Great Shepherd, the shepherding purposes given to the church will tend to be those associated with social connectivity and the church's purpose to be an agent of God's healing—helping people develop resiliency and protecting them from damaging influences.

The shepherding function exists to:

- Enrich communal experience. At its core, the Church is a community gathered in adherence to Jesus—the recipients of His saving, reconciling and healing grace. Friendship, mutuality, reconciliation and devotion in the midst of life together, demonstrate a better way to be human together.
- Social bonding. In many ways, the shepherding function develops the necessary attachment and bonding to the movement and its purposes in the world. The focus therefore falls strongly on developing loving relationships that mirror the love of Jesus in the world.
- Credible witness. The shepherds purpose is to nurture local disciples witnessing to the blessings of the kingdom of God.
- Protective abilities. Healthy communities are notoriously difficult to develop and maintain. Because each member of the community is capable of sinful actions and each community is made up of selfish people, community life is inordinately vulnerable to damage. Therefore, like the Good Shepherd, shepherding will serve to protect the church from influences and people that will destroy it from the inside out.
- Healing. This function spans from practical care of the sick and feeble, to prayer for healing, to counseling and reconciliation in broken relationships—a very important aspect of healthy community.
- Shalom and wholeness. The biblical idea of peace (shalom) involves not just an absence of conflict, but also the active experience of harmony, restoring of wholeness and the experience of godly prosperity.
- Inclusion and embrace. The members of the church are chosen by Jesus and not by societal trends and preferences. The church is a new humanity made up of all classes, ethnicities and genders, united together in Jesus and called into his body. There is a deep respect for the poor and the excluded.
- Discipleship in the Way. The local church is at essence a disciple-making system where everyone is committed to following Jesus in the context of all of life. Perhaps one of the best ways to articulate the essence of the shepherding function is summed up in the word formation.
- Human flourishing. The shepherding function creates a culture and an environment where people can thrive, flourish and reach their full potential as creatures made in the image of God.
- Cultivate the family of God. One of the main goals of the shepherding function is to draw people together and reconcile them together as a redeemed family.
- Cultivating rich and loving community. Scripture is clear that one of the main ways the world will know us is by our reputation as a loving community (John 13:35). Deep and meaningful relationships with one another, along with a strong value for each person's story, exemplify the shepherding functions that seeks to create and maintain healthy community.

The roles of the shepherding person

At its core, the shepherd is the vocation tasked with creating and maintaining healthy community, promoting the common good, encouraging people in the faith and ensuring the welfare of the people as well as the broader society in which the community abides. Shepherds pay close attention to their immediate environment, noticing details about people and the state of the community. They have strong empathic aptitudes and heightened capacities for meaningful friendship and relationships. To be a good shepherd would be to know all the names and stories of the people in one's immediate care.

Because of their great sense of and need for cohesion and unity, shepherds will find it disheartening when people leave the community. People, even the most unlikely and insignificant ones, matter to shepherds. This content is an excerpt from Hirsch's latest book, [5Q: Reactivating the Original Intelligence and Capacity of the Body of Christ](#). Order the book to learn more about the APEST model.

Alan is co-founder and associate faculty for the M.A. in Missional Church Movements at Wheaton College (Illinois). He is also adjunct professor at Asbury Seminary, Fuller Seminary, George Fox Seminary, among others, and he teaches frequently throughout Australia, Europe, and the United States. He is series editor for Baker Books' Shapevine series, IVP's Forge line, and is an associate editor of Leadership Journal. [More from this author](#)

When You are Tired of caring...

By: Jackie Harmon

Link to article:

https://www.namb.net/flourish-blog/when-you-are-tired-of-caring-for-the-ones-you-love?utm_campaign=Send%20Network%20Newsletter&utm_source=hs_email&utm_medium=email&utm_content=56723986&hsenc=p2ANqtz-9ChC3XPm_jlPKYjF3eC4Y6dOfX2UTUvz_i7Lj-Yu5A3uR0hw4rKo5wpaY1f5J2-vcOUyf93yJmsJtwfhbuBi6g2ANsOg&hsmi=56723986

Northwest, AR - "I'm tired of caring for Miles." I actually spoke those words out loud in our small group.

Keith and I have the privilege of teaching a group of young married couples every Sunday morning. We knew God wanted us to share with them what was going on in our lives. I didn't want to. Sharing our lives and struggles with them is usually easy, but we were tired and our lives felt extra messy that day. I don't mind sharing my messy life with people, but I prefer to do it after God works, restores and redeems. But God was asking us to share our hearts in the midst of being weary. But it just felt like a big ask.

"Eight years." These two words have been running through my head all month. We just celebrated Miles' 8th birthday, and his birthdays always throw me in a funk. I celebrate knowing he is being remembered. I celebrate his physical age, but developmentally,

emotionally and mentally, we are nowhere near that number. And it's just hard. Every year that goes by, I find myself grieving where I thought we'd be. I read posts from years past and realize we haven't come as far as I thought we had or hoped we would.

But this year, it seemed heavier. I couldn't help but wonder if I can do this for eight more years? And then eight more? And then eight more after that?

"We're caregivers."

Keith spoke those words to me as I stood in an ocean washing sand off of me. I had been playing in the sand with our friends' children and I told Keith I forgot how fun it was to play with kids that can play back. Playing with Miles is work. Keeping Miles safe is

work. Keeping others safe from Miles is work. And because he has no self-care skills and is not potty trained, caring for his physical needs is a lot of work. The role of caregiver can be exhausting. And lonely.

"Let us not grow weary of doing good..."

God has been speaking these words over me the last month. He has been whispering them to my heart because He knows I am tired. And weary. He has been reminding me that "... in due season we shall reap, if we do not lose heart" (Galatians 6:9).

But that is so hard when you are walking through what could be the rest of your life on this earth.

"And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh..."

God is using this verse found in Galatians 5 to bring clarity to my weariness. When I say I am tired of caring for Miles, what I actually mean is I am tired of what caring for Miles requires from me. It requires a daily dying to self, a daily crucifying of flesh and a daily decision to lay my life down so Jesus can shine. Crucifixion was such a slow and painful way to die. So when we are told to be crucified with Christ, when we are told to offer ourselves as living sacrifices, we need to be prepared for that death to be slow and painful.

"I never want to be the me before Miles."

Those words are just as true today as the day I first spoke them. Caring for Miles is the hardest thing I've ever done, and it is the greatest privilege of my life. Nothing has ever challenged me to keep my eyes fixed on Jesus and eternity more than the gift of Miles who has the gift of Autism.

"So, how are you doing?"

I wish I could sit with you over a cup of coffee and ask you that question. I wonder today what has you feeling tired and weary? What has you feeling defeated? What "gift" has God given you that feels too big and too heavy? Don't give up. Don't give in. Don't lose heart. Keep your eyes and heart fixed on Jesus.

Don't you know? Haven't you heard? The Eternal, the Everlasting God, the Creator of the whole world never gets weary or tired. His wisdom is beyond understanding. God

strengthens the weary. Even young people get tired, then stumble and fall. But those who trust in the Lord will regain their strength. They will soar on wings as eagles. They will run - never winded, never weary. They will walk - never tired, never faint" (Isaiah 40:28-3).

Read more [about Jackie's journey here](#).

Jackie Harmon is wife to Keith, the Marriage and Family Pastor at [Cross Church](#) in Northwest Arkansas. Together they have two sons, Alex and Miles. Read more about their family on [their blog](#). [More from this author](#)

SENDING

Following God's Road Map

By Michael Gates

WAYLAND, MI - My wife, April and I married 24 years ago have four children, from the beginning we were following God's road map and didn't even know it. For the first 11 years of our marriage, we lived in Grand Rapids and did not attend church. I had been raised Catholic and April was not raised in church at all. I stopped going after I graduated from high school. In 2003, we moved to Mancelona, Michigan where my family is from and we were invited to church by a coworker of mine. My wife really loved the church. It was new and different, inviting and real. We went back a couple of weeks later for their Fall program. We each received Jesus Christ as our personal Savior a week apart in 2004. This was a life/eternity changing event, and we were baptized a few weeks later.

Shortly afterwards I was called to the ministry and enrolled in Baptist College of America where I received my Master's of Ministry. I became the Assistant Pastor in my church where my training continued until 2009. I was then called to be the Lead Pastor of Abundant Life Baptist Church in Midland, MI. In 2014 we moved to Wayland, Michigan in order to help take care of April's parents while they were going through some health problems. We rented a trailer in a trailer park, because it was close to her parents' house, with plans to move out and buy our own home after a year. However, God worked on our hearts and we fell in love with the residents of the trailer park, so we stayed.

Our ministry is to reach the underserved residents of the trailer parks in the Wayland area. These residents have a wide variety of economic conditions, varying from retired people to young single parents that can barely pay their bills. One thing they all have in common is feeling hurt from being marginalized by society. This hurt and marginalization has resulted in the trailer park residents having some of the lowest attendance in church.

Wayland is a small town with only 4,206 people living inside the town lines. However, there are 13,500 people that live within a 5-mile radius of Wayland. Within that 5-mile

radius there are over 1000 homes in 4 separate mobile home parks. Since door knocking is not allowed in mobile home communities we plan on reaching the community through missional communities and family events such as BBQs and block parties. Our goal is to find a “person of peace” in each of the parks and begin a small missional Bible study group. It only takes one person to start.

Once we have established 3 small groups in a community we will rent a space for group worship services. Our ministry is a missional style of church which fits perfectly with the trailer parks. This style allows us to build relationships first to overcome the lack of trust the communities have for churches.

We fully intend to be co-vocational for our entire ministry. By doing so, it will help us build relationships inside the community and help us to show that we not only preach the word of God, but we live it every day. Our jobs give us the freedom to have church and study groups at night and on the weekends. Amazed by God’s timing and leading we are where we know He wants us, serving in communities that need the Good News.

It’s a long way from where we started as a unchurched, young couple, but we can see now that we are exactly on the road where God sent us.

Michael Gates is the Outreach Pastor at Anchor Community Church. He has served as an associate and lead pastor, and has a Masters of Ministry from the Baptist College of America. He and his wife, April have been married for 24 years.

MAAF goes to St. Croix

By: Angela Spencer

LANSING, MI - Michigan’s African American Fellowship (MAAF) is excited to announce its first annual mission trip to St. Croix. The team went to assist church planter and former Michigan minister, Pastor John Smith, in serving the gracious people of this small island nation, August 14-19, 2017. The diverse ministry team consisted of thirteen (13) pastors and lay members, ranging in ages from 16 to 70.

Pastor Stan Parker, President of the Michigan African American Fellowship and mission trip participant, revealed the trip had a threefold purpose: expose, engage, and evangelize. The desire was to expose African American Churches to missions, engage churches in partnering with church planters, and evangelize so that others will make a decision to accept Christ as their Lord and Savior. God did not fail as he allowed this threefold purpose to be accomplished.

The mission team began its exposure to ministry in St. Croix upon arrival by visiting the John F. Kennedy (JFK) Terrace, which would serve as the ministry focus throughout the week. The management team at JFK was very receptive and welcomed the mission team. This housing complex, which was composed of low-income individuals from various backgrounds, ranging from no religious beliefs to conservative Muslims, would serve as fertile ministry ground for the mission team.

Under the leadership of Pastor John Smith, the ministry team engaged in service to the individuals in the JFK housing complex throughout the week. These activities included the following:

- Praise and Prayer
- Games/prizes
- Crafts
- Face painting
- Water balloons
- Food (hot dogs/burgers)
- Fellowship
- Teaching of lessons
- Conversational evangelism
- Door-to-door evangelism
- 3-day revival

The mission team served more than 60 parents and children each day. And, by doing so allowed the team to share Christ with them, many of whom made decisions for Christ. The ministry team was able to glorify God by showering the beautiful people of St. Croix in His love. It is the prayer of the MAAF that the residents of St. Croix, will continue to accept Jesus as their personal Savior, that the saving of souls would continue daily, and the establishment of two bible studies in the JFK Complex in the near future. The mission team would like to conclude with a heartfelt thank you to Pastor John Smith. Thank you, Pastor John, for stepping out in faith to minister to the residents of St. Croix. God will surely reward your efforts!

For more information about future Michigan African American Fellowship (MAAF) ministry mission trips and/or if you desire to support the ministry in St. Croix, you may contact Pastor Stan Parker at [\(517\) 853-9897](tel:5178539897).

Bio:

Angela Spencer, currently resides in Lansing, MI and works as a Senior Business Analyst for Accenture. She is also a minister's wife, and faithfully serves as the Church Administrator for Faith Fellowship Baptist Church in Lansing, MI where Dr. Stan Parker is the Pastor.

AROUND THE STATE**READ IT!**

READ IT! Is a ministry of Eastside Community Church. It is a kids reading program and the children in our community love it. The program is designed to help with reading skills, especially for families with little help, no money and no time. READ IT! Focuses on getting children to read the Bible and grow in confidence both in the Word and in their reading skills. Last week 20 students attended. Eastside Community Church is providing this tool free to churches seeking ways to be part of the community. Contact Pastor Mathew Vroman for more information and to get started. Call (313) 657-1100 or email pastor@eastsidecommunitychurch.com.

CLASSIFIED

Classified Ad Submission Guidelines

1. Baptist Beacon classifieds are posted free of charge.
2. All classified posts will run for 2 consecutive months. Longer or shorter times may be requested. Publication of classifieds correspond with the monthly publication of the Baptist Beacon.
3. Classifieds must be from a BSCM church.
4. Be sure to include thorough details of request, name of church, contact information as well as a point of contact.
5. Submissions must be made no later than the 10th of the month prior to publication.
6. Submit all classified ads to beacon@bscm.org

Church Strengtheners/Mobilizers position

The Greater Detroit Baptist Association is seeking an individual for a Church Strengtheners/Mobilizers position. This position will replace the position of Associational Missionary (Director of Missions). [CLICK HERE](#) for more information about specific responsibilities, financial support, desired skills, education requirements, education requirements, ministry experience, and theological views. Interested applicants should send a cover letter and resume by July 31, 2017 to:

Mr. Nonnie Lesada,
Administrative Assistant
24250 Joy Road
Redford, MI 48239
detbaptassn@sbcglobal.net
313-533-2663

Family Ministry Leader

Warren Woods Baptist Church in Warren seeks a Family Ministry Leader to assist the church in developing a ministry to children, youth, and their families with the goal of inspiring faith, love and growing discipleship. Children's and youth ministry will reflect a balance of Bible study, fellowship, worship, service, and outreach.

Qualifications:

- A person with an undergraduate degree equivalent or with experience in children's and/or youth ministry
 - Strong organizational, leadership, and communication skills
 - Experience and ability in teaching and training
 - The ability to build and lead volunteer teams
 - A love for children, youth and families
 - In alignment and agreement with the Baptist Faith & Message 2000
 - A Christian who feels a call by God into ministry and demonstrates a personal relationship with Jesus Christ evidenced by Christian character and behavior
- This is a 20 hour per week position. Pay commensurate with qualifications. Please submit a resume to pcarnline@warrenwoods.org prior to May 31, 2017.

Singer or Speaker for Women's Group

Mary Hester is the pastor's Wife of The Shore Church in St. Joseph, Michigan where she serves with her husband, Church Planter and Pastor Kevin Hester. Mary has been involved in ministry for twenty plus years. She is a homeschooling mother of eight children with a passion for changed lives through the life changing power of God's word. Mary studied music at Bethel College in Mishawaka, Indiana and at Grace Bible College in Wyoming, Michigan. Mary is available to give full or partial concerts or for speaking engagements to women's groups. To schedule a concert or a speaking engagement contact Mary at mry_hester@yahoo.com.

Bi-vocational Pastor Needed

Liberty Missionary Baptist Church, in Monroe MI is searching for a bi-vocational Pastor. Please send resumes to retiredchief1980@att.net or curtpat33801@yahoo.com. If you have any questions you may call Ron Doolittle at 734-752-0238.

Church Information Packets

The information previously mailed out in the Church Information Packets will now be available online at bscm.org/flyers for all churches to download, print, and use!

ABOUT US

The Baptist Beacon is the official newsjournal of the Baptist State Convention of Michigan (BSCM), in association with the Southern Baptist Convention. The mission of the Baptist Beacon is to communicate with Michigan Baptists in our shared mission of punching holes in the darkness through starting, strengthening, and sending churches.

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