

EXALTING **CHRIST** • EQUIPPING **BELIEVERS** • EVANGELIZING **THE WORLD**

CORNERSTONE

SEPTEMBER - OCTOBER 2017

IN THIS ISSUE:

**Why I Like The Midweek
Prayer Meeting**

**Taking The Gospel
To The Unsaved**

...and more

TO YOU WHO **BELIEVE**, THIS **STONE** IS **PRECIOUS** • 1 PETER 2:7

Taking The Gospel To The Unsaved

Editorial

“Go into all the world and preach the gospel...”

Mark 16:15

In 1960, D. James Kennedy graduated from seminary and began preaching at the Coral Ridge Church in Fort Lauderdale, FL. After just eight months of ministry there, the congregation dwindled from 45 to 17 believers. Although he was very discouraged about what was happening, he would not give up. He realized the problem was that he lacked courage to confront unbelievers with the truth of the gospel. To his surprise, he was invited to Decatur, GA to conduct a gospel campaign for ten days. He preached each evening, but during the mornings and afternoons, he received training and visited homes, presenting the gospel door-to-door. Those experiences at the doorways of the unsaved would transform his ministry completely. After the evangelistic campaign, he returned to the Coral Ridge Church, where he implemented the principles he had learned in Georgia—he called these principles “Evangelism Explosion.” By presenting unsaved men and women with the claims of the gospel on their doorsteps, the Coral Ridge Church grew from 17 individuals to over 2,000 in nine years. These simple door-to-door evangelistic principles would be the means of winning thousands to Christ in the United States and throughout the world.

Door to Door Evangelism Answers Its Critics

Door-to-door evangelism is one of the few ways that each family in a city can be reached with the gospel. The Lord has effectively used this method throughout the history of the church, from the time of the early church (Acts 20:20) to the modern day. Today, church leaders are calling for renewed efforts in teaching and training Christians how to use door-to-door evangelism, proving the timelessness of this evangelistic method. In a study of the fastest growing 576 Southern Baptist churches in the U.S., Southern Baptist researcher Dr. Thomas Rainer concluded that traditional door-to-door evangelism was still a very useful evangelistic method. In the churches surveyed, 50.2% of these churches ranked weekly door-to-door evangelism as one of their most effective evangelistic tools. Bill Hohenstreet, of Post Falls Baptist Church in Post Falls, Idaho states that door-to-door visitation was critical to their evangelistic outreach. He explained that their primary outreach efforts were door-to-door, cold-call visitation, and Tuesday evening visitation using a prospect list. This church of two hundred saw forty-eight individuals come to faith in Jesus Christ and baptized in 1996. *“Churches that rated door-to-door evangelism highly did not believe that it was any less effective or resistance to visits was any greater than in years*

past.” Churches throughout the United States are beginning to find that consistent evangelistic visitation, when followed up with literature, Bible study, and hospitality are effective means in winning the lost to Christ.

Nevertheless, door-to-door evangelism is not without its critics. Since 1973 church growth experts have unwisely labeled this method as old-fashioned and ineffective in modern society. However, recent studies have challenged the validity of these widely-held convictions of church growth researchers. Thomas Rainer, who conducted a survey of the fastest growing churches, speaks of this issue when he writes, *“But what about the studies of growing churches which made the conclusion that traditional door-to-door evangelism was on the decline? The research of those studies was based on growing churches, not necessarily churches that were increasing in size by conversion growth. In fact, many of the churches were hardly growing at all through new converts, but by Christians who were leaving one church to join another. Additionally, the other studies rarely looked at more than forty to fifty churches; our research is based upon a study of over 500 churches.”* The results of this recent study have soundly contradicted the tenaciously-held beliefs of church growth experts. This fact has caused concern among many church leaders, and has led them to re-examine their evangelistic methods. Many are beginning to see that traditional methods are indeed Biblical, important, and effective means for producing conversion growth in churches.

Door to Door Evangelism Works!

Evangelism is not a special activity for special people at special times. It is the normal activity of all Christians as the Lord gives opportunity. There is a great need not only to invite the unsaved to hear the gospel, but to take the gospel to the unsaved. Presenting Christ door-to-door puts the “go” back into evangelism and emphasizes the “woe” of personal responsibility. A church’s evangelistic effort should be a blend of youth and children’s ministries, evangelistic Bible studies, prayer, regular gospel campaigns, and individual witnessing. But church leaders are coming to the conclusion that door-to-door evangelism is an essential if a church is serious about contacting an entire community for Christ.

David Dunlap

by David Dunlap

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News & Events



The 106th Annual Labor Day Conference Twin Cities, MN • Sept 1 - 4, 2017

Invited speakers are Dan Smith (IA) and Joe Reese (Ontario). All meetings with the exception of the breaking of bread meeting will be held at Christ the King Lutheran Church, 1900 7th St. NW, New Brighton, MN 55112. There will be nursery provided in addition to children's meetings and teen challenge meetings. Please check the website for contact info & housing accommodations: www.mnldc.net. Schedule as follows: Fri 9/1: Opening prayer mtg 7:30 pm, Sat. 9/2: 10:00, 3:00 & 7:00 (lunch & dinner served), Sun 9/3: Breaking of bread at various assemblies, 3:00 & 7:00 (lunch & dinner served), Mon 9/4: 10:00 am followed by lunch.

Labor Day Weekend Bible Conference

100 Mile House, BC • Sept 1 - 3, 2017

On September 1-3, the Horse Lake Christian Fellowship, at 100 Mile House, BC will host its annual Labor Day conference. This year's conference is entitled "Lord, You Alone are Worthy!" Plenary sessions and seminars will focus on the subject of Christian worship. Speakers invited are Mike Attwood (MO), Steve Price (KS), and Daniel Webster (Ghana). A children's program is planned to run concurrently with the conference sessions for children ages 3 through 11. Child care may be available for younger children. A hostel and events for youth is also planned. You are warmly welcomed by the believers of the convening assembly. For more details visit www.hlcf.org.

STW Bible Study

York, PA • Sept 9, 2017

The study enters its 29th year on September 9th with Mark Shelley (NC) teaching on "Faithful Youth in Trying Times." It starts at 10AM and ends by 3PM with lunch served. Held at North York Gospel Chapel this topic will be followed by others on the 2nd Saturday of each month (Sept.- May). More information is available at www.FoodForSaints.com.

Tillsonburg Bible Chapel Fall Weekend Conference

September 9-10, 2017

Please join Tillsonburg Bible Chapel for their fall conference on Sept 9-10, 2017. The speaker is Bob Johnson who will be speaking on "Marriage and the Family." Schedule for the weekend: Saturday September 9 - Sessions 1 & 2 (10:00am - 12:00pm), Sessions 3 & 4 (1:00pm - 3:00pm), Sunday September 10 - Breaking of Bread (9:30am - 10:30am), Session 5 (11:00 am - 12:00 pm), Sessions 6 & 7 (1:00 pm - 3:00 pm) Please note that lunch will be provided both days and that registration is required. For more information or to register please contact Jim Noseworthy Sr. by phone (519 842-7410) or email (tillsonburgbiblechapel@bell.net).

2017 Bible Conference on the Bay

Harvey Cedars Bible Conference,
12 Cedars Ave., Harvey Cedars, NJ
September 11-15, 2017

The conference begins Monday at 5:30 PM and runs until Friday 10:30 AM. The speaker is Paul Young (Wales, UK) and the cost is \$399 per person. Enjoy a great time of fellowship and ministry at the Jersey Shore. Great accommodations, great food, great location. Other events are scheduled for the week. For more information, visit www.knowtheword.com or email Mark Kolchin at knowtheword@gmail.com or call (609) 709-3220

Shepherding Conference

Fayetteville, PA • Sept 21 - 23, 2017

The Shepherding Conference is directed by Spread The Word and held at Greenwood Hills Bible Conference, Fayetteville, PA. The conference is open to men of all ages. (One need not be an elder to attend.) Conference starts with a noon lunch on Thursday September 21st and ends on Saturday 23rd with a noon lunch. Scheduled speakers are John Gordon, Bruce Hulshizer, Mark Kolchin, Bob Spender. More information is available at www.FoodForSaints.com and www.GreenwoodHills.net.

30th Annual San Luis Valley Women's Conference

Calvary Bible Chapel, Alamosa, CO
October 6 - 7, 2017

Guest speaker: Linda Evans Shepherd from Longmont, Colorado will be teaching on the subject "Faith like a Mustard Seed". Friday: 7-9 PM, Saturday 9AM-3PM. Childcare and scholarships available. Continental breakfast and Lunch included. Reservations are essential. \$45 for the entire conference. For more information: Kay Jones 719-480-2352 or kayjones@fairpoint.net

2017 National Workers and Elders Conference

Raleigh, North Carolina • October 10-12

The 2017 National Workers and Elders Conference will be held Oct. 10-12 at the North Ridge Bible Chapel in Raleigh, North Carolina. The theme of the conference will be "Encouragement for Pilgrims from 1st Peter." To register, please visit www.workerselders.org/#/register. Come join with other workers and elders in seeking the Lord concerning His church and the lost world.



News & Events

Believers Bible Conference

Murfreesboro, TN • December 27-30, 2017

An international assembly Bible conference. This year's theme: The Glory of the Cross. Plenary speakers: Alan Gamble, Glasgow, (Scotland); Nate Bramsen, (Niger); Keith Keyser, (PA). In addition to plenary sessions there will be over 25 seminars conducted by competent Bible teachers on various themes related to the cross in Christian life and service. Registration is required and details will follow on the conference website. The conference will be held at Embassy Suits & Convention Center, 1200 Conference Center Blvd, Murfreesboro, TN. For more information please contact: Brian Gunning at briangunning1@gmail.com or call (905) 685-5090

Wanted: Camp Director

Marshview Bible Camp on the Georgia coast is in need of a camp director (or a couple) for the months of May thru July (possibly couple) for active children's ministry. Workers can live on camp site if desired. Please respond to: Thomas J. Taylor 50 Red Hawk Road Seabrook Island, Midway, Georgia 31320. Phone 912-884-3938 or 912-312-2478

Wanted: Young or Retired Couple

The Deep South Family Bible Camp located in Carriere, MS, is looking for a young or retired couple to care for and oversee the camp grounds. Interested parties should contact Robert Brown at jesusistheway@junio.com

Commendation to Full-Time Service

Boulevard Bible Chapel in Pembroke Pines, FL would like to announce the commendation of Christian Aichele to the work of the Lord. He has been involved in the work of evangelism, teaching, equipping, and in assisting believers for many years. The Lord's blessing upon his labors has been evident. Therefore, the elders and the believers at Boulevard Bible Chapel have officially and corporately commended Christian to the work the Lord has called him.

Commendation of Rodney and Pam Hain

After much prayer and seeking the Lord, the Bible Chapel of Shawnee, in Kansas City, KS, has commended Rodney and Pam Hain to the work of the Lord at Turkey Hill Ranch Bible Camp with an official start date of May 1, 2017. We value your prayers for them and their labor for the Lord.

Scripture Teaching Library

STL is a publisher of devotional and expository Christian literature. It uses print-on-demand technology to provide sound biblical literature for Christians world-wide. There are over 40 titles available by respected writers. Their books are available through our website www.scriptureteachinglibrary.com

Western Assemblies Home

Western Assemblies Home is an assisted living facility located at 350 Berkeley Avenue, Claremont, in sunny California. They offer Assisted Living with single and two room suites. Eleven Independent Living houses are also available close to the main building. Claremont Bible Chapel is just a short walk or quick ride in the Home's van away. For more information on independent or assisted living in an assembly-focused environment please contact Lynn Hughes or Rod Chance at (909) 626-3711, or visit their website at www.westernassemblieshome.org.

The412Project: Blog for Young People

Esther Bosworth from Boulevard Bible Chapel in Pembroke Pines, FL has begun an excellent blog for young people. There are encouraging posts on prayer, outreach, and serving the Lord. Visit her page and tell others about The412Project.

www.the412project.wordpress.com

Assembly Request

Would some doctrinally sound, self-supporting Christian couple, or some doctrinally sound, self-supporting single Christian brother, if exercised and able to give help in a small Christian assembly, prayerfully consider contact with the assembly at Gospel Chapel in Avera, Georgia. Curtis Thigpen, correspondent, 1074 Sunset Blvd. Avera, GA 30803, 706-547-6276, thigpens1074@att.net

Overbrook Gospel Invites Students

Overbrook Gospel Chapel, in Greenville, SC, invites students attending Bob Jones University to fellowship with us. For information or transportation, contact DeWitt Jones at 864-232-0529, Ed Goodwin at 864-268-7959, or check out our website, www.overbrookchapel.org

Homecalls

Donald Norbie (1923-2017)

Don Norbie passed into the presence of the Lord on July 30, at 1:15pm. He was 94 years old. Don was born in Minnesota in 1923 and was led to the Lord in 1938. After his Navy service in WWII, he attended Wheaton College. Following graduation, in 1949, he and his wife Marie were commended to the Lord's service by Bethany Chapel in Wheaton, IL. Don taught Greek for three years at Emmaus Bible School. In 1970, Don and Marie moved to Greeley, CO, where they were engaged in Bible teaching, prison work, and evangelism. Marie preceded Don to glory in 2014. Don was a respected Christian leader, counselor to many, gifted writer, evangelist, and Bible teacher. He was a blessing to all who knew him.

Establishing New Testament Assemblies IN NORTH AMERICA



During the apostolic era, pioneering efforts pertained to missionaries visiting regions that had never heard of Jesus Christ previously. Though believers were rigorously opposed by the devil, many souls were saved and new local churches sprang up throughout the Roman Empire. Those responding to the gospel were to be discipled and cared for in local church fellowships (Matt. 28:19-20; Heb. 10:25). This generalizes the scriptural pattern for pioneering ministry.

The Modern Challenge

The present dynamic in North America is quite different than in New Testament (NT) days. The modernized Church is not persecuted and is mostly ignored. Our post-modern society already has some notion of Jesus Christ, but on the whole it has rejected Him through humanism, invented religion, or disregard. Many local churches have become places for social gatherings, entertainment, professionalism, and religious form. Paul and Barnabas planted churches with a clean slate; however, the pattern and order they established is contrary to what is accepted in “churchianity” today. So, barring another Great Awakening to revive the pampered Church from her slumber, how do we carry on the great commission today?

Outreach Ministry

Evangelism is a life-style; all Christians are called to be witnesses of Christ (Acts 1:8). The Church is to actively exalt God, edify believers, and evangelize the lost. If any of these upward, inward, and outward ministries is neglected a local church will wane in time. When our assemblies decrease, we often think that stepping up evangelistic efforts will rectify the problem; but often such declines occur because of poor body-

life, sin, or displacing Christ and His word. Acts chapters 2-6 show us that reproduction is a normal part of healthy church life. Proper discipleship protects new converts from falling prey to flesh-appeal and false teachers (Eph. 4:14). Upholding Christ’s Lordship resolves most church problems and keeps everyone’s focus where it should be (1 Cor. 1:1-10).

The Church has employed various outreach methods through the centuries. Scripture poses two evangelistic metaphors: the fisherman (representing one-on-one witnessing) and the farmer (who casts gospel seed over many soils or heart-conditions). When a fisherman casts a line into the water, the result is quickly known—a fish is caught or not. However, the farmer understands that there will not be a harvest in the future unless seeds are sown now. Beloved, it is wrong to neglect seed-sowing activities just because we do not see immediate results. The Church in North America has largely adopted a business mentality, and has become focused largely on enticements and numerical results rather than following the scriptural example. So our outreach ministries should include things like: backyard and after-school kids’ clubs, ESL classes, reaching out to refugees, open-air preaching, door-to-door work, and literature tables/booths at college campuses, flea markets, and county/state fairs.

Our Experience in Establishing New Testament Assemblies

My wife and I were introduced to the NT Church pattern almost 35 years ago in a hive-off work to establish a new local church. Since that time we have labored to establish new assemblies as the Lord has blessed with new converts. We have many lessons-learned, thrilling stories, and also disappointments. It is important to realize that not all

outreach work is for the purpose of seeing a new assembly begin. Prison ministry, rescue missions, and attending to the poor are certainly important, but do not have this goal (nor should they). The poor and those struggling with substance abuse often respond best to the gospel (thank the Lord); however, these people require much love, time, and resources and often have a transient lifestyle. So, if the goal is to establish a new local assembly, it would be good to remember that there are just so many of these folks that can be helped, while accomplishing that objective. Later, an established assembly will be better able to reach those in need.

For us the most effective method for us of seeing people saved, discipled, and added to a new work has been through home or workplace Bible studies and children's ministries. After-school clubs have been effective in leading several children to

A church environment stressing the priesthood of all believers is important: men, women, and children should be prepared worshipers for the Lord's Supper. Believers should be challenged to use their spiritual gifts and fulfill their callings. All should pursue holy living and be involved in church body-life.

Christ, and in providing additional contacts for home studies. Evangelistic studies often consist of just one or two people; then after conversion, believers are placed into larger studies to build relationships. We often do not invite new believers or folks attending home studies to the local assembly for several months for two reasons: first, to build their trust in us personally (as legitimate teachers of Scripture); and second, to allow sufficient time for them to grasp and learn the truth. This is God's work and requires patience! By introducing NT principles for gathering gradually and casually, believers begin to desire to see what a biblical church meeting looks like. Through the years, new converts have generally embraced NT principles joyfully, while those coming out of denominationalism tend to struggle, as the new pattern they are learning conflicts with what they are familiar with.

Establishing a New Testament Assembly

While having established one assembly without any outside help, I would suggest to have a starting core group of at least three like-minded families. Having other assemblies nearby is

a tremendous help. Do not let the excitement of starting a new work cut short the necessary up-front dialogue of doctrine and church practices; the devil can use disagreements later to cause division and stop the effort. Established local churches have an oversight to guard the believers, so more diversity in thinking is permissible, but those in a new work must be cohesive. A detailed doctrinal statement and vision/mission statement should be developed. Then every nook and cranny of church practices should be discussed. The five "heavy-hitters" are: divorce/remarriage, Calvinism, youth ministries (including Sunday school), eschatology, and gender roles (including symbolic truth).

Other matters to be considered include: What are the meetings of the church? What type of teaching/format will be used? What type of emblems will be at the Lord's Supper? What type of government will be formed and how should leaders be recognized? There should be agreement on charismatic issues, "easy-believism" vs. "lordship salvation", creationism views, dispensational thinking, permissible music/instruments, Bible translations, facility goals (e.g., home, rental, or ownership of a building), and a blameless method of collecting and managing funds. Believers gather to Christ, so beware of initial clicks that can stress unity later (schooling preferences, political agendas, family clans, out-of-balance doctrine, etc.). Understand local laws and then decide whether to incorporate, pursue 501c3 status, and apply for sales tax exemption.

A church environment stressing the priesthood of all believers is important: men, women, and children should be prepared worshipers for the Lord's Supper. Believers should be challenged to use their spiritual gifts and fulfill their callings. All should pursue holy living and be involved in church body-life.

Pressing Onward

Until the Lord returns for His Church, may we continue to pray for a reviving work of God among His people in North America, and in the interim let us be faithful to the Great Commission. We live in a dark world which desperately needs Christ and needs to see a real work of God that represents the wonder of who He really is!

Warren Henderson is a full-time worker living in northeast Kansas. He is involved in writing, evangelism, and Bible teaching. Currently, he is pioneering a new assembly in Ottawa, Kansas.

by Warren Henderson



The scene is a far too familiar one: the regularly scheduled elders' meeting begins with a brief, but generalized, time of prayer. It is then followed by the usual routine of going around the table, asking each elder what he would like to discuss. The suggestions usually range from the urgent to the trivial – and everything in between. The discussion may be punctuated with a passionate exchange of differing opinions, or it may simply proceed in the typical, unexciting “business as usual” format. A few important items may be discussed at length, but by the end of the meeting, it resembles more of an administrative task force than a spiritual, strategic planning and implementation think tank. Unfortunately, the minutia of assembly life often wins the day – the withering details that cause the heads and hands to droop even lower than when the meeting first began—and it comes to a rushed and nebulous conclusion.

If this has been your experience in the meetings in which you serve as an elder, take heart – you are not alone! Too many elders' meetings are characterized by such a routine, a routine that needs to be adjusted, if not radically overhauled, if the local church is to make a difference in the world. Considering the gravity of the present decline in our culture, it is incumbent upon all elders to maximize their time, sharpen their focus, and identify and address the significant spiritual issues affecting congregational life. True, there will always be minor “housekeeping” details that need to be addressed, but to exclude the more serious issues that require deeper spiritual dredging should never be neglected. These issues need to be brought up for discussion, prayerfully examined, and properly dealt with. The vitality and well-being of the congregation is at stake, a condition for which the elders will have to one day give an account (Heb. 13:17). If the elders don't do the job, who will? With this in mind, I would like to suggest some helpful reminders to revitalize and improve the elders' meetings.

Prepare Your Heart

Prior to the elders' meeting, each elder should privately commit this meeting to the Lord in prayer. As undershepherds of God's heritage, prayer for everything affecting the local assembly should be the regular exercise of every elder. Since this position was one that was desired (1 Tim 3:1), there should be a readiness to bathe their responsibility in prayer and an eagerness to do so. Done regularly, this can only help to elevate the tone of the meeting and steer it away from the mundane. In so doing, elders can practically demonstrate what Paul exhorted the Philippians to do, to “approve the things that are excellent” (Phil. 1:10).

Establish an Agenda

Another helpful reminder for effective elder's meetings is to be prepared with an agenda ahead of time—not your agenda, but the elders! The temptation can arise to come to this meeting without adequate preparation and simply react to the items that are put on the table. Without proper forethought on the part of each elder, effective elder's meetings will struggle to stay afloat. To facilitate this, elders in some fellowships arrange in advance to collect agenda items in order to assemble and prioritize a master list. This can be done through emails or phone calls to a designated elder, who collects all agenda items. This will help keep the meeting on track and effectively move it along at an even pace. Each elder should certainly be encouraged to keep an ongoing list between meetings so that there is not a frantic last-minute attempt to assemble such a list.

Budget Your Time

Another important element of effective elders' meetings and a must if they are to be revitalized, is to adequately budget the time allotted. The length of the meetings may vary among local congregations, but one thing is usually the same— items brought up first on the agenda have the luxury of being given

yond MEDIOCRITY

a lot more consideration time, while items that come up at the end are time-deprived. This is accentuated when the typical order is routinely followed, and the elder who unfortunately is last in line has only minutes to talk about the items on his list. This is why a pre-arranged and prioritized list is so important—it avoids a lopsided agenda and keeps the discussion balanced. If this is the format followed, try switching it up and changing the order. In the same vein, try also alternating who leads the discussion each month, quarter, or year. It will go a long way in keeping things fresh.

Stay on Track

Staying on track is also an imperative for effective elders' meetings. We have all experienced the curse of getting off course. The question is asked: "How is brother so-and-so doing after his surgery?" "Well, he's fine. He is out of rehab, but his car is in the shop." To which another elder replies: "Maybe we need to arrange rides for him. By the way, have we serviced the church van lately?" Another elder replies, "No, not lately. Who is responsible anyway for servicing the van and why don't we get a maintenance schedule established? This is a problem and we need to fix it." And off the discussion goes into orbit, requiring a lasso a mile long to bring it back. A simple question of asking how a person in the assembly is doing ends up going in a completely different direction. And we wonder why we run out of time by the end of the meeting! If we are to accomplish what really needs to be accomplished, it will require disciplined thinking, planning, and the ability to bring the discussion back into focus. That is not easy to do, but it is critical! It is standard operating procedure in the business world; why not do it even better in the house of God, which is the "pillar and ground of truth"? (1 Tim. 3:15)

Keep Good Notes

Finally, there is a need to record items discussed and decisions rendered if we are to have effective elders' meetings. We so easily forget and need our memories jogged as to the details surrounding certain decisions, especially in the months afterwards. Notes should be taken, duplicated, and stored for easy retrieval. Copies should be promptly provided to each of the elders. A collective "To Do" list which would include specifics and dates for which items on the list are to be accomplished should be assembled. Furthermore, efforts should be taken to employ every elder for the tasks at hand. This helps avoid the "armchair elder" syndrome that can characterize many elders' meetings – a lot of talk, but little or no action.

Effective elders' meetings are definitely needed if we are to make any spiritual headway for Christ. These are just a few suggestions for elders to help things run more smoothly in a job that receives very little thanks. Regardless, it is a position that should emote from every member of the local church an attitude of acknowledgement, submission, and loving respect for those who serve the Lord in this way (Heb.13:7, 17, 24). Anything that can be done to make elders' meetings more efficient and more effective will help foster appreciation for the challenging work in which elders are engaged.

Mark Kolchin is a commended full-time worker from Lanoka Harbor, NJ. He is in fellowship at Bethany Bible Chapel in Silverton, NJ. He is involved in writing, Bible teaching, and evangelism. He is married to Cindy and has four children.

by Mark Kolchin



WHY I LIKE THE MIDWEEK Prayer MEETING

I like the mid-week prayer meeting. I feel sorry for Christians who cannot make it due to legitimate demands of work and family. I feel even sorrier for Christians who can make it to prayer meeting but choose not to. Here's why mid-week prayer meeting should be on every believer's schedule.

✓ It is a time of spiritual refreshment in the midst of a hostile world. All week long we are confronted with this world. Its constant assault can dull our spiritual senses and wear us down in spiritual apathy. The prayer meeting is a great way to get refocused on the thing that really matters. We need the prayer meeting to keep us sharp spiritually. We can never have too much exposure to spiritual things. Let the busyness of life crowd out other things, but not the prayer meeting.

✓ The prayer meeting connects us with fellow believers. The writer to the Hebrews challenged us to meet frequently (Heb. 10:25) for mutual encouragement and to avoid the danger of abandoning the assembling of ourselves together. We minister to others and others ministered to us when we attend at prayer meeting.

✓ Prayer changes things. The collective prayer of God's people is a powerful force. Yes, we do pray privately too. But there is added force when believers assemble together to pray. It supports so many lives and ministries. The very health of your assembly depends on men and women who know how to pray.

✓ The mid-week prayer meeting presents an ideal opportunity for younger men to learn to develop gifts in preaching, song leading, and chairing meetings. Young men, be there! And the rest of us should be there, too, to support the next generation.

✓ It is an ideal time to hear missionary reports. With today's

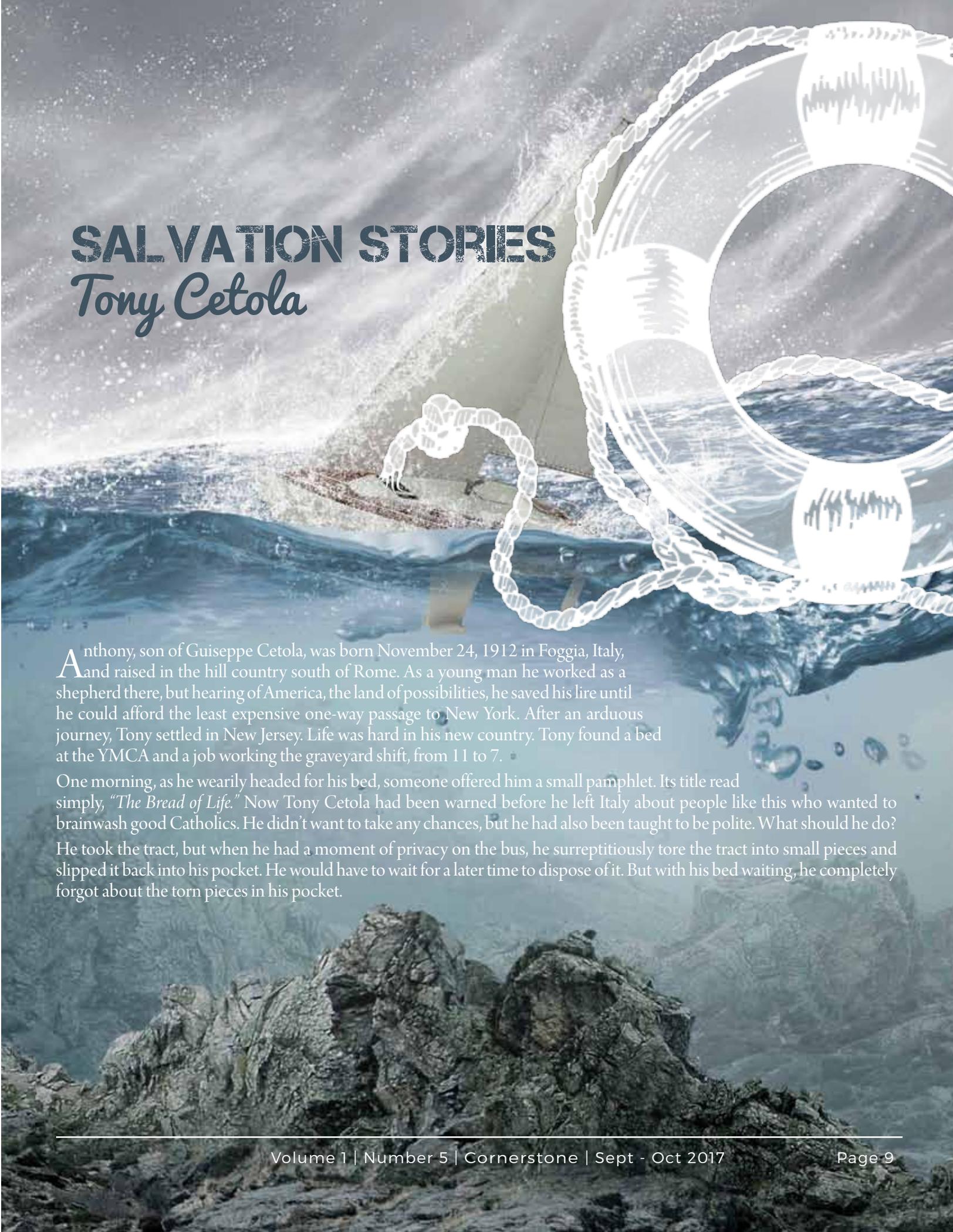
technology, we can have live presentations from missionaries all over the world. Hearing and praying for other ministries beyond our own local area is healthy for every assembly. Who knows what future missionaries are sitting right in your prayer meeting? And who knows what an impact we can have in some work on the other side of the world?

✓ The prayer meeting is mandated in the New Testament. The early church continued in prayer according to the book of Acts (Acts 2:42). It was not just occasional but steadfast (Acts 12:5). If we claim to be New Testament churches, then we need to follow the example and likewise be steadfast in prayer.

So how is your schedule this week? Will you and your family make room for prayer meeting? Don't miss this blessing from heaven.

Brian Gunning is married to Marlene and they have four children. Brian is a self employed accountant. He has been in fellowship at Brockview Bible Chapel in St. Catharines, ON since his early teen years and currently is an elder in that assembly. In addition to itinerant preaching he is on the boards of Counsel Magazine, the Ontario Workers and Elders Conference, Gospel Folio Press, Bible Conference Corporation and Cornerstone Magazine Inc.

by **Brian Gunning**

A dramatic seascape with a ship's mast and a life preserver overlaid. The background shows a ship's mast and rigging against a dark, stormy sky with rain falling. In the foreground, a large, white, rope-like life preserver is superimposed over the scene. The water is dark and turbulent, with white foam from the ship's wake. The overall mood is one of peril and survival.

SALVATION STORIES

Tony Cetola

Anthony, son of Guiseppe Cetola, was born November 24, 1912 in Foggia, Italy, and raised in the hill country south of Rome. As a young man he worked as a shepherd there, but hearing of America, the land of possibilities, he saved his lire until he could afford the least expensive one-way passage to New York. After an arduous journey, Tony settled in New Jersey. Life was hard in his new country. Tony found a bed at the YMCA and a job working the graveyard shift, from 11 to 7.

One morning, as he wearily headed for his bed, someone offered him a small pamphlet. Its title read simply, "*The Bread of Life*." Now Tony Cetola had been warned before he left Italy about people like this who wanted to brainwash good Catholics. He didn't want to take any chances, but he had also been taught to be polite. What should he do? He took the tract, but when he had a moment of privacy on the bus, he surreptitiously tore the tract into small pieces and slipped it back into his pocket. He would have to wait for a later time to dispose of it. But with his bed waiting, he completely forgot about the torn pieces in his pocket.

One morning some days later, Tony stood waiting for his bus. He was tired and cold. Rain began to fall. He moved to stand under the awning of a nearby bakery. The smell of fresh baked goods wafted to his nostrils. Tony's stomach reminded him that he was very hungry, but he had no money to spare. To warm his hands he shoved them deep into his pockets.

And felt the gospel tract. He remembered the title: "*The Bread of Life*," and couldn't help a hint of a smile from sitting across his face. He knew God was speaking to him. The rain from heaven had moved him to stand near enough to the bakery to enjoy its smells. The chill wind from heaven had caused him to push his hands into his pocket at that moment. And the message from heaven was waiting, though torn in pieces, there in his grasp.

As soon as Tony arrived at his room, he began to reassemble the tract pieces until he could, although with some difficulty, read the message he now believed was sent from God Himself. On that cold, drizzly New Jersey morning, after a long night of manual labor, Tony Cetola realized his true hunger was in his heart, a hunger for God's Bread, the Lord Jesus, and salvation through His name.

There in the YMCA, at the age of 22, he heard the words of the Savior as if they were directly to him, "*I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever*" (John 6:51). He received Him, and his soul was satisfied. He found a group of believers, and for the next 67 years, Tony Cetola quietly and humbly served the One who had redeemed him. It could well be given as his testimony

the words of 1 Timothy 6:6, "*Godliness with contentment is great gain.*"

On his deathbed, the one-time shepherd boy from the Southern Apennines looked up at his son. Barely able to speak, he asked if they could sing one of his favorite songs:

*I have a Shepherd, One I love so well,
How He has blessed me tongue can never tell,
On the cross he suffered, shed His blood and died,
That I might ever in His love confide.*

*Following Jesus, ever day by day,
Nothing can harm me when He leads the way;
Darkness or sunshine, what'er befall,
Jesus, the Shepherd, is my All in All.*

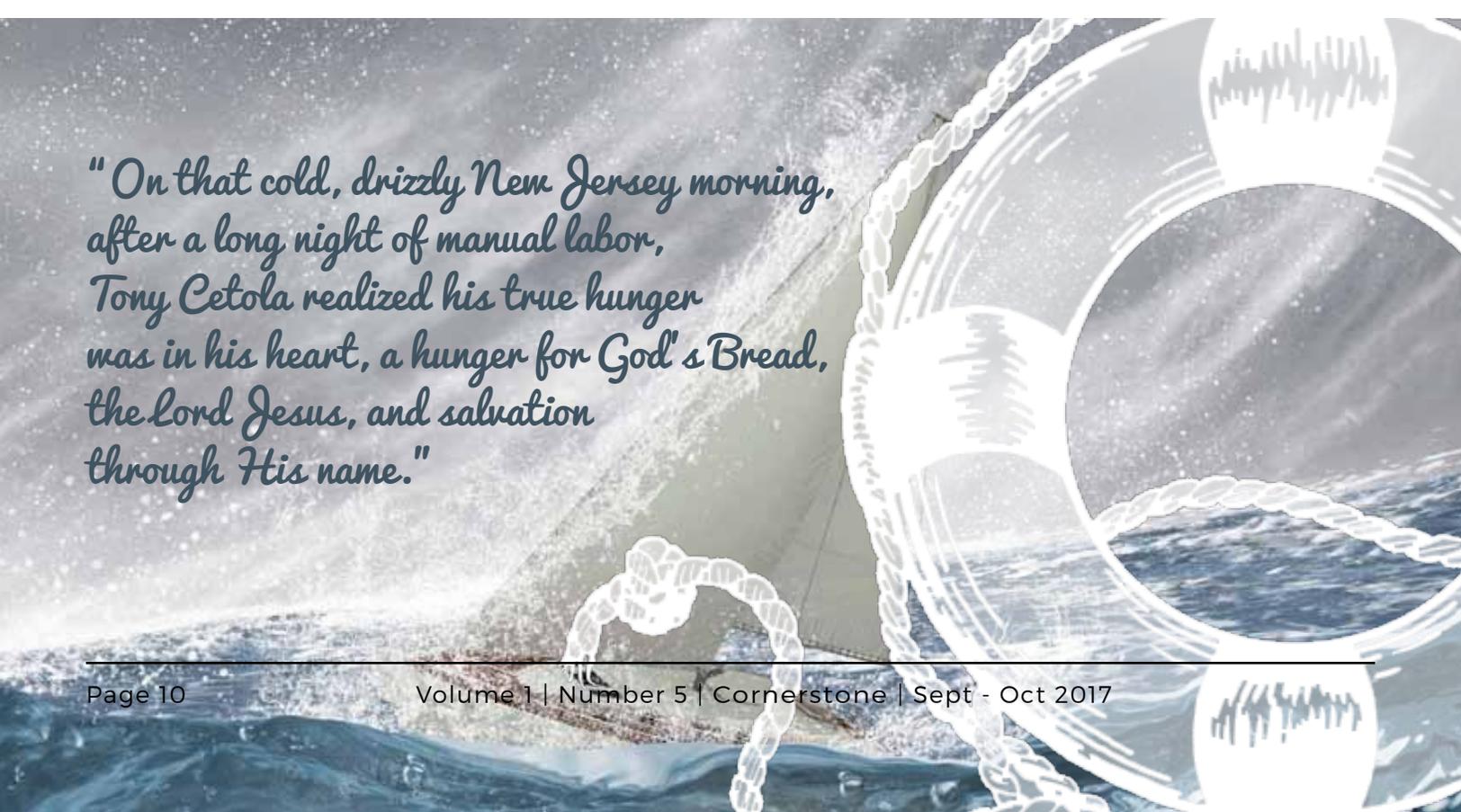
*Pastures abundant doth His hand provide,
Still waters owing ever at my side,
Goodness and mercy follow on my track,
With such a Shepherd nothing can I lack.*

*When I would wander from the path astray,
Then He will draw me back into the way;
In the darkest valley I need fear no ill,
For He, my Shepherd, will be with me still.*

*When labors ended and the journey done,
Then He will lead me safely to my home;
There I shall dwell in rapture sure and sweet,
with all the loved ones gathered round His feet.*

(Lyrics by Leonard Weaver)

- This article originally appeared in *Uplook* magazine - as retold by Jabe Nicholson



"On that cold, drizzly New Jersey morning, after a long night of manual labor, Tony Cetola realized his true hunger was in his heart, a hunger for God's Bread, the Lord Jesus, and salvation through His name."

THE *Glory* OF THE **CROSS** *Believers Bible* CONFERENCE 2017

December 27th to December 30th

Check-in Starts: Wed., Dec. 27th, 2017 at 2:00PM

First General Session: Wed., Dec. 27th, 2017 at 7:30PM

Conference Closing: Sat., Dec. 30th, 2017 at 11:00AM

Location

Embassy Suites & Convention Center

1200 Conference Center Blvd., Murfreesboro, TN, 37129 USA
30 minutes from central Nashville, TN

Hotel Accommodations

All deluxe rooms are 2 room suites.
Upgraded ballrooms, break-out rooms, and board rooms; large open (10 storey) atrium; indoor pool and spa, fitness room; casual dining, and coffee shop.

Children's Program

Children aged 2-12 can enjoy the program and their own menu planned just for them!

Teens

Come for a time of fun and fellowship with a message each night!
Feel free to bring board games, song books, guitars, etc., for this time!

Seminars

Victory in Jesus	Mike Attwood
The Cross and Missions	Bob Dadd (CMMML)
Praying in the Holy Spirit	Scott DeGroff
Preaching the Cross	Grady Dollar
Outside the Camp	David Dunlap
Prophecies of Christ's Sufferings	Alan Gamble
Types and Shadows of the Cross	Keith Keyser
The Christ of the Cross	Keith Keyser
Exalting the Lamb in Worship	Mark Kolchin
The Exceeding Sinfulness of Sin	Steve Price
Gospel Zeal	Chris Schoeder
Sacrificial Stewardship	Mike Stoudt
The Cross and Consecration	Rex Trogdon
Hymnology of the Cross	Rex Trogdon
Women Only:	
Women Living Out History	Vickie Gaynier
Women at the Cross and at the Tomb	Nadia Mikhael

General Session Speakers



Alan Gamble



Nate Bramsen



Keith Keyser

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I, Robert, was born in 1938 near Algoma, Wisconsin, to dairy-farming parents. Both of my parents were practicing Roman Catholics; so, of course, I was baptized as an infant, and grew up in Catholic church.

Before Christ

When I was old enough to understand, something of the world around me, I realized that the World War II was over and the great depression that preceded it was over as well. Many transitions were taking place during this era. Early on, my father did some of the field work with horses; but as time went on, tractors and mechanization took over. I went to grade school in a one-room schoolhouse located on the edge of our farm; consequently, high school was a bit of a shock. When I began attending high school I joined the Future Farmers' organization and soon grew determined to follow in my father's footsteps. After high school I attended a fifteen-week Farm Short Course at the UW College of Agriculture. At age 22, I enlisted in the U. S. Army and served 6 years of active duty/active reserves.

Julie was born in the same county to Roman Catholic parents as well. Her father was employed at one of the major meat packers in Green Bay. Midway through high school her

family moved near Green Bay, where she graduated from high school. Following graduation, Julie worked in retail sales in a large department store.

We met in late 1961 at a wedding dance that neither of us was invited to. We began to date and were engaged a year later. Following our marriage, in August of 1963, we farmed together with my parents for a number of years, until taking the farm over in 1974. Dairy farming is time and labor intensive, so much of our time was dedicated to that endeavor, as well as involvement in farm organizations and cooperatives. During those years, the Lord blessed us with two daughters and then a son.

We were very involved in our local Roman Catholic church as well. I was president of the parish council, at one point and Julie served on the school board. The teachings of that church were all that we knew. The Bible was just a big book turned open on a stand in our living room—sort of an ornament.

Time of Searching

In the late seventies with the stresses of the farm, and raising a family, Julie became a bit disillusioned with her circumstances, in comparison to what her expectations had been. In God's

providence, the “Jesus Movement” and the charismatic movement in the Catholic church began manifesting themselves in our area. Some of her friends became involved in the Bible studies and luncheons that were held, and they invited Julie to attend. She began to hear things from the Bible, things previously unknown to us. At first I wasn’t too interested because, after all, we were in the true church. But as time went on, we began to discuss some of the things she heard. Our veterinarian, an elder in the assembly with which we would eventually fellowship, gave us Bibles. As president of a local Christian radio station, he encouraged us to listen to the programs, soon we were hearing good Bible-based preaching.

Eventually, we began to notice differences, radical ones, between the teachings of the Catholic Church and the Bible’s teachings—namely salvation by faith alone, the Lord’s Supper, and absence of praying to Mary. We encountered some difficulty understanding what exactly “the new birth” was and how it came about. Eventually, in December of 1980, we both trusted Jesus Christ alone to be our Savior and Lord and experienced that new birth. In May of 1981 we started attending the assembly that has since become Country Bible Church.

A New Relationship

Before we were saved, we probably saw each other as the most important person in our lives. All of that changed now. There was a new person, One more important than our spouse, in each of our lives—the Man Christ Jesus, who, of course, was the eternal Son of God as well. We were saved in middle age and soon found out that there was much we didn’t know about our God, His Son, and the Holy Spirit. We were biblically illiterate! We did know that we were saved beyond any doubt (1 John 5:13), an assurance we never had before. No more kneeling in the confessional before a priest, because now we could confess directly to our High Priest (1 John 1:9).

Though the dairy farm still consumed much of our time, little by little we learned biblical truth. Our assembly had one brother who had attended Emmaus Bible College, but the other men who taught had no Bible college education. Some coming from outside might have said that they were “uneducated and untrained men” (Acts 4:13). But all the brothers who taught knew Jesus and loved His Word, the Bible. Christian radio was another venue that aided us in our Christian growth and walk.

One of the blessings and privileges of fellowship in a New Testament assembly is the opportunity to use spiritual gifts. At some point in time, I was asked to speak at our Sunday evening meetings, and eventually at our Family Bible Hour on Sunday morning. There came a time when the elders saw leadership ability in me and asked me to join them in the oversight of the assembly.

Mid-Life Changes

Not long after being saved, I had a desire to be involved in ministry to a greater degree—perhaps attending a Bible

college or seminary would better equip me. So we put our dairy farm up for sale—and it was up for sale for many, many years. (The Lord has His timetable for His own.) Finally, in 1997, part of the farm sold. Our son owns the remainder of the farm; he and his family are in fellowship in our assembly. But did I want to enroll in a Bible college at sixty years of age? The Lord, in His providence, helped with that dilemma. In February of 1998, Country Bible Church commended me as a local worker. I have appreciated so much the opportunity

One of the blessings and privileges of fellowship in a New Testament assembly is the opportunity to use spiritual gifts.

they gave me. I do some of our teaching and lead Bible studies as well. I write an article for our weekly bulletin, and visit our elderly and shut-ins at home, hospitals, or residential facilities. Julie helps me with the visitation and provides hospitality for visiting speakers.

Filling A Need

Even before I was commended, Julie and I had begun to take training in biblical counseling at Faith Baptist in Lafayette, Indiana, because we realized there was a need for that ministry in our local assembly. After our commendation, I earned an undergraduate degree in biblical counseling from Trinity Seminary in Newburgh, Indiana, in addition to training received at various seminars and conferences.

I want to emphasize that our counseling is truly biblical, rather than integrational. Julie has been very helpful in this ministry, especially when counseling women. The counseling ministry that Country Bible Church has provided has been a benefit for our assembly, as well as for men and women from outside the assembly.

Bob Steiner is a full-time worker residing in Luxemburg, Wisconsin. He is an elder at Country Bible Church, and is active in preaching, writing, and biblical counseling. He is married to Julie, they have three grown children.

by Bob Steiner

Report: Missionary Service Committee, Canada

Local Church-Driven Missions



From the start, MSC has held four key beliefs about missions. First, we believe that God is the one who calls and sends workers. It's more that God calls and enables people and much less that they choose the life of mission work. Also, this means that churches, God's frontline for the Great Commission, send workers rather than a parachurch organization. Second, we believe that the Holy Spirit doesn't require a large organizational missions structure to accomplish His work. A top-heavy organization is restrictive and inflexible and unable to quickly accommodate the moves of God's Spirit. Consequently, we strive to keep MSC personal, nimble, efficient, Spirit-led, and flexible. Third, we believe in a partnership model that reflects the many different roles each member of the body has to play in missions. No local church on its own can fill all the necessary pieces of accomplishing cross-cultural missions in the 21st Century. Finally, we believe that God will supply all that is needed to accomplish the work He has called mission workers to do. Mission workers are called to ministry, not fundraising.

A Brief History

With the world at war in 1940, a collection of elders from Brethren assemblies in Toronto started the Missionary

Service Committee as a means of efficiently transferring funds to overseas missionaries while complying with then-newly introduced Foreign Exchange Controls. For over 75 years now, MSC has served mission workers and their sending churches as they seek to fulfill the Great Commission. We still help move money to missions, but as the years have passed, we have expanded our services to help meet the evolving needs of mission workers and their sending churches.

Mission + Service Connections

These days, we like to think that the "MSC" in MSC Canada stands for *Mission + Service Connections* because so much of our work today revolves around connecting. We connect funds from God's people to mission workers and projects, we connect workers and churches to mission and services, and we connect prayer items to prayer warriors... to name a few. So, although our legal name is MSC Canada, we'd love it if you remembered that we're all about connecting workers and churches with God's mission.

What We Do

More than just a way to safely and securely get funds overseas, MSC provides a host of services tailored to the

needs of today's mission worker and their sending local church. We call it missions expertise - the legal, logistical, and practical supports that make serving the Lord across oceans and cultures possible. Whether that's specialized missions training, financial advice, sending short-term construction or evangelism teams to support work on the

of MSC is twofold. First, the challenge of reconnecting with assemblies across Canada, many of whom no longer think of MSC first when they think of missions. Second, the challenge of engaging new generations of missions-minded young adults and retirees who are considering the Lord's calling on their lives. To these ends, we have doubled our efforts with social media, our online presence, our newsletter InsideMSC, and our involvement in missions breakfasts and conferences all across Canada.

Connecting with Us

If you have some questions about MSC, we'd encourage you to check out our website first (msccanada.org). To check out the latest news from MSC, please look us up on Facebook or Twitter. Finally, go msccanada.org/mpi to subscribe to our weekly Mission Prayer Items email list and stay current with what God is doing around the world through Local Church Driven Missions. We look forward to connecting with you!



field, or providing field support and counselling. Our team of experts and former mission workers has been put together specifically to help mission workers focus on what God has called them to - the mission.

What Sending Churches Do

While MSC provides missions expertise, we look to a worker's sending local church to provide their need for ministry direction and spiritual oversight. It's not our job to direct the ministry of mission workers. Our expectation is that a worker's elders and sending church will be invested in their mission worker, praying for them, being God's supply for their financial needs, and even making a point to visit them on the field when possible. In our model, MSC is not the sending agency, local churches are.

Current Challenges

MSC's missions model is more relevant than it has ever been and is resonating today with many new workers and sending churches. Having said that, the greatest opportunity in front



Jerry Bolton is the communications director at MSC. He is responsible for managing voice and direction in social media, print, email campaigns, graphic design, website content, photography and videography.

by Jerry Bolton

Report: Eastside Bible Fellowship

East Lawrence, KS

Eastside Bible Fellowship began about four years ago in East Lawrence, Kansas. Leading up to this, the Lawrence Bible Chapel had targeted this area for a new assembly. On Wednesday evenings, several car loads of people from the homeless shelter and Salvation Army would be transported to the Lawrence Bible Chapel for Bible study followed by a meal with the welcoming believers. There were other contacts through an established women's Bible study at the local county jail. Neighborhood visitation by Samuel Mutfwang (now back in Nigeria, his homeland) helped bring about a weekly neighborhood Bible study at the East Lawrence Recreation Center. It was the only church some of the attendees knew and they called it "church."

During this time in June 2010, the GNOM Team and "Good News, Eastern Kansas" made East Lawrence one of their targeted areas. Three thousand packets were hung on doors. Ministries included Kids' Club at a local park and Cowboy Clinic for kids at a housing complex. The Lord opened up several venues, (Douglas County Jail) for Vicki Gaynier's dramatic presentation of Corrie Ten Boom, Jabe Nicholson spoke on the subject "Does God Care?" at the downtown Community Building. One of the contacts from that summer was brother Keith, who continues to

meet with us. We also met Stan, who called the designated phone number in response to the "Need Prayer, We Care" magnet. He doesn't know how the magnet ended up on his refrigerator, but he was feeling far from God and longed for spiritual reality. He was one of two strangers who agreed to

We have continued to enjoy good unity and heartfelt prayer support from the larger meeting...

meet on a dark Tuesday evening in a thunderstorm at the South Park Gazebo. That was the beginning of a one-on-one Bible Study. Later, this Native American man was hired to remodel the Palathe Indian Center, which would become the home of Eastside Bible Fellowship. The building had been purchased by a local believer who hoped that it would be used for the Gospel. Its purchase was quite remarkable,

in that it was never publicly listed on the market, but became available after inquiry was made.

Joe Bradshaw and Mark Schonberg (deacons at the Lawrence Bible Chapel) were exercised to ask the elders for their approval to start a new meeting. The elders said they would pray about it for a year. Meanwhile discussion continued. About a year later the elders said they were in full agreement. (At the time it seemed like a long wait, but definitely worth it. We have continued to enjoy good unity and



heartfelt prayer support from the larger meeting, and the elders come and speak on Sundays from time to time.) How do you go from deciding to start a meeting to actually doing it? What level of management by the parent assembly is required? Not really knowing the answer, nothing happened for a while. Then the Workers and Elders Conference came to Kansas City in the fall of 2012, hosted by The Bible Chapel of Shawnee. The subject was 'passing the baton.' Some of the elders from Lawrence attended. Several weeks later, they called Joe and Mark to meet with them. They said, "give us a date" and December 9 was decided upon. In advance of that date, at the fall conference, the



local elders prayed and laid hands on Joe and San Bradshaw, and Mark and Mona Schonberg. On December 9, 2012, they and several other dear believers began meeting at the new building in East Lawrence. The next Sunday, Stan, Jr. visited for the first time. We had seen him on the roof of the building shingling with Stan, his father; but never inside. "Zaccheus ... come down." He made a profession of faith that very day after the fellowship meal, and was later baptized.

People have come and gone. A few have stayed, so we have grown a little. Our gathering is too small to hide interpersonal issues, which is good incentive to make things right. We are excited about "simple church" and enjoy gathering like a family. Generally, if visitors stay, it is because they are loved. Love is of God, largely untapped and underestimated. Please pray that we would grow in love and truth.

East Lawrence remains in need of Gospel witness and our efforts are feeble. Without a doubt people would respond if visited. We visited to home of one lady who came the next Sunday. She told us with tears, "We were waiting for you."

Often Jehovah's Witnesses and Mormons precede us to the door in the community. It is a sad commentary that we are compelled to clarify, "No, we are not them". On a positive note, two of us were visiting with an unbeliever on the sidewalk. Two young ladies walked up and gave us each a Gospel tract. They were Bible-believing Baptists concerned about our souls!

We are grateful for the many believers who have prayed and helped us. If you are in the area, come visit! We meet downstairs. (The upstairs is rented out to the Boys and Girls Club)

We are excited about "simple church" and enjoy gathering like a family. Generally, if visitors stay, it is because they are loved.

Eastside Bible Fellowship,
1423 Haskell Ave, Lawrence, KS 66044

Sunday
9:00 Prayer, 9:30 Remembrance, 10:30 Ministry

Monday
7:00 Bible Study

Elders:
Mark Schonberg 785-766-0867
Joe Bradshaw 785-865-6655

"For all things are for your sakes, so that the grace which is spreading to more and more people may cause the giving of thanks to abound to the glory of God." 2 Cor. 4:15

Mark Schonberg is an elder at Eastside Bible Fellowship, he is married to Mona. They are active in serving the Lord in East Lawrence, Kansas.

by **Mark Schonberg**

“Without a doubt the most effective means of getting the gospel message to the unsaved is by taking it to them. That is where the bottleneck lies. The evangelistic method of the Apostle Paul was not so much a ‘You come hear me’ evangelism, as it was an ‘I’ll bring it to you’ evangelism. Paul was a great officer in the army of the Lord, a man of intellect and influence, but he never stopped knocking on doors to witness for His Lord. Yet today it is very difficult to find Christian men and women who are willing to go from house to house witnessing and distributing literature to the unconverted. Satan is a master strategist; he will do everything to keep us from eye-to-eye contact with the unconverted.”

- George Verwer, the founder of Operation Mobilization. Taken from *Literature Evangelism*, (Send The Light: Bromley, England, 1977), p. 11