



Leader's Digest

District-Wide Prayer Weekend Set

The Prayer Team of the East Central District is once again planning a district-wide weekend of prayer for January 27-29, 2012. While churches should focus on prayer every day of the year, this weekend is an opportunity for churches to plan 24/7 prayer vigils, calling their people together to not only pray for their church and community, but also for other district churches, for church planting across Ohio, and for the lost souls around the world.

to our churches and posted on our district website. For more detailed information on how your church might be involved, please contact our district prayer coordinator, Rev. Tom Schwind at tschwind@live.com.



Information will soon be sent

**Missionary Church
East Central District**



Christian Ministries Conference

Saturday, February 25, 2012

9:30 AM - 1:00 PM

Troy Christian High School



Keynote Speaker: Dr. Gary Wilber

Gary Wilber is the Superintendent and Founder of Troy Christian Schools. He began the school over 30 years ago as an obedient step of faith to God's calling to provide a Christian education not only to his own children but to those around him. In 2010, he received an Honorary Doctorate from Toccoa Falls College. Gary is passionately committed to developing a biblical lens in the hearts and minds of students for Christ's kingdom. The school's motto is "The heart of education is the education of the heart."

Inside this issue:

<i>From Our District Superintendent</i>	2
<i>Keeping the Faith: A Weekend to Equip Teens</i>	3
<i>From Our Director of District Ministries</i>	4
<i>Coming Events</i>	5
<i>Hometown Boy Pastor's True Life Church in Troy</i>	5
<i>A Musical Evening for District Pastors & Wives</i>	6
<i>Operation Christmas Child</i>	6



Your District Team:

Rev. Dale Leinbach, District Superintendent
Email: dalel@ecdistrict.org

Rev. Jeff Gerig, Director of District Ministries
Email: jeffg@ecdistrict.org

Mrs. Jean Gerig, Secretary
Email: jeang@ecdistrict.org

Mrs. Wendy Dyke, Financial Secretary
Email: wendyd@ecdistrict.org

District Office Information:
Phone: (937) 339-0015
Fax: (937) 339-1924

Website:
<http://www.ecdistrict.org>

From Our District Superintendent



From Another Point of View

Some time ago I read a book titled "In The Land Of Believers" and subtitled "An Outsiders Extraordinary Journey into the Heart of the Evangelical Church."

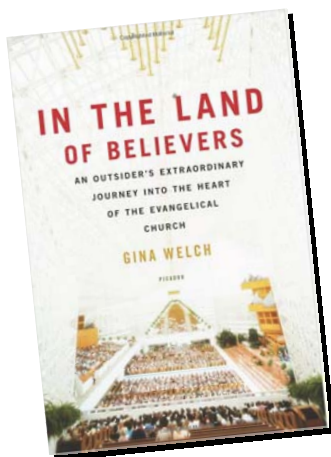
It is written by Gina Welch, who describes herself as a "secular Jew" raised by a single mother in Berkeley, CA. She says "I cuss, I drink, and I am not a virgin. I have never believed in God."

While a graduate student in Virginia she became interested in "Christian Culture" around her. In order to better understand Evangelical Christians she decided to go undercover. The front flyleaf of the book says she "...joined Jerry Falwell's Thomas Road Baptist Church. Over the course of nearly two years, Welch immersed herself in the life and language of the devout: She learned to interpret the world like an Evangelical, weathered the death of Falwell, and embarked on a mission trip to Alaska intended to save one hundred souls."

In the book Welch describes how she "faked" her conversion and was able to pass it off as authentic. She was baptized and joined the

church. She became active in a small group and participated in several ministries in the church.

It was an interesting read, yet it was disturbing. I did not agree with everything she said about Evangelical Christians. However, seeing "our" world through her eyes was very revealing.



Because the people at Thomas Road Baptist Church did not know she was faking they treated her as they would any other believer.

They talked about pagans, politics, movies, etc. as was normal for them. More than

once I found myself wincing at the image she experienced. I had to ask "Do I come across like that to pagans?" All too often I had to admit that I just might be more like the people she met than I would like to believe.

Last fall I wrote several articles about the reunion of former Sierra Leone missionaries at Ludlow Falls Camp. If you read and remember, we were able to bring the cook from the boarding school, Foday Mansary, to the states, he was able to spend a month in America.

Just before he left he reflected on his time in America.

Among his insights were the following:

1. *People respect each other and follow certain "protocol." Standing in lines, being helpful and considerate, etc...* (He wasn't here for Black Friday.)
2. *There are machines that do so many things: washing machines, dryers, dish washers, automatic sinks and toilets, ice makers, farm equipment, etc...*
3. *Clean water in every faucet in the house and other places.*
4. *No blackouts - we always have lights. Foday asked us where the generator was located and we didn't know.*
5. *The roads are all good!*
6. *While he was here, he didn't hear of anyone dying in our town. We showed him the newspaper obituaries. (In Sierra Leone any death calls forth a lot of loud wailing, people throwing dust in the air, etc.)*
7. *One of the first things Foday asked us was, "Where are all the people?" He was curious why there were not people walking on the streets or sitting around outside their houses. (With only a few lights, if any, and no air-conditioning, people in Sierra Leone spend most of their time outside their houses.)*
8. *The only negative thing he observed is that we are not connected very well to our* (Continued on page 3.)

Keeping the Faith: A Weekend to Equip Teens

This year's Keeping the Faith event is scheduled for March 2-4, 2012 at the Embassy Suites Hotel in Blue Ash, Ohio. The purpose of this youth event is to challenge high school teens (grades 9-12) to own and safeguard



their faith in Christ before they leave home to start life on their own.

This year's speaker will be Dr. Jeff Kephart. He is the Senior Pastor of Trinity Church in the Cleveland area. Jeff has been asked to speak to the teens on the topic of developing a Christian systematic belief system that will create a support system

for life out in the world.

The deadline for registering is Monday, February 6, 2012. Please encourage the teens of your church to register before the deadline. The cost is \$85 a person if there are four to a room. The cost increases to \$95 per person with 3 in a room. If your church needs to combine with another district church, let the district office know.

From Another Point of View *Continued from page 2*

neighbors. People don't greet each other when they are out on the streets.

The first six make me smile as I remember living in Sierra Leone and just how different life is in America; we take all of those things for granted and even become a little upset when life isn't like that.

The last two make me stop and think, especially the last one. We truly are not very well connected with our neighbors. We have lived in our subdivision 2½ years and know the names of the people in four or five households. Part of that is due to #7, people are not out and about like they are in Sierra Leone. Our neighbors drive down the street, punch the garage door opener, drive in, the garage door goes down and that is it.

In the summer we might see people outside washing a car, mowing the lawn, etc., but they are there for a job and are not always open to a conversation.

Every year our subdivision has a "block party" but only about 15% of the people even bother to show up. Unless you have lived in your community for a long time and/or are very intentional you may be a lot like we are.

How do we connect with our neighbors, especially those who do not know Christ? Are we the kind of people they even want to get to know? How do we bridge the cultural gap that exists which makes building friendships difficult?

In Mark 16:15 (NIV) Jesus said, **"Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation."** We as a

Missionary Church have been very good about going to the world overseas. How are we doing about going to the world outside our front door? It has often been said that people don't care how much you know until they know how much you care. Do we care? Do our neighbors know we care? What might have to

change in our lives to let our neighbors know we care? Could be an interesting discussion, let me know what you think?

(We have the mentioned book in the ECD office if you would like to read it, but be warned, it is an uncomfortable read.)



From Our Director of District Ministries



The Best Laid Plans...

"The best laid plans of mice and men often go awry" is a famous line

from a poem written to a mouse by Robert Burns in 1785, having ploughed up her nest one winter day. The line basically means that no matter how well you have planned something, one should always expect the unexpected. Just because a person thinks that they have thought through every conceivable scenario, something can, and often does, go terribly wrong.

Life is littered with our best intentions. Take, for instance, these sporting events that seemed like a good idea at the time, but ended up with the home team forfeiting the game.

Some genius in the Cleveland Indians organization dreamed up the idea of having ten-cent beer night in order to sell more tickets. So on June 4, 1974, the Indians hosted the Texas Rangers, sold a lot of tickets and ended up with a drunk and disorderly crowd. One woman ran to the Indians on deck circle and lifted her shirt. A naked man sprinted onto the field during a home run. An inning later, a father and son team ran onto the field and "mooned" the audience in the bleachers. The crude pranks later turned

dangerous. A fan ran onto the field and stole an outfielder's ball glove. Fearing for their safety, Ranger players rushed out of the dugout with bats. Fans stormed the field with knives, chains, and stadium seats. Cleveland players rushed out with bats to protect the Ranger players in the field. Riot squad from the Cleveland Police Department were called out to restore order. With the game tied in the ninth inning, the Indians forfeited.

It was a hot summer night in Chicago, July 12, 1979. The White Sox had a scheduled double-header with the Detroit Tigers and fans were asked to bring in their old disco records. Being a Tigers fan as a kid, I often listened to their games on the radio and this was one game I remember

well. Between games the records would be "blown up" in center field. The Sox didn't expect such a large and raucous crowd, with 50,000 showing up to see the destruction. It started with fans zinging records like Frisbees onto the field. One player said, "They would slice around you and stick in the ground. Then whiskey bottles began to be tossed. Fans charged the field and started tearing up the pitching mound. They took the bases. They started digging out home plate. The batting cage was

dragged out and trashed, fans burned banners and climbed foul poles." The White Sox forfeited.

There are others, "Ball Night" at Dodger Stadium in 1995, "Vuvuzela Night" in 2010 which caused the Florida Marlins to bat out of order and lose the game, and then off course "Cash Drop" night where a helicopter dropped \$1,000 onto the field causing injuries to fans, including children.



We've all made plans that didn't turn out quite like we had hoped. That's part of life. The goal would be though for our failed plans to not turn into a catastrophe. The thing that gets us into trouble is when God's plan for our lives is overrun by our own selfish desires. God's plans are great, ours sometimes not so great. (See 2 Corinthians 1:17)

God says in Jeremiah 29:11, "For I know the plans I have for you, 'declares the Lord,' plans to prosper you and not to harm (Continued on page 5.)

The Best Laid Plans *Continued from page 4*

you, plans to give you hope and a future." So what happens when my plans cross God's plans for my life—catastrophe!

Remember the story of the rich man who had a good year in the field and decided to tear down all his barns and build bigger ones so he could hoard his grain and goods. His plan was then to retire or at least semi-retire and then "take life easy; eat, drink and be merry." (Luke 12:13-21) God called him a fool for that very night he would die. He wasn't a fool because he saved up to retire, but because he got to the point where his plans didn't include God. He had everything he needed and had no use for God. "This is how it will be with anyone who stores up things for himself but

is not rich toward God."

As we head into this new year, it's always a good opportunity to sit down and do a little self-evaluating. Maybe there are a few bad habits which need to be broken or some future plans needing to be made. When you do finally get the chance to reflect on the direction your life might be heading in 2012, please remember these two things...

1. Expect the unexpected. Don't set your plans in concrete, but rather, allow for a plan B.
2. Don't leave God out of your plans. (See James 4:13-17) His plans will always be better than anything you might

think up.

May you and your family experience God's blessing this year and in the years to come. Happy New Year!



Coming Events

- ✓ **January 27-29, 2012**
District-Wide Prayer Weekend
- ✓ **February 2-4, 2012**
Pastors & Wives Retreat
Embassy Suites in Blue Ash
- ✓ **February 25, 2012**
Christian Ministries Conference
Troy Christian High School
- ✓ **March 2-4, 2012**
Keeping the Faith
Embassy Suites in Blue Ash
- ✓ **April 27, 2012**
District Conference
Rona Community Church, Fairborn

Hometown Boy Pastor's True Life Church in Troy



Rev. Chris Daum, pastor of True Life Church in Troy, recently found himself on the front page of the Troy Daily News. You might wonder who is Rev. Chris Daum and where is True Life Church. This past month, Heartland voted to change their name to True Life Community Church to better identify with their community. They were also forced recently to relocate to a new facility, with only a week's notice. After

a frantic search around town, the church found it's home, the Quality Inn meeting rooms located on the corner of I-75 and St. Rt. 55. The hotel has given them the exclusive use of several of their rooms, giving them more than adequate space for services, as well as youth and children ministries.

Pastor Chris is a hometown boy, having grown up in Troy as the son of the pastor of Troy Christian Church. Ministry took Chris and his family away from the area for awhile, but God called him back. Chris told the paper, "I've always had a vision in my heart from my

early 20's to have a church in Troy."

Chris said, "It's really interesting to me how God works out his perfect plan. What we thought was a temporary fix has now become our home."



Pastor Chris Daum talks about the True Life Community Church, which holds its services in a former banquet center of the Quality Inn in Troy.



A Musical Evening for District Pastors & Wives

This year's Annual Pastors & Wives Christmas Dinner was held at Union Chapel Missionary Church in Lima on Friday, December 2, 2011. Highlights of the evening included fellowshiping with one another, a delicious meal catered by Henry's Restaurant and musical entertainment by Steve Banks, Music Director at Liberty Presbyterian Church in Delaware, Ohio. It was a wonderful

evening for pastoral couples to simply sit back, relax and reflect on the true meaning of Christmas.



The following churches reported how many boxes they filled for Operation Christmas Child.

Bethel	84
Fairfield	133
Gateway	45
The Gathering Place	50
Grace	281
Great Hope	50
Greenville	130
Newson	60
Ottawa	16
Pandora	60
Phillipsburg	130
Pleasant View	250*
Redeemer	69
Rona	73
St. Marys	70
Swam Creek	10
Trinity Cleveland	34
True Life	45
True North	109
Union Chapel	175

*Also sent people to Processing Center



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The Missionary Church
East Central District
607 South Market Street
Troy, Ohio 45373-3334



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