



Leader's Digest

RENEW: Bringing the Heat

Our third annual RENEW Camp, July 21-24, 2011, was again a big success, with 170 braving the extreme July heat to hear God's Word. Rev. Mike Drury, Senior Pastor of Pine Hills Church in Fort Wayne challenged the people to be men and women of prayer, following the example of Jesus.



Rev. Jerry Francis and Dr. Jeff Kephart led in worship during the services.

Highlights of the weekend included

Jon Bruney, professional strongman, entertaining campers with feats of strength and precision, as well as a Family Fun Carnival on the ball field.

Our SOAR youth camp



also ran concurrently with RENEW, with a dozen kids being challenged by Pastor Brad Bullock, Senior High Ministries Pastor at Pathway Community Church in Fort Wayne speaking to the teens.

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Camp Meeting: Spirit-Sourced

This year's Camp Meeting, July 30-August 7, 2011, will be remembered for a variety of reasons—the worship, the fellowship, the fun activities and events, but no doubt, the highpoint of the week had to be the dynamic preaching of God's Word.

Dr. Stephen Manley started off the week challenging us to "repentance," the giving up of a former thought to



embrace a new thought. It doesn't necessarily involve sin, but rather making a change in our mindset that is more in line with God's way of thinking.

Sharing from Matthew 4:1-4, he also challenged us to live "Spirit-sourced" lives, fully relying on God, rather than "self-sourced," taking earthly



matters into our own hands.

Rev. Steve Jones, District Superintendent for the Central District of the Missionary Church, challenged us on a variety of topics related to our relationship with God, including the call of God on our lives, hearing God speak into our everyday lives, loving God without fear that we've caught Him (Continued on page 3.)

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From Our District Superintendent



“IT WAS THE BEST OF TIMES; IT WAS THE WORST OF TIMES”

This is the lead sentence in Charles Dickens, “A Tale of Two Cities.” You didn’t think I knew that much about classic literature did you? (Actually I don’t, Google is great!)

This summer I had an experience that was just that, the best of times, the worst of times. The last weekend in June we had a reunion at Ludlow Falls Camp with over 175 people present. If you had been there you would have heard words that sounded something like English, but not quite. And the phrasing and inflection would have sounded familiar but you would have struggled to understand. It was a gathering of former missionaries and their children and we were talking Krio, the Pidgin English of our adopted country, Sierra Leone.

What fun we had for 2½ days as we laughed, cried, hugged, sang the Sierra Leone national anthem, and laughed some more. We ate fried plantain and rice with a spinach sauce. We even were able to have the cook at the boarding school fly in for the weekend and he made his special dish, jollaf rice. We

have pictures and memories that will last a lifetime.

It was great to see Pa Foday Mansary, the cook again. He worked at the boarding school for 22 years and watched our children grow up. During the weekend he acted very much the father and grandfather that our children felt him to be.

What a joy to talk with Foday and hear of the work of God in the years since we lived in Sierra Leone. He is now the “zone pastor” (like our DS position) for the Kabala area and has seven Wesleyan churches under his care. This includes one right across the road from his house which is near the old boarding school grounds. This is the third church he personally has planted.



Foday shared about one of the churches he helped plant. He would wake at 4:30 on Sunday, get ready

and walk over an hour to a small hut on the other side of the town. He would hold services at 7:00 so he could walk back and teach SS and preach at his own church.

As I listened to Foday, I had questions. Would I be willing to rise at 4:30 so I could walk

over an hour to hold services at 7:00 and then walk back to take care of my duties at the mother church?

And the other question was: who would wake up and come to a service at 7:00 in the morning. Yes, we do this maybe once a year on Easter when we have a Sunrise service, but every Sunday???

I must mention that this took place during the civil war that tore Sierra Leone apart for a number of years. In fact, Foday lost his 17 year old son due to the fighting. He also lost almost everything he owned as the soldiers and rebels helped themselves to his belongings.

Yet it hit me as we talked that Foday never once complained. He never once questioned God in any of this. He did acknowledge that one of the reasons people were so hungry to hear the Gospel was because of the war and the resulting problems. Because of the war they had to depend on God and he and other pastors seized the opportunity to preach the Gospel and saw many come to faith.

Foday has returned to his family in Africa. Foday held a special place in my heart because of the relationship we had when we worked together. As I reflect on our summer, Foday holds even a more special place in my life. I want to be more like Foday. How about you?

Camp Meeting *Continued from page 1*

on a bad day, and understanding God's sadness when we live sinful lives.

Some of the special highlights of Camp Meeting included the comedy, ventriloquism and chalk art talents of Rod Snow, and Peter Rushton, The Reptile Man introducing the



boys and girls to various reptiles, amphibians and arachnids, including "Big Boy" Peter's pet python. We also enjoyed the music of

PROV3RB5, a men's singing group from Bethel College.

We were also pleased to have Dr. Dennis Engbrecht, Senior Vice President and Terry Zeitlow, Vice



President of Institutional Development for Bethel College on our grounds to host a Bethel College gathering after

one of the evening services. Michael Mortensen, Director of Fort Wayne Alumni & Friends Resource Center also hosted a special Heritage Celebration on the first Sunday afternoon, as well as graciously underwriting pizza for everyone after one of the evening services.

Campers also had a chance to interact with missionaries at a special Meet & Greet after an evening service.

Pastor Jeremiah Bolich, Cross-Style Ministries, was our youth speaker for Journey. Sixty-five teens attended camp this year,

with several making commitments to Christ, two for the first time. Youth activities



included swimming at the Troy Aquatic Center, bowling at McBo's Bowling Lanes and roller skating at 36 Skate Club. We

appreciate the leadership of Pastor Brad Reineke in directing the youth side of Camp Meeting.

Attendance this year at Camp Meeting was very strong, averaging just over 400 in the evening services. We are also very grateful for the generous giving as we met our goal of \$30,000 on the last day. We praise the Lord for His many blessings related to Ludlow Falls Camp and look forward to how He will use His grounds in the future.

No-Hitter!

Our first "Take Me Out to the Ball Game" event was held on Wednesday, July 27 at Jacobs Stadium in Cleveland as the Cleveland Indians took on the visiting Los Angeles Angels. Over 130 individuals from the district sat out in the left field seats cheering on the home team. Unfortunately, Ervin Santana, pitcher for the Angels had a different game plan and threw a no-hitter against the Indians.

While the game had its exciting moments, a large part of the fun was the fellowship among the eight district

churches represented. Following the game, our group was invited to seats behind the home dugout to hear Justin



Masterson share his testimony as well as answer questions as to what life was like as a professional baseball player. He also took time to sign autographs until it was time to close the gates.

A big thanks goes to Pastor Jeff Martin, Clyde, who helped to organize the event.



Mark your calendar!

Camp Meeting:
July 21-29, 2012

RENEW:
August 2-5, 2012

From Our Director of District Ministries



Gaining a Little Perspective

With the cost of air travel being what it is right now, Jean and I made the thrifty decision

to drive the family down to General Conference, held this year in Dallas, Texas. Despite temperatures in the 100s and a 15-hour drive, the girls did extremely well sharing the backseat.

Without intentionally planning it, our trip soon came to be known as the "Vacation of Death." On our way down to Dallas, we drove through Memphis and took the "Platinum Tour" of Graceland, seeing where Elvis lived and was buried. Then we drove into town and visited the Lorain Hotel and saw the site where Martin Luther King, Jr. was assassinated by James Earl Ray.

During our stay in Dallas, we spent an afternoon visiting the Texas School Book Depository, the site where Lee Harvey Oswald shot President John F. Kennedy, as well as Dealey Plaza.



We took the more northern route home, which took us through Oklahoma City, so, you guessed it, we stopped by to view the Oklahoma City National Memorial, the site of the bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building back on April 19, 1995. Our travels then took us a couple of miles south of Joplin, Missouri, so we stopped to witness the aftermath of the May

22, 2011 monster tornado which killed 116 people and injured over 500. We then spent a day in Branson, Missouri, to enjoy a little fun. So what did we do? We visited the Titanic exhibit.

I'm one of those that like history, so while I enjoyed visiting these various places, there weren't a lot of facts that were new to me. Yet there's something about standing at the actual spot where history has taken place that helps me gain a better perspective of how things actually were or how they actually happened.

Jean and I were both a bit surprised at the simplicity of Graceland. We both thought that "The King" should have lived a bit more extravagantly. The Lorain Hotel was a small hotel in a run-down section of Memphis surrounded by other buildings, not exactly as I expected it.

As I stood at the site on the 5th floor of the School Book Depository, I thought to myself, "What would cause a man to do something like this?" I went outside and stood on the two X's which mark the two actual spots where President Kennedy had been shot. Here I thought, "This President had no idea that at this spot his life would come to an end."

In Oklahoma City, I stood at the spot where sixteen years earlier, Timothy McVeigh had parked a

Ryder Truck, full of explosives. On that day, at exactly 9:02 AM, 168 innocent victims were killed and another 680 injured. It is said that 324 buildings were damaged from the blast. As I looked to my left, I saw the time etched in stone, 9:01, marking the time when life was normal. To my right, the time 9:03, marking the time when life would never be the same.



In Joplin, we pulled into a former McDonald's parking lot, got out of the car and looked in every direction. What we saw was very disturbing. Nothing prepared us for this kind of devastation. It made us very sad to think of the many thousand lives affected in a matter of minutes.

As I stood at these various locations, a few things really hit home to me.

1. *Sinful man is capable of atrocious acts.* What would cause a person to intentionally kill other people? Have they no conscience? Have they no fear of God? As long as mankind lives on this planet, we must expect to hear of individuals who do vile and sinful things. They follow their master, the devil.
2. *Man knows not when his time on earth is done.* On our tour of Graceland, we spent a few



moments at Elvis' private racquetball court, where Elvis would spend his final moments at Graceland, never to return. At the Oklahoma Memorial, we walked by the big and small chairs that signify the adults and
(Continued on page 5.)

Gaining Perspective *Continued from page 4*

children that died in the blast and on what floor they were killed or fatally injured. Of course John F. Kennedy and Martin Luther King, Jr. knew the dangers of public life but did not expect the bullet that hit them on those fateful days. Am I prepared to meet God at a moments notice?

3. *Once in awhile, it's good to look at things from a different perspective.* I usually bound through life, seeing life as it impacts me. Maybe I should slow down and see my life as others see it. What do they think of me? Is my life a testimony of God's love and mercy to others. Maybe I should look at life from a totally different perspective, from the viewpoint of a black person during the 1960s civil rights movement, or from that of a family who has just lost everything they owned in a

tornado. How understanding am I of other people's situation and circumstances?

4. *Finally, as I stood in that McDonald's parking lot in Joplin, seeing the devastation, I was truly reminded of God's great and awesome power.* While a gentle breeze brings relief on a hot day, too much of a good thing brings destruction. Yet God is in control no matter what the circumstance. I'm reminded of the disciples words early on in Jesus' ministry, "What kind of man is this? Even the winds and the waves obey him!" (Matthew 8:27)

Maybe it's time for you to begin seeing things from a different perspective, seeing this world as God sees it, seeing your Christian walk as others observe it, and seeing your neighbor as Christ Himself. (Matthew 25:40)

A Quiz Season Ends—A New Begins

The 2010-2011 youth quiz season wrapped up with Quiz Finals, held at Bethel College on July 14-16, 2011. Twenty-seven teams from across the denomination participated, along with some churches from other denominations, who have joined our quiz program due to our quizzers moving to new locations where no Missionary Church is present. Because they see the value of Bible quizzing, they begin a program in their own church.

This year, the East Central District took home many top honors. Ada First Presbyterian, with a few former quizzers from Grace Missionary in Celina won both the experienced and rookie tournaments. Grace Celina also came in third in the rookie division. In the one-on-one tournament, our district took the

top three spots, with Elita Smith defeating her brother Jeremiah, to become the champion. Nathan Robenalt from Celina came in third.

Our district also won the team all-star competition and Jeremiah Smith was named the Quizzer of the Year.


September now begins a new quiz season for both youth and kid's quizzing. The youth will be studying the books of Hebrews and 1 & 2 Peter. Children will be quizzing over Acts 1-12.

If you or someone in your church would like to know more about Bible quizzing, please contact the district office, as now is a very good time to consider jump-starting a team.



Coming Events

- ✓ **September 9, 2011**
GuideStone Meeting for Pastors
First Missionary Church, Lima
- ✓ **October 1, 2011**
GuideStone Seminar for Pastors &
Church Leaders
Union Chapel Missionary, Lima
- ✓ **October 8, 2011**
Youth & Kids Quizzing Begins
Place To Be Determined
- ✓ **October 14-15, 2011**
Women's Fall Retreat
Hope Hotel in Fairborn
- ✓ **October 21-22, 2011**
Lumberjack Retreat
Ludlow Falls Camp
- ✓ **December 2, 2011**
Pastors & Wives Christmas Dinner
Union Chapel Missionary, Lima



Left to right: Ron Eckleberger, Connie Brown (VBS Director), Chris Daum (current Pastor)

HeartLand Church in Troy, "celebrating" having taken in \$1,000 in VBS offerings to help purchase a motorcycle for Pastor Ron Eckleberger's new ministry in Guatemala.

Breakout Workshops:

- ☑ "Parenting Special Needs"
led by Jennifer Shaw
- ☑ "Your Spiritual Gifts & Learning Where to Serve"
led by Donna Kephart
- ☑ "Dealing with Your Adult Children When They Aren't Walking with Christ"
led by Edie Leinbach

October 14-15, 2011

Hope Hotel (3660 SR 444, Fairborn)

Cost: \$65* per person (with 4 in a room)

Speaker: *Jennifer Shaw*

*Registration Deadline: Tuesday, September 13, 2011

Women's Fall Retreat

"For Such a Time as This" from the Life of Esther

Jennifer Shaw is an accomplished singer, speaker, songwriter, recording artist, and worship leader whose music is on the radio across the U.S. and Canada. Her song "Your Great Name" recently reached #3 on the Worship chart of Christian Music Weekly. Through various challenges in her life, she has learned that God is amazingly powerful, and He will absolutely use all things to the good of those who love Him. Join Jennifer for a look at the life of Esther, a godly woman who shows us how to trust God for the big picture, even when we can't see it in the moment.

Jennifer and her husband along with their three beautiful children reside in Columbus, Ohio. They recently returned from a music and mission tour to the United Kingdom and Kenya.



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