



# CB NORTH CENTRAL

*Connecting Churches Who Love God and the Gospel*

## THE CENTRAL CONNECTION May 2014

From the Director

### *Is it Church Health or Church Growth?*



*Pat Phinney*  
*CBNC Regional Director*

Just yesterday I had a most interesting conversation with a friend, who is a young Christian and a successful business professional. When I asked where he went to church I received the strangest look. It is the same look you get when you unexpectedly catch a toddler dipping their hands into the cookie jar without permission. Puzzled by the look I said, "I am sorry for making you feel uncomfortable. I know you have a personal relationship with Christ and so I was curious where you are choosing to worship." He said that he does not attend any particular church instead he watches a well-known pastor on TV. Curiosity killed the cat. After a few more questions I discovered that his impressions of the church were filled with boredom, confusion, guilt, rejection, hostility, manipulation and irrelevance. I explained that EVERY Christian, to be complete, must be a member of a local body of men and women who are followers of Christ. Whether we are part of a vital, growing, energized assembly of believers depends in some measure upon us.

My friend went on to say that he had no clue how to select a church that was both healthy and growing.

We have all been to seminars, heard great speakers and even read pointed books regarding church growth. You walk away from the experience wondering how this applies to you and your church. It does! Let me just go on line and say it. Church health always leads to church growth. It is a PROCESS (not an event) that requires risk taking, lifestyle changes and on-going evaluation. Over the past three years I have met with well over 500 CB pastors and church leaders. It is my general impression that many are deathly afraid of evaluation, even if it does lead to church health. That is why I continue to wave the banner of a CB North Central core value, "We value the reproduction of healthy churches that make passionate disciples of Jesus Christ."

So allow me to ask you some questions pastor, "Is it time for a spiritual health checkup for your church?" "Is your church in a reproductive cycle where you are multiplying healthy disciples for Jesus Christ?" "Are you seeing in your church quality characteristics that are essential for health and growth?" "Are you dissatisfied with the status quo in your church?" Take the next step by considering Natural Church Development (NCD). The Survey was developed to help churches measure the strengths and weaknesses of each health characteristic in the life of your church. Contact the CB North Central office and for a minimal fee of \$300, we will send you a pack of NCD surveys, provide a detailed analysis and the name of a qualified NCD Coach to assist you in the process.

Please hit the link below and read an inspiring challenge from one of our newest NCD Coaches, Leo Cumings. He will speak to your heart about this important process.

[Read](#) Leo Cumings' Article - 'NCD Can Make a Difference in Our Churches'

Pastor's Wives. . . *Just for You*

*"Jesus, I Want You to Live in My Heart.  
I Know You'll Say Yes!"*

This time of the year between Mother's Day and Father's Day is always a bit nostalgic for me. My mom died in 1992 and my dad in 1995. They were both wonderful people and had a huge impact on my life. Even after all these years I miss them! This time of year causes me to reflect on lots of memories. There was a time in my life when



I envied other people's testimonies. It sounds so amazing to hear how God has saved them from something horrible. It is amazing! I remember more than once thinking no one wants to hear my testimony. I grew up in a Christian home. My parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles were all Christians. Our family always went to church. We prayed before and after every meal. Family devotions were just a part of each day. It has taken me awhile to recognize the amazing grace God gave to me in and through my family. I am so thankful for the wonderful Christian heritage I have been blessed with. I am equally thankful as I see evidence of that heritage in our children and grandchildren. Our four year old grandson, Lincoln, recently prayed, "Jesus, I want you to live in my heart. I know you'll say yes!" It doesn't get better than that. I am so thankful for the legacy my parents left for me and my family.

As we look ahead to Father's Day next month it reminds me of a time when our son Scott was about 6. We were in the car and Scott's friend, Trene was with us. Her dad was the Sr. Pastor at the church where Pat was on staff. The conversation between the two of them went something like this - Trene: "My dad went to high school." Scott: "So did mine. My dad went to college." Trene: "Well, my dad went to seminary." Scott: "My dad went to seminary too!" Pat and I were in the front seat trying not to laugh out loud. It made us wonder what happened to that normal discussion of "my dad is

stronger than your dad." This month as we pray for our husbands I want us to focus on STRENGTH. Here are a few verses to get you started:

I pray that my husband will wait on You, Lord, and that he will renew his strength. I pray that he will mount up with wings like eagles, that he will run and not be weary, and that he will walk and not faint.

Isaiah 40:31

I pray that You, Lord, are my husband's rock and his fortress and his deliverer; his God, his strength, in whom he will trust; his shield and the horn of his salvation, his stronghold. I pray that he will call upon You, Lord, who is worthy to be praised; so will he be saved from his enemies.

Psalms 18:2-3

I pray that my husband will be strengthened with all might, according to Your glorious power, God.

Colossians 1:11

I pray that my husband will be strong in You, Lord, and in the power of Your might, I pray that he will put on the whole armor of God, that he may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For he does not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.

Ephesians 6:10-12

Ladies - I have some ideas on different ways to help us stay better connected. The details will be coming to a mailbox near you (yours :)). Be watching for a postcard to arrive in the next couple of weeks.

*Karen Phinney, Wife of Regional Director*

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Thoughts from a Cluster Leader

## **Reflection**

Reflection. I had a lot of time to do that over the last week. I had to take an unexpected trip to Michigan, over 2000 miles round trip. That's a lot of time to think and reflect. Monday May 5th my wife and kids picked me up at the church and we started off on a prayer walk around Sibley. We got about a block into it when my phone rang, it was my sister and she informed me that my gran had passed away that morning.

Reflection. As I drove back to my old stomping grounds I felt the way I always do in time like this. Pulled in two directions, knowing people in Sibley need encouragement and ministered to and knowing you need to be with your family. Regret, some from the enemy some from within, all of it misplaced.

Reflection. It started in 2008 when my grandpa died and it has been every year since then, 2 Aunts, 2 Grandmas and my Dad. All now physically dead but more fully alive than we are. As I traveled home I began to feel that pull of being obedient to God and serving Him here in NW Iowa and remembering there is a price to us being here serving Him. As I traveled my thoughts took me to remembering someday my wife will get the call that her mom and dad are gone and we will feel the sting of the price that we have paid. But it's the price that we have chosen to pay. The price of kids not knowing grandma and grandpa, the price of missing out on graduations, weddings, holidays, special moments and just the lack of time spent with those we love.

More driving and more reflection then Luke 14:25-33 comes to mind and I am reminded this is what we are called to do. Love Jesus more than anything, even our families, even more than ourselves and mostly more than playing it safe. Consider the cost it's going to take to follow me before you decide to is the way I hear Jesus say it to me. That is what we are called to do. Not just me. Not just us. But you are also. And for everyone it looks different, for us it was moving from everyone and everything we ever knew and making the sacrifice of losing closeness to our families. And for us it was and is worth it. Jesus is worth it. The reality of what we do and have done is pale compared to what Jesus did. And so you count the cost and you say it's worth it.

*Pastor Doug NoonKester*  
First Baptist Church, Sibley, IA

## Youth Pastor to Youth Pastor

### ***Ministering to TCKs***

So he walks into youth group one night. He doesn't quite seem to fit in although you can tell that he must have a christian background. His clothes are different from everyone else's and he is acting a bit shy. Then you get the note from the pastor, he tells you that some of the church's missionaries have settled here for the next year or so and he wants you to make their son feel welcome.

Have you ever wondered how to minister to TCKs (third culture kids) or missionary kids (MKs)? After serving 5 years at Faith Academy in the Philippines (a school for missionary kids), my wife and I have put together some ways you can minister to these unique students. Check out the top five ways to minister to MKs and the top 5 ways to destroy your ministry to MKs. [Read more](#)

*Jason Quick*  
*Come 2 Life Student Ministries*

## CBAMerica CHAPLAINCY

### ***Reports from our Chaplains Telling Stories of God's Blessings***

While doing my rounds in the Special Housing Unit (SHU), one of my MAX Custody inmates started talking to me about tattoos and I quickly informed him that I was allergic to pain and thus would never consent to ever getting a tattoo. He then surprised me . . . [read more.](#)

*Allen Russell, CBAMerica Chaplaincy*

"We can complain because rose bushes have thorns, or rejoice because thorn bushes have roses." - *Abraham Lincoln*

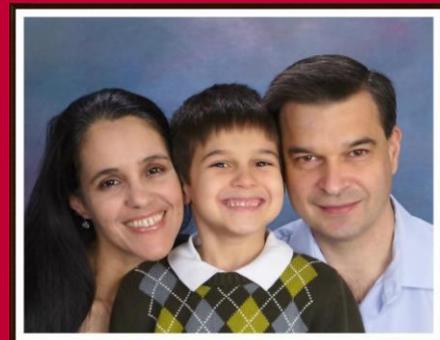


## **#SPOTLIGHT**

### **Getting to Know You**

It's good to be connected and to do that it's good to know a little more about others in the CBNC Region. Following a brief interview with one of CBNC's newer pastors, Pastor Shawn Barr of Noelridge Park Church, Cedar Rapids, IA, this is what we found out.

Shawn was born in Hollywood, FL. He and his wife Debora have a 10 year old son named Jared. After a long day Shawn really enjoys spending time with them as a family. Pastor Shawn has been serving the Lord in ministry for 27 years, starting with his Bible College days. At times he was a volunteer or bi-vocational, but for the last number of years Shawn has been full-time. As a hobby he likes to garden and has recently finished adding some raised beds in preparation for this spring's planting.



*Pastor Shawn & Debora Barr  
and their son Jared*

When asked if he could share a blessing or something he sees God doing, this is what he had to say. "Like many churches, Noelridge Park Church is a church with a great past, but in recent history has been struggling. It has been a

difficult first year with many challenges, but I am blessed to be a part of a church that has made the decision to follow God unconditionally, even with the hardships that come with making such a choice. In the midst of this, we have seen unchurched folks attend, dedicate (or rededicate) their lives to the Lord, and get involved. Our youth group has grown by leaps and bounds over the last few months. Some of the youth have never been to church before and started attending because they were invited by our youth. Today, there is a hunger for the Word of God and a general excitement in our church because of what God is doing and is going to do in and through Noelridge Park Church."

## How Has CBNC Helped You?



*Pastor Phil & Jeannette Butler*

My wife and I have been a part of the Conservative Baptists for 27 years, and knew about the CB long before that. It has been an honor to be in fellowship with the many pastors and wives over the years, to personally know the last five Regional Directors, and also a privilege for me to have been on the CB North Central Regional Board on two occasions. We believe the most recent help we received from our region was

rather personal as a year ago our son, Dale was in a fatal small plane accident in Nebraska. Dale was 26 years old. We appreciated so very much the cards, phone calls, emails, and gifts that a lot of pastor families shared with us. Most of all we are even more thankful for the countless prayers that were offered to God on our behalf - without the prayers God's people we all would be at a greater loss. So this is our personal "Thank You" to the many of you from our region who helped us this past year. THANK YOU! May God keep on blessing you. Philippians 1:3-6.

*Phil and Jeannette Butler*  
First Baptist Church, Colfax, Iowa

## What Exciting Things Are Going On in Your Church?

We no longer live in a six-day world. That may be a sad fact, but it is our present reality in this country. People work every day of the week. People play on the weekends. Kids have an amazing array of options from which to choose, from sports to music to dance and everything in between... and they all get squeezed into Saturday and Sunday.



We Christians can sit around and wring our hands in despair, bemoaning the decline in our pleasure-obsessed culture, its impact on our families and the fact that God has been relegated to the back seats of our lives... if that. Or, we can attempt to do something about it. [Read more.](#)

*Pastor Steve Schoenwald*  
River of Life Church, Hastings, MN

## Church Law and Tax

### 4 Tips for Church Budgeting

Help for avoiding budgetary headaches.

- by *Richard Vargo* [Read more](#)

### Rules Covering Opting Out of Social Security

A Pastor asks if it's too late for him to opt out.

- by *Richard R. Hammar* [Read more](#)

## Please Pray for the Following Churches in Transition:

SENIOR PASTOR

- Mason Township Baptist Church - Cassopolis, MI
- First Baptist Church - Bradford, IL
- First Baptist Church - Streator, IL
- Delavan Baptist Church - Delavan, IL
- First Baptist Church - Elmhurst, IL
- First Baptist Church - Whitehall, WI
- First Baptist Church - Long Prairie, MN

#### STAFF POSITIONS

- Bethel Baptist Church- Jackson, MI *Director of Family Ministries*
- First Baptist Church - Spring Lake, MI *Associate Pastor*
- Oak Grove Church - Golden Valley, MN *Associate Pastor*

## CB North Central Pastoral Cluster Groups

### North Dakota/Northern Minnesota

Thursday, June 19

10am - 12pm, Skype

Steve Daggett, Cavalier Baptist Church,  
Cavalier, ND

701-265-8989



### Central Minnesota

Monday, June 9, 10am - 12pm

Steve Schoenwald, River of Life Church, Hastings, MN

### Southern Minnesota

To Be Determined

Doug Noonkester, First Baptist Church, Sibley, IA

712-754-3310

### Wisconsin

Wisconsin Cluster Group is on break. Planning meeting will be in August with group meetings up and running in September. Calvary Baptist, Eau Claire, WI

Wade Duroe, Crossroads Church, Chippewa Falls, WI  
715-723-1054

**Iowa**

To Be Determined

Jay Jentink, Calvary Baptist Church, Cedar Rapids, IA  
319-396-3233

**Illinois**

Tuesday, September 9th 10:30am - 1:30pm

Meeting at Living Hope Community Church, Bartonville, IL

Mark Friday, First Baptist Church, Pekin, IL  
309-347-5965

**Michigan**

To Be Determined

Mike Wetzig, Ravenna Baptist Church, Ravenna, MI  
213-853-96021

For a Pastor Cluster Leader in your area, [click here.](#)

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Pat's Cell: 952-500-3743

Stay Connected  
Website: [www.cbnorthcentral.org](http://www.cbnorthcentral.org)



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