



# CB NORTH CENTRAL

*Connecting Churches Who Love God and the Gospel*

February 2015

## THE CENTRAL CONNECTION



From the Director

### **"When the Sun Shines Again in Southern California"**

I just love what Henry David Thoreau once said, "It is not enough to be busy, so are the ants. The question is: What are we busy about?" Oh, I totally get that! When I first entered the ministry as an Associate Pastor in 1984, the Senior Pastor passed me in the hallway and said, "Tell me how your day is going Pat." Without a second thought I said, "Oh I am plenty busy alright." Wrong answer. He looked at me and said, "Just because you are busy, doesn't mean you are productive." Busted!

I don't know about you, but when I get overly busy . . . the mission and purpose of what I really want to do tends to get lost. God knows my DNA. He knows

how I am wired. He knows the thing in ministry that brings me greatest joy is sharing the Gospel and leading people to Christ. When I start to get stale in why I really exist, God opens the opportunity to share Christ to the lost.

This happened to me a year ago in sunny California. I was attending a REDS (Regional Executive Director) meeting in Dana Point and after a long day, God said to me, "Ready for a break?" He told me to go to the harbor at night and share the Gospel with some homeless people pitched around fires. Like a kid in a candy shop, I got there with my Bible and a couple tracts. There were so many fires and homeless people everywhere. God reminded me of what Jesus said in Luke 19:5, "When Jesus came to the place, He looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, hurry and come down, for today I must stay at your house." I came to that God appointed place and shared the Gospel with homeless Ray at his open fire. He repented of his sin and surrendered his life to Jesus Christ. The Son shined in southern California that January 29, 2014.

The story is not over. I have been discipling homeless Ray this past year to be a committed disciple of Christ via email. As God would divinely have it, we had meetings again back in California this January 26-28. I texted Ray and said, "Now that you are growing in Christ, are you ready to go witnessing to share the Gospel with someone else?" A year later back in Dana Point, Ray and I went to a Mexican restaurant to enjoy a meal before we went witnessing. "When we came to that place", a mother and two sons sat near us. A verbal fight ensued between the mother and her fourteen old son. He shouts for all to hear, "I'm running away tonight and I don't care what you say." Mom desperately said, "Whatever! I don't care. Do what you have to do!" I nudged Ray and said, "Are you ready? Here is our opportunity." Ray boldly spoke up and said to the crying mother, "I ran away when I was ten years old and never went back home. I became homeless and it lead me to a life of sin and many bad decisions." Ray went over to the contemplating teenager and I headed to the mother. One hour later, the mother gave her life to Jesus and prayed the prayer of salvation. The Son shined again in southern California.

The story is not over. The next day at our meeting, I asked homeless Ray to meet with the REDS and tell the story. Ray shared what God did in his life a year ago and how a mother prayed for salvation that night in a Mexican restaurant. I stood with Ray that day and said to the REDS, "This is why we exist! The heart of God is for the lost and that is why we do what we do in supporting our churches."



Like yours, my life continues to be busy. I never forget what God can do when we set aside our important agendas at church and look for opportunities to share Christ with the lost. Back to Luke 19. In verse 10, Jesus said to the jeering crowd when He was confronted while hanging with social outcasts, "For the Son of Man has come to seek and save that which is lost." I believe that people in our churches are looking for their pastors to model this lifestyle. Have you "come to that place" where God has divinely appointed you to share Christ? Think about it.

*Pat Phinney*  
*CBNC Regional Director*

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

### "Promises"



February - the month when love is on everyone's mind. Valentine's Day has a way of causing me to think back to those early days of falling in love with Pat. So many sweet, sweet memories and of course a few "What were we thinking?" questions. We only dated for five weeks before we got

engaged. Hmmm ... sure glad our kids didn't do that. Now almost 39 years later it has become more and more obvious that God brought us together. As I reminisce I can't help but think back to our wedding and the vows we made that day. You may have said similar ones at your wedding ... "I take you Pat, to be my husband, to have and to hold from this day forward, for better or for worse, for richer or for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish; from this day forward until death do us part." It is amazing how those vows have so much more meaning today than they did on June 4, 1976. There is no doubt I meant every word I said that day - I just didn't really understand the depth of what I was promising. Now after some better and some worse, times when finances were scarce and other times when God blessed us financially, through a child with cancer and Pat suffering a heart attack and lots of years of being blessed with health, the having and holding and loving and cherishing certainly have become more meaningful.

As I've been thinking about those vows the past couple of weeks it reminded me of how when I became a child of God, He promised to always love me. No matter how inadequate my love for Him might be or how often I might disappoint Him, He keeps on loving me. Comprehending that kind of amazing unconditional faithful love is not easy. This month let's pray that our husbands (and us) will get a clearer understanding of just how much God loves us and then share that love with others.

Here are a few verses to get us started .....

"I pray that my husband will realize that You, God, demonstrated Your own love toward him in that while he was still a sinner, Christ died for him."

Romans 5:8

"I pray that my husband totally understands that as You, God, loved Jesus, He also loves him and he is to abide in His love."

John 15:9

"I pray that my husband will love You, the Lord his God, with all his heart, with all his soul, with all his mind, and with all his strength and that he will love his neighbor as himself."

Mark 12:30-31

"I pray that my husband has known and believed the love that You, God, have for him and that he who loves You must love his brother also."

1 John 4:16, 21

We try to have a regular "Date Night". I'm sure many of you do as well. I want to share an idea that may help you keep that night even more fun. Make a "Date Night" Jar. It can be a jar, a box or just about anything. Write ideas for dates on slips of paper and put them into your container. You can decide on the ideas together or you can each put in some of your own. The ideas don't have to be expensive. They can be as simple as playing a board game together, going for a walk or having a picnic in front of the fireplace. Use your imagination. Then when it's time for your date draw out a slip of paper and you're ready to go!

*Karen Phinney*

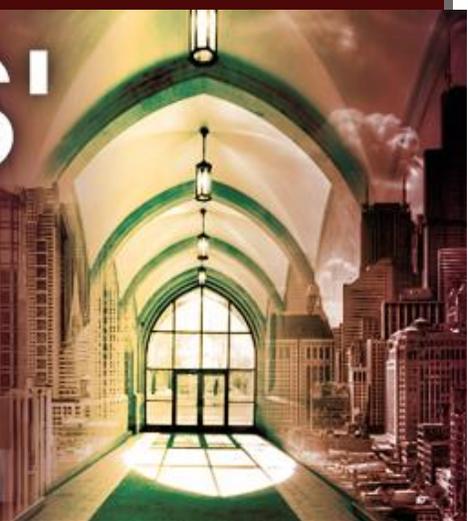
*Wife of Regional Director*

# PASTORS'

C O N F E R E N C E



MAY 18-21, 2015 · CHICAGO



It's time to start planning for the next Moody Pastor's Conference. Yes it's a few months away, but before you know it you'll be wishing you had registered early!

*For more information about speakers, musicians and the 2015 schedule [click on the picture above](#) to go directly to the site.*

Register by **February 28, 2015 through CBNC** for the Early Bird discount.

**Conference Registration** - Includes all sessions and breakout sessions.

CBNC Early Bird \$200 per person.

Early Bird through Moody is \$230.

After the Early Bird date the price is \$250.

**Conference Registration with Meals** - Includes all sessions and breakout sessions and 10 meals and evening snacks.

CBNC Early Bird \$300 per person.

Early Bird through Moody is \$330.

After the Early Bird date the price is \$350.

**Conference Registration with Housing and Meals** - Includes all sessions and breakout sessions, a four-night stay in campus housing and 10 meals plus evening snacks.

CBNC Early Bird \$400 per person (double or triple occupancy).

Early Bird through Moody is \$430. Single occupancy is \$480.

After the Early Bird date the price is \$450 and single occupancy is \$500.

As this event is designed for men in the pastorate, registration for housing and meals are available only to men. Pastors' wives may attend the general sessions (not breakout sessions) without charge or registration.

*Developing Healthy Congregations*

**"First Seminar Was a Whopping Success"**

"Are the people at church really spiritually mature if they are not reaching the lost?" This was the take-away from a Wisconsin pastor who attended the first "Developing Healthy Congregations" seminar at Calvary Baptist Church in Eau Claire, WI February 7, 2105.



Nearly 40 pastors and church leaders were challenged as Pat Phinney presented the concepts of how to develop a healthy church. Like bright lights flashing in a thunder storm, the conference room was filled with continuous "Ah ha!" moments. It was a blessing to see God at work to refresh the mission of the church in making committed disciples of Jesus Christ. Another pastor said, "It is time to get busy now!" We agree!

The staff at Calvary Baptist Church in Eau Claire, WI were amazing hosts as leaders from all over Wisconsin traveled to hear what God might share with them through the seminar about the future of their churches. We want to wish a warm thank you to Pastor John van Gorkom and his Team for helping make the first seminar so successful. More importantly, we thank the Lord for the love of His church and the passion of his leaders to sustain the mission we are called to champion.

Testimonials from attending leaders:

"The leaders from Bloomer Baptist that attended the healthy congregation seminar at Calvary Baptist in Eau Claire were truly inspired. At a leadership meeting the following week we spent 20 minutes rehearsing the things we learned. We praise God for the inspiration."

- Eldon Carlson, Bloomer, WI

"The seminar delivers a clarion call to develop healthy churches at a time when it is desperately needed."

- Wade Duroe, Chippewa Falls, WI



What is Really Urgent and Important?  
**"Developing Healthy Congregations"**

Lakeside Church, Worthington, MN

Saturday, April 18, 9am-2pm

*Presented by*

*CBNC Regional Director Pat Phinney*



Is it your desire to have a spiritually healthy church that is able to make committed disciples of Jesus Christ? Do you desire to have a church that is able to experience a level of reproduction that will impact your community for Jesus Christ? Come to a "Developing Healthy Congregations" seminar in your area in 2015. Here is your opportunity to take the first step to developing spiritual health in your own church. For more details and how to register [click here](#).

## Thoughts From a Cluster Leader

### "What Would Your Church Autopsy Reveal?"

As pastors and church leaders, we are all too familiar with the statistics detailing the struggles of churches here in the United States. According to Thom Rainer's book, "Breakout Churches", at least 100,000 churches are showing signs of decline. In most circumstances, that decline does not occur overnight; instead it takes place gradually and imperceptibly over a period of many years.

Church health is an important topic to consider which is why the region makes available resources like NCD (Natural Church Development) and also trains coaches to come alongside churches to help them process the results and make suggestions based on the NCD survey. As church leaders, we need to constantly be on the lookout for unhealthy trends that might be creeping into our churches. We need to be watchful and alert to make sure we do not allow a spirit of apathy to take root in our lives or in the churches God has called us to lead.

Over the last few months our leadership team, including both our pastoral staff and our elders board, read and discussed Thom Rainer's book, "Autopsy of a

Deceased Church". It is a short, easy read, but it definitely generated significant discussion regarding church health and where we stand as a church. The reading caused us to make an honest evaluation of where we are as a church and how to keep from becoming one of those churches that might need an autopsy.

In the first eleven chapters, Rainer reveals the results from the post-mortem examination of the churches that had died and closed their doors. Many of the issues would not surprise us, but the way they slowly crept into these deceased churches should cause us to pause and honestly examine the health of the churches that we lead.

Do people talk fondly of "the good old days" where the past is always looked at as the best and where the future and change is looked at with fear? Has the church ceased its efforts to reach out into the community? Simply hoping and expecting that people in the community will come through the doors on a Sunday. Are the ministries of the church solely focused on serving those already within the church rather than having ministries with a Great Commission emphasis?

As the church declines and the budget shrinks, where are budget cuts made? Rainer reveals that in the deceased churches, the areas that were cut were the ministries, programs, and funds that were allocated for local outreach. The churches ceased to fund ministries that were focused on the Great Commission and the Great Commandment, and the ministries that were saved focused solely on meeting the needs of those that were currently part of the existing body.

How long is the average tenure of the pastor? Rainer reveals that in the years leading up to the churches death, the tenure of the pastors decreases to the point that the pastors are leaving every 2-3 years - which is often during that stage when the initial conflicts and challenges take place.

What does the prayer life of the church look like? Does the church really pray? Is the leadership committed to prayer like the early New Testament

church? Are they devoted, passionate, and fervent in their prayers? The deceased churches rarely prayed together and Rainer concludes that prayer and church health go hand in hand.

Those are just a few of the issues Rainer addresses, but I want to encourage you to pick up the book and maybe grab a copy for your entire leadership team. It will no doubt lead to some important introspection and hopefully spark some great discussion. And maybe, it will even breathe a little life back into your church.

*Pastor Mike Wetzig  
Ravenna Baptist Church, Ravenna, MI*

## *Celebrations - 2014*



*First Baptist Church, Luverne, MN*

Over thirty brand new people in attendance. Most of these are younger families. There were six baptisms including teens and adults celebrated in 2014.

*Oak Park Community Church, Blaine, MN*

Fifteen baptized and three Parent- Child

Dedications celebrated.

*"...Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord, always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ." Ephesians 5:19-20*

Please send your celebrations to CBNC so that together, we can all give praise for the mighty works of our Father. Email [wendyj@cbnorthcentral.org](mailto:wendyj@cbnorthcentral.org).

**Church Law and Tax**



**Photos on Church Websites-Learning From Our Costly Mistake**

How using images from internet searches can lead to trouble.

- by Ed Marino [Read More](#)

**Q&A: Business Acumen Matters to Church Lenders**

For a mortgage loan application, don't assume a consultant is best. - Interview

By Bobby Ross, Jr. [Read More](#)

**Maximizing Church Calendars . Praying During Meetings . The Power of 'No': Management Roundup**

Trends, tips, ideas, and stats to help church leaders manage well this week. -

compiled by Matt Branaugh [Read More](#)



Please Pray for the Following Churches in Transition:

**SENIOR PASTOR**

Mason Township Baptist Church - Cassopolis, MI

Delavan Baptist Church - Delavan, IL

First Baptist Church - Elmhurst, IL

First Baptist Church - Whitehall, WI

First Baptist Church - Lake Crystal, MN

First Baptist Church - Pekin, IL

Palisade Baptist Church - Silver Bay, MN

Monona Oaks Community Church - Madison, WI

Cornerstone Community Church - Manchester, IA

Oak Park Community Church - Blaine, MN

First Baptist Church - Big Rapids, MI

**STAFF POSITIONS**

First Baptist Church - Spring Lake, MI

*Associate Pastor*

**CB North Central Pastoral Cluster Groups**

**North Dakota/Northern Minnesota**

Thursday, February 19 & Thursday, March 19, 10am - 12pm Skype

*Steve Daggett, Cavalier Baptist Church, Cavalier, ND*

701-265-8989

**Central Minnesota**

Monday, March 9, 10am - 12pm

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

651-437-3965

### **Southern Minnesota**

To Be Determined

*Doug Noonkester, First Baptist Church, Sibley, IA  
712-754-3310*

### **Wisconsin**

To Be Determined

*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, January 27, 10:00 - 3:30

Meeting at Bethany Baptist Church, 7422 North Heinz Ln, Edwards, IL  
*Art Georges, Living Hope Community Church, Bartonville, IL*  
309-633-0028 [art@livinghopecentral.org](mailto:art@livinghopecentral.org)

### **Michigan**

Tuesday, April 14th, 10am - Noon

Meeting at Cornerstone University next to the cafeteria. \$10 to cover room cost and lunch.

*Leo Cummings, Bethel Baptist Church, Jackson, MI  
517-416-1247*





## **CB North Central**

PO Box 490441  
Blaine, MN

Office Email: [wendyj@cbnorthcentral.org](mailto:wendyj@cbnorthcentral.org)  
Wendy Jonasen, Administrative Assistant  
Office Hours: Tues. thru Fri. 8am - 1pm

### **Pat Phinney, Regional Director**

[patp@cbnorthcentral.org](mailto:patp@cbnorthcentral.org)

Pat's Home Office: 952-322-7173

Pat's Cell: 952-500-3743

Stay Connected

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

