



North Central

Connecting Churches Who Love God and the Gospel



October 2016

THE CENTRAL CONNECTION

"We are an organization of churches that is committed to the mission of Christ to multiply disciple-making churches through evangelism, leadership training, and connection with other like-minded churches."

[Visit Our Website](#)

From The Director

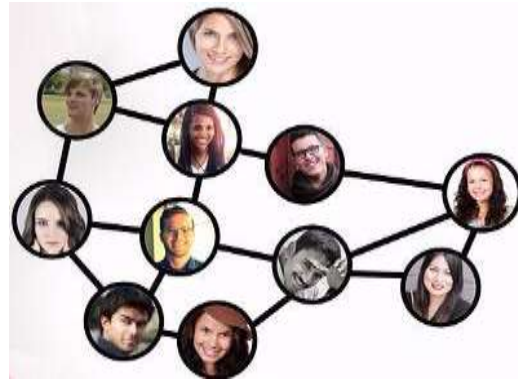
"Who's Watching the BODY Language?"

People often use words to disguise their thoughts about others, but their non-verbal actions or "body language" gives them away. We have all seen it! I remember reading a story where a family therapist investigated how the physical stance reflects the psychological distance between people. He studied 108 married couples, asking partners to walk toward one another. They were to stop when they got to a comfortable conversational distance. The happy couples stood an average of 11.4 inches apart and the unhappy ones stood 14.8 inches apart. This happened to me just last week when a church Elder came up to me after some training. I am not

exaggerating. You could not have put four fingers between his face and mine. Inside I was screaming, "Hey, you're in my space! Keep your distance!"

Ok, so here's my point. As I get into our regional churches, I continue to emphasize the tremendous need to stay on task with Mission. Our mandate is to make disciples of Jesus Christ. We must see lost souls come to new faith in Jesus Christ. We must build God's people into Christ-like maturity. We are to equip each believer in the church with the skills to serve Him for the sake of the kingdom. Our mission is also to recruit, develop, and multiply godly leaders in the church, starting with the Elders or Deacons. Finally, we must empower believers to go out into their community to serve and live out their faith for the world to see. In order to do this, we need to take the risk of getting into each other's space. I was in another church a few weeks ago and someone said out loud for all to hear, "We may be lacking in a lot of things here at church, but what we do have is a strong sense of community." I said in response, "It is one thing to say you have community and it is altogether different to see it displayed. Tell me how your church is showing a sense of community."

Earlier I said that "body language" is a form of communication that is almost always non-verbal. I wonder, what kind of body language are we sending to those whom God has given into our care? I have spoken with numerous individuals that attend our CB churches and they say things like, "We can't believe how friendly this church is. It is like a little community that really cares for each other. We simply love it!"



I like the body language that I am seeing out there. Is it perfect? No. Is there community? Yes! Paul said in I Corinthians 12:12, "For even as the body is one and yet has many members, and all the members of the body, though they are many, are one body, so also is Christ." I see this encouraging body language emphasis in many of our churches. There is a real maturing love for Christ and His church. There is an abiding respect for God's Word. There is a strong sense of family in the very center of relationships. There is an honest desire to change even when it is painful. There is commitment to bring harmony in the church, even if it is hard. There is a genuine warmth and friendliness toward new people who visit the church. There is real love, care and acceptance taking place, especially in time of need or crisis.

As I stand in that "happy" conversational space of 11.4 inches, I genuinely see people in churches who are looking for a community. I remember a couple saying to me recently, "We just want to be in a place where we can be cared for. We just want to make a difference." Friends, this is real body language. Paul continues on in I Corinthians 12:13, "For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit." This says to me that a healthy church encourages believers to grow in their walk with God. It brings each of us into a covenantal relationship where we are able to make an unusual commitment to one another. Robert Fulghum says it beautifully in his book, *All I Really*

Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten, "When you go out into the world, watch out for traffic, hold hands, and stick together."

I want to say one last thing. As I travel around our region, do you know who I am most thankful for? It is our pastors. These are not just individuals who are hired into a staff position. I watched a pastor a couple weeks ago weep in front of me. He was so



concerned for his people and for those who needed Christ in his community. I see pastors on all levels making tremendous sacrifices. Pastors, thank you so much for all you do. You are the ones who first step into that intimate conversational space of 11.4 inches. We honor you and your families for the love you give each other, your church and the community you faithfully serve.

Happy Pastor Appreciation month!!

Pat Phinney
CB North Central Regional
Director



Pastor's Wives . . . Just For You

"Walking With God"

I know I've said this before, but I LOVE it when God uses something in my everyday life to clarify a spiritual truth. This time He used our dog. :) Let me explain. Recently in my personal study I have been going through Hebrews 11. As I read all those commendations of faith for people like Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Moses, Rahab and the list goes on, I decided to do some additional study on each of them. One of the things I noticed in almost every case, it was said that person "walked" with God. Now that really wasn't a surprise, but it did get me to pause and think. What does it really mean to walk with God? I thought to myself, "One of these days I should do a word study on the word walk". Apparently God thought I needed some insight on "walking" before I get around to doing the study. Here's where Molly (our dog) comes in. She loves going

for walks, but she still has a lot to learn. Her 20 month old enthusiasm could get her into a lot of trouble. If she was not connected to one of us by a leash, she would be darting into traffic and chasing every squirrel she sees. We keep the leash tight enough so she has to walk on the path we are on and not randomly try to veer from side to side. We are also teaching her that when we stop, she stops and sits down to wait for the next command. It is our desire that she learns she is not the one in charge of the walk.



That's when the "Aha" moment occurred. How like Molly I am. I still have a lot to learn. And like her in my enthusiasm, I have a tendency to take off into places that could be dangerous and sometimes I may even chase a squirrel or two. :) It is important for me to stay close to God in my walk so that I am on the path of His choosing. After all, I am not in charge of this journey. I still want to do that word study one of these days, but I am thankful for the insight God has already given to me. Thanks Molly!

This month let's pray for our husbands as they walk with God. Here are a few verses to get us started

"Father, I pray that my husband will walk in the way that the Lord has commanded him, so that he may live and prosper and prolong his days in the land that he will possess."
Deuteronomy 5:33

"I pray that my husband will walk in all His ways, to obey His commands, to hold fast to Him and to serve Him with all his heart and all his soul."
Joshua 5:22b

"I pray that my husband will act justly and love mercy and walk humbly with You, God."
Micah 6:8b

"Father, I pray that my husband will walk in the light, as he is in the light, so he will have fellowship with one another"
1 John 1:7

"Father, my prayer is that my husband will walk in obedience to Your commands."
2 John 6

I know that I shared the following recipe with you a couple of years ago. But as the saying goes "Tis the season". Pat loves this cake so it's on my list of things to do during the month of October. If you haven't tried it before, you may want to try it this time. It really is very good. Especially served warm with whipped cream!

Pumpkin Pie Cake

5 eggs	½ tsp salt
1 -13 oz can evaporated milk	½ tsp cloves
1 - 29 oz can pumpkin	2 tsp cinnamon

1 cup sugar

Mix all together and pour into ungreased 9X13 pan.

½ cup margarine, melted

1 box white or yellow cake mix

Mix those together. Sprinkle crumbs over the pumpkin mixture. Bake at 350 for 1 hour.

[Click here to print.](#)



Karen Phinney

Wife of Regional Director, Pat Phinney



Welcome to CB Global

CB Global is a network of evangelical church associations around the world cooperating together to strengthen each other in fulfilling the great commission of our Lord Jesus Christ. [Click here to visit site.](#)

Jesus said, "Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

Matthew 28:19-20

New Living Translation

Thoughts From A Cluster Leader

"The One Thing"

A couple of years ago I was injured. I did something stupid and I completely wrecked my foot. I'm all healed up now from my surgeries and convalescence, but there are still some things that I can't do. I can't really run yet... or jump... I can to a certain degree... enough to get myself quickly across a busy street, but I can't do much more than that. I used to be an athlete (back in the day), but since running and jumping are out of the question, those kinds of activities are now memories of the past. I'm also getting older

(and fatter). I'm 62 now and I don't have the energy or drive that I used to have. There are just some things that I can't DO anymore.



So much of our identity is wrapped up in what we DO. When we are being introduced to someone for the first time, what is one of the first questions that we are asked? It's, "What do you do?" isn't it? Then we tell them about our jobs or ministries mostly. We identify ourselves by what we DO. We may get into our hobbies next or our recreational interests, but these too are things that we DO. Even after we retire, we identify ourselves by what we DID.

What happens then when we are no longer able to DO what we once did, either because of our age or because of a change in circumstances in our lives? Some of us lose our identities. Some of us begin to feel useless. Others get depressed and lose interest in life. Aren't we more than what we DO or are able to DO? Jesus thought so.



He showed us so in Luke 10:38-42. It is the familiar story of Martha and her sister Mary. The setting of the story is the



small village of Bethany about 2 miles outside of the city gates of Jerusalem. On one occasion, Jesus came through the village and was invited to stay in the home owned by Martha. Jesus was becoming rather well known and so this was a pretty big deal for the sisters. Of course the twelve disciples were there as well and presumably others too, all interested in hearing what Jesus had to say.

As is the case when there are visitors, hospitality demands a meal for the guests. So Martha busied herself with all the preparations. But her problem was that she had no help. This was a big job and Mary was in sitting by Jesus listening to Him instead of DOING what needed to be done. At this point in the story we are identifying with Martha. She's getting a bit upset by her sister. We would be too.

So she went to Jesus and demanded, "Tell her to help me!" To her that was the most important thing at this moment. Unfortunately, Jesus didn't agree. He said this to her: "Martha, Martha... you are worried and upset about many things, but only ONE THING is needed. Mary has chosen what is better..."

From Jesus' perspective, the most important thing about Martha was not what she DID, but who she knew... Him. Mary had chosen the ONE THING that mattered most. She was sitting in the presence of her Lord and soaking Him in. She was getting to know HIM. For a follower of Jesus Christ, THAT is the one thing that matters most about us. Our identity is not found in what we DO or even in what we DO for God. Our identity is found in Christ. Through our faith in Him, He has made us sons and daughters of God... princes and princesses of the Kingdom of God. That's who we now ARE! That

defines us now! HE is our everything... not our ministries or our activities, or even our families.

We are followers of Jesus and that fact now colors and influences everything about us... how we work... how we play... how we vote... what we believe... and what we know to be true. Our identity is in Jesus. He is the ONE THING!

I know that we are busy. There is so much to do in the life of a pastor... and it's never really done is it? The temptation is to set aside the development of our relationship with Jesus in favor of the "tyranny of the urgent." It's a mistake. Brothers (and sisters) choose what is better, or rather Him who is better. He is the ONE THING who matters. Without Him our efforts are nothing but wind.

*Pastor Stephen Schoenwald
River of Life Church, Hastings, Minnesota
Twin Cities Cluster*

#What'sYourStory?

"Front Burner Issues"

My wife does most of the cooking in our household but I do take my turn at cooking occasionally. One of the things I have discovered when I cook is that the pans on the front burners get the most attention. If I have something on the back burner, it's usually a less important item for the preparation of that meal or maybe something I just have simmering.



That's the visual that comes to my mind when I think about the mission of the church. Making disciples and presenting the Gospel to people in our community should always be a "front burner" item. But it's very easy to push our primary mission to the back burners and not be as intentional or to not have a sense of urgency about the Great Commission. We are more prone to give significant time to church programs, sermon preparation, and administrative tasks. Programs and activities are often an important part of our mission but if they overtake the mission or become more important than the mission, then we have put our mission of pointing people to Christ on the back burner.

A couple examples from our church come to my mind. Our youth meet every Wednesday night during the school year. For many years, we struggled to get any kind of youth ministry established. But in the last five or six years, we put together some new approaches and adults volunteered to get on board to do what needed to be done so that we might reach the youth in our community for Christ. As we have pursued our mid-week program and encouraged them to attend a week at Camp Shetek in the

summer, we have seen youth give their lives to Christ and learn what it means to follow Him.

We recently started a Guys Time Out (GTO) with the purpose of getting men in our community together once a month to establish connections with other men while being strengthened in the roles they have in their families and workplaces. We believe that if we can point men to Christ that their marriage, family, and network of friendships will be greatly improved.

As Pat Phinney reminded our leaders recently, "The Gospel never changes, but the church must change constantly." We realize we have to change our approach from time to time to effectively reach our community for Christ. We live in a rural area with four small towns within a 15 mile radius. It isn't easy to gather people together for worship services or outreach activities because of the distance factor. But people attend these things because they are invited by someone from our church family and because we are feeding them from God's Word. We have a church family that truly cares about our community and is willing to do what it takes to help them grow in Christ.

Sometimes churches in rural areas are reluctant to change or enlarge their vision. But I am fortunate to lead a church that is willing to move forward and try new approaches if they see how it fulfills our mission of "developing an intimate relationship with Christ and sharing His love with others."

As we read in Isaiah 43:16-17 - "Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?" We know that it is the Holy Spirit who changes people's lives. So we seek to join God in what He is already doing as we follow His prompting in our lives. As we do that, we will be on target for making disciples and keeping the important tasks on the front burner.

Pastor David Johnson
Storden Baptist Church, Storden, Minnesota



ALL GLORY TO GOD

"Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the LORD of hosts." (Zechariah 4:6)

May all the glory go to God for the work His Spirit is doing in the church of Jesus Christ called Calvary in Eau Claire, Wisconsin.

We are being overwhelmed by the blessing of God as we see the Lord adding to the number of people connected to Calvary on a weekly basis - some by salvation and baptism, some by reconnection to church after deep spiritual hurts in their past, and some by a desire to grow deeper in the truth of the Gospel to reach full maturity in Christ.

Last week we had 6 new converts baptized, 5 of whom did so outside in the Chippewa River. What a joyous celebration of God's redemptive purpose. Now begins the adventure of reproducing disciple-making disciples of Jesus Christ.

It is not my intention in writing this article to boast about anything that we are doing at Calvary. I do not want to share "successes" or "ministry models". Yes, I could talk about the exponential growth we are seeing at Calvary, but I want to be very clear that nothing good that happens in Christ's church is by the power, might, planning, vision, or intellect of man. Everything that happens is by the Spirit of God, and all we can do is accept His invitation to partner with Him in God's redemptive purpose.

It is my intention to encourage you in your ministry with only one thing that we see God doing in our midst: He is blessing us with the caretaking responsibilities of a multitude of people, and we believe that is happening because we are proving to be faithful caretakers of His truth.

In today's evangelical culture, two extremes have developed that are indicators that a church is not being a faithful caretaker of the truth. One is the revival of legalism in the form of separatist truth. Far too many churches are so overly emphasizing truth that they have become exclusionary. Every little doctrinal position is used to eliminate perceived threats to the truth, and as a result, the church stops ministering to the lost and begins the process of dying.

On the other hand, there is the extreme of permissive grace, where sin is never confronted and people's feelings are exalted above truth. Sin is never addressed in people's lives, and church becomes an individualistic expression of personal preferences. Truth is ignored for the sake of keeping people happy.

Both positions are an unfaithful response to the heart of Jesus Christ who is the head of the church. The Apostle John describes Jesus as "full of grace and truth." That is the one thing that we focus on at Calvary that we believe God is honoring. The marvelous balance between grace and truth that flowed from the heart of God into the activity of Jesus is what defines us, and for that reason God is blessing us as caretakers of an ever-increasing number of people who are coming to Him for redemption.

Hallelujah!

May God continue to entrust to faithful people the lives of those He is calling to repentance. May we be faithful to fulfill Christ's commission to reproduce disciple-making disciples. May the world around us continue to be drawn to the cross of Christ through the people of Calvary because they are faithfully living the truth of the Gospel in lives of grace.

*Pastor John van Gorkom
Calvary Baptist Church, Eau Claire, WI*

CBAmerica Chaplaincy **"Just the Right Size"**

"One of the inmates that took one of our pocket New Testaments (let's call him Jim) was a known drug dealer in the prison; one of your go-to men if you wanted to get high on something." -by Chaplain Bob Ishkanian

[-Read More](#)

*Rev. Andy Meverden
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WELCOME to the CB North Central region **Pastor Walt Moser** who began his ministry at First Baptist Church, Luverne, MN on 10-1-16 and **Pastor Rob Buhl** welcomed by First Baptist Church, Whitehall, WI on 9-12-16. We are so happy to have these new pastors as part of the CBNC region. Please pray for them and their families as well as their prospective churches as they transition into their new roles.

Please Pray for the Following Churches in Transition:

Senior Pastor



Lakes Community Church, Clitherall, MN
Delavan Baptist Church - Delavan, IL
Wildwood Baptist Church - East Moline, IL
Oak Park Community - Blaine, MN
First Baptist Church - Parkers Prairie, MN
Bazetta Baptist Church - Warren, OH
First Baptist Church - New Richmond, WI



Three Keys to Creating Inspiring Church Communications

"These three elements of your church communications will help motivate your church members to share information about your church." -by Jonathan Howe, ThomRainier.com [Read More](#)

Should We Meet in House Churches?

"God has brought great awakenings and massive church growth during times with and without church buildings."
- by John Piper, ChurchLeaders.com [Read More](#)

Some Thoughts About the Recent Exit of Two Megachurch Pastors

"If you're thinking well, I'm just more righteous than all this, you need to know that puts you in great company. That's exactly what the Pharisees thought." - by Carey Nieuwhof, ChurchLeaders.com [Read More](#)

Find a Friend to Wound You

"Faithful are the wounds of a friend; profuse are the kisses of an enemy." -Proverbs 27:6
[Read More](#)



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CB North Central Cluster Groups

North Dakota/Northern MN

To be decided - watch for details.

Steve Daggett, Cavalier Baptist, Cavalier, ND
701-265-8989

Central Minnesota

Monday, October 10, 10am to Noon (10/10@10)
We're reading: "Old Paths New Power", by Daniel Henderson.

Meeting at River of Life Church, Hastings, MN
Steve Schoenwald, River of Life Church, Hastings, MN
651-437-3965



Wisconsin

Men's Retreat 2016 Camp Arrowhead October 7-9 Cost \$89

Friday: 6-7 pm registration (supper on your own)

7 pm Session #1 Bucky Buckwalter

8:30 pm round-robin foosball and carpetball

Saturday: 8:30 am breakfast

9:30 am Session #2 John van Gorkom

11 am to 12pm Free Time

12 pm Lunch

1 pm Volleyball (Fishing, Archery, Hiking, Relaxing, Board Games, ATV

outside
of camp)

3 pm Frisbee Golf (Fishing, Archery, Hiking, Relaxing, Board Games, ATV
outside of camp)

5:30 pm Supper

7 pm Session #3 Eldon Carlson

8:30 pm round-robin ping-pong

Sunday: 8:00 am Breakfast

8:30 am Worship Wade Duroe

9:45 am Departure

For more information contact Wade Duroe, Crossroads Church, Chippewa Falls, WI
715-723-1054 or Eldon Carlson, Bloomer Baptist, Bloomer, WI 715-568-1979.

Iowa

Tuesday, November 15, 12:00 noon

Meeting at Calvary Church, Muscatine, IA

Illinois

To be decided - watch for details.

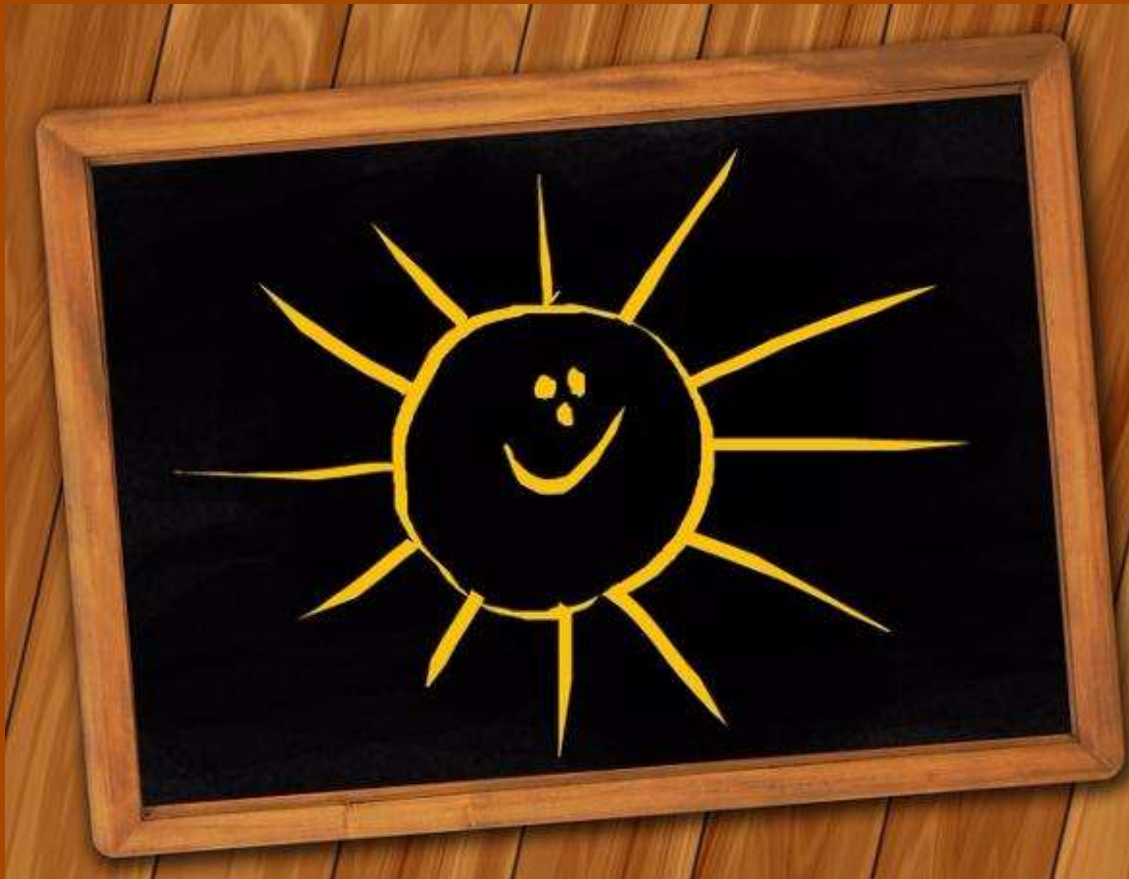
Art Georges, Living Hope Community Church, Bartonville, IL
309-633-0028 art@livinghopecentral.org

Michigan

To be decided - watch for details.

Leo Cumings, Bethel Baptist Church, Jackson, MI
517-416-1247

For more information on a Cluster Group in your area please contact the CBNC office.



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Stay Connected
www.cbnorthcentral.org

