



March 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](#)

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### **From the Director**

**"The Perfect Storm"**

I know the metaphorical phrase, "The Perfect Storm" is only a popular expression. It normally describes an event where a rare combination of circumstances could lead up to a situation of unusual magnitude. Tragically, the Perfect Storm took the lives of thirteen people including six crewmen of the fishing boat, 'The Andrea Gail'. In a number of ways, the perfect storm is a good metaphor.



Let me tell you about my recent Perfect Storm. A few weeks ago I was on a five-day road trip meeting with pastors and church leaders in WI, IL and IA. It was a great trip and most productive. On the way back home, I met with a pastor in Colfax, IA when the perfect storm hit. Literally! I got snowed in and could not travel north to Minneapolis because all the Interstates were closed. Here is where the storm gets interesting. Colfax has two hotels. One that is nice and comfortable. The other . . . ah not so nice. I made the reservations thinking I chose the nicer accommodation, BUT I WAS WRONG. How could I have made such a mistake? Great. Now I am stranded in this small Iowa town, residing in something like the "Bates Motel" and I can't get home. I stayed the first night and woke up at 5:00 am only to discover that the Interstates were still closed. What now? I stagger to the breakfast lounge for some well needed coffee and was greeted by another stranded traveler. After about fifteen minutes of small-talk regarding the weather, the convergence of the storm began. He asked me, "So what do you do?" Oh I have been there so many times and I knew what God was doing. I honestly thought to myself, "But I am in the wrong hotel Lord and all I want to do is get home." Well the questions kept coming about the meaning of life and all this man wanted to hear was more about God. I had a choice to make. Do I obey God, submit to my untimely circumstances in the Bates Motel and the surrounding snow blizzard or share the Gospel? I obeyed. I said to the man, "Now wait here because I want to get a booklet from my room, so I can tell you about someone who changed my life forever." I dashed to my room and when I returned to the breakfast lounge, he was gone. When I spoke to the hotel representative as to his whereabouts, he told me that the man left as if there was a fire. Disappointed, I went back to the room to recheck the weather and to my delight, the Interstates were now open. As I was walking down the hallway to load my car, I hear this faint voice, "Here I am!" What?? He didn't leave and he wants the "rest of the story". I quickly grabbed my "Steps to Peace with God" and Bible to go finish what God started. It was the Perfect Storm. After about twenty minutes of sharing the Good News, he prayed to receive Christ right in the lounge. Alex was a truck driver and wait for it . . . a staunch orthodox Jew. What a joy to see the Holy

Spirit descend upon him and give new life in Christ. He said, "I guess the Messiah has come and now I believe."

Jesus experienced many "Perfect Storm" scenarios. In Luke 19:1-10, Jesus was traveling through Jericho to get to Jerusalem, which was a mere 20 miles away. He was on his way to the cross. I love what verse five says, "When Jesus came to the place, He looked up (in a sycamore tree) and said to him, 'Zacchaeus, hurry and come down, for today I must stay at your house.'" The NIV says, "When Jesus reached the spot . . ." Friends, don't you think for a moment that Jesus might have been distracted a little, knowing he was only eight days from His crucifixion? Clearly, it was appointed and ordained that Jesus obey the opportunity to share the way of salvation with Zacchaeus, so he might find new life in the Messiah.



*Pat Phinney*  
*CBNC Regional Director*

The other night I was helping my 12-year-old grandson by proofing his notes for a two-minute speech. He was to speak about Herb Brookes, who was a Minnesota hockey legend. He closed his comments to the class by quoting the legendary coach, "Great moments are born from great opportunity." It is my prayer this Easter that we will seize every great opportunity and God-given appointment to share the Good News of Jesus Christ. Like for Alex, the Jew, great moments were experienced in knowing the Messiah.

Your perfect storm is brewing and all God needs is willing hearts to obey the opportunity. The promise of what Paul said in Acts 28:28 is real, "they will listen". I can't wait to hear your amazing story!

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# PASTORS' CONFERENCE

EQUIPPING PASTORS AND CHURCH LEADERS

MAY 23-27, 2016 · CHICAGO

It's time to start planning for the next MOODY PASTOR'S CONFERENCE. For the line up of speakers, musicians, and the 2016 schedule [click on the picture above](#) to go directly to the site.

Early Bird Information is HERE! [Click here](#) for more information.

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## "The Triumphant Second Coming"

Years ago, when my wife and I were first engaged, we decided to attend a Good Friday service at a very large local church, where the sanctuary accommodated thousands. This Good Friday, the service consisted of a theatrical performance portraying the Passion of Christ. As a pastor's kid (always seated in the front row), I relish the opportunity to visit a church and sit in the back. So, my fiancé and I took our seats in the back row and spent the next couple of hours deeply engaged in the trial, crucifixion, and resurrection of our Lord. The performance was beautiful, complete with scores of actors, animals, set pieces, etc. At the very end, after the resurrection, the house lights went out while the orchestra continued to play. Expecting that the actors would be coming out next to take their bows, I nudged my beautiful fiancé and whispered that we should leave now to beat the traffic. Just as we arrived at the exit doors, located at the rear center of the auditorium, every single spotlight in the sanctuary came on, all centered directly on us.

*Uh oh.*

The double doors swung open, the music reached a major crescendo, and there, directly in front of us, was Jesus...on a nine foot tall white horse.

*Yes, they had decided to include the triumphant second coming into this performance!*

I was stunned, panicked, and momentarily paralyzed under the watching eyes of about 2000 people. Then it happened: from behind Jesus, a panicked usher screamed at me, "GET OUT OF THE WAY! YOU'RE RUINING THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST!"

Followers of Jesus generally don't hear those words!

As all embarrassing stories have the potential to be, this one is an incredible illustration, specifically of what happens when we put our own desires at odds with HIS desires. Serving as the director of WorldVenture's Church Mobilization efforts across the nation, one thing I see frequently is that we elevate our own plans and ask God to bless them, rather than finding out how/where God is moving, and joining him in His plans.

So many Christians memorize Jeremiah 29:11 and take it to mean that the goal of our spiritual journey is simply "to find God's plan for my life." We need to challenge church members with an understanding that our goal is to join God in the plans He has already set in motion. God is on the move, and we have the privilege of joining in.

It's my goal to see our churches living up to the calling they've received. Churches are to be mobilization centers where people come to be equipped and then launched to the ends of the earth-in line with the movement of the Father.



So, I make a simple ask: if anyone in your church is praying about a role on the mission field, please connect them with me. I want to help them launch, and do it in a way that engages your congregation.

*JJ Harling*

*Director of Church Mobilization, WorldVenture*

[j.harling@worldventure.com](mailto:j.harling@worldventure.com) | (719) 235-8580

### **Who is WorldVenture?**

WorldVenture is a Christian missionary sending agency. We are a network of passionate people connected in the common cause of seeing the Great Commission of Jesus Christ fulfilled.

Our people serve in 63 countries working in the arts, media, business, education, family and medicine, church outreach, science and agriculture, and government. We exist to see people of all nations transformed by Jesus Christ in partnership with his church.

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

### **"Is There a Church In It?"**

We recently had two of our grandchildren stay with us while their parents had a chance to get away. As you can imagine, we loved every minute of those ten days. There was a lot more activity than normal and our schedules went through a bit of a change. Because Gabe (12) and Anna (9) go to different schools, their starting and ending times are quite different. Gabe's school starts at 7:15 and Anna's not until 9:15. Since Gabe's middle school is about a twenty minute drive from our house, Pat and Gabe would leave home at about 6:35. Then later I would drive Anna to her school. One day as we were on our way we drove by a large church in one of the suburbs we passed through. There was a long line of cars in single file dropping off children. Our conversation went something like this:

Me: "I wonder if that church has a school in it."

Anna: "Maybe."

Me: "It looks like there are a lot of kids being dropped off."

Anna: "I bet it's a preschool. Grandma, do you remember the preschool I went to?"

Me: "I do."

Anna: "My preschool had a church in it too."

I couldn't help but smile. She didn't say "My preschool was in a church too." She said "My preschool had a church in it too." I kept thinking about her perspective on that. What a great way of thinking! Wherever we are - there should be a church. We are after all the church. When I go to the grocery store, when I meet with friends, when I am driving in traffic, whatever the situation or the circumstances, there should be a church there too.

As we look ahead to Easter Sunday, we are always very aware of and thankful for the many people that will walk through the doors of our churches that day that don't usually come. What a great opportunity that gives us to minister to them. This year let's remember all the people who won't come to our churches and take the church to them.

This way of thinking gives us great responsibility and opportunity to serve wherever we are. This month let's make that the prayer focus for our husbands. Their days are filled with service. Here are some verses to get you started ....

"I pray that my husband will fear You, the Lord his God, and walk in all Your ways and love You, and serve You with all his heart and with all his soul and that he will keep Your commandments and Your statutes which You command him today for his good."  
Deuteronomy 10:12-13

"I pray that my husband will serve You, Lord, with gladness and come before Your presence with singing."  
Psalm 100:2

"I pray that my husband will serve You, the Lord his God, and You only will he serve."  
Matthew 4:10

"I pray that my husband will be kind and affectionate to others with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to others; not lagging in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving You, Lord; rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing steadfastly in prayer, distributing to the needs of the saints, given to hospitality."  
Romans 12:10-13

Many years ago I ran across this recipe. When I first read it I thought "what a strange combination of flavors". I decided to give it a try. I'm sure many of you may already have this, but it is such a good side dish with ham that I thought I would share it this month.

### Broccoli Surprise Salad

1 head raw broccoli, chopped  
12 slices bacon, fried crisp and crumbled  
½ red onion, chopped  
½ cup raisins

Mix together and add this dressing:

1 cup real mayonnaise  
½ cup sugar  
2 tbsp cider vinegar

Mix and marinate overnight.

[Click Here for a Printable Copy](#)



I pray that as we prepare to celebrate Easter, you will rejoice in the resurrection!

Happy Easter to you and your family.

*Karen Phinney  
Wife of Regional Director*

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## "DEVELOPING HEALTHY CONGREGATIONS" SEMINAR Central Minnesota

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. 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.](#)



What is Really Urgent and Important?

## **"Developing Healthy Congregations"**

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

**Saturday, May 7, 9am-2pm**

Presented by CBNC Regional Director Pat Phinney

Don't miss this opportunity. The **last day to sign up is Friday, April 29th.**

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### **Thoughts From A Cluster Leader "Called to Integrity"**

One of the greatest challenges we face as pastors is the call to minister with integrity. We live our lives (especially those of us in rural or small town settings) in a fishbowl, and all of our public (and some private) interactions are subject to scrutiny by the community at large. Sue and I have enjoyed attending as many high school basketball games this winter as possible. It's a great way to connect with the community, plus it's a cheap form of entertainment in a town without a lot of other options!

As so often happens at these events, tempers can flare and our inner passions suddenly are on display for a whole gym full of people to see! (Or hear!) This was vividly illustrated just a couple of weeks ago at an important conference game.



We were sitting just a couple of rows above the playing floor, and though the game was young, the intensity was building. A number of adults sitting near us were commenting, with growing volume, about various refereeing

calls. Then an out of bounds play took place right in front of us and the ref on the far side blew his whistle, paused with a blank expression, and then awarded the ball to our opponents.

Those of us sitting closest had clearly (to us anyway) seen our opponents touch the ball last. Someone behind us yelled: "If you didn't see the play, could you at least ask a ref that did?" Then, from very close by, came a quiet voice: "Yeah-ask an adult!" The ref was standing only about 4 feet away and immediately turned to the bleachers. "The game will not resume until the person that made that last comment leaves the building." The whole gymnasium was suddenly hushed. After a pause, the ref calmly repeated his edict. He was dead serious. After another aching, endless pause, the man sitting on the other side of my wife slipped on his jacket, stood, and quietly left the building.

Every eye was on him. Everyone knew. You can't hide in a gymnasium when you've been called out; the distance between his seat in the bleachers and the exit on the far side of the gym floor must have seemed like a mile. I felt so bad for him. He's a respected member of the community with a good job and a wonderful family. His son is a starter on the team.

And it so easily could have been me! I've been known to express my disappointment at a bad call. Sue has shushed me more than once. I've never completely lost my cool, but you never know . . .!

Jesus taught that, though the surface of my life may look all shiny and clean, it's what is stored up within that really defines me. (Matt. 15: 16-20) My gentle demeanor and kind words can be replaced in an instant by something far less attractive, far less reflective of my Savior. And this is the true measure of what's in my heart. The incident in the gym reflects the reality that there's really no such thing as a "private world". Whether in my small church, or in my town, or in eternity, my inner life can never remain my own. It has a way of expressing itself, and it will define who I am and what I can accomplish for eternity.

God grant me, and all of us who serve the King, the grace to walk in the Spirit, daily exposing our inner lives to his sanctifying work through the Word of God. "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law."

*Steve Daggett*

*Pastor of Cavalier Baptist Church, Cavalier, ND*

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## **-CBAmerica Chaplaincy**

### **"Burial At Sea: Providing Hope and Closure"**

"It was the most beautiful funeral I have ever led. Watching the final committal from the safety of the higher position, the stern gate, which normally is lowered for Amphibious Assault Vehicles, was now being opened to say farewell to a beloved shipmate one last time. "

[Read More](#)

[Read More & See Photos](#)



*Aaron C. Carlton*  
*Chaplain*  
*LCDR CHC USN*

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## **#How Has CB North Central Helped Your Church?**



*Pastor Wade Duroe*

In the past few years, Crossroads Church has benefited from CB North Central in two key ways.

In 2010 and 2012, we have taken the Natural Church Development Assessment Surveys. With the help of a trained NCD coach, we have been able to see the overall health of our church. We were encouraged to see that we are doing well. We were excited to see our areas of strength. We have tried to build on them. We addressed the areas of weakness in our church by developing action plans to strengthen the weaker areas. We continue to use the NCD surveys to evaluate and build upon our strengths and to improve our weaknesses.

A second way CB North Central helped us was in finding a full-time youth pastor. They sent us a number of resumes. But we did not find a good fit for our church. The help came from the relationships and networking we had developed in our regional cluster group.

The churches of western Wisconsin put on a joint men's retreat in the fall of 2015. While we were there doing all kinds of manly things like teaching and worship, praying and singing, eating, snoring and playing games, guys from Crossroads spread the word that we were looking for a youth pastor candidate.

After the retreat, one of the men went back to his church and talked with a volunteer who was working with their students. He had always felt called to do full-time youth ministry, but for various reasons had not yet realized such an opportunity. He sent a resume to our church, and long story short, he was a great fit for our church and our youth ministry. He began ministry on January 3, 2016 and this past Sunday we formally installed him with church leaders, family and friends laying on hands and praying for him and his wife. Who knows when, or if, we would have filled the youth position at our church without the networking and connections that were built in our regional cluster group?

We are thankful for the churches in our North Central region, and for Pat Phinney and Wendy Jonasen. They all deserve our prayers and support.

*Wade Duroe*  
*Pastor of Crossroads Church, Chippewa Falls, WI*

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## **#What's Going On In Your Church?**

**"Alleluia, Amen!"**

God is so good to give us every once in awhile an "extraordinary day" Sunday January 17 was one of those days. There were two couples and two teenagers who were baptized and became members of our church along with three others who transferred their membership.

What a defining moment to hear the testimonies of the baptismal candidates! The teenagers had accepted Christ through our youth ministries. Their father had accepted Christ as a youth. The mother became a believer through a church Bible study. All of these had been baptized as babies, but now wanted to follow the Lord in believers' baptism.

*"God is so good to give us every once in awhile  
an 'extraordinary day' "*

A young couple was also baptized. The wife had been baptized at about 10 yrs of age but felt she was not really a believer at the time. Her husband, was baptized as an infant. Along with their three young children, they have been attending our church for several months and having made commitments for Christ, wanted to be baptized and become members.

In the baptismal pool, one of the deacons assisted me in baptizing the couples. Our youth leader assisted me in baptizing the teenagers. After each baptism the congregation shouted "Alleluia Amen!" and cheered with great joy.



There were also three adults who transferred their membership to our church.

We are all praying that this is just the beginning of God's special blessing on our congregation. There are already some others who are expressing interest in "growing deeper." Nearly every Sunday, there are new people attending our church. May God be pleased to continue His blessing!

*Dr. M. Fred Polding, Interim Pastor  
First Baptist Church, Lake Crystal, MN*

## **2016 HENRY C. SPICER SCHOLARSHIP**



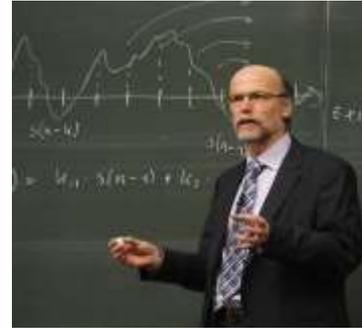
## **For Graduating High School Seniors**

### **The Henry C. Spicer Scholarship**

is awarded each year to high school seniors planning to attend college in the Fall. To qualify, an applicant must be a committed Christian and a regular attender of a CBNC affiliated church. Four \$500



scholarships were awarded in 2015.



For more information and an application, visit our [website](#). More questions? Contact our office by phone 763-205-9330 or email [wendyj@cbnorthcentral.org](mailto:wendyj@cbnorthcentral.org). **Applications must be postmarked no later than April 1st.**



### **How Much Should You Pay a Guest Preacher?**

This article includes a simple formula to use as a guideline when you are faced with how much to pay a guest preacher.

- by *Art Rainier*, AR [Read More](#)

### **3 Steps to Break Through The Busyness of Leadership**

"Let vision define priorities." - by *Art Rainier*, AR [Read More](#)

### **5 Illusions That Will Lead You Straight Into An Affair**

"NOTE: This article is an excerpt from The Solomon Seduction: What You Can Learn From the Wisest Fool in the Bible by Pastor Mark Atteberry." - by *Mark Atteberry*, ChurchLeaders.com [Read More](#)

**Please Pray for the Following Churches in Transition:**



Senior Pastor

- Delavan Baptist Church - Delavan, IL
- First Baptist Church - Lake Crystal, MN
- First Baptist Church - Pekin, IL
- First Baptist Church - Parkers Prairie, MN
- First Baptist Church - Detroit Lakes, MN
- Oak Park Community - Blaine, MN
- First Baptist Church - Whitehall, WI
- Squaw Creek Baptist Church - Marion, IA
- Bazetta Baptist Church - Warren, OH
- Lakeside Church - Worthington, MN
- First Baptist Church - Luverne, MN
- First Baptist Church - New Richmond, WI

**CB North Central Cluster Groups**

**North Dakota/Northern MN**

Thursday, April 21, 10:00am  
Meeting at Faith Bridge Church in Park Rapids, MN  
Steve Daggett, Cavalier Baptist, Cavalier, ND  
701-265-8989

**Central Minnesota**

Monday, March 14, 10am to Noon  
Meeting at River of Life Church, Hastings, MN  
Steve Schoenwald, River of Life Church, Hastings, MN  
651-437-3965



**Wisconsin**

Thursday, March 10, Noon to 3pm  
Ordering out for lunch. Contact Eldon with your choice of Chinese, pizza, or chicken.  
Discussing legal issues and constitutions.  
Meeting at Bloomer Baptist, Bloomer, WI.  
Wade Duroe, Crossroads Church, Chippewa Falls, WI  
715-723-1054

**Illinois**

Tuesday, April 26th, 10:30-1:30  
Meeting at Living Hope Community Church in Bartonville, IL

Art Georges, Living Hope Community Church, Bartonville, IL  
309-633-0028 [art@livinghopecentral.org](mailto:art@livinghopecentral.org)

## Michigan

Tuesday, May 3rd, 10:00am

Meeting at the campus of Cornerstone University.

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.

*"And behold, the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom.  
And the earth shook, and the rocks were split." Matthew 27:51*



*Blessings to you and your family this Easter as you celebrate in sincere  
thankfulness the great sacrifice that Christ made for us.*

## CB North Central

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