



**CB NORTH CENTRAL**

*Connecting Churches Who Love God and the Gospel*



*These little blue flowers were picked just for you.  
Welcome Spring!*

April 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**

#### **"An Unlikely Encounter of Power"**

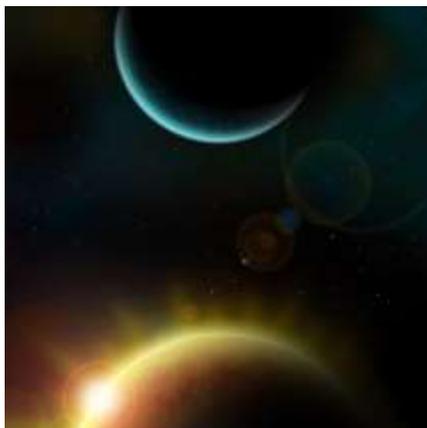
I was having lunch with some good friends last Sunday after I spoke at a Wisconsin church. I walked over to the coffee bar and saw some people engaging in a deep conversation. Our eyes warmly met as if to say, "Shall we talk?". I greeted them and before long I asked them, "Do you know Jesus?" Without saying a word, a distinguished and gray haired gentleman started writing something on his napkin. He said, "I will bring it to your table." I was most curious. What was he writing? What was he going to say to a complete stranger? After a few minutes of anticipation, I saw him coming right towards me. He handed me a folded napkin and said, "When you get home read this passage and it will tell you what I think about Jesus."

The church I was speaking at is small and six months ago it was ready for a funeral. Last October a young deacon came up to me after we had an honest "come to Jesus" meeting. He asked me, "Does God have the power to turn our church around?" I took him to a great passage in Revelation to answer his question. "And all the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures; and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, saying, "Amen, blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might, be to our God forever and ever. Amen." (Revelation 7:11-12)

Many hours of intervention, counseling and training had passed. I spoke at his church again last Sunday, so we could talk about the need of mission. I asked the young deacon if he now thinks God has the power to turn his church towards the mission of making disciples? The answer was a resounding yes.

Have you forgotten about the crumpled napkin and the mysterious passage written by the 80-year-old man? It was that same passage from Revelation 7:11-12, which describes the sovereign power of God.

When I look at churches that are not focused on mission, it absolutely breaks my heart. I cry, "If only they would tap into His unlimited power." Don't they know God can do anything effortlessly? It is no more difficult for Him to create the universe than it is for Him to make a butterfly. I get tired when I work. According to Isaiah 40:28 God's infinite power never lessens, "Do you not know? Have you not heard? The Everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth does not become weary or tired."



Not only does God have unlimited power, but He also has the authority to use it. It has been asked of me more times than I am old, "Why did God do that?" I have often replied, "Because He wanted to." He showed His sovereignty and His ultimate control of everything. When it comes to rebuilding or revitalizing His church, I have never questioned God's use of power. It is His right.

I also saw contentment in the eyes of that old man at the restaurant. Oh yea! He knew of God's power. In Revelation 7:11-12, our response to God's power is that we are to worship Him. Wait! Wait! There is

more. Our response to God's power also gives us confidence. Paul said in Philippians 4:13, "I can do all things through Him who strengthens me." Leading God's church towards spiritual health is no easy task. If we are honest, there are times when we want to quit. Hold on now. We can know with confidence that the promise of God to restore His church is ours for the taking. Are you with me?



*Pat Phinney*  
*CBNC Regional Director*

There was something else I saw in the eyes of that man. God's power gave him victory. In Ephesians 6:10, Paul instructs us to "be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power." What? You mean when the adversary comes to attack us and His church, we can rest in His power? God will bring about the victory in our battle for the church because "greater is He who is in [us] than he who is in the world".

I am grateful for all of my daily encounters, especially the one with the man of God at the restaurant. It was God's way to encourage me and not give up on the church. When I rest in His sovereign power, I can do anything for Him. I love the church and will never give up on her. How about you??

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## **Pastor's Wives . . . Just for You** **"No Fraud Department Required"**

It was April Fool's Day and I was kind of waiting for someone to try and pull a prank on me. I just wasn't expecting it to be our bank and this wasn't even close to being a joke. It was Friday morning and I was going to transfer some money from our checking account to our savings account. Pat's paycheck had been deposited the day before and I wanted to get our budgeted



amount into savings for our quarterly tax payment. You can imagine my surprise as I checked the account balance before I made the transfer and quickly realized something was very wrong. There wasn't even close to the amount of money there should have been. As I started looking at the account activity that "sinking feeling" started to overtake me. There was some unusual and suspicious activity. I noticed that a week earlier two deposits had been made by the same person. One was for 29 cents and the other for 12 cents. Then the next day that person had somehow

withdrawn a significant amount of money. On the day Pat's check was deposited another large amount was withdrawn. They even had the nerve to leave a "Thank You". My reaction when I saw that was "You are not welcome!". Pat was not at home so I headed to the bank. I knew this had to be taken care of before there were any more withdrawals. The bank immediately closed our account, set up a new one for us and turned our case over to their Fraud Dept. You can imagine my relief when I was informed we would get our money back. It would take about ten business days but the debt would be paid. Phew! I was so thankful!

As I was driving home I started thinking about what had just happened and the consequences of it. All of our automatic withdrawals and deposits will have to be changed to our new account. We will have to buy new checks and in the meantime hope we can get by with the temporary ones the bank furnished. I guess we will see if the IRS is okay with them.

I couldn't help but think of the debt that Jesus paid for my sins. When I act in a way that is against God's desire for me, all I need to do is ask for forgiveness. No Fraud Department required and no ten business days waiting period. Phew! Now that is something to be really thankful for!! This month let's pray that our husbands will recognize what a blessing God's forgiveness is. Here are a few verses to get us started .....

"I pray, God, that it is You who blots out my husband's transgressions for Your own sake and You will not remember his sins."  
Isaiah 43:25

"I pray that You, God, will cleanse my husband from all his iniquity by which he has sinned against You, and that You will pardon all his iniquities by which he has sinned and by which he has transgressed against You."  
Jeremiah 33:8

"I pray that whenever my husband stands praying, if he has anything against anyone that he will forgive them, so that You, his Father in heaven, may also forgive him of his trespasses."  
Mark 11:25

"I pray that because my husband is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old things have passed away and all things have become new."  
Corinthians 5:17

Here in Minnesota we are getting closer to picnic season. I realize some of you may already be there. I thought I would share a recipe that I got from my sister many, many years ago. It is a great picnic dish. I know there are all kinds of recipes for baked beans. This one is pretty easy and really good.



### **Baked Beans**

2 -15 oz. cans of pork and beans

$\frac{3}{4}$  cup brown sugar

1 tsp dry mustard

$\frac{1}{2}$  cup ketchup

Mix together and put into casserole dish. Cut up 6 slices of bacon (uncooked) and lay on top.

Bake uncovered at 325 for 2  $\frac{1}{2}$  hours. [To print click here.](#)



*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.](#)

**Don't Miss  
This!**



**Sign Up  
Now**

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.



"The Global Leadership Summit is a two-day event telecast LIVE in HD from Willow's campus near Chicago every August to hundreds of locations in North America. This year the Summit will take place Thursday-Friday, August 11-12, 2016."

For more information and to register [click here.](#)

*We've added something  
NEW!  
You can now search our  
online map to find other  
CB churches in the  
CB North Central Region.  
Check our [website.](#)*



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## Thoughts From A Cluster Leader

### "We Have Been Redeemed"

Recently on a road trip Sue and I listened to Focus On The Family Theatre's rendition of Les Miserables. The book written by Victor Hugo is set in France in the early 1800's. Jean Valjean (a guy) is the central character, but the theme is redemption. Jean, as a young man, was put in prison for 5 years for stealing a loaf of bread. His attempts to escape prison raises the 5 year term to 19. Javert is Jean's nemesis who plays the role of a legalistic police inspector. Throughout the story Javert pursues Jean simply because the inspector feels once a person fails they are scarred for life.

The ultimate crisis in Jean's life takes place after serving his term in prison. He is looking for a place to stay and ends up at the Bishop's home. In the middle of the night he assaults the Bishop steals his silverware and flees. Caught the next day by the police Jean is brought back to the Bishop. The Bishop not only demonstrates mercy but grace. The police are told that Jean was given the silverware and Jean is scolded for forgetting the silver candlesticks. The police then leave.

A famous interchange takes place. The Bishop turns and says to the robber: "Jean Valjean, my brother, you no longer belong to evil, but to good. I have bought your soul of you. I withdraw it from black thoughts and the spirit of perdition, and give it to God." The rest of Jean's life is living out that redemption.



I will be honest, I love the story. Sue and I not only have the Focus On The Family Radio Theatre's version but 5 other versions as well. I have a copy of the book, 3 video versions and the musical CD. My favorite video is the 1960's version. Just ask and I will be glad to loan you our copy.

The reason I bring up Les Miserables is because I love the story of redemption. Jesus purchased our pardon on Calvary. He guaranteed its effectiveness by the resurrection from the dead. We now are the recipients of His grace. One Bible scholar tells us that when we trust Christ 33 things happen to us. We not only get mercy - deliverance from hell fire; but grace - a relationship with God, heaven, spiritual gifts, brothers and sisters in the Lord, to name just a few things.

I believe redemption is a deep seated longing in the hearts of us all. The story of Les Miserables strikes a cord because we are either a Javert working our way to righteousness or a Jean Valjean living out righteousness because we have been redeemed.

So the point of my article is we have been redeemed. I have been bought with a price and God has expectations for me. I am to glorify God with my life. Jesus died for me so that I can live for Him. I have surrendered my rights to Him.

*Eldon Carlson*

*Pastor of Bloomer Baptist Church, Bloomer, WI*

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## **#ExcitingThingsAtEureka #CBNCHelpedOurChurch**

### **"A Testimony from Eureka Baptist Church, St. Croix Falls, WI"**

I am a young Christian who grew up in a small, but beautiful 134-year-old country church. It is called Eureka Baptist in St. Croix Falls, WI. Tradition runs great for me here, as my extended family has been at Eureka Baptist for many generations. Although I left the church for a period of time, I got married and returned to Eureka to raise my family in the Word of God.

Eureka Baptist had few male members when I returned, so I was asked to become a deacon. I accepted the position not knowing anything about being a leader, but I still said yes.

Unfortunately, I made some terrible mistakes. Being in a stagnant church with some misguided leadership, trouble started to seep in among the congregation and community. We were on a crash course to closing our doors forever. So what do we do? Where do we go from here? Our pastor was gone and our church was divided. I asked myself, "Why Lord are we in this position? What do we do? We are lost."



The Lord may allow problems to arise, but He always show us how to solve them. So the Lord gave us Pat Phinney, who is the Regional Director with CBA. At first the majority of the congregation was hesitant to accept him in because we thought he would shut down our church. We were wrong. Pat spoke with the church and told us what we need to hear to turnaround. We were not living up to God's expectations for the church. I guess if we continued, we would be like a broken vessel floating down a raging river to destruction. We needed to change our course. We need to fix our problem and turn this broken vessel around.

We were blessed because the Lord sent us a perfect mechanic in Pat Phinney. He said to us leaders, "It is not going to be easy. If you are willing to let me help you and with God's help, we can turn your church around." God used Pat to open our eyes. He challenged us to be better Christians. He led and taught us. He worshiped and prayed with us. He explained so much to us and is helping us revive from being a stagnate church to a bright star to shine His Word into our community. We are not to be Christians who sit in a pew on a Sunday for an hour. We are to be Christians who are not confined to four walls and a rooftop to worship. We must go out and spread the word and worship wherever we may be.

So what is the future of Eureka Baptist Church? Is it in God's hands or is it in our hands? Are we going to reach out and be disciples of Christ in our community? Are we going to be disciplined to live by and teach His Word? The answer is yes! The future of our church is in our hands through God's hands. He has given us this opportunity. It is up to us to be advocates of His Word. It is up to us to become committed disciples of Jesus Christ and then show others. Oh how I am excited for the future!

*Shaun Anderson*

Eureka Baptist Church, St. Croix Falls, WI

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## **-CBAmerica Chaplaincy**

### **"No Ordinary Joe: WW2 Hero Laid to Rest"**

"As a retired Army chaplain, I continue to serve our Veteran community. Occasionally called on to visit the sick and dying, I have opportunities to honor the failing and the fallen. On December 2nd, seven hours before he breathed his last, I read Luke's account of the Crucifixion (Hill #1) and prayed my last prayer with Private George



"Joe" Taro Sakato, WW2 Veteran, and recipient of the Congressional Medal of Honor (CMOH) in his Denver home."

[Read More](#)

*Rev. Andy Meverden*

Director of Chaplaincy Chaplain, Colonel, US Army, Retired "Chaplain for Life"



### **Six Reasons Why Most Churches Are Lousy at Follow-up**

"If our churches and their leaders would begin to elevate the importance of follow-up ministries incrementally, we would likely see a disproportionately positive response. It's an incredible opportunity most churches are missing."

- by *Tom Rainier* [Read More](#)

### **Kara Powell: #1 Reason Youth Leave the Church - And How to Reverse the Trend**

"Dr. Kara Powell discusses the greatest change in youth ministry today and the number one reason this generation walks away from their faith."

- *ChurchLeaders.com/podcast* [Listen to this Podcast](#)

### **5 Things Every Small to Mid-Sized Church Struggles With**

"When the people who are gifted to lead get to lead, your church gets healthy." - by *Cary Nieuwhof*, ChurchLeaders.com [Read More](#)

### **3 Myths of the 501(c)3**

"Each week CBAmerica is contacted by churches seeking verification of their 501(c)3 status under the CBAmerica Group Exemption Number 1719. A church is covered by the CBAmerica Group Exemption if the church is in good standing with their region, has its own Employer Identification Number (EIN) and is included in the CBAmerica Database of active churches."

[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 - 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, April 11, 10am to Noon

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



### Wisconsin

Friday, April 22, 6:30pm supper

Donation of \$10/person or \$15/couple

Meeting at the home of Kevin & Carol Schumann

691 West St, Taylors Falls, MN; 651-465-6792; Email [kpschu6@frontiernet.net](mailto:kpschu6@frontiernet.net) to RSVP  
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.



## CB North Central

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### Pat Phinney, Regional Director

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Pat's Cell: 952-500-3743

Wendy Jonasen, Administrative  
Assistant

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

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Office Hours: Tues. thru Fri. 8am -  
1pm

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