



**CB NORTH CENTRAL**

*Connecting Churches Who Love God and the Gospel*



May 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**

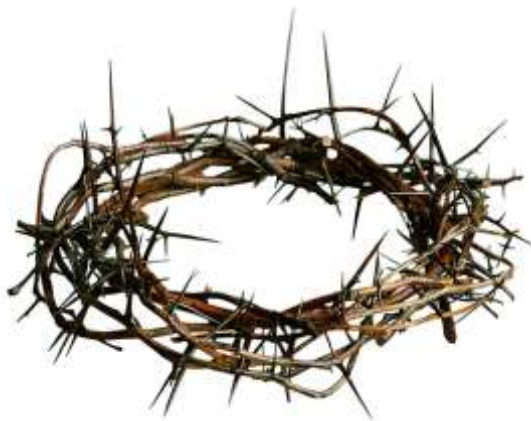
**"It's a Memorial Day"**

I just enjoyed a week long work vacation. You know the kind, right? The "honey-do" list is longer than your arm, but what fun we had. When I was running a routine errand to Home Depot to pick up some supplies, I struggled my way to the checkout. As usual I handed the employee my Veterans Card to take advantage of their 10% discount. After receiving the card warmly, a young Millennial carefully examined the picture and then gave me a quick glance. He methodically looked at the picture again and then back at me. Then this is what he said, "Sir, I want to thank you for serving our country. We are grateful for all you did." I felt so proud. My mind was flooded with warm memories of serving in the military during the tail end of the Vietnam war.

As I was walking back to my car I started to reminisce about my emotional journey at Arlington National Cemetery years ago. "Freedom is not cheap!" were the words strewn everywhere. The solemn invitation was given for all who dared to walk the hollowed grounds, "Honor - Remember - Explore". I recall walking for hours among those fallen soldiers and just weeping. My heart was broken for



the many who gave their lives on our behalf. It was overwhelming to realize that more than 260,000 men and women were buried there. These included presidents like John F. Kennedy, William Taft, five star generals and countless other brave soldiers. On May 30 we will most likely pause in some lonely cemetery to embrace those veterans who served us well. We will open our hearts as a nation in gratitude for their sacrifice, their courage, and their boldness as they gave their all. Yes, it is our duty to remember our fallen heroes. And we will.



As we take time to pay tribute to our veterans, could I ask you to reflect upon a number of things about God's hero who was "killed in action" for us? Paul said in Galatians 5:1, "It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery." No united forces of the nations of the earth have the strength to deliver us from the bondage and death that comes with

sin. When Christ cried out on Calvary's cross, "It is finished!", sin's curse was conquered. The ultimate price for real freedom was paid.

Of course the ultimate expression of showing our freedom in Christ is seen by the way we treat each other in the family of God. Paul goes on to communicate this in verses 13 and 14. "You, my brothers, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the sinful nature; rather, serve one another in love. The entire law is summed up in a single command: "Love your neighbor as yourself." When we look back and reflect on what this war Hero did in the battlefield on Calvary, we have no alternative but to look out and love those around us. I enjoy what Peter said, "Now that you have purified yourselves by obeying the truth so that you have sincere love for your brothers, love one another deeply, from the heart." (1 Peter 1:22) Because of what Christ did for us, we have a responsibility not just to love our brother, but to love him deeply from our heart.



*Pat Phinney  
CBNC Regional Director*

This Memorial Day do your duty as an indebted soldier of Jesus Christ and honor Him who "killed His Son in action" for you. Let us remember the One who emancipated us and for the countless others who gave their lives to guarantee that marvelous freedom. "Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise!" (Revelation 5:12)

I resonate with what the late Lyndon B. Johnson said, "This, then, is the state of the union: free and restless, growing and full of hope. So it was in the beginning. So it shall always be, while God is willing, and we are strong enough to keep the faith."

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## **Joint Meeting Held: CBAmerica Regional Executive Directors & CB North Central Board**



*L-R standing are Vince Welch, CBNC Board; Pat Phinney, RED CB North Central; Ron May, CBNC Board; Lyall Sutton, CBNC Board; Brad Little, CBNC Board; Art Georges, CBNC Board; Jay Jentink, CBNC Board, Jim Smith, RED Pacific Church Network; Dave Forsythe, RED CB Mission Northeast; Jim Leary, RED Mission Mid-Atlantic; and Andy Meverden, Director of Chaplaincy CBAmerica. L-R seated are Stan Rieb, RED Rocky Mountain Church Network & National*

*Facilitator; Mark Hoeffner, RED CB Northwest; Steve Engram, RED Southwest Church Connection; and Dave Whitaker, RED Next Generation Churches.*

A joint meeting was held April 18-20 at Oak Park Community Church in Blaine, MN that included CBAmerica Regional Executive Directors (REDS) from across the U.S. and the Board members of CB North Central. The CB North Central Board is comprised of men from across our 10 state region of churches. They shared with the REDS things that are going on within our region. Together the Board & REDS talked about strategies for the future.

It was a delight to host these men from all over the U.S. and give them a little taste of the CB North Central Region.

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## **WorldVenture**

### **"Global Hurts, Global Opportunities, Gospel Responses"**

The world is our doorstep and so are the many issues and challenges that come with the new context we live in. It is hard to go someplace today where at least two major issues cannot be found. Human trafficking and migration. These are not issues that we only see on the evening news anymore, they are in our communities.

WorldVenture is seeking to address these issues in a way that will allow us to bring the gospel to places where it has not been in the past. Within the last 24 months we have a Director of Anti-Human Sex Trafficking and a Director of Diaspora Initiatives.

There is no country, state, urban or rural area that does not have a trafficking issue at some level. From children to adults people are being tricked, bought, sold, and moved from place to place so someone can make a profit. Awareness is critical to the first step in stopping trafficking. People who have been trafficked will have scars for a lifetime, but this is also an opportunity for the gospel. We are focusing on education for prevention and what we can do to help people who have been rescued from trafficking to give them new opportunities in life, but more importantly to share the love that Jesus has for them and the salvation



that is available to them. This emphasis is only in its infancy but is already starting to make a difference both here in the U.S. and around the world.

In a recent trip to a country adjacent to Syria and yet close to 800 miles away from the closest border it didn't take long walking through the city to see and recognize the Syrian refugees that were present. On my flight out of the country business people and refugees shared adjacent seats on my flight. I have been in train stations in China where families going on vacation stood next to daily commuters who stood next to construction workers with their small bags and welding equipment. The world is on the move.

We have global migrants, internally displaced people, and refugees just to name a few of the categories we use to describe the many aspects of what is transpiring globally. The greatest migration in the history of the world is happening in every part of the globe. It brings its challenges but it also brings great opportunities for the spread of the gospel.

When my wife and I were doing church planting in Japan one of the most fruitful areas for planting a new church was what was then called "New Towns." A new development of houses and apartment complexes with 20,000 to 80,000 people or more would go up and people would move in from all over the country. In the initial

years after such a development people had yet to put down roots in their new community and tended to be open to the gospel. In the same way as the people around the world move into new areas we are hearing stories of people who we could not reach in the past responding to gospel presentations. The unique part about this is that even though they have left their home countries most if not all of these people are connected in some way back to their home country. By utilizing this connection it allows us the opportunity to not only reach those who have left their homes but through them to reach the people back in the areas were many times we cannot go.

WorldVenture's new Director of the Diaspora Initiatives is helping us understand who is moving, where they are going and how we can partner together to reach out to these people and to their friends and family back in the countries from whence they came. Mapping, technology and databases all help us understand how we can build strategies to further reach people both here in the US as well as around the world.

WorldVenture continues to be "Founded on the Word and Focused on the World." The Word has not changed but the world in which we live and work is changing. As we focus on our transitioning world it will require us to be attuned to the events that happen thousands of miles away as well as in our backyard and these are becoming increasingly connected. Our desire is to respond to the changing needs of the world we now live in with a gospel that has not.

*Marty Shaw, Vice President of International Ministries  
WorldVenture*

### *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**  
**"Thanksgiving Thankful"**

I just returned home after running several errands. Everywhere I went there were suggestions of gifts for Mother's Day. It has been awhile since I have had the pleasure of buying a card or gift for my mom or Pat's mom. My mom died in 1992 and Pat's mom in 2010. As I reflect on their impact in my life over the years, I realize that it was I who actually received gifts from them. My mom showed me by example what it meant to be a woman of faith. She also taught me by her life what it meant to love, support, and cherish your husband. As a mom she always made sure our needs were met and she loved my sister and me unconditionally. When she died unexpectedly at the age of 64, I was so very thankful that I had another mom - Pat's mom. She was another amazing woman of faith. Her life had certainly not been easy over the years, but once she found Jesus, her love for Him never faltered. She loved her family with all her heart. Their examples have contributed to the person I have become.



I am completely aware that it is typically on Thanksgiving that we talk about counting our blessings, but on this Mother's Day I have many blessings to count! I was blessed with two great moms. I have been blessed with being the mom of two great kids. I am blessed by being the grandmother to four wonderful, adorable and creative grandchildren. I pray that I am leaving to my children and grandchildren an example that will help them see what it looks like to live for Jesus.

As we count our blessings, it is impossible not to lift our hearts in praise. This month let's pray that our husbands will take the time to reflect on all the good things that God has given to them and then give praise to Him for those blessings. I don't know about you, but I always do better when my heart and mind are focused on praise. Here are a few verses to get us started .....

"I pray that every day my husband will bless You, God and will praise Your name forever and ever."

Psalms 145:2

"I pray that my husband always remembers that You, Lord, are great and greatly to be praised."

1 Chronicles 16:25



"I pray that my husband will hope continually, O God, and will praise You yet more and more."

Psalm 71:14

"I pray that my husband will continually offer the sacrifice of praise to You, God, that is, the fruit of his lips, giving thanks to Your name."

Hebrews 13:15

I love this time of the year when everything is so green and the plants are popping up out of the ground. I was especially excited to see the rhubarb I transplanted last year reappear. Not only has it come back, it is already looking healthier than it did before. In this house - we LOVE recipes with rhubarb in them. I want to share a recipe that Wendy (Pat's Administrative Assistant shared with me a few years back.) It's a good one!

## **Fruit & Cream Cake**

Prepare yellow cake mix (no pudding in the mix) according to the directions on the box.

Pour batter into a 9 X 13 pan.

Put 4 cups of diced rhubarb or any fruit over cake. (I have actually mixed fruit - like strawberry and rhubarb or strawberry and blueberry. Just keep the total amount to 4 cups. The possibilities are limitless.) Sprinkle with  $\frac{1}{4}$  to  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of sugar. Pour 1 pt. of half and half over the top. (Yes that's right. You just pour it over the top of everything.) Bake at 350 for 45 minutes.

It really tastes best when it is still a little warm. Enjoy!

(I have cut it in half for a 9 X 9 cake by using a Yellow Jiffy Cake mix. Obviously you need to cut all the other ingredients in half as well.) [Click here](#) for printable recipe.



*Karen Phinney  
Wife of Regional Director*

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"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](#).

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## Thoughts From A Cluster Leader "Shepherding Our People"

- "A church that loses its distinctiveness is a church that has nothing distinctive with which to engage the culture."
- The first step to cultural influence is not to contextualize to the present, but to contextualize to the future, and the future is awfully strange, even to us."
- "To rail against the culture is to say to God that we are entitled to a better mission field than the one he has given us."

Quotes taken from Russell Moore's new book 'Onward: Engaging the Culture without Losing the Gospel'.

Our CB North Central Michigan Cluster meets quarterly at Cornerstone University. Part of the time we spend together is in discussion around content related to best practices and pastoral ministry philosophy. The quotes above come from a book we interacted with in our last Cluster meeting on May 3. The book provided the platform for a lively discussion around living missionally as citizens of an eternal Kingdom within the confines of the current political and social climate.

During our time together we shared a number of concerns we have for our people regarding cultural engagement in general and in the political arena in particular. As one of our pastors put it succinctly, "I don't care how my people vote, but I very much care how they pray." As the political landscape continues to shift and cultural norms

grow increasingly adverse to some of our highest values as Jesus followers, we talked about the need to shepherd our people to become the missional minority. We do so with the confidence that throughout history whenever Christians have embraced that role, God has seen fit to topple empires and expand His Kingdom in incredible ways.



*"I don't care how my people vote, but I very much care how they pray."*



Ministry enrichment and what we call soul care (mutual encouragement, sharing burdens, and prayer) continue to characterize our time together. We have a great group of pastors serving His church in Michigan as part of CB North Central. Ministry is challenging and often can be disheartening, so we are grateful for the time we have together.

Please continue to pray for the work God is doing in and through our Michigan churches and for the pastors seeking to lead missional communities in these exciting times. As Moore puts it toward the end of his book, "It may be that America is not 'post-Christian' at all. It may be that America is instead pre-Christian, a land that though often Christ-haunted has never known the power of the gospel, yet."

*Nathan Wagner  
Pastor for Sparta Baptist Church, Sparta, MI*

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*Spring Valley  
Bible Camp  
Muscatine, IA*



*Bringing glory to God by helping people come to know Christ and grow in their relationship with Him*



Spring Valley Bible Camp was established in 1953 and is a place of outreach, discipleship, growth and renewal, providing safe, positive, uplifting events for people

of all ages. The purpose and mission of the camp is to bring glory to God by helping people come to know Christ and grow in their relationship with Him. It is located in the Mississippi River Valley just north of Muscatine, Iowa and 30 minutes west of Davenport, Iowa. SVBC is associated with the Conservative Baptist Churches of Iowa and has 10 supporting churches and would like to see that number grow under new leadership by Director Danny DuRocher. To learn more about Spring Valley Bible Camp [click here](#).

*Danny DuRocher, Camp Director*  
Spring Valley Camp, Muscatine, IA

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## **CAMP LEBANON:**

God Stories Told  
Here



*"That's the closest I've ever been  
to falling out of a boat as a Camp Director!"*

I get to do a ton of fun things as a Camp Director. Taking kids fishing (11 solo on a pontoon is my personal record!). Greeting incoming campers and parents on Sunday afternoons. Hosting Senior Day twice a year. And teaching Bible (speaking at Adventurers is my favorite!).

The ultimate experience by far is my role at the Super Kids campfires on their last night of camp. My upfront segment ends with the famous "Lion Hunt" (still haven't got him despite 30 years of trying!). That's a blast, for sure, but first comes the awesome opportunity to invite kids to publicly declare their decisions for Christ.

For Super Kids, that means inviting the campers and their counselors to stand with me in front of the entire group of 150 to 250 kids and staff. Many come because for the first time they embraced the gift of new life in Christ. For some, there was a need for assurance. And for still others, there's a commitment to get back on track as a follower of Jesus.

So picture, if you will, 25 or more kids standing around me at the campfire. After a brief challenge from God's Word to encourage them in their life-time walk with Jesus, I'll often ask the Camp Pastor to pray over these kids. And then we sing: "I have decided to follow Jesus, no turning back...no turning back." To read more [click here.](#)

*By Bill Abeler, Executive Director*  
Camp Lebanon, Burtrum, MN

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## **-CBAmerica Chaplaincy**

### **"Final Meeting: We're NOT Going to Apologize!"**

"All seemed to go as rehearsed. The soldiers moved in line with discipline up to the compound. Once the mortar fire died, we could see a car racing across the valley floor. It drove past the posted guards and into the line of fire at the compound. A cease fire was quickly called. ... " [Read More](#)



*Rev. Andy Meverden*  
Director of Chaplaincy Chaplain,  
Colonel, US Army, Retired  
"Chaplain for Life"



### **HOUSING BENEFITS for Ministers Back Under Attack**

"Freedom From Religion Foundation (FFRF) has filed a new lawsuit in federal court challenging the constitutionality of the ministers' housing exclusion." - ECFA(Evangelical Counsel for Financial Accountability

[Read More](#)

### **Seven Ways Church Members Should Prepare for a Sermon**

"What if church members prepared for each sermon they heard? What if they believed their roles as recipients of the Word are also crucially important?" - *ThomRainier.com*

[Read More](#)

### **College Kids Say the Darndest Things: On Identity**

What happens when a 5'9" man visits a college campus and tells students he's really a 6'5" Chinese woman? Joseph Backholm found out! - Family Policy Alliance (*previously Citizen Link*)

[See Video](#)

*"Take a stand, right or wrong;  
the road of life is paved with flat  
squirrels  
who couldn't make a decision."*

-unknown



### **10 Principles for Personal Productivity**

"Do what you do with all your heart. Be done with half-heartedness. O, so many people limp through life doing what they do with a half heart, with half of their energy. If it is worth doing, it is worth doing with your whole soul." - *John Piper,*

*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 - 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

See you at the Moody Pastor's Conference  
May 23 - 27, Chicago, IL  
Steve Daggett, Cavalier Baptist, Cavalier, ND  
701-265-8989

### Central Minnesota

Monday, May 9, 10am to Noon  
Meeting at River of Life Church, Hastings, MN  
Steve Schoenwald, River of Life Church, Hastings,  
MN  
651-437-3965



### Wisconsin

The Wisconsin Cluster Group is on summer break, but will begin in the fall with a Men's Retreat on October 7-9 at Arrowhead Bible Camp. Watch for more details.  
Wade Duroe, Crossroads Church, Chippewa Falls, WI  
715-723-1054

### Illinois

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



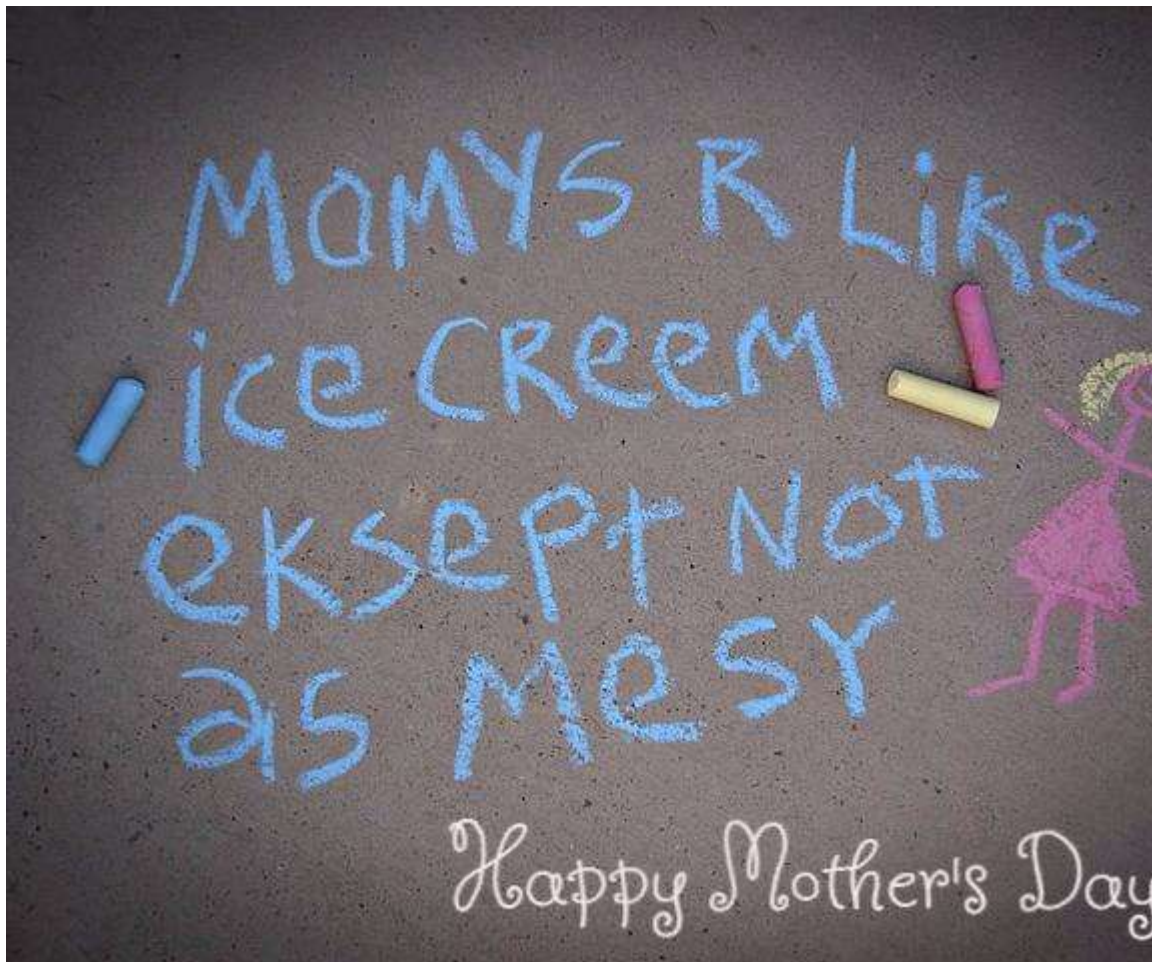
## Michigan

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.



## CB North Central

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

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