



July 2013



## E-Central E-Mail

### Grand Opening! - New Location in Eau Claire WI

Pastor John VanGorkom and the staff at Calvary Baptist Church, Eau Claire WI, are excited to invite you to their Grand Opening, August 3 & 4, at the new location: 3036 Epiphany Lane. They will be holding a dedication celebration of their new facility on Saturday and Sunday, August 3 & 4. The weekend begins with [Click here for more details](#)  
Call Calvary Church at 715-832-6363 if you have questions.



From the Regional Director

### Spiritual Markers

The introduction to this July Newsletter highlights a time of rejoicing with our brothers and sisters at Calvary Baptist Church in Eau Claire, WI. God has

been Faithful to this church over the years. On August 4, 2013 they are going to celebrate the Grand Opening of a new church building.

I have been following the progress at the new church location. When all the work began, I thought of Joshua 4:8 . . . *"Thus the sons of Israel did as Joshua commanded, and took up twelve stones from the middle of the Jordan, just as the Lord spoke to Joshua, according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Israel; and they carried them over with them to the lodging place and put them down there."*

Spiritual memory is crucial in our lives as Christians. Do you vividly remember those precious times when God spoke to you? I do! God spoke to me the day I left my first church as an associate pastor in West Linn, Oregon, to become the senior pastor of a church in Minnesota. My best friend hugged me tightly and whispered into my ear, "Don't forget me!" That describes why God puts life-changing experiences in our journey as Christians. Some of those memories can be "spiritual markers" at the key crossroads of our life and ministry. Without the help of these markers, we could even lose our spiritual bearings. The believers at Calvary Baptist are seeing this new building project as a marker of God's Faithfulness in their history. They will look back on this experience as a way to give praise to God for what He did. In addition, they will be ready to take on the next impossible challenge.



We all know that Israel experienced a tumultuous pilgrimage, and their doubt that God was powerful enough to give them victory cost them forty years of wandering. God knew that Israel would face insurmountable enemies as they entered the Promised Land, so He gave them a reminder that He was powerful enough to protect them. They built a monument on the banks of the Jordan River and whenever they returned to this spot, it would remind them of God's incredible power. It became a marker that would give them confidence as they met new challenges.

A spiritual marker actually identifies a time of decision when we clearly know that God guided us and provided power to overcome impossible assignments. Do you want to hear something tragic? God has been showing Himself powerful, but most Christians don't even notice. Through these spiritual markers, God is whispering in our ears, "Don't forget me!"

Let's do what our friends at Calvary Baptist Church in Eau Claire, WI, are doing on August 4, 2013. God is moving powerfully among us as a region of churches. So let's keep track of these moments as a spiritual marker or a reminder of His Faithfulness to us. Let's regularly rehearse and notice them as a steady progression in the way that God is leading.

Thanks for modeling this, Calvary Baptist, and we pray God will continue to show Himself powerful among you, as you reach people with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Keep track!

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## How Healthy is Your Church?

This is a proven tool that can help your church with growth, not just in terms of quality but in terms of evangelism.



**Give us a call at 715-538-2298 (office) or 952-322-7173 (Regional Director).**

**Natural Church Development** will help you identify the eight qualities and six growth factors for a healthy church.

**Healthy NCD is seeing a steady growth through conversions and the ongoing discipleship of those who are part of the church. We have trained coaches in our Region ready to assist you.**

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## New Provider for Background Checks

CBNC is recommending the following organization for our churches to perform background checks for volunteers and potential staff members: Click on this link, [Shepherd's Watch](#), for information and inexpensive sign-up.

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## Thoughts from a Cluster Leader

I've been in ministry now for almost 25 years, and the Lord has been incredibly gracious to me in many areas surrounding my ministries, but especially in the area of conflict. I can honestly say that I RARELY have had to struggle thru major conflict with my bosses of the past (when I was an associate pastor for 15 years) and the same has been true with my board in the past 10 years (as I've been the senior pastor). However, in this season of ministry, I have had to struggle thru some of the most frustrating conflicts with individual church family members - more than I can ever remember.

But I am reminded that these conflicts, IN OF THEMSELVES, are not necessarily bad and that they do not, IN OF THEMSELVES implicate me - that I'm now doing something wrong. But they brought me back to an article I read years ago by Peter Wise (1998) that I thought was one of the most insightful, honest, and practical helps to me over the years in looking at conflict from God's perspective. So enjoy an edited version of Peter's wisdom, and pass it on to any of the ministry partners that you may have that are (or will soon be) need such encouragement!

### **Conflicts in relationships are a fact of life.**

No one is immune to them. The question is not if they will come-but rather what you do with them when they do come. Without any governing principles or guidelines people will fight in ways that lead to chaos and emotional pain.

### **Conflicts are great catalysts for growth, agents of change. View them positively!**

The critical question here is: How do we respond when we are confronted? Do we react in anger, sorrow, or self-pity, or even a spirit of revenge? Or do we act in humility; with a teachable spirit, viewing this as an opportunity for growth?

God could have miraculously taken away all conflicts among believers in their various relationships. But God sovereignly allows them in our lives for a variety of reasons. Three of those reasons are the following:

- To humble us
- To test us
- To cause us to grow

All people, Christians as well as non-Christians have conflicts; the difference is in the *way we handle them*.

Don't be fooled into thinking that if you meet the right person and if both of you are mature in the Lord, then you will be spared any conflicts! This kind of thinking will only set you up for a disappointment later on. It's important to realize that it's not sinful to have problems, it's only sinful to handle them in improper ways.

### **It is possible to honor God through our conflicts**

Surprising as it may seem, it is possible to please God and be a great testimony if we handle conflicts in a God-honoring manner. In fact-the way we handle conflicts will either be a great testimony or a poor one, depending on the way we respond. Think of conflicts as *opportunities* for honoring God and being a good testimony.

Honor God, even through your disagreements. Make this your prime focus and you will have great wisdom in dealing with difficulties. If you seek to honor God you will have the strength to bear with petty differences without undue annoyance. If you seek God's honor, you will be in control and won't go beyond proper bounds.

### **PREREQUISITES (for handling conflict well)**

Before we can do the right thing in a confrontation we must first be the right kind of people. This is a non-negotiable given. If we fail to exhibit godly Christian character, then no "how-to" methods, no matter how successful, will work.

**The first prerequisite is humility.** This is so important. Why? Because we have to look to ourselves and to our own weaknesses and feelings to keep things in proper perspective. We need humility to keep from exalting ourselves or arguing from the vantage point of supposed superiority. Galatians 6:1 says *Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Look to yourself, lest you too be tempted.* Humility is needed to keep the focus on God's glory and our growth. Humility is needed to keep from getting resentful.

**The second prerequisite is love.** If you don't love the person you don't have a right to confront them. If you don't have love for the person you confront you won't have the attitude of desiring God's best for him or her.

**The third prerequisite is patience.** We need patience in order to have proper self-restraint and we need patience to hear the other person out. Impatience is a source of anger and intolerance-and it has no place in conflict resolution.

**A fourth prerequisite is to be without hypocrisy.** If we are living a deluded lifestyle, contrary to God's purposes for our lives, we can't see clearly enough to qualify for correcting other people. If we want to confront somebody about an area of sin (or even of non-moral issues) we must first have demonstrated victory in this area ourselves.

*Mark Friday  
First Baptist Church, Pekin IL*

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**Most Pastor Clusters will resume meeting in September. To contact a Pastor Cluster Leader in your area, [click here.](#)**

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## UPCOMING EVENTS

**Calvary Baptist, continued:** an all day Vacation Bible School from 9:00 AM to 3:30 PM. Then at 7:00 PM Saturday night Lightswitch will be in concert. Lightswitch is a youth band made up of four brothers who got their start in music ministry at Calvary 15 years ago and now tour the upper midwest and have appeared at Sonshine Festival in Wilmar Minnesota and have recently opened for featured artists at the Northern Wisconsin State Fair. **Sunday's activities** include a celebration worship service at 10:15 AM, followed by a catered lunch at 11:45, and a 30-minute church dedication ceremony at 1:00 PM. We would love to have representatives from as many of our sister churches in the CBNC who can attend.

*--John van Gorkom, Senior Pastor*

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**Please pray for the following churches and Search Committees:**

- Mason Township Baptist Church--Cassopolis MI SENIOR PASTOR
  - First Baptist Church-Bradford IL SENIOR PASTOR
  - First Baptist Church--Streator IL SENIOR PASTOR
  - Delavan Baptist Church--Delavan IL SENIOR PASTOR
  - First Baptist Church--Elmhurst IL SENIOR PASTOR
  - Calvary Church at Village Green--Moorhead MN SENIOR PASTOR
  - First Baptist Church--Whitehall WI SENIOR PASTOR
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- Faith Fellowship Church--Cincinnati OH WORSHIP LEADER
  - Bethel Baptist Church--Jackson MI DIRECTOR of FAMILY MINISTRIES
  - First Baptist Church--Spring Lake MI ASSOCIATE PASTOR

**THANK YOU FOR PRAYING!**

Calvary Baptist Church, Eau Claire WI, has hired a full time Pastor of Worship, **James Alan Hall**, who returns to Calvary from North Carolina after 14 years of ministry in the music field, serving in touring music ministry and church worship leader positions. Pastor van Gorkom says the church is excited to have them back at Calvary. James and his wife, Whitney, served as worship leaders at Calvary from 1998-2000. They are expecting their fourth child in November. He is not only a gifted musician and worship leader, but also is a gifted graphics art designer, and will bring great expertise to Calvary's print, media, and web design ministries. He officially began duties July 8th.



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Stay Connected

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