

connect

Meeting America's Greatest Need

BCP
A PUBLICATION OF
BAPTIST CHURCH PLANTERS

Summer 2018

Making Disciples *Stephen P. Little, President*

I have often pondered how you make a disciple (Matthew 28:19). I understand that God sovereignly oversees this process. He has installed an innate awareness within us (Romans 1:19), He uses the creation around us (Psalm 19 and Romans 1:20), He speaks His Word into us (Romans 1:16), and the Holy Spirit draws us to Himself. God also has chosen to use us for part of the process as His witnesses, and He commands us “in our goings” to “make disciples.”

Recently while working on a construction project at home, I was rehearsing how I became a carpenter. Believe me, I didn't come by it naturally. It was given to me! In fact, a guy by the name of Jack made me a carpenter. In 1984 Becky and I left our dairy farm and headed for Bible college. I only knew how to build pole barns, and even that was limited. Ask my wife, Becky. My first remodel job at our home in the late 1970s was done with a chainsaw and a sledge hammer. Pretty rough work!

Jack was one of the men in our church. He was a contractor and a proficient carpenter. Jack stopped me in church one Sunday and asked if I would come work for him. I was not sure I had the right skills for the job, but I started working. He paid me way more than I was worth and involved me in every step of the construction process. He saw something out ahead of me that I could not see. In fact, early in the process Jack told me I would become a finish carpenter by the time he was done with me. I could hardly see myself as a carpenter, let alone a finish carpenter! I remember one day saying, “Jack, why are you doing this? You know I will be leaving someday for Brazil as a missionary.” He said, “I know, but I am going to give you something that will stay with you for the rest of your life.” Jack was beginning the process of building into my life!

I have a lot of fond memories of working with the construction crews on and off the worksite. I learned a lot of lessons, made a lot of mistakes. There were many times that Jack must have shook his head wondering if I would ever “get it.” Jack was not perfect. He struggled just like all followers of Jesus struggle: taking one step forward and feeling many times like you are losing more ground than you are taking. We had some great talks about our faith or the lack of it. I learned practical faith lessons while becoming a finish carpenter.

The way Jack personally worked with me and put me into the right circumstances to grow as a carpenter is the epitome of “making a disciple.” **Jack did not just tell me how to do something; he showed me how!** If he couldn't show me, he put me with just the right person to develop me in the trade. Bob, his son-in-law and a proficient finish carpenter, taught me how to slow down, read a blueprint, “think twice, cut once” and so many other important lessons. The apostle Paul hit the nail on the head (carpenter talk☺) when he said, “Follow me even as I follow Christ.” The reality today, though, is that we have become very good at teaching what the Bible says, but we are lacking at intentionally showing the next generation how to be a follower of Jesus.

As we pursue the idea of Making Disciples, we must ask ourselves two questions: “Who is discipling me?” and “Who am I discipling?” If our answers are not active relationships with individuals, then we need help to obey Jesus. Jack sought me out to build into my life. Jon Jenks, BCP Vice President and Director of Intentional Discipleship Ministries, is striving to help missionaries and churches know “how to make disciples.” If we can be of help to your church, contact Jon at jjenks@bcpusa.org. Let us strive together to be witnesses of Christ and make disciples!





Priorities of a Servant-Sending Church

Patrick Odle, Senior Pastor,
First Baptist Church of Elyria, OH



One of the greatest joys of local church ministry is seeing God call members of the church to serve Him to do Great Commission ministry. Such servants of the Lord may be missionaries, pastors, Christian school teachers, church builders, tentmakers or others who have sensed the call of God which has been recognized by their local church. If your church currently has such people serving the Lord across the globe, you know the joy of which I write. Sadly, that joy is not shared by as many churches today as it was in the past. The trend in our circles is that fewer people are following God's call to the ministry.

This trend is reflected in shrinking classes of candidates for mission agencies. If you were to ask the leaders of our mission agencies that we affiliate with the most closely, you would find out just how small those classes are. In some cases, it has been some time since the mission hosted a missionary candidate class. This trend is alarming! Recently I heard a Bible college president say that his college had far more requests for graduates than they possibly could send to fill the various ministry needs. The tendency might be to assume that the problem lies with the Bible colleges, seminaries and mission agencies. But the problem is not the mission agencies. The problem is not the Bible colleges or the seminaries.

The problem – if there are fewer people – is in the pew. The problem is in the churches. The issue has to do with the churches because it's the church's responsibility to train and to equip and to sense God's call in the life of a couple or an individual or a family. It is the local church's responsibility to send those who have been called by God to serve in vocational ministry. Agencies don't disciple and send missionaries. Agencies assist local churches. Ultimately the responsibility lies with the local church. Spiritually vibrant and Biblically

purposeful churches will disciple, recognize and send out called servants of the Lord. God wants local churches to train and equip servants of the Lord. The question we must ask ourselves is what the priorities of such servant-sending churches are. If your church wants to be used by God to send people out to fulfill the Great Commission, what must be of utmost importance to it? Consider seven priorities.

Priority #1 – Balancing Biblical Evangelism

The first priority of a sending church is balancing Biblical evangelism. Acts 1:8 states, *"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit is come upon you and you shall be witnesses to me in Jerusalem, in all Judea, and Samaria and to the end of the earth."* That is balanced, Biblical evangelism, and it is balanced in at least two different ways. First, balancing Biblical evangelism means that reaching people with the Gospel is a local priority, not just a global one. There is a tendency sometimes for churches to say, "We give tons of money to missions," but if you asked what they are doing to reach their neighborhoods for Christ, we find that their gospel focus lies in supporting others to do the work they won't do themselves. In many cases, churches and individual believers find it easier to send money and to send people across the globe than to go across the street. A church that is truly balanced understands the local priority of reaching people for Christ. ***A church that doesn't take the Gospel across the street won't produce people who will take the Gospel around the world.***

Second, a church that is truly balanced in its evangelism sees evangelism as a personal responsibility, not just a pastoral responsibility. Many believers view evangelism as the pastor's job. In reality, evangelism is every believer living out their life in the context of their workplace or

neighborhood and sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ in those contexts. Every member is a witness, not just the pastor. There is no substitute for your personal witness through the relationships that God has given to you. As a matter of fact, the Bible says that we owe it to people to share the Gospel – Romans 1:14. David Platt put it this way, "Every saved person this side of Heaven owes the Gospel to every unsaved person this side of hell." It's true. We owe it to people to share the Gospel of Christ with them. We have a long way to go here as the body of Christ in America when it comes to sharing the Gospel. Not too long ago Lifeway Research gave the following statistics: in the next seven years 55,000 churches in the United States will close! Lifeway also stated that those who attend church on any given weekend in the next few years will drop from seventeen percent to fourteen percent. That means that on any given weekend only fourteen percent of Americans will be found in any kind of church. Their study went on to state that only twenty percent of American churches are growing. To make matters worse, of those that are growing, only one percent of those churches are growing because they are reaching lost people. You know what that means? Most church growth is simply shuffling Christians around. Most churches that are growing are attracting Christians from other churches, perhaps because they got upset about what was happening in their church and decided to go to a "growing" church. That's not really church growth. Real, Biblical conversion growth is when unbelievers are coming to faith in Christ and following the Lord in believer's baptism.

Recently I spoke with a ministry leader who provides direction and counsel to a fellowship of churches organized on a state level. He shared his burden for the Baptist churches of his state. One of the greatest burdens he shared was related to this matter. As he visits and helps local churches, he regularly asks a very penetrating and important question. It goes something like this, "When was the last time you saw an adult trust Christ as Savior, get baptized and join your church?" Guess what the two most common answers to that question have been! "We can't remember the last time that happened," or "It has been a long time!" What an indictment on the condition of our churches! Remember, a church that doesn't take the Gospel across the street won't produce people who will take the Gospel around the world. We must take the responsibility of reaching souls seriously if we ever expect that burden to be caught by others who will be passionate about taking the Gospel across the street and around the world! Biblically balanced evangelism must be priority one!

(Watch for the next priorities in the upcoming *Connect* publications.)

The Church's Multiplying Commission

We have written previously about how a church goes through stages within its lifecycle – birth, growth, plateaus in growth, reproduction, decline, and even death. As we look at our churches, we can determine in which stage our local body currently resides. Similar to our own natural lifecycle, each stage has its own unique challenges, and no matter the stage, the purpose for existence remains the same. For physical life it is to bring glory to God. For the Body of Christ, it is to share the good news of Jesus with others. The church is to be about the work of making disciples. If we examine our churches and find that we are not growing through the making of new disciples, we must do something.

BCP exists to facilitate local churches in their multiplying commission. The training division of Baptist Church Planters is built and available to assist a church in expanding and growing its discipleship process. Recently BCP expanded its training division to not only include Youth Ministries which trains local churches to teach their youth and their youth workers, but also Intentional Discipleship Ministries which

equips and guides churches in any stage of their discipleship process of adults. BCP helps these churches equip and send their disciples out to strengthen their local church as well as to plant or revitalize sister churches. The newest need and coming expansion to the training division of BCP is in the area of transitional ministry. As churches go through their lifecycle, there are times of transition that come – transitioning from one pastor to the next, transitioning from being a church plant to an established mothering church, or transitioning from being a dying church to a thriving church.

As we look at our churches, we need to identify what stage of the lifecycle we are in, and then begin to focus back on the Gospel. Unlike the human lifecycle where we are born, we grow, we live, we age, and we pass on, the church's lifecycle can be rebooted, can be restarted, can regain its youth, and its love for the Lord. BCP stands ready to facilitate your church to revive and renew its life again.



BCP Family Camp (July 17-20) Prayer Initiative



Join the Family Camp prayer team by emailing Jon Jenks at jjenks@bcpusa.org with "family camp prayer" in the subject. We will send you three prayer updates as the event takes place.

Begin by praying:

For the 120 missionary family members traveling to Faith Baptist Bible College;

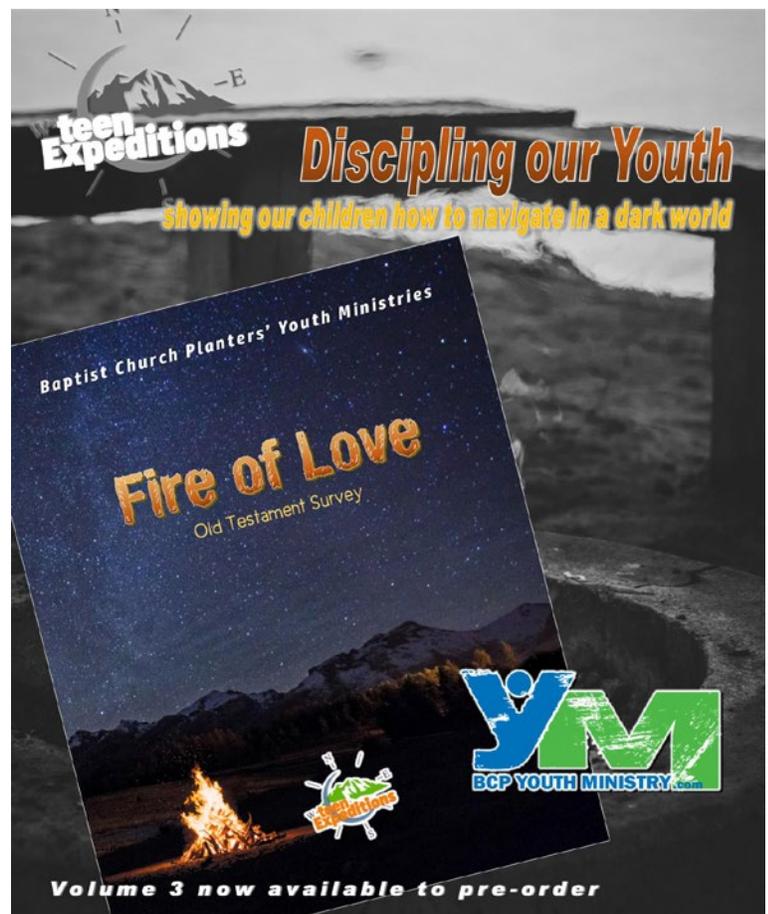
For blessing upon FBBC for hosting; Dan Fields for teen ministry; Altoona Regular Baptist for the children's ministry work and; Faith Baptist Church in Cambridge for providing our picnic outing;

For the BCP office and Council committee for their hard work in the planning and production of this event;

For spiritual care and rest to happen among us as we love one another and worship together;

For Dave and Carolyn Culver as they spiritually guide our learning as adults; and

For Steve Little, Jon and Jen Jenks as they guide the worship and mission family thinking.



From the Field:

Sheryl Ridley has retired after 32 years of very active church planting ministry. Sheryl joined BCP in 1991 with husband, Roger, after twelve years in the pastorate in Grand Island, NE. The Lord directed them to Gretna in 1995 as a place needing to have a church planted. The first service of Gretna Baptist Church was September 7, 1997, and the church graduated from mission status on September 7, 2008. At their first service in the new building in March of 2006, they commissioned a team to plant a church in nearby Bennington. They also began searching for the next place to plant a church, and the Lord directed their eyes toward Chalco Hills. After the Lord took Roger Home in 2009, Sheryl continued on with a heart for church planting as an associate, serving at Gretna Baptist and then moving her ministry to Chalco Hills Baptist Church for women's and children's ministry. Sheryl's impact can be seen in the variety of ministries seen in their reports: quilting classes, art classes called "God's Word, By Design," ladies' nights out, Dorcas Pin Cushion ministry, Creative Bible Study Ministry, MOPs (Mothers of Preschoolers), as well as kids' clubs, parades, music presentations, and more! We rejoice with Sheryl in her retirement and are sure that she will continue to have a "heart for church planting."



Change of Plans for Pinecrest!

We are amazed by God's timing and His provision for Pinecrest Baptist Church in Massachusetts! The building approvals for our property with the town of Millbury have been a long, difficult process. A few weeks ago, Bill, the owner of the building that we are presently renting to meet in, asked if we would consider

buying the building. Well, that gave us a lot to pray about!

The building (seen below) is a 7,000 plus square foot building with a seating capacity of over 200 in the auction end. It has an office area and a small apartment for housing. It is handicapped accessible and has plenty of space to meet every need we have as a church family once we renovate. The location is visible and accessible to major routes and local traffic.

The church family voted unanimously to purchase this property God has opened up for us. The closing is set for August 8th. Will you praise God with us and pray as we sell our other property, work on the financing, and make plans for renovating and moving in?! We are so excited to move forward with getting settled as a church family!



New Missionary Appointees in 2018



Robert and Mishael Martinez
Lead Church Planter
Field: Albany, NY
Sending church: Adirondack Baptist in Gloversville, NY
Contact info: 518.775.7100
info@albanylaunch.com
website: albanylaunch.com

Rob trusted Christ as Savior in 1999, two weeks before the world was going to end (or so he thought). He made his way to a local Bible church and gave his life to Christ. Mishael came to know Christ at age 14 when she was convicted of her sin and saw her need for Jesus. Rob was called into full-time ministry in 2001 and married to Mishael in 2005. He has served as outreach and youth director as well as on pastoral staff at Saving Grace Baptist Church in Fonda, NY, and most recently as assistant pastor at Adirondack Baptist Church in Gloversville, NY. Rob and Mishael have three children, Titus, Joseph and Valerie. They plan to officially relocate to Albany, NY, this coming August to begin the ground work of planting City Rise Baptist Church. The plan is to continue deputation for about a year's time while also getting connected into the community. They will then begin the process of holding strategic Bible studies and discipleship meetings, as well as conducting vision and interest meetings in the city.

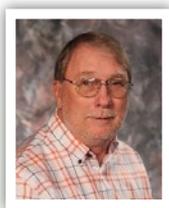


Scott and Marti Owen
Director of Apollos ministry
Sending church: Crossroad Baptist Church in Ames, IA
Contact info: 515.203.9580
sowen@bcpusa.org

Scott was raised by a single, factory-working mom in north central Iowa. He did not hear of Christ until he was a teenager, accepting Him as Savior at a Jr. High Camp. He grew considerably after his salvation through the help of some Christian friends, but he hit a spiritual drought after his friends moved away. He left home his senior year of high school to attend a Christian school with one of those friends. His spiritual life renewed, and he went on to Bible college. Marti grew up in a dedicated Christian family in southern Iowa. She accepted Christ as a child and participated in church ministries through her youth. She became distracted by the popularity she received in high school because of her artistic abilities. She committed

to one year of Bible college before venturing into a career in art. It was there that she recommitted her life to Christ and met Scott during their freshman year. They married between semesters of Scott's junior year. They immediately started an internship at Scott's home church that lasted 3.5 years. Vocational ministry took them to Indiana where they served for 15 years in various ministries. Their four children were born during that time, all of whom have grown and left the nest, providing Scott and Marti with five grandchildren. The Lord moved them back to Iowa in 2000, opening the door to invest in numerous churches utilizing the Biblical Counseling and Peacemaking training. They are excited about the potential of being used by God to impact even more congregations across the nation. Scott and Marti are raising prayer and partner support now as they transition out of their ministry at Crossroad.

ChurchCare CONSTRUCTION



Spring is here!

David Whipple, Executive Director
When the sun begins to shine and the temperatures rise, everyone expects things to happen. This has been true with ChurchCare activities.

- Missionary Builders Brent and Michele Howard and Ron and Sandy Cornell moved to First Baptist Church in Dryden, NY, the first of April. Even though winter hung on for a couple more weeks in April, progress has been steady. The addition to the team of short-term missionary Jimmy Stevenson, whose work will begin in June, will provide much needed help.
- Several meetings with churches hoping to be the next project have been held. Four churches are working diligently to complete architectural and engineering plans so permits can be obtained to build new buildings or additions to existing buildings.



- Pinecrest Baptist Church in Millbury, MA, a Baptist Church Planters church plant, with Lead Church Planter Roy and Karen Kinney, is in the process of purchasing a building. By the time this article goes to print, Pinecrest will have submitted a loan application from the ChurchCare Revolving Loan Fund which, when approved, will provide the needed funds to purchase the building and make initial renovations. ChurchCare may also provide missionary builders to help with the renovations.
- An application is in process for a new missionary builder! They are retiring after selling their business. He says that he still has several years of work and ministry left in him. His experience is in the heating and plumbing trade. Pray as he and his family complete the application process and make the transition to missionary builder.
- Spring has brought interest in several of the ChurchCare properties listed for sale. Two properties in Iowa have been sold, and one church property in New Jersey has much interest from two buyers. ChurchCare will probably accept the first offer that obtains prequalification from a lender. When the sales are closed, at least

\$50,000 will go toward each of two BCP church plant building projects.

God has not waited for spring to demonstrate His sovereignty. He is good all of the time. Thank you for your prayers in this busy time!

Short-term mission training with ChurchCare Construction



It appears a pattern for short-term missions training was set by Jesus in the relationships and learning environments He cultivated for His disciples. Out of their short-term training, eleven were launched into life-long ministry. Jesus lived with them, served them, demonstrated for them, tested them, corrected them, protected them, sent them, and debriefed them. BCP sees short-term missions training in this same way. We foster relationships and environments that provide and

produce these same impacts with the same desired outcome that some will go and serve for a lifetime.

Consider Jimmy Stevenson, a recent Faith Baptist Bible College graduate, being sent as a short-term missionary builder by Ankeny Baptist Church through ChurchCare Construction. He grew up on a dairy farm in Pennsylvania in a family long connected to serving Christ in their local church. Every step of this short-term training prepares and challenges Jimmy toward the long-term ministry that God has before him as a missionary from a local church or as a servant in a local church. As a short-term missionary he interviewed with his church and ChurchCare, is raising prayer and support partners, is presenting his ministry in print and in person, and is learning to trust God for help in each phase. He will then embed on a worksite

with missionaries Brent and Michele Howard and Ron and Sandy Cornell who will spiritually and practically mentor him in how to be a missionary builder sent by a local church, how to interface with a local church family, and how to do life in an RV. Spiritual journaling, local church ministry events, and reading assignments proctored each week by a trainer help round out the training. After these focused ten months, God will use the sending church, mentors, and trainer to guide the next phase of ministry life for Jimmy. Would you please consider joining the team by praying and supporting Jimmy as an investment in God's church? Please also pray for who the next short-term missionary will be, and consider who around you should be challenged to consider this kind of opportunity.

Administrative Directory

Stephen Little – President
slittle@bcppusa.org

David Whipple –
BCP Administrative Vice President;
Executive Director of ChurchCare;
Regional Field Director for Builders
dwhipple@bcppusa.org

Jon Jenks –
Vice President of Training
jjenks@bcppusa.org

Eric Wilmeth –
Vice President of Operations
ewilmeth@bcppusa.org

Tim Weeks –
Regional Field Director – Eastern
tweeks@bcppusa.org

Bob Sauser –
Regional Field Director – Western
bsauser@bcppusa.org

Herb Taylor –
Regional Field Director –
Hispanic Ministries
htaylor@bcppusa.org

Chip Wood –
Director of BCP Youth Ministry
cwood@bcppusa.org

Scott Owen –
Director of Apollos
sowen@bcppusa.org



36830 Royalton Road
 Grafton, OH 44044
 PH: 440.748.1677
 FAX: 440.748.1837
 Email: bcp@bcpusa.org

NON-PROFIT ORG.
 U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
 RANDOLPH, NY
 PERMIT NO. 31

CHECK OUT
 OUR WEBSITES!

bcpusa.org
churchcare.org
bcpyouthministry.com
michaelpeck.org
reachinghispanics.org

Follow us on
 Facebook.com/BCPUSA

Meet Jan Paton, Retired and Still Serving! Michael Peck



Jan is no stranger to the Baptist Church Planters' family. She and her first husband, Terry, started two churches in California and three in Texas, and all the while Terry served as the SE Field Director. Together

As is typical of our dear SALT (Senior Adults Living Triumphantly) missionaries, though retired, Jan keeps very busy serving the Lord. She stays busy in the musical ministry of her church as well as teaching boys and girls in the JOY Club ministry. She is a blessing indeed.

they served twenty-seven years. He was involved in the formation of Baptist Church Planters. In fact, he was the one who suggested the name! In 1990 Terry suffered a massive heart attack and went Home to be with the Lord.



Following Terry's Homegoing, Jan moved to Elyria and worked in the BCP office for three years. Guess what? That's where she met a dear single missionary named Bill Paton. You know the rest of the story! She and Bill served for twenty-three years in four rescue works and in planting another church. Bill, too, has gone Home to be with Lord. Jan writes, "I miss him so very much, but I am so thankful that the Lord allows me to continue serving Him."

MEMORIAL GIFTS

Since our last publication, gifts were given in loving memory of:

Warren and Norma Davis

If you would like to give a gift in memory of someone, we will list the name in the *Connect*.

If you would like to receive the *Connect*, visit bcpusa.org/Connect Sign-up where you can designate receiving it by mail or email.

We'd love to hear your feedback and thoughts from our *Connect*. Contact us at bcp@bcpusa.org.

"GO PAPERLESS"!

Please visit www.bcpusa.org/go-paperless, where you will find a short form to complete. There you can designate the *Connect* and/or gift receipt as paperless.