

connect

Meeting America's Greatest Need

BCP
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The Journey to Serving Christ

Stephen P. Little, President

As I reviewed all the articles in this Connect, I could not help but think of the dozens of families and churches who have discipled the people in the articles by faithfully proclaiming and exemplifying the Gospel to them! This is what it takes to train another generation, and it takes years for that training! If I narrow my focus down to just our administration and staff, it took decades of parental impact, discipleship training, pastoral care and church families walking with Christ to train these servants with whom I work. If I lift my eyes to a wider view of the whole missionary family of Baptist Church Planters, it is profound to think that God has used hundreds of churches, parents, pastors, deacons and Sunday school teachers to train this generation who now serve as missionaries.



As an example, consider Jimmy Stevenson, a newly appointed missionary builder, who is highlighted in this Connect. Jimmy was born into a faithful Christian family in Watkins Glen, NY. He spent his first five years at Glen Baptist Church in Watkins Glen under Pastor Mike Spiegel's ministry. When Jimmy's parents moved to Greenville, PA, Perry Baptist Church in Hadley entered into the developmental process for Jimmy. In addition to Perry Baptist, the youth group leaders and pastors at Calvary Baptist in Meadville, PA, were very instrumental in Jimmy's spiritual development. Along with his parents and the above-mentioned churches, Slippery Rock Baptist Camp, a local church fellowship-owned camp, played a huge role in Jimmy's spiritual development. It was during these years that Jimmy accepted Christ as his personal Savior and became a follower of Jesus at the age of 17. **(By the way, God alone does this part!)** After graduating from high school, Jimmy went to Faith Baptist Bible College in Ankeny, IA. FBBC did their part in helping Jimmy to take further steps in his faith journey. While at FBBC Jimmy became a member at Ankeny Baptist Church, and Pastor David Strobe and the church took up the mantle of the next step in Jimmy's spiritual development. After the hurricane floods in 2017, Jimmy joined a short-term mission team from Ankeny Baptist that went to Houston, TX, to help. While there, Jimmy and the team worked

with retired BCP/ChurchCare builder, Larry French. Larry challenged Jimmy to consider the building ministry with BCP/ChurchCare. Jimmy's family and church in Ankeny confirmed this next step in his walk with Christ and his call to this ministry. After graduation from FBBC in 2018, Jimmy applied to BCP/ChurchCare for missionary service. Today, Jimmy is raising partners to be a career missionary builder. Jimmy is only 23, and so much is yet to be invested in his life and for him to invest in others!

All of that to say this. God uses families and churches to train and develop another generation of missionaries. As we follow the lives of young men in the Scriptures like John Mark, Timothy and Titus, their parents, grandparents, churches and spiritual leaders were directly involved in their development for ministry. When parents, churches or their leaders lose their perspective on discipling and training the next generation, not only does the church suffer, missions suffers, too.

Enjoy reading the remainder of this Connect. As you read, consider and be grateful for the people who have impacted your life for the Lord. If you need help in the process of developing the next generation, we may be able to help you. Contact us!

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Why do you have what you have?



**David Whipple, Executive Vice President;
Executive Director of ChurchCare**

Recently I have been reading Ephesians. Paul begins his letter and identifies the exalted position that grace has afforded to believers when we become part of the “body of Christ.” Paul also exhorts us that because of

the new position, our “walk” should look different to the world. In chapter 4, Paul identifies some specific contrasts between the walk of a believer and the walk of an unbeliever, i.e., the difference between the lost person and the newborn “saint.”

In Ephesians 4:22-29 we find a list of activities that believers are to “put off,” such as “Let him that stole steal no more; but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth” (vs. 28). I heard a message when I was a young man in which my pastor used this verse to identify the three ways that a person has obtained ‘stuff.’ That message has stuck in my mind for decades. The three ways are listed in this verse: I could have obtained some things by

stealing; I could have obtained some things by working for them; or I could have received something as a gift from someone else.

Stealing is obviously not an option for a believer (Thou shalt not steal). The question then is why we work for something or why God has blessed us with an undeserved provision. The answer is found in the last phrase of verse 28: because believers have a need to give, to be generous to those who are in need (Luke 3:11). I do not need to justify the truth that as believing Americans we are living a blessed life. The question is, “Why?” Are there those who are in need? Are there needs all around us?

Baptist Church Planters’ byline is “Meeting America’s Greatest Need.” As blessed generous believers, it is important to recognize the need and to take advantage of the opportunity to “walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called” (Eph. 4:1), by generously meeting the need. There are many opportunities to give. Baptist Church Planters has missionary church planters, builders, and administrators raising personal support that directly impacts church planting and disciple-making. There are church plants who need facilities, publications and equipment. There are churches that need counsel or guidance through a revitalization process that will bring them to a place of reproducing themselves as a mother church. Pray about how and where you are demonstrating a generous “worthy walk.”



**Welcome to the
new BCP Retiree
and Candidate
Coordinators, Dr. Paul
and Debbie Reimer!**

Paul and Debbie serve as pastor and secretary at Bible Baptist Church of

Newark, OH, just east of Columbus. Their story shows the Lord’s blessing in their lives.

They grew up about five miles apart on the edge of Des Moines, IA, and attended the same junior and senior high schools. The Lord saved them as teenagers in 1970 - Debbie while attending Grandview Park Baptist Church and Paul at Altoona Regular Baptist Church. Paul graduated from Faith Baptist Bible College in 1976. Debbie completed one year at FBBC and then earned a degree at Des Moines Area Community College. They were married in 1974, so Faith awarded Debbie with a PhT (Putting Hubby Through!) degree when Paul graduated. Paul also earned a Master of Arts in Biblical Studies and a Doctorate in Religious Studies from Trinity Theological Seminary. In 1990, he became a counselor with the Association of Certified Biblical

Counselors. After graduating from FBBC, they moved to Findlay, Ohio, to serve with two different pastors before moving to Newark in 1991. Pastor Fred Crown and Pastor Richard Pettitt greatly influenced the Reimers regarding missions and revitalization. The Lord blessed them with four boys and ten grandchildren who all live in the Newark area and actively serve at BBC. Paul also serves as an associate chaplain with the Licking County Prosecutors Office and a bugler with the Veterans Alliance. He served on the BCP Council for the past ten years.

Retiree Highlight – Larry and Lilian French

Moses stated in Psalm 90 that the years of our lives are threescore and ten,

and by reason of strength, they can be fourscore. Larry and Lillian French are an example of the strong octogenarians amongst our retired missionaries. On October 27, 1967, under the ministry of Don Moffatt (pastor, missionary, evangelist), Larry and Lillian came to Christ

in their late twenties. Larry has been involved in construction since his childhood, and for the last twenty years the Frenches have been involved in building churches with Continental Baptist Missions, Baptist Missionary Builders and ChurchCare. They were commissioned by Calvary Baptist Church, Mesa, AZ, in 2004. God used them in 2006 to build the addition to the BCP home office. In 2016 Larry and Lilian “came out of retirement” to lead the building project for a BCP church plant in Buckeye, AZ. The 14,000 sq. ft. facility, reference later in this Connect, was the first fundamental church in Buckeye. In 2017 Larry coordinated the efforts of three agencies which sent finances and teams to rebuild homes and churches in Texas after Hurricane Harvey flooding. More recently they have been working on remodeling storefront churches in their home state of Oklahoma. The Frenches are anything but retired and are a pattern of serving the Lord with all their heart, soul, mind, and strength. They have one more passion with which they would challenge us, “Churches need to do home missions!” This is the passion of Baptist Church Planters. How can we effectively reach the USA or send more missionaries across the seas unless we first build the base here at home?



FROM THE FIELD

Please pray for this need for Iglesia Bautista Hispana in Plainfield, WI, and consider if your church has someone you should send to be a part of this work!



The need: a bilingual missionary pastor with some outside support.

The current team: Pastor Carlos – retired Guatemalan pastor who is preaching each Sunday and providing limited care.

The steering committee: Local mother church pastor, two deacons, and one couple; a bilingual sister church couple; men from Hispanic core group, the state representative. This committee provides oversight and training through an interpreter.

The format: A Friday two-hour bilingual training of core men with Pastor Carlos led by steering committee; and a Sunday bilingual training hour and then a morning Spanish-only worship service.

The resources:

*A building to meet in with utilities provided by the state fellowship for this year and probably next;

*A house that a missionary could live in;

*Mother church financial support toward ministry and utility / upkeep needs; and

*Hispanic core group offerings toward ministry needs and limited care of Pastor Carlos.

Recent praises:

*Over forty in church on Sunday;

*Unsaved visitors returning to morning worship;

*Great work day by mother church people and Hispanic core group to clean property inside and out; and

*Continued faithful attendance by core men to training time.

Next steps by end of summer:

*Ongoing training so doctrinal statement is understood and able to be used by core with lost and one another;

*A sign being made (already paid for);

*Provision of Bibles for pews;

*A gospel / church invitation produced;

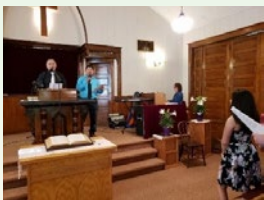
*Property care schedule by core group – cleaning and mowing;

*Complete the plan for handling finances;

*Worship music expanded;

*Complete gospel sharing ten times by core with some adult conversions; and

*Summer 5-day club in English.



“Serving Christ is undoubtedly an inheritance we can never lose and a joy that can never be diminished, and the body at Desert Hills Baptist is blessed beyond measure,” shared Adam and Elizabeth Zamora of the work in Buckeye, AZ. The ministry has seen growth not just in numbers (they now host an 8:45 and 10:30 service to help with parking and seating) but also in ministry participation. They recently finished a sermon series on Christian habits. Families were excited to share steps they need to take in their personal walk with God and to share encouragement received to faithfully continue steps that they are currently walking in such as faith, prayer and Bible reading, church attendance and use of spiritual gifts.



The youth ministry has been encouraged to see growth in an after-school outreach to a local school. Teens are welcome to participate in the youth center after school. Here they can receive help with tutoring, if needed, play various games together, and of course, have a time of preaching and Christian fellowship. They stay until the Wednesday Bible study, and the Zamoras are excited to see fruit grow from this. The new members' class routinely has participants desiring to discover specifically what Desert Hills believes and their philosophy of bringing Christ to the community. Through this they have seen families come to Christ and follow the Lord in believer's baptism and from there enter into various small groups.



Two more areas of excitement are the ladies' Bible study, which meets twice a month, and the children's church. The ladies' Bible study continues to thrive, and they truly come together to learn about Christ in a deeper way. The children's church participants are excited to learn more about missions. They weekly learn what missionaries do and how children help their families while on a foreign field. They will be sending Christmas items to missionary children of similar age this year and are excited to be personally involved.

A couple of areas for prayer would be for God's continued protection and unity, finances to complete an extended parking area, prayer for pastor's family, and for families to continue to be rooted in Christ.



Priorities of a Servant-Sending Church

PART IV

If your church wants to be used by God to send people out to fulfill the Great Commission, what must be of utmost importance? What are the priorities of healthy servant-sending churches that lead them to embrace and fulfill their responsibilities? In prior Connects, the first five priorities were laid out. To read them in their entirety, please visit bcpusa.org/priorities. Following is a summary of those first five priorities and the last two priorities. *A servant-sending church is committed to . . .*



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

Priority #1 Balancing Biblical Evangelism

A church that doesn't take the Gospel across the street won't produce people who will take the Gospel around the world (Acts 1:8).

Priority #2 Training Rather than Entertaining

A servant-sending church is all about equipping the saints to do the work of the ministry (Ephesians 4).

Priority #3 Praying for Harvest Laborers

They are consistently, passionately, and intentionally praying for more harvest laborers (Matthew 9:36-38).

Priority #4 Surrendering to the Will of God

Biblical surrender is preached from the pulpit, emphasized as a priority and practiced by those in the pew (Romans 12:1, 2).

Priority #5 Raising Children for God's Purposes

A servant-sending church is full of Godly families and individuals who purposefully strive to rear children for God's purposes and not their own (Psalm 127:3).

Priority #6 Championing Missions and Missionaries

There is a Biblical pattern set for this in Acts 14, the account of Paul and Barnabas and the conclusion of their first missionary journey. When they came back to Antioch, the church that had sent them out on that missionary journey, they reported on their ministry. Acts 14:26 says, "From there they sailed to Antioch where they had been commended to the grace of God for the work which they had completed. Now when they had come and gathered the church together, *they reported all that God had done with them.*" They came back to their home church and told about the people who trusted Christ as their Savior and the churches that were established as a result. They reported that He had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles. They championed what God was doing. Churches should want to hear how God is using those in whom they have invested to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Sadly, many churches relegate missions and missionary reports to the most poorly attended service of the church or only give them ten minutes to give a brief report. In many churches, missions has been pushed to the side, and it seems that missions conferences have been eliminated. Yet churches wonder why interest in missions has plummeted. One of the ways to keep the fire for worldwide evangelism burning is to regularly stoke it with missionaries reporting about what God is doing. Our prayer ought to be that God would light that fire for missions in every one of our hearts as well.

Priority #7 Measuring Success by Sending Capacity

Finally, a sending church will measure its health by sending capacity rather than seating capacity. This idea is from a book entitled, "Gaining By Losing," by J.D. Greear. He makes the point that historically we have measured whether or not a church is doing well by numbers that reflect growth and increased offerings. Yet in Acts 13 God took Paul and Barnabas away from the church and called them to missionary ministry. "Now in the church that was at Antioch there were certain prophets and teachers . . . and as they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, 'Now separate to Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.' Then, having fasted and prayed, and laid hands on them, they sent them away." (Acts 13:1) The church kicked them out - to go be missionaries! The church gained by losing, measuring their success by sending capacity rather than seating capacity. Greear uses a metaphor that illustrates his point powerfully. Churches can be described as one of three boats - a cruise liner, a battleship, or an aircraft carrier. People who see the local church as a cruise liner act as if the church is all about their needs. The cruise liner church provides all kinds of ministries for every member of the family - relevant preaching, sports ministries, youth groups, nursery, comfortable seating, exercise classes, social events, feel good music, etc. Someone with a cruise ship mentality often jumps from one cruise ship to a better cruise ship that happens to be going by. Others have the mindset that the church is a battleship. This church is always in attack mode. It is made for a mission, and success is determined by how loudly and dramatically it fights

the battles. Greear says, "The role of the members is to pay the pastors to find the targets and fire the guns each week as they gather to watch. They see the programs and the services and the ministries of the church as the primary instruments of the mission." The last example of a church is the aircraft carrier which exists to take the battle away from the ship and to the enemy. The church should be like an aircraft carrier, but sadly, a lot of churches think the battle goes on in the church, and they are waging little wars inside of it. Christ said, "I will build my church and the gates of Hell will not prevail against it!" The picture that Jesus is creating is that the church ought to be attacking the gates of hell by winning souls to Christ. This kind of church prepares and launches Christians into the battlefield to take the Gospel into their neighborhoods, workplaces, families, social environments, and maybe even across the world, sent out from the aircraft carrier church! The great thing about churches like this is that some of those who are so thrilled about being sent out locally will realize that there are people in other places where nobody has ever flown with the Gospel before. Such churches have a hard time holding back people like this because they are so excited to be sent on their mission! Aircraft carrier churches become great servant-sending churches!

If our churches are going to reverse the trend of seeing fewer and fewer servants of the Lord sent into the ministry, our churches will need to place a premium on all seven of these priorities! That will require leadership, prayer and change, but by God's grace, all of our churches can be the servant-sending churches that God wants them to be!



More than a Conference Jon Jenks, Director of Intentional Discipleship Ministries

Recently, Baptist Church Planters had the privilege of serving in two state association conferences. April kicked off with Mission administration serving the Iowa Association of Regular Baptist Churches in their annual spring conference. Under the theme

Revive or Die, Jon Jenks served as the keynote speaker, and fellow BCP trainers, Tim Weeks and Scott Owen, provided workshops. State representative for Iowa, Tim Capon, kicked things off with a probing sermon imploring the fellowship to “wake up” and serve one another by helping one another be awake. The main sessions dealt with revitalization by examining what makes a healthy church and how a healthy church can help a struggling church build toward health. This working together can occur without violating a church’s autonomy. Specifically, the Baptist Church Planters’ revitalization phases were introduced and explained.



ministry accountability from a sister church and the state representative. The association is ready to walk with churches through this process with Baptist Church Planters.

BCP’s *Leadership Journey* is a key element in this process as the accountability churches have walked through this process and will help the church being revitalized to do the same. Several Iowa churches are already trained and ready to help a sister church. The first official IARBC revitalization church will be in Phase Two of revitalization as this article is published. An additional church has reached out to begin the process since the conference ended. These churches will join four other churches that BCP is facilitating in their revitalization focus. Pray for the number of churches involved in revitalization to grow. Stay tuned for specific celebrations from some of these churches as God guides them.

April also included the Nebraska Association of Regular Baptist Churches’ spring conference held in Gretna. Their theme of **Resolute Revival** provided the backdrop as Jon Jenks and Scott Owen prompted a very unified group of churches desiring to be healthy and to help one another be healthy. This fellowship has two BCP church plants already trained in the *Leadership Journey* with two more churches in process this year. From this training they should have an accountability church ready to partner with a church seeking revival next year. Sessions from this conference are available on the NARBC website. Check them out, and they will become **more than a conference** as the scriptural truth impacts your life and ministry.

These phases are how the Mission facilitates a process of helping a church rediscover dependence upon God worked out in the practical obedience of the local church.

This conference was significant because this was **more than a conference**. The IARBC introduced their initiative to help churches in need of revitalization. They are committing to financial assistance and



Discipleship is more than imparting information, it is actively guiding others to make a vessel of honor with their life
(2 Timothy 2:1-21).

Let us help you develop a culture of discipleship in your church, enhancing the skills of teachers and counseling leadership toward an effective plan.

Connect with us at BCPYouthMinistry.com or call 440.748.1677 and ask for Chip or Karen.





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Looking for a Good Read?

Jon Jenks, IDM

God commands discipleship as the great commission for the church. This is at the heart of church planting and healthy churches. Healthy churches then produce healthy workers which forwards the commission to new areas with new servants doing the work. But God commands many other important actions for His church to do that are an integral part of this great commission. Very central to this is teaching and preaching. Daniel Overdorf in *Applying the Sermon* (Kregel, 2009.) presents a measured approach to application in a sermon. He presses the preacher to be careful to depend upon the Spirit's work while at the same time structuring the teaching event with application that communicates from the text. He lays all of this out with an appropriate dependence upon a text that the preacher has studied with a precis hermeneutic. If you love the Word being treasured, this book will encourage you. It has been said that most good preachers read something every year on preaching. If you follow this plan, this book won't disappoint. In my opinion, possibly the best part of this book is how it is set up to help an experienced teacher coach someone refining his craft. After all, preaching and learning how to preach should be a part of discipleship.



Pleasantly Surprised!

Elizabeth Stevenson

"For I know the plans I have for you, declares the LORD..." (Jeremiah 29:11a ESV). God always has a plan and nothing takes Him by surprise. Sometimes His plans can take us by surprise. God's plan for me to join Baptist Church Planters was a surprise. I was born in New York and raised in a Christian home on a Pennsylvania dairy farm with one brother and two sisters. I made a profession of faith when I was in Sparks and was baptized as a teenager. At sixteen I rededicated my life to Christ while I was at camp. After high school, I earned an Associate's degree at Faith Baptist Bible College. I have since worked as a church secretary and at two different grocery stores in various positions. At the beginning of 2019, I was praying for a new job. In January my brother asked if I had a resumé ready. He was working with Baptist Church Planters as a missionary builder intern and had heard that they needed a secretary. I sent in a resumé and had a phone interview two days later. Following a personal visit to the office to meet everyone, I was offered the job on the spot. After talking with my parents and two friends, I accepted the position. Before the interview, Mom shared a verse with me. Isaiah 60:22b says "At the right time, I the LORD, will make it happen." I moved to Ohio three and a half weeks after hearing about the position. Only God can make that happen. I look forward to the future God has for me here at Baptist Church Planters.



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Richard Besemer

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