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AROUND THE CONFERENCE

The Mission Field is Here

by Rich Cook, *Great Plains Area Rep*

As many people know, the Great Plains has seen a huge population explosion because of the oil boom. This has both positive and negative effects for our churches and communities. I'll begin with the impact on our communities.

The oil boom has brought people from many different places to western North Dakota and eastern Montana. This has produced a need for new construction, new services and new businesses. Most of this is looked on positively.

But with this growth comes other issues: housing shortages with increasing costs, homelessness, increased crime, prostitution, drugs, human trafficking and an infrastructure too small to handle the growth. Many public service units find themselves understaffed. Other businesses face a shortage of employees because many people, including former employees, are finding much better pay working for the oil industry.

What does all of this mean for the CCCC churches? Kingdom opportunity. God has brought the mission field to us. As a result, two of our churches, closest to the oil boom, are going through expansion projects.

Ebenezer Congregational in Sydney, Montana, saw the potential of the Lord adding daily to their number

those who were being saved (Acts 2:47). It started with a lift elevator and handicap bathrooms to minister to those who needed assistance. Then there was a need for more classrooms for children. Finally the growth led to the expansion of the sanctuary.

As Pastor David Meehan says, "We simply want to swing wide the door, so that He might be glorified, His people edified and the Kingdom enlarged through simple, honest worship."

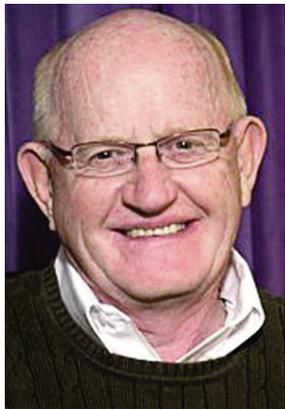
Evangelical Bible Church in Dickinson, North Dakota is also growing as a result of its ministry to the community. Growth of the congregation and their school, Hope Christian Academy, has shrunk existing available space. Associate Pastor Ron Dazell says even the church's nursery room

is being considered as a space for teaching Hope's high school class.

Construction was held up for various reasons, but now things are fully underway. The "shell" is still being worked on and they expect to have electricity, plumbing and HVAC complete by March, 2015. Finishing of usable space will be done as funds allow. Their goal is to have some space usable in the new section by the beginning of the 2015-2016 school year.



CM COMMENTS



A Big “Thank-You”

Ron Hamilton, *Conference Minister*

We will share in the wonderful celebration of Thanksgiving Day this month. While this special day comes once a year, I note that many of my Facebook friends practice “gratitude” on a regular basis by posting daily expressions of thankfulness. I’ve been encouraged by the things that I have read as I see people focus on God’s goodness in their lives.

The Bible encourages us to thank God for the wonderful people He has placed in our lives as members of the Body of Christ.

I thank my God every time I remember you.
(Philippians 1:3)

As I reflect on this verse, I want to say some special words of thanks for you as members of our CCCC family.

I thank God for the faithful ministry of our churches as they offer the love and grace of our Lord Jesus to people in this generation! Your work for the Lord is not in vain. I thank God for all of our member ministers who serve as pastors, missionaries, chaplains, counselors, and para-church workers. Thanks for your hard and sacrificial work in the name of Jesus!

I thank God for the faithful and sacrificial work of our ministry staff: *John Kimball, Rob O’Neal, Terry Shanahan, and Lenn Zeller.*

I thank God for our office staff, *Carolyn Benson and Shirley Hamilton*, and the assistance of our Communications Coordinator, *Kim Gardell*. Their

“behind the scenes” work is so helpful in developing the ministry of our Conference.

I thank God for the wonderful support of our CCCC leadership as they pray for me and encourage me in my work of ministry! God has provided us with special leadership: *Todd Venman* (President), *Matt Milligan* (Vice-President), *Alvin Helms* (Recording Secretary), *Bob McKenney* (Treasurer) and *Phil Lewis* (Controller) and Board members, *Steve Carmany, Loring Carpenter, Tim Dubeau, Mark Galloway, Kim Gardell, Dave Kemper, Dave Kimberly, Mike McElroy, Susan Moody, Scott Nice, Bobbi Sargent, Larry Towne.*

I thank God for our Area Representatives: *Marc Axelrod, Tom Bridgman, Dale Brown, Steve Burkett, Jonathan Colegrove, Rich Cook, Dayle Keefer, David Randlett, Tom Mathieson, David McKinley, David Meckley, Chris Surber, Bob Barber, Jay Warren, Larry Wood, Dan Peterson, Stephen Sloat, Bob Tolson, Larry Towne, Kirk van der Swaagh, Dean Walker. Peter Anderson, Ryan Howell, and John McPherson* are recent Area Representative appointees.

I thank God for the work of all of our committees and ministry teams as they promote the work of the Conference across the nation.

God is at work in the life and ministry of the CCCC! Thank you to everyone who is active in the life of our Conference in so many ways. ♦

NE REGIONAL NEWS

Ren-o-vate, verb 1. Restore something old to a good condition

Terry Shanahan, NE Regional Minister

Be transformed by the renewing of your mind... Romans 12:2

I was privileged this past week to be able to join the CCCC Church Development Team at the national Renovate Conference in Orlando, Florida. Our own Dr. John Kimball presented several workshops at this national event, and we were blessed by all of the plenary sessions and workshops. (And the weather!)

For me personally, I was inspired by the testimonies of pastors who spoke about their church revitalization efforts. The testimonies were honest and authentic as they shared stories of failure and success, triumph and tragedy. I was moved by the sharing of one man in particular who talked about all his struggles, frustrations, and hurts which continually brought him to his knees. A revelation that came to him out of all the frustration was that trials and struggles were his spiritual formation. The struggles continued to draw him to Christ in ways he wouldn't have been drawn before. The frustrations continued to keep him seeking God in prayer and left him humble enough for God to do the work, and for him not to rely on himself.

This was not a concept that was new to me, but through the working of the Holy Spirit, this message hit home in a very real way. It was one of

those occasions where God speaks to my soul and I am able to release to Him some personal struggles of ministry. We can expect struggles in the work of the ministry and we can thank God for those struggles. The struggles work within us and help grow us to the person God desires us to be.

Of course there were numerous other excellent presenters, including Ed Stetzer who spoke at our Annual Family Conference this past July. This whole conference reinforced within me that the CCCC has been on the right path, and in many ways we are leaders in the evangelical community in recognizing and seeking to meet the development needs of our churches. For me it was a time of rejuvenation, sort of like a "renovation," like a renewing of my mind.

We can all get overwhelmed by the tyranny of the urgent, the sense of responsibility, and the ultimate sense of our human frailty as we do this work. We need to make sure to stay close to God and remember that He does the work; then let Him perform his renovation in us. It starts with the renovation of our hearts and the renewing of our minds before we can renovate our churches. ♦



CHURCH DEVELOPMENT

Renovate 2014

By **John Kimball**, *CCCC Director of Church Development*

The current and potential members of the CCCC Church Development Team (CDT) all gathered with John Kimball, Ron Hamilton and Terry Shanahan in Orlando the first week of November for the Renovate 2014 National Church Revitalization Conference. Some may be familiar with Exponential, the national church planting conference held each year in Florida and Southern California — Renovate is its counterpart for existing congregations and is held annually in Orlando and Kansas City.

The CDT was blessed with three days of great teaching and tactical breakout sessions on Church Revitalization, as well as fellowship together. Then they met together at the home of Steve and Diane Olson (the initial meeting place for Palmwood Church, the CCCC's new church plant in Orlando) for worship, prayer, debriefing and specialized training for the ever-growing ministry of Church Development within our Conference.

Those attending the gathering were (from left to right) Dave Balicki (Grand Rapids, MI), Ed Rinehart (Lima, OH), Jim Bertoti (Zelienople, PA), Terry Shanahan (Rye, NH), Dan Peterson (Lake Elmo, MN), Dean Walker (Garfield, WA), Peter Wood (New Ipswich, NH), Rich Cook (Hazen, ND), Dave Eisley (Oshkosh, WI), John Kimball (Oviedo, FL), Scott Nice (Telford, PA), Mark Alvis (North Aurora, IL), Tim Franklin (Bridport, VT), Todd Venman (Russell, PA) and Ron Hamilton (CCCC Office in Lake Elmo, MN).

This team plays an important role for our Conference as we continue to expand the ministry of church development and slowly move the work of training and mentoring out toward the local level. Please pray for each of these men as they serve the CCCC, our local churches and our pastors ♦



FROM THE PRESIDENT

Outcomes from the Board of Directors

By **Todd Venman**, *Conference President*

The Board of Directors met via web-ex/conference call in October and would like to share some of the things God is doing.

One of the most remarkable differences from past meetings was the small amount of time dedicated to our financial structures. For the past few years a significant amount of time was given to financial matters so that the Board could provide greater oversight. This oversight has given more guidance to our Treasurer, Controller, and Conference Office and we are seeing fruit from this labor. This is not to say resources are not being monitored, or that we are without continued need of resources. Funding ministry continues to be a great need because the tasks God has called us to are great. However, with the reduction of time spent on developing financial structures the Board was able to move to other ministry objectives.

Please join with me in praising a faithful God who has used His servants over many years to monitor and report the resources He has provided. Include with those praises the faithful giving of His people and the greater ministry objectives He has called us to. He is faithful and He has done it!

The majority of our time was spent on our "Annual Gathering." Due to multiple circumstances we find ourselves behind in our normal planning practices. Much discussion was devoted to where God is leading us in respect to our Annual Gathering format and focus.

The name of our biggest annual event "Annual Gathering" was discussed in great length. One of our Board Members will share the outcomes of that discussion in a future article. I need only to mention that much insight was gleaned from our discussion.

The purpose of our Annual Gathering was highlighted and some possible venues discussed. The Board is committed to help provide oversight to the many talented people who sacrificially give to make these events a success. Please pray that God will provide clarity in the locations and focus as we align our Annual Gathering with our God given directives.

The Schedule for the Annual Gathering 2015 Rochester NY was approved by the Board of Directors. Many of the successful changes in last year's schedule have been carried over into the 2015 schedule. A few changes have been made that will provide more intentional focus on our Guiding Values.

The theme will be "Fully Invested." We will focus on our God given resources that are to be applied to our God given directives. God is alive in the CCCC. Please prayerfully consider attending July 20th-23rd in Rochester. We will rejoice and unite together in His blessings and His ministry objectives. ♦



WORLD OUTREACH

Hope Armenia Ministries

by Kaarina Ham



Dr Kaarina Ham is a CCCC international worker serving with Way of Hope ministries in Armenia

Our staff and helpers have worked hard with autumn start-up ministries, as you can see from these pictures. Our prayer is for the Lord's blessing for ongoing programs, and also on several new programs, designed particularly for young adults. May those coming faithfully continue to bear fruit in every good work and grow in the knowledge of God!

Please join us in prayer too for *Gohar*, one of our energetic participants who was recently in a car accident, resulting in knee surgery. She has a wonderful testimony of the Lord's protection and provision. We're waiting for the right time and venue for her to share about the Lord's goodness at one of our adult Bible Study programs. And of course, news of all the evil and suffering in the world brings us to our knees as well.

On a personal note, I've been blessed recently by two trips on this side of the Atlantic, both of which were postponed earlier for health reasons. First in August, I travelled to Vienna, then in September, I spent some enjoyable days in London with friends whom I'd not seen for 10— in several cases 15— years.

Just a bit of background concerning the new little blue station wagon pictured happily at the top. In the early 1980s, I started out with white vehicles because travel in the East-Central was precarious, and white was the major color of cars moving in and among horsecarts.. [There after followed a series of white vehicles, all named Henry I, II, III, etc.] And so [a] change in ministry tradition (by calling this new little blue one Henrietta VI) has occurred because Tatevik, Tigran, and Mher asked: "Dr. K, after all those white boys over 35 years, isn't it time for you to have a girl vehicle that's your favorite color? *Aren't they a great staff!*"

In Jesus' Love, Kaarina



"Henrietta VI" 2009 Toyota Siena
7-seat station wagon, arrived September 24



Staff-Helper Bible Study Book of COLOSSIANS
Monday afternoons, HOPE Office



Coffee Evening, presenting autumn ministries
Wednesday, September 24



New Youth Program Basics of Christian Faith
Gomadzor village school, Sevan region
Wednesday afternoons, October - December

EDITOR'S NOTE:

The preceding is a synopsis of the article submitted by Dr. Hamm. It was edited for space constraints in this PDF.

To read the entire text go to:

www.cccusa.com/FORESEE/worldoutreach/

CONFERENCE CARE

Constructively Dealing with Difficult Experiences

By **Lenn Zeller**, (Volunteer) CCCC Director of Conference Care

Flee the evil desires of youth, and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, along with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart. Don't have anything to do with foolish and stupid arguments, because you know they produce quarrels. And the Lord's servant must not quarrel; instead, he must be kind to everyone, able to teach, not resentful. Those who oppose him he must gently instruct, in the hope that God will grant them repentance leading them to a knowledge of the truth, and that they will come to their senses and escape from the trap of the devil, who has taken them captive to do his will.

2 Timothy 2: 22-26

In this particular passage, Paul was exhorting his "son Timothy" to all diligence and steadfastness in his ministry, and to faithfully discharge all the duties of his office. He urged Timothy to, "flee the evil desires of youth," and instead, "pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, along with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart."

There are many translators who say the original language had no comma there in verse 22, and that it more correctly reads Pursue peace with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart. Realistically, it is not possible in this fallen world to be at peace with everyone, everywhere. But within the community of faith, where we share one purpose and one faith, where we all sincerely claim and call on the name of the Lord, we should pursue peace.

And how do we pursue peace in the body of Christ? For one thing, avoid foolish and stupid arguments, because you know they produce quarrels. Don't have anything to do with those who love to fuss and fume and argue and debate, because it only creates di-

vision and controversy. Some people just naturally seem to enjoy foolish and stupid arguments. They have no desire to feed on the nourishing Word of God. They get their jollies from arguing, bickering, squabbling, disputing and disagreeing. Don't get drawn into that! It wastes time. It accomplishes nothing. Have nothing to do with that nonsense.

Secondly, pursuing peace in the body of Christ means to be kind to everyone, able to teach, not resentful, and to gently instruct those who oppose us. Once again, as it often does, it comes down to an attitude of humility and love. Here Paul used the word gently. Be patient, do not always and quickly jump to the attack. Try to be gracious and overlook as many offenses as you can. As Proverbs 19:11 says, "A person's wisdom yields patience; it is to one's glory to overlook an offense."

So perhaps our first response should always be, if at all possible, to overlook sins committed against us. God does not deal harshly with us when we sin. He forgives us and sent His Son to pay the penalty we deserve. So we should be willing to treat others in a similar fashion. By His sovereign grace, God can bring good out of our failures, and even out of our sins, and when we are damaged by life, or when we damage ourselves, He works to restore us to Himself. That is what we are called to do with others.

Those times when we must confront error that is damaging the church, we must do so gently, lovingly, patiently and kindly, teaching the Word of God in meekness. It means we don't go into this with guns blazing, loaded for bear. We go in kindly and gently, trying to understand the feelings and pressures the other person may be under, and seeking to resolve the issue fairly. Remember that your purpose is to



DIFFICULT EXPERIENCES *cont. from pg 7*

heal and reconcile, to win people back from the brink of self-destruction and back into the truth and the arms of their loving heavenly Father.

J. Stuart Holden tells of an old Scottish mansion close to where he had his little summer home:

The walls of one room were filled with sketches made by distinguished artists. The practice began after a pitcher of soda water was accidentally spilled on a freshly decorated wall and left an unsightly stain. At the time, a noted artist, Lord Landseer, was a guest in the house. One day when the family went out for a picnic, he stayed behind. With a few masterful strokes of a piece of charcoal, that ugly spot became the outline of a beautiful waterfall, bordered by trees and wildlife. He turned that disfigured wall into one of his most successful depictions of Highland life. (Swindoll, *The Quest For Character*, Multnomah, p. 49. eSermons: Sermon Illustrations)

That's what God does for us. By His grace and through Christ, He turns our stained, disfigured lives into beautiful scenes of life and hope and glory. That's what we are called to do... by gently restoring. ♦

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR AND READERS' CONTRIBUTIONS

We welcome your contributions! If you have comments on what you read here, please e-mail them to

kenandjoy@bellsouth.net.

If you have other comments or articles you wish to contribute, including "Something to Think About," please send them to the same e-mail address.

LIFE *cont. from pg 1*

Even in the midst of these changes God has brought unity, exceptional leadership, and increased giving to missions.



Both congregations have made a point of remaining debt-free. They are relying on God's provision and God's timing for these expansion projects.

Some of you may be wondering what the negatives of this could be for these churches. The biggest negative is what most Congregationalist fear — change! Change can be very threatening to individuals, families and congregation. But there can be no growth without change. So this negative is minor compared to the opportunities that lie before these congregations in the mission field where God has placed them, and where the mission field is moving to them. ♦

HEALTH NEWS

Getting Started

Betty Mitchell RN BSN, *Parish Nurse,*
Emmanuel Bethel Church, Royal Oak, MI



There is a lot of information in the media encouraging us to be active, but not much on how to get started.

Consider joining an instructor led group exercise program in your community. The type of class you select is not as important as being active. Dance, core conditioning, Pilates, line dancing, and kickboxing are some examples of classes that might be

available in your community.

Generally you will be able to find different levels of workout, from beginner to advanced. Showing up and participating is important. Once you have blocked off the time for a group exercise class it becomes easier to find the time to get active.

A group class not only provides activity for you, but becomes a social and fun time with a safe workout. There will also be accountability with the group for keeping up with the program.

Some things to consider when you begin to exercise is how you are strengthening your muscles to make it easier to carry a laundry basket, increasing your endurance to make it easier to push grandchildren on a swing, improving your balance to be able to stand on tip toe and increasing your flexibility to look over your shoulder as you back out of the driveway. All of these activities will help you maintaining your independence.

There are many health benefits you will gain from exercise of any kind that far outweigh the risks of getting hurt if you begin slowly and talk to your doctor before getting started.

Source: <http://www.acsm.org/access-public-information/articles/2012/01/20/benefits-of-group-exercise>; www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity/everyone/health; <http://go4life.nia.nih.gov/exercises>

“I discipline my body like an athlete, training it to do what it should.”

—1 Corinthians 9:27a ◆

CHANGES & OPPORTUNITIES

PASTORAL CHANGES

Parkersburg, IA	First Congregational* Mark Eggleston (Associate Pastor)
Boxford, MA	First Cong. Church of Boxford* Andrew James
Cambridge, NY	Coila Church* Jason Kleber

PASTORAL OPPORTUNITIES

Greeley, CO	St Paul's Cong. Church* (Part-time Associate Pastor)
LaMoille, IL	First Congregational Church*
Sulphur Springs, IN	Sulphur Springs Christian* (Family Life Minister)
Andover, Ma	Free Christian Church* Campus Pastor
Tauton, MA	Union Congregational Church*
Douglas, MA	Second Congregational Church*
Pittston, ME	First Congregational Church of Pittston*
Avon, MN	Avon Community Church* (Part-time Worship Arts Dir.)
Cook, MN	Ashawa Chapel* (Part-time)
Hardin, MT	Christ Evangelical & Reformed*
Beulah, ND	Beulah Congregational Church*
Taylor, ND	Taylor Ecumenical Parish (AFLC)
Scottsbluff, NE	Plymouth Cong. Church*
Lakeview, NY	Lakeview Community Church*
Inwood, NY	Community Bible Church* (Part-time)
Speculator, NY	North Country Bible Fellowship*
Parkman, OH	Parkman Congregational Church*
Beaver Springs, PA	Christ Church (EFCA)
Reynoldsville, PA	Paradise Community (UCC)

* = Conference member

+ = In process

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