A PUBLICATION OF THE FELLOWSHIP OF EVANGELICAL BIBLE CHURCHES

Fellowship Focus



BAPTISM IN PARAGUAY



Thirty-five young Christians took the challenge of a discipleship course, and trained for several months to better prepare them to live the Christian life and serve the Lord

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Blaine Donaldson, President, Fellowship of Evangelical Bible Churches

THE POWER OF STORY

A lways tell the truth, because if you don't, people will not believe you when it is really important."

I think that most of us know this lesson. I expect that we have all meticulously been taught it, but not in that

form. Rather, we were taught about the boy who cried wolf. To tell the story takes about two to five minutes, yet the point is contained in the quote with which this column opened.

Why do we teach our children through stories? Surely it would be faster to just get to the point. However, it would be far less effective. We teach because we want to inculcate beliefs or values.

Straightforward didactic teaching is often the least effective means to influence values and beliefs. There is a large part of me that wants to reject this truism. Personally, I have tried to allow logic and straightforward argument to govern my values and beliefs. I have used logical argumentation as my primary means of influence. However, for most people today, this thinking would dramatically limit my influence.

Most values are obtained and formed through not just the intellect, but also

the emotions and the imagination. The story of the boy who cried wolf informs at all three levels. My initial statement only informs the intellect. It is therefore a less effective tool for influencing values. Many people know this intuitively,

Stories seem to connect with our hearts in a way that facts alone can never do.

and Jesus certainly did. Jesus was continually telling stories, illustrations or parables.

We have just finished the Christmas season, and we find that more people come to church this time of year than any other. The second most common time for church attendance is around Resurrection Sunday. Have you ever wondered why? In part, it is because these are the seasons of our best stories. The birth of Jesus and His death and resurrection are evocative stories. I am not saying that everyone who comes to church understands, but there is something about the stories that draws them.

Stories are powerful in society. I

could mention the Tortoise and the Hare; the Ant and the Grasshopper; Androcles (the mouse) and the Lion; Jonah and the whale; or the Gift of the Magi. Each of these stories espouses different values, and they are very effective at

communicating those values – not just at the intellectual level, but also at the emotional or imaginative levels.

Stories ... so often they stick with us, they shape who we are, they inspire us to be better than we are. It is notable that facts

often state what we need, but stories seem to connect with our hearts in a way that facts alone can never do.

God has been moving in churches of the Fellowship to convince us that He wants us to become a proclaiming people. This means telling the stories of Jesus to those who have not believed in Christ. As the Spirit prompts, be telling the story of how Jesus created everything. Tell the story of His miraculous birth, His sinless and righteous life, His sacrificial death and His glorious resurrection. Tell the story of His work in your life. God can and will instill faith in some of those with whom you share your stories of Jesus.



FEBC Students attend Urbana Missions Conference

Eight college students from four Fellowship churches attended the Urban Mission Conference held in St. Louis Dec. 26 – 31. This conference informs students of mission strategies and opportunities worldwide. Churches received matching grants of \$150 per student. Students attending were:

- Jaden Friesen Countryside Bible Church, Meade, Kan.
- Kara Friesen Christian Fellowship Church, Rhineland, Sask.
- **Tinese Friesen** Countryside Bible Church, Meade, Kan.

- **Sierra Harder** Cornerstone Bible Church, Mountain Lake, Minn.
- **Braden Wiens** Countryside Bible Church, Meade, Kan.
- **Tanner Wiens** Countryside Bible Church, Meade, Kan.
- **Taylor Wiens** Countryside Bible Church, Meade, Kan.
- Joanne Redekop Dalmeny Bible Church, Dalmeny, Sask.

FEBC missionaries Dennis and Cindy Wiens represented SAT-7 as exhibitors at the conference.

Comment

By Sharon Berg, Editor

"I've found myself praying \dots that I would be ready for whatever adventure God brings my way for the day."

So wrote **Hannah Curby**, who serves in Italy with Avant Ministries, in a letter last summer. God answered that prayer, she wrote, as He gave her unexpected opportunities to have conversations about Him and to share the Gospel. Read about some of those interesting experiences in "Proclaiming Christ Around the World" on page 6.

I like how God does that. He has always called us to share the Gospel, but it's still an exciting surprise to me when He crosses my path with someone that He wants me to talk with and/or pray for. Lately, He did that while I was traveling. A couple of weary airport employees "just happened" to vent their worries and frustrations about health, finances and legal problems; a religious education teacher shared that she doesn't teach her students that they must, as Jesus taught, be born again. When God presents these opportunities, I feel an urgency to engage in a conversation, however clumsily, that I hope and pray will point them to the One Who has the answers they need.

I like how Hannah views each day with God: an adventure. He has adventures waiting for all of us in this new year that can have an eternal impact. May He give us wisdom and discernment as we share the abundant life He offers.

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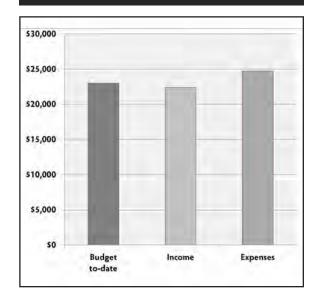
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The *Fellowship Focus* is available to read online. Check it out!

http://www.fellowshipforward.org click on the *Resources* tab



WHY IS OBEDIENCE OFTEN A STRUGGLE?

If obedience to Christ and His Word is always "a piece of cake" for you, stop reading right now. This article is *not* for you. But if you, like I, struggle at times with obedience, then you might want to read on.

It is clear from reading Scripture that although we are saved by grace and grace alone, and not by what we do, we are called to obey the teachings of the Word of God. Many Scripture passages could be quoted to support that. One should suffice:

"Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you" (bold mine) Matthew 28:19-20.

Obedience to his master is inherent in the very definition of a disciple. Only as he obeys will he be recognized as a *follower* of Jesus; one who *does* what His Master asks him to do. Obedience is not optional. It is vocational.

Parallel to that, we must never lose sight of the fact that it is the indwelling Holy Spirit who enables us to obey. We are *not* called to a life of tenacious, persevering, disciplined, gritty obedience in our own strength.

So, if obedience is not optional and if the indwelling Holy Spirit is always present and ready to infuse us with strength and power to obey, why is obedience so often a struggle in our lives?

There may be a number of reasons. Sometimes we are just plain stubborn and rebellious. We want to live life on our own terms. Sometimes other priorities just get in the way of obedience.

Sometimes life seems more attractive and enticing doing something other than that which our Master wants us to do.

But let me suggest another cause which may, in fact, be at the root of much of our disobedience.

It is highlighted in Hebrews 11:8: "By faith Abraham, when called to go to a place he would later receive as his inheritance, obeyed and went, even though he did not know where he was going."

The key to Abraham's obedience was *faith*. Faith encompasses the concept of trust, confidence, assurance, conviction. When someone tells us to do something, we will find it much easier to comply if we have unswerving confidence

that that person is totally committed to our best interests in asking us to do that. But we will no doubt hesitate about doing it if we are not absolutely convinced that it is in our best interests to do so.

That's where "the rubber hits the road" in relation to our obedience to our spiritual Master. Does God always have my best interests at heart? Does He always know beyond a shadow of a doubt what is good for me? Can He ever be mistaken? Does He always desire what's best for me?

When He says He is always ready to enable me to obey, is He always dependable? Will He ever fail to empower me? In other words, is God totally trustworthy and reliable?

Abraham, Noah, Gideon, King David and Daniel (and we could go on) had to be absolutely convinced that God was totally trustworthy and reliable in motive and in His instructions. Without that unshakeable conviction, they would not have obeyed as they did.

On the other hand, it is clearly implied in Genesis 3 that Eve began to question God's wisdom and love. She began to doubt that God's command-



We are not called to a life of tenacious, persevering, disciplined, gritty obedience in our own strength.

ment was in her best interests. She disobeyed.

As I look back over my life, a pattern emerges. Anytime I question God's wisdom, God's love, God's knowledge, God's promise to enable me or God's reliability, I have had difficulty obeying Him. On the other hand, whenever I am totally convinced of these truths about God's Person, it is not a struggle to trust Him, and the decision to obey Him is not difficult to make.

Next time you find yourself struggling with obedience issues, don't try harder. Focus your mind on the One who is asking you to obey. Consciously articulate to yourself some of those "rubber-hits-the-road" questions above.

When we are consciously and subconsciously convinced of these immutable truths, the struggle to obey will be replaced by prompt, willing and joyful obedience to do what He asks. It is all summed up in three words from the song we have sung often: "Trust and obey." Let's learn to know Him so well so that the words "mistrust and disobey" never describe our reaction.

Scripture taken from the New International Version

Letters to the Editor



Security

Safety



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November 20, 2012

Fellowship of Evangelical Bible Churches Attention: Paul Boeker 11605 W Dodge Rd Ste 3 Omaha, NE 68154-2566

Dear Fellowship of Evangelical Bible Churches:

With tensions escalating in the Middle East, news reports most often center on the fear of increased violence and political turmoil, many having global implications. But behind the headlines is another story – the hidden story. Millions of people unsure about their future and facing present dangers, are finding hope, safety and security because of what they see and hear

Christians of the Middle East and North Africa, using modern communication technologies, are broadcasting daily programs of hope and transformation to millions of people living in over 70 countries, including Europe. SAT-7, broadcasts on two satellite systems with five channels in Arabic, Farsi, and Turk twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. Uniquely, the SAT-7 KIDS channel is the only Christian satellite television channel for kids in the Arabic speaking world.

Old governments are crumbling in Tunisia, Egypt, Yemen, and Syria. Others could be next. New and uncertain governments are taking their place. Yet, families are finding safety and stability through the uncensored message of SAT-7. In front of a television set in the privacy of their own homes, they are finding the peace they are seeking – a message of God's love and hope

The discipleship and theological education of the thousands coming to Christ is vital. Satellite television overcomes historic obstacles and allows delivery of discipleship and theological education through the SAT-7 TEACH Project. Your financial gift to the TEACH Project has

Changing lives together,

Dennis Dennis Wiens

Director of Church Connections

I want to thank the Fellowship of Evangelical Bible Churches for the 2012 Anna Rieger Christian Education Worker of the Year award that I received on July 21. I was deeply honored and humbled that my church nominated me.

Mrs. Betty Schierling Evangelical Bible Church Langham, Sask.

2012 Christian Education

Proclaiming Proclaiming

Marilynn Lester Commission on Missions



ur missionaries continue to be a source of encouragement and example in proclaiming Christ to people around us. Hannah Curby is serving the Lord in the area of

church planting in Verona, Italy, with Avant Ministries. Hannah expressed some frustration in her July 2012 letter because of the unpredictable summer schedules. Hannah claimed this unpredictability makes her feel out of control, which is a gentle reminder that she is not in control, but God is. She writes, "God has been teaching me about having peace, and relaxing in the knowledge that He is in charge. So I've found myself praying a lot more lately that I would be ready for whatever adventure He brings my way for the day. And He does!"

Hannah talked about having conversations about God and the Gospel in "unplanned (by me) times and places." She mentioned going to the swimming pool with her friends and running into a friend's acquaintance and her boyfriend. The boyfriend is an atheist, but was very interested in American culture and asked about religion in America.

Another time, Hannah was doing physical therapy with the brother of a Christian friend. The physical therapist was trying to figure out his purpose in life. Still another time, a friend of a friend wanted Hannah to explain what she was doing in Italy. This person expressed that "she isn't sure if she

believes or not, but she notices that she goes looking for God when she's in trouble."

Hannah's prayer is that God would prepare her for "whatever adventure He brings (her) way for the day." She ended the letter with this note: "So far I haven't seen 'results,' but I know that the same God who orchestrated these conversations is the one who loves these people and is working in their hearts to call them to Him. Please pray that I will be faithful in speaking the truth in love, and be ready to take the adventures that God brings me in His strength, and not my own."

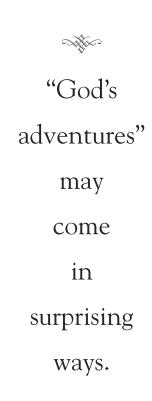
Kent and Sonya Becker, proclaiming Christ in France, reiterated the fact that it takes time to see results. Kent shared some details of a recent visit with one of his son Stefan's former teammates from four years earlier who

"was strongly touched by the Gospel about 10 years ago as a child, when his mother got saved ..." Since that time, this young man has gotten into trouble with the law and al-

> lowed "radical (rebellious) influences" into his life. But during his recent visit, this young man shared impressions he had because of how Stefan, the Beckers' son, reacted in a difficult situation. He said, "One thing that impressed me about Stefan is how he handled everyone making fun of him. He never reacted. I couldn't take it anymore, and I told the guys in the locker room to stop or else I would make them stop. It helped some, but I wondered what would happen to Stefan when I wasn't there." Kent shared with this young man Max Lucado's story of Punchinello and "how when we spend time with our Maker, we are less concerned with what others think about us. It is because of our son's relationship with God that he is able to let go of what other people say and think about him." Kent reminded us that they had to "wait four years to give a clearer testimony to this young man. Apparently throughout his vain pursuits, the silent witness of our son has stuck with him, and it took four years for those seeds to bear fruit." The Becker family continues to pray for this young man; that he will read the Word of God, and that God will win the spiritual battle

for this young man's soul. Opportunities can come through the lives of our children, and they can come at the least expected times and in the least expected ways. As Hannah shared, we need to be ready for "God's adventures" that may come in surprising ways, and Kent reminded us that it takes time to see results. Pray that we all will be ready for opportunities that God sends our way, and patiently persevere even when it looks like nothing is happening.

Please note: There are some FEBC missionaries on home assignment now who have some real support needs. Please pray for them, and open your doors and your hearts to allow them to present the ministry that God has laid on their hearts.





Imagine the impact we can have on those around us when we walk in obedience as we should.

anuary has arrived and 2013 looms before us. We wonder what is ahead.

The prophet Jeremiah was facing off with the false prophets, corrupt leadership and disobedient Israel. Sound familiar? Finally he asked them the real question (Jeremiah 5:31) "... but what will you do in the end?"

I guess that's what it always comes down to, doesn't it? What will *I* do? Will *I* give in to the pressures out there or stand firm? Will I capitulate to the world's system or follow God's plans?

It always comes down to a choice, doesn't it? Life is full of choices. We make dozens of them every day. Some choices are relatively inconsequential, but others are not. Each choice is seldom an isolated event. One choice balances on the last one, and eventually they melt together to form who I am, where I am going, whom I will follow and ultimately where I will end up: reward or ruin; success or failure.

There is nothing new under the sun. Jeremiah's prophets and priests were saying the same things we hear today. As it says in Judges, people were doing what is right in their own eyes.

Do we have "eyes that don't see" or "ears that don't hear"? Have we replaced God with idols of our own making, thinking they are the ways to joy and satisfaction? Maybe we have "adjusted" our lifestyle to fit those around us and in doing so have moved out from being totally obedient to the Lord. That's easy enough to do in these times.

The problem is, our lives quickly lose purpose and meaning when we leave God out, even in a small way. One small step away leads to another, and before we know it we are looking way back to where we once were, wondering how we got so far away from there.

"Oh, not me!" we insist. "I would never push God out of my life. I am just trying to fit in to this world so I can reach out to it. Things have changed, anyway. We aren't as strict or narrow as we used to be."

The bottom line is that God has not changed. His Word remains the same. What "used to be" sin, still is! Jeremiah said "we have exchanged the glory of God for worthless idols."

Jeremiah 2:13 says, "My people have committed two sins: they have forsaken me, the spring of living water, and dug their own cisterns, broken cisterns that cannot hold water."

The first step is forsaking God, Who is the source of our life. Forsaking doesn't have to mean turning our backs all at once on God, but it easily happens when we begin to disobey in the little things, adjust our stand on what is right, and compromise here and there. It slips in on us almost unnoticed as we make those small choices every day that add up to changing our spiritual direction and foundation.

Secondly, we begin to make our own cisterns; find our own source of water outside of what is the true source of "living water." The sad reality is that our cisterns are cracked and leaking, unable to provide us with what we need to grow and live as we should. We won't be, nor can we be, satisfied when we drink from this source of water. We will face continual thirst for the real thing, while chasing fruitlessly after that which, in the end, does not satisfy.

It's time to look at our lives honestly and see just where we are standing with the Lord. We, as women, seldom live in isolation. Our lives reach out and touch so many others as we live and work from day to day. Our husbands, our children, our friends, our neighbors and so many more are touched positively or negatively as they come in contact with us. Imagine the impact we can have on those around us when we are walking in obedience as we should.

The hard soil of our lives may take some work to break up and become soft and responsive again, but as we take God at His Word and lay it before us, as we spend time with our Father, and begin making the right choices that draw us back to Christ, that ground will become open so that the seed of his Word can grow again without restriction.

God calls us to "stand at the cross-roads and look, ask for the ancient paths, ask where the good way is and walk in it and you will find rest for your souls" (Jer. 6:16). God doesn't want my empty gestures or words; He wants my life. Let's look to Him and be resolute in moving in the right direction this New Year.

Beth Fast recently started serving on the

Commission on Women's Ministries. She has ministered alongside her husband, Pastor Jim Fast, at Community Bible Church in Prince Albert, Sask., for three years.



FELLOWSHIP VIEWS • FELLOWSHIP VIEWS • FELLOWSHIP VIEWS

Annual Reports

The 2012 Fellowship Directory and Annual Report is available. To purchase a copy, e-mail **orders@febcministries.org**. The cost is \$5 plus postage.

Convention Project

SAT-7 received a total of \$33,813 for The TEACH Project! A special thank you to each of you who gave toward this project. (See note from Dennis Wiens on page 5.)

Leadership Training Seminars

FEBC President Blaine Donaldson, together with consultant Terry Schultz and Paul MacDiarmid, a member of the Vision Implementation Committee, held leadership seminars in Grunthal, Man. (February), Omaha, Neb. (August), Mountain Lake, Minn. (October), and Martensville, Sask. (October). More than 100 leaders from our Fellowship learned skills to help move their congregations through change. These seminars are one of the ways the Fellowship is helping churches to move toward the 20/20 Vision. We deeply appreciate the churches which facilitated these seminars. And we appreciate the hours of volunteer time given by the presenters.

Churches Seeking Pastors

- Community Bible Church of Indian Head, Sask., is seeking a senior pastor. Please direct all inquiries and resumes to Ed Martens (306) 695-2451; emmartens@yourlink.ca or Community Bible Church, Attn: Ed Martens, PO Box 1096, Indian Head. SK SOG 2KO.
- Martensville Mennonite Church of Martensville, Sask., is seeking a senior pastor. Please send enquiries and résumés to Brendon Johnston pastor.brendon@martensvillemissionchurch.com.
- Grace Evangelical Bible Church of Abbotsford, B.C., is seeking a senior pastor. Please submit résumés or enquiries to Henry Esau at henryesau@telus.net.
- Randville Bible Church of Randville, Mich., is seeking a senior pastor who has a passion for the Word and has church-planting abilities. The attendees are mostly older, but would love to see the church reach the lost and grow. Contact Verna Pollock at vkpollock@yahoo.com.
- Fairview Bible Church of Swift Current, Sask., is seeking a part-time senior pastor. Most attendees are mature believers who appreciate traditional music and Bible preaching. Direct inquiries to fairviewbiblechurch@hotmail.ca .

Capital for Church Planting By Paul A. Boeker, FEBC Administrator

Farming takes capital. There is a huge investment in land, equipment, manhours and fertilizer before the first seed hits the soil. Church planting is no different. Expenses for recruiting a church planter, training, relocation and salary can pile up before one service is held. Then expenses like rent, advertising, training materials, sound and music equipment continue to require more capital. Where does this money come from?

In our Fellowship, money for church planting has come from a variety of sources. At one time our Fellowship encouraged "Life Loans." Members invested money with the Fellowship. The Fellowship then reloaned this to church plants. The buildings for Heartland Bible Church (Lincoln, Neb.) [formerly Holmes Park] and Community Bible Church (Omaha, Neb.) were partially financed this way. With a "Life Loan," the lender received interest on his investment, but when he died the principle automatically went to the Fellowship. Changes in interest and investment yields have made this approach passé.

Annuities have also provided funds for church planting. A portion of a charitable annuity becomes an immediate contribution that can be used for this purpose.

At several points in our history, Barnabas-minded donors have given a house or a piece of property to the Fellowship. These have been sold, and the proceeds used for church planting. Today one can give a home, and yet live in it the remainder of his life.

Fortunately, several people considered the importance of church planting when they wrote their wills. Several bequests have been received through the years that provided funds for church planting. Last year, Tisdale Bible Church received a \$15,000 grant from the Fellowship for its new addition (see *Fellowship Focus*, Sept./Oct., page 20). This money, as did the \$10,000 or \$15,000 given to each other church plant for their first building, came from bequests given to the Fellowship!

Several years ago, when many people owned stocks that had appreciated

substantially, giving stock was a huge benefit, both for the donor who avoided capital gains taxes and for the charity which received a valuable gift. Our Fellowship received stock gifts from several donors. The Fellowship then sold the stock and directed the proceeds to church planting. This is still an option, but because few stocks have appreciated greatly in the past 10 years, and tax laws have changed, donors have not been as ready to donate stock. However, giving stock may still be a good option to help church planting. The Fellowship can simply be listed as the beneficiary on mutual funds or IRAs.

Our Fellowship needs capital to invest in church planting. If you are interested in making a major gift to the Fellowship, go to http://www.fellowshipforward.org/legacy-giving.html and look at "Secrets of Giving Wisely."



COMMUNITY BIBLE CHURCH

Prince Albert, Sask. James Fast, Pastor



This fall began in a big way, with a seminar open to all called "Israel 101." **Pastor Jim** and his son, the **Rev. Peter Fast**, who has been serving with Bridges for Peace in Jerusalem for more than two years, were our very able presenters. About 50 people spent a wonderful day learning about the church and Israel. It was very informative, and in light of recent events in the Middle East, very timely.



We held the baptism of a young woman who had come to know Christ and was eager to be obedient to him. She, along with three others, was also welcomed into membership. Pastor Jim used the visual aids of baptism, the Lord's supper and membership to clearly present the Gospel to those gathered.

B. Fast, Correspondent

COMMUNITY BIBLE CHURCH

Omaha, Neb. Charles Tschetter, Senior Pastor

Our youth pastor, **Jeremy Wissink**, began leading a weekly Campus Life group at a nearby public middle school in partnership with Youth For Christ. About 100 students gather each week to play games, eat donuts, hang out together, and hear the Gospel right at their school.

We continue to wait for God's timing in the possible purchase of a property for our planned church plant. It now appears that a vote to purchase the property will not come until sometime in January. An August 2013 beginning date for the church plant is likely.

CBC again participated in the Advent Conspiracy, which provided the congregation the opportunity to give to four projects in Zambia, Papua New Guinea, Kalmykia and China.

Visiting missionaries included **Gretchen Larsen** with AVANT Ministries in Bolivia, who has completed 25 years of teaching at the Hebron Theological Seminary and in the local church there.

Sharon Berg, Correspondent

CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP CHURCH OF RHINELAND

Pastor Alvin Buhler, Senior Pastor Rhineland, Sask.

We enjoyed the activities that were a part of the autumn season, including Awana, junior and senior Youth events, and Bible study and prayer times. We enjoyed a Men's Chili Cook-Off with some delicious chilies (some spicy and one with chocolate in it!), and an 'Amazing Race' involving many of our congregation. The ladies are meeting on Mondays to work on their UFO (UnFinished Object: knitting, quilting, etc.) We practiced for our Christmas musical, "Joseph the Carpenter," and looked forward to two mission events early in the new year.

Verna Buhler, Correspondent

CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP CHAPEL

Winnipeg, Man. John Harwood, Pastor

For the last issue, I wrote about our preparations for "Christianity Explored," a seven-week outreach program. Those weeks have come and gone, and we are thanking God for His faithfulness throughout the weeks and months of preparations, as well as the Thursday evenings themselves. Each session began with a meal shared around small table groups where connections were made, after which was a time of discussion, followed by a DVD presentation and further discussion. The Gospel was presented in a clear and thoughtful manner, and at least one person (that we know of) made a commitment to the Lord over those seven weeks. Praise God! Now we are praying for discipleship opportunities.

Baptism Sunday coincided with a visit from **FEBC President Blaine Donaldson**, who shared the Word that morning. *Nancy Kunkel, Correspondent*



Our congregation was encouraged and blessed by the testimony and baptism of Jordan Kunkel on Nov. 18.

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continued from page 9

CORNERSTONE BIBLE CHURCH

Steinbach, Man. Jared Hiebert, Pastor

Cornerstone participated in a corporate prayer time for our church and community on Nov. 17. We gathered during the Sunday school hour with all classes joining us for a great time of united prayer as a body of believers.

We were excited to celebrate the Christmas season with all the joy and hope that it brought. Our Christmas events included our annual Sunday school Christmas concert, a ladies' Christmas celebration and a candlelight Christmas Eve Service.

Marsella Wiebe, Correspondent

COUNTRYSIDE BIBLE CHURCH

Meade, Kan.

Our annual church business meeting was held Nov. 18. **Pastor David Cummings** resigned to pursue further education, and possibly teach on a seminary level. We wish him God's best.

Ryan and Shannon Toews shared about Shannon's month spent in Congo doing medical missions, and their possible involvement after she finishes residency.

A number of youth attended URBANA 12 Missions Conference. Others plan to attend the Passion Conference (www.268generation.com).

We are invited to share in a "Perspectives on the World Christian Movement" at the Emmanuel Church for 15 weeks starting in January.

Harvest Missions Festival was observed Nov. 3-4, with **Pastor Chris Wiley** of Community Bible Fellowship in Tahlequah, Okla., speaking. Saturday evening featured **Keith Brich** of Village Missions, a rural mission to plant churches.

Four people became new members in October, and one person was baptized. *Mary Friesen, Correspondent*

DALMENY BIBLE CHURCH

Dalmeny, Sask. Dennis Friesen, Pastor

Boyd Hopkins of Spoken Word Ministries was with us for six Sundays speaking on a series of messages called "Freedom through Forgiveness."

The junior and senior high youth each had a lock-in at the church. They stayed overnight and ate, watched movies, played games, and maybe even slept a little. It was a great time for sponsors and youth to bond.

Women's Ministries held their Annual Christmas Craft and Bake Sale (silent auction) at the end of November. Speaker **Joyce Sawatzky**, the pastor's wife from Dalmeny Community Church, asked "What Will Your Christmas Be Like?"

Marilyn Harder, Correspondent

EVANGELICAL BIBLE CHURCH

Omaha, Neb. Dr. Don Pahl, Senior Pastor

Forever Families is a new ministry to our church that purposes to mimic God's heart for the orphan by serving and supporting adoptive and foster families in the ups and downs of their journey. The group provides information for those considering adoption or foster care, as well as support for those who are serving children-at-need in some way.

The CARE Team coordinates a Food Box Ministry. Throughout the year, members of our church donate non-perishable food items, which the CARE Team boxes up. At any time, as church members become aware of friends, co-workers or acquaintances in need, they can take a box of food to give to that person or family. The boxes also contain the plan of salvation, as well as information about additional food and resources for those in need. It is our prayer that these boxes will serve as an encouragement and help to those who receive them.

This fall, the men had the opportunity to tour one of our local correction facilities. The tour was given by one of the representatives of the Good News Jail and Prison Ministry, which actively ministers to men and women inmates in our area correction facilities. It was an inside look at what life for inmates and ministry to inmates is like.

Sherrie Lindsey, Correspondent

EVANGELICAL BIBLE CHURCH

Dallas, Ore. Jerry Franz, Senior Pastor

We started October with our Women's Ministry "Fall Kick-Off," introducing our new team and the schedule of events for the coming year. Also in October was our Missions Conference. We heard from **Dr. Rex Rogers**, President of SAT-7, and took a special offering for the TEACH Project. That evening we "skyped" several of our missionaries, seeing and talking with them from Africa, Montenegro, Thailand, Ecuador and in the United States.

In November we set up a table with a card for each of our military personnel. For two weeks the congregation had the opportunity to sign cards or write notes of encouragement to each person serving in the military. Those were mailed to the personnel for Veteran's Day.

The youth group held a "Rake and Run" to help people who have trouble keeping up with the falling leaves in their yards.

Donations came pouring in for the Samaritans Purse "Operation Christmas Child." One Saturday was set aside to come and fill "shoeboxes" for children in other countries with everything from hygiene supplies to toys, and lots of candy! This project has been such a success every year, this year we exceeded the number of boxes filled in the past. Kids of all ages have fun with this, and what an opportunity to teach the little ones about the needs of other children and how to make small sacrifices for them.

Vicki Kibbey, Correspondent

EVANGELICAL BIBLE CHURCH

Langham, Sask. Greg Guarnett, Senior Pastor

The Youth Missions Team is busy fundraising for their trip to North Carolina next July to work with *YouthWorks* organization. **Pastor Justin and Nashly** minister to approximately 40 junior youth and about 12 senior youth each week.

We are thankful for faithful leadership and help with our club program this fall. Approximately 55 children, ages 3 - Grade 6 attend. Vacation Bible School ministered to 15-20 children in August, in cooperation with Canadian Sunday School Mission, which provided a program director; our church provided workers and snacks.

Our Christmas banquet featured home-grown talent and a FUNdraising auction of our Youth Missions Team members!

Willing Hands Ladies held a brainstorming salad supper. They recently held a cookie exchange, and are planning quarterly events to draw our church ladies together. HITmen (Honesty, Integrity, Transparency) meet on Tuesday evenings for bonding, prayer and spiritual growth.

We welcomed three new members.

Marilyn Friesen, Correspondent

FILADELFIA EMB CHURCH

Asuncion, Paraguay Arnold Boschmann, Senior Pastor

Decisions to take new steps of faith and obedience bring believers in Christ and churches to open doors of growth and opportunity.



Thirty-five young Christians took the challenge to take a discipleship course and train for several months to better prepare to live the Christian life, serving the Lord and becoming part of the church. For the Filadelfia EMB church in the Paraguayan Chaco, the decisions of these young people and one father led to a very special church service. They wanted to be baptized, but their desire was that this baptism take place in the new church building that is not yet completed. This baptismal service took place on Oct. 21. The week before, these candidates for baptism gave their personal testimonies of how they came to accept Christ, and of the struggles and victories they experienced.

The new church building was filled, with people bringing their own chairs. It was the first time we had a baptistry inside our church.

The Sunday school complex is being constructed and the finishing work completed on the church building. The present church building is to house a new outreach church, and the first two services have already taken place. This new step of faith is exciting for those who have had the vision for this outreach ministry in Filadelfia.

An opportunity to serve in Uruguay in the month of December is a challenge for a group of young people with musical ability. They have been invited to bring programs in churches and hold open air meetings.

Several of our mission churches in Asuncion have also recently held baptisms. May decisions of obedience, preparation and faith continue to lead us forward and through the open doors our Lord graciously gives us.

Linda Boschmann, Correspondent

EVANGELICAL MENNONITE BRETHREN

Grunthal, Man. Russ Reimer, Pastor

Our church had the privilege of sending Pastor Russ and Sheila on a mission trip to Cuba in November, along with Don Pickel, with the ministry called Assist. They had an exciting time ministering to pastors, their wives and families, and churches. It was also difficult for them to view the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy, seeing firsthand the devastation left in its wake. They were able to offer encouragement, gifts and money to some of the people who have lost their homes through this disaster.



Our church prayed for the shoeboxes distributed by Samaritan's Purse, which church members filled to send to needy children around the world. We were surprised and blessed to find out that there was someone in our audience who had been the recipient of a shoebox at one time. He shared how much it meant to him to receive this shoebox as a boy, and he still remembers many of the items he received in it. His name is **Nathanael Ralaimiarison** from Madagascar, and he is fellowshipping with us as he takes flight training in the hope of becoming a pilot someday with Mission Aviation Fellowship.

Tamara Bergen, Correspondent

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EVANGELICAL MENNONITE BRETHREN CHURCH

Lustre, Mont. John Skillman, Pastor

Several missionary couples presented their ministries this fall and early winter. **Darwin Stoesz** (SENDIJapan) spoke at our Harvest Missions Festival Oct. 7-9. "Workers Together With God" was our theme. **Pablo and Judi Perez** (Leadership Resources International), visited Oct.17. **Jim and Olga Wiens** (Avant Ministries) and their children presented their work in Volgograd, Russia, on Nov. 25. The family also shared their musical talents at our Faith Lutheran Home service in Wolf Point that afternoon. These missionaries also spoke in chapel at Lustre Christian High School.

Many community members had our church high school students working around their homes and yards this fall. The students raised money to attend the youth event, "Acquire the Fire," Nov. 16-17. We praise the Lord that several students made decisions for the Lord.



Women's Ministries held a Mission Sale (auction) Nov. 5 to raise money for the missionaries they support. It was a very fun and profitable evening with a variety of items given, all the way from braided horsehair hatbands to homemade soap.

We baked Christmas goodies to fill tins that were given during the holidays as an outreach in our community.

EVANGELICAL MENNONITE BRETHREN CHURCH

Marion, S.D. Randy Maass, Pastor

Our Harvest Mission Festival in October featured **Neil and Jenny Downey** from Sioux Falls, serving with Campus Crusade for Christ. Campus Crusade works on college and university campuses to lead Bible studies and as a witness.

We welcomed one new member.

Ray Becker, Correspondent

FAITH EVANGELICAL BIBLE CHURCH

Winkler, Man. Mike Comtois, Pastor

Awana has started, with 26 children from grade 3-6 who meet every other week for praise, worship, games and

awards.

Our church organized a Bible Quiz meet in November, hosting 200 quizzers and coaches.

Our Adult Bible Sunday School is going through "Christian History Made Easy," by Timothy Paul Jones. The series covers church history from the time of the apostles up until the modern day church, in 12 lessons.

Liane Thiessen, Correspondent

FAITH EVANGELICAL BIBLE CHURCH

Henderson, Neb. Michael Fink, Pastor

Our missions committee sponsored an ice cream social in honor of **Mike and LaRae Schmidt** as they have closed the chapter of their ministry in Niger. Mike is now head of the Missions Department at Grace University. Also sharing their ministries in October and November were **Tony Savarese** with Chosen People Ministries, and **Darwin Stoesz**, missionary to Japan.

The church family was invited to a soup dinner provided by the team making a ministry trip to Haiti with Grace Mission in January. A freewill offering was taken to help with the expenses of their trip.

Alice Decker, Correspondent

HEARTLAND BIBLE CHURCH

Lincoln, Neb. Scott Hecht, Pastor

Because of a very fruitful 5-Day Club this summer, our youth and Kids Clubs have been seeing quite a few new faces on Wednesday evening. Some of the parents have also attended church services. Pray that we might have an even greater impact in these families.

Karen and Darwin Stoesz (SEND/Japan) were with us for our annual Missionary Conference Oct. 19-21. They shared photos of their first term in Japan. Darwin spoke at the Men's Missionary Breakfast and at Sunday services, and Karen shared her work at the Ladies' Missionary Tea.

Jim and Olya Wiens shared their ministry with us on Nov. 11.

Trudy Reimer, Correspondent

HEBRON BIBLE CHURCH

Hebron, Neb. Jeff Friesen, Pastor

We are quite thankful of our growing congregation! We can't express how excited we are that our "family" continues to grow. In light of the holiday season and school activities, the Pioneer Club for children and the "Conflicts and Resolutions" Bible study were placed on hold and resumed in January.

Knowing that there were a few church families and widows who do not have other family members nearby to spend the holiday with, **Pastor Friesen** and his family hosted a din-

ner event the day after Thanksgiving at our local activities center. There was a wonderful turnout, and everyone enjoyed the time spent together.

We welcomed a missionary couple to our regular services on Dec. 2, and enjoyed hearing of their ministry. We will continue to keep them in our prayers as they go forth on their missions. During the evening we held a soup dinner and decorating event as well. It was wonderful to have so many people gathered, and to watch the children decorate for the Christmas season.

Misty Poisel, Correspondent

HODGSON BIBLE CHURCH

Hodgson, Man. James Thiessen, Pastor

One of the biggest highlights for our church in 2012 was the opportunity to celebrate the ministry of **Pastor James and Juliann Thiessen**, who have served Hodgson Bible for 31 years. The congregation, community members, family and friends offered thanks and appreciation for the many ways James and Juliann have given leadership and service to the church and the community. Included are directing and working at Fisher Bay Bible Camp, teaching religion classes in local communities, as well as working in the community in the roles of piano teacher (Juliann), maintenance/custodians of the local 55-plus housing unit, and teaching Hunter Safety courses (James). We deeply value the way they have led, supported, prayed for and encouraged each one of us and pray God's blessing on them as they continue to minister, mentor and guide our congregation.

Other highlights from the year include the involvement of various members of the congregation at Fisher Bay Bible Camp, and "Hunter's Sunday," a yearly tradition that includes a potluck of wild meat dishes and the opportunity to invite local hunters and their families.

Daphne Flett, Correspondent

JANSEN BIBLE CHURCH

Jansen, Neb. Paul Carpenter, Pastor

Tony Savarese, a Messianic Jew of the Chosen People Ministries, spoke to us about "The Future of Israel."

The Harvest Missions Festival in November featured reports from our own local missionaries, **Vic and Gwen Flaming**, who serve with International Training Partners in much of Asia; **Jeff and Nicky Porter**, serving in computer tech and child care ministries at New Tribes Bible Institute, as well as those serving in creative access countries; and guest speaker **John Niemala** with the Message of Life Ministries and distributor of John's Gospel, *Living Waters*.

Christmas highlights included the Sunday school play, ladies' party, and a piano concert.

Tena Dick, Correspondent

NORTHEAST BIBLE CHURCH

Calgary, Alta. John Fehr, Pastor

Our youth group celebrated Thanksgiving and our church anniversary in October by baking cookies and packaging a few of them for each person in the congregation who serves the rest of us in some form of ministry, from cutting grass and changing light bulbs, to leading worship and preaching

and teaching. In doing this, they found themselves among the group of those who serve, and it felt good!

The youth performed a skit on Nov. 25 that addressed the pros and cons of yielding to peer pressure in order to be accepted.



Six men from our church attended a Promise Keepers Conference in November, where they were inspired and encouraged by the passionate speakers they heard.

Julie Ann Simpson, Correspondent

RICHER FELLOWSHIP CHURCH

Richer, Man. Simon Cheung, Pastor

ZZZOOM OUT! "Go forth and make disciples of all nations" This was the theme of the Awana Conference this year, and that's exactly the attitude Richer Fellowship takes to impact families with the Gospel. On Wednesday nights we recite and memorize Scriptures from the Gospel Wheel, using a Bible story or props to teach Bible truths, while next door the youth learn about life lessons.

On Sunday mornings we have Sunday school classes for all ages. Topics such as God and His creation, helping our youth maintain a Christian world view, and God's design for marriage, will help us grow in our walk with Christ while equipping us to reach the community with the Gospel.

Many folks from Richer attended our Fall Outreach Supper in October. After the meal, Pastor Simon handed out worksheets on history and science trivia, with cleverly worded Bible questions throughout. Although the noise level can only be compared to a "barnyard brawl," the Gospel definitely "zzzoomed out!"

Michelle Driedger, Correspondent

SALEM CHURCH

Waldheim, Sask. Darrell Derksen, Senior Pastor

Nic Wiens is not waiting for spring to arrive before continuing with his farming. He relocated to South Africa in late November and has been volunteering and learning the day-to-day activities on a micro farm. Nic plans to be involved in several different initiatives while in South Africa. He will help

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feed the poor, and also hopes to participate in a Operation Mobilization ministry team. While it is not possible for all farmers to invest their winter in this way, it is great to see a young man make the best use of his time possible.

Lorelei Nickel was in Haiti Nov. 7-12 to participate in board meetings with International Child Care. The organization wants to rebuild the hospital that was destroyed by the earthquake.

Kevin Klassen has just returned from spending a week in North Dakota with Mennonite Disaster Service, applying his electrical expertise to assisting those who are rebuilding after a flood.

While people from Salem were making a difference around the world, we had a couple of special events at home. Our annual Sportsman Night was held in November. Local outdoorsmen gathered around the various displays and shared their own stories. **Tim Blum**, an avid hunter and a free climber, shared why he, as an outdoorsman, is a follower of Jesus Christ.

Women of Waldheim (WOW) hosted a night with **Katie Hess**. Katie sang some of the songs she sang at her Calgary Stampede Show and then transitioned into sharing her faith in Jesus through song.

We hosted our annual "Welcome to Waldheim" meal. More than 40 invitations were delivered to families who have moved into town over the past year. Even in small towns it can be a challenge to find new friends. We believe having a meal together is one way we can serve those new to Waldheim.

VALLEY BIBLE FELLOWSHIP

Morris, Man. Ryan Rear, Pastor

Monthly prayer breakfasts were initiated by **Pastor Ryan** in October. We fellowship over a delicious breakfast prepared by a few men, and then share in praise and prayer items, specifically for the direction of our congregation. In December, our guest speaker, **Jack Wiebe**, a leader of the Youth For

Christ (YFC) in Morris, shared his story of what God is doing with the youth locally. Renovations are complete in the YFC building and boxing club. The youth have a great place to come to eat supper, study the Bible, box and just "hang out!"

We have been blessed to have two missionary couples with us in the last six months. Ron and Eunice Wiebe (Child Evangelism Fellowship/Brazil) shared their ministry and their plans for their future in Canada in 2013. Howard and Eileen Dueck (Teach Beyond) reported of the many travels and meetings that Howard is involved in, and shared the excitement of new people joining their team and the many opportunities for more to come on board. They now live in St. Pierre Jolys, a mere 25 minutes from Morris.

Pray for our small congregation as we look into the future. Where will God take us in the year to come? He alone knows!

Rita Voth, Correspondent

VITA BIBLE CHURCH

Vita, Man. Jurgen Penner, Pastor

Once again, we distributed New Testament Bibles in December, along with a Jonathan Sperry DVD, to our surrounding community. This is a one of the ways in which we can witness and invite others to our annual Christmas program.

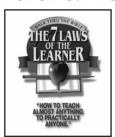
For our fall meetings this year, we held a youth night, when the "Freedom Band" from Winkler put on a show for us. We also enjoyed hearing **Richard Quiring**, a pastor from Winnipeg, speak at the morning service, where the he spoke on "The Message." Later he shared about "The Messenger," and "The Method."

Our Women's Ministry held a bake sale in December at the Clearspring Mall, with all proceeds going toward our continued fundraising for back surgery for a member of our congregation. In January, the women plan a "Treasure Exchange" of thrift store items that is open to the public, and a free pancake breakfast.

Tiffany Tuurenhout, Correspondent



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Other teaching videos can be found at www.fellowshipforward.org/resources.

THE RECORD

BIRTHS AND ADOPTIONS

Christian Fellowship Church

Rhineland, Sask.

- Braden Timothy to Pastor Tim and Heather Knelsen, Aug. 24
- Josephine Anna Camilla to Joel and Renee Funk, Nov. 2

Community Bible Church

Omaha, Neb.

- Andrew Josiah to Pastor Daniel and Rachel Bear, Aug. 25
- Azalea Jane to Phil and Tesa Goossen, Aug. 30
- Sophia Aleena to Andy and Kim Dyer, Sept. 14; grandparents are Marty and Laurie Dyer
- Harper Noelle to Curtis and Melissa Keierleber, Oct. 1; grandparents are Larry and Dawn Allbery and Richard and Vicki Keierleber
- Aubrey Gayle to Mark and Katie Smith, Oct. 30; grandparents are Randy and Bonnie Smith
- Davis Dennis to Derrick and Haley Dick, Nov. 2; grandparents are Dennis and Kathy Dick and Flint and Renee Calvin

Cornerstone Bible Church

Steinbach, Man.

- Eliana Faith to Cameron and Stephanie Hiebert, Oct. 25
- Amy to Jakob and Tanja Borsch, Nov. 11

Dalmeny Bible Church

Dalmeny, Sask.

- Braden Spencer to Brendan and Stacey Epp; grandparents are Dale and Sheryl Epp; great-grandparents are Gilbert and Doreen Schultz; Oct. 10
- Liam Hale to Jared and Cherise Roberts; grandparents are Trevor and Carrie Braun; great-grandparents are Dick and Ruth Krahn: Nov. 9
- Raelia Lilly-Jean to Cary and Carlena Scriven; Nov. 27

Evangelical Bible Church

Omaha, Neb.

• Henry Aidan to Kent and Stacy Johnson, Oct. 26

Evangelical Bible Church

- Arianna Diane to Daniel and Sarah McFarland, Nov. 28; grandparents are Ian and Linda McFarland, HCJB missionaries in Ecuador
- Zora Alice to Mark and MaryLynne McCulloch, Nov. 29

Northeast Bible Church

Calgary, Alta.

- Shiloh Joanna Rayne to Jojo and Sheila Valdez, Nov. 1
- Divine to Anthony and Faith Naasi, Nov. 6

Salem Church

Waldheim, Sask.

- Abigail Marie to Scott and Heather Langelaar, Oct 17
- Marlow Cameron to Cam and Nikki Willems, Oct 29; grandparents are Bob and Sherry Willems

WEDDINGS

Christian Fellowship Church

Rhineland, Sask.

Jansen, Neb.

- Danielle Neustaeter to Stanley Andres, son of James and Lorna Andres, June 23
- Josilin Allin to Craig Tschetter, son of Clarence and Brenda Tschetter, July 7
- Amanda Unger to Tyler Dickie, July 28
- Alicia Dyck, daughter of Bob and Marilyn Dyck, to Scott Adamson, Oct. 5

Jansen Bible Church

• Darci McGee, daughter of Scott and Judy McGee, to Mick Pesek, Dec. 1

Salem Church

Waldheim, Sask.

• Deborah Reimer to Doug Thiessen, son of Harvey and Agnes Thiessen, Dec. 8

DEATHS

Christian Fellowship Church • Isaac Fehr (84), April 10

Rhineland, Sask.

• Jacob Neustaeter (82), Sept. 11 **Cornerstone Bible Church**

• Winnie Barkman (90), Oct. 30

Steinbach, Man.

Henderson, Neb.

• George D. Rempel (85), Nov. 10

Faith Evangelical Bible Church

Northeast Bible Church

Jansen Bible Church

• Marie Regier (95), Nov. 9

Calgary, Alta.

Jansen, Neb.

• Marvin Motz (57), Dec. 2

http://www.fellowshipforward.org

The Fellowship Focus is available to read online. Check it out!

click on the Resources menu

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NO ENDORSEMENT

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The increasing implementation of the FEBC 20/20 Vision will inevitably lead to an increasing need to grow new churches.

Focus on FEBC Church Plan ing

By Harvey Schultz

The *purpose* of the FEBC Church Planting Commission is to *advise* and *assist* FEBC churches and regional extension committees in the creation of new churches. Several of our existing church planting projects are on target to reach autonomy within the next year or two. In fact, one may achieve that goal before our next convention. However, the need for advice and assistance will grow, not diminish. Why?

The members of the Commission on Church Planting are convinced that the increasing implementation of the FEBC 20/20 Vision will inevitably lead to an increasing need to grow new churches. The need for more church planting will grow.

Anticipating that need, the Commission on Church Planting has set Target 2020:

We will seek to stimulate and encourage FEBC church planting initiatives so that, starting in 2013, six (6) new FEBC church plants will be created by 2020.

The Commission can always be available to *advise*. That does not cost much. But the Commission also wants to be able to provide *financial assistance* to each one of these new church plants.

Just over a decade ago, annual FEBC budgets enabled us to allocate up to \$25,000 per year for new church planting projects.

Currently that figure has been reduced to \$10,000 or less, and only if our full budget target is attained. Clearly, such amounts will not enable us to offer much meaningful financial assistance to new church planting ventures.

There is one way you could make a difference: by means of estate donations or substantial private donations. In the past, such gifts have made a significant impact on our church planting efforts.

Consider this example: Recently the roof of Community Bible Church at Indian Head, Sask., was damaged. The church asked the FEBC Trustees to add \$25,000 to their mortgage. But the FEBC Revolving Loan Fund did not have \$25,000. Then, just on time, money from an estate, designated for the Revolving Loan Fund, brought the balance up to \$25,000! The FEBC Trustees were able to grant the request.

The Commission should be able to provide at least \$50,000 (if not \$100,000!) for each new church planting venture. We fully anticipate that by 2020, six new church plants will be on the FEBC map. In fact, four are already on the drawing boards, with two of these in the advanced preparation stages. You will soon read about them on these pages. As of today, we have only \$35,000 in church planting reserves to meet this wonderful challenge. Does God want someone reading these lines to make an impact on future FEBC church planting?

Convention 2013

Evangelical Bible Church in Dallas, Ore., will host the 119th Annual Convention July 17–21, 2013. Make plans to attend this convention — and include an Oregon Coast vacation. A new model of governance for the Fellowship will be proposed.