

Baptist Testimony

VOLUME 54 NUMBER 2 FEBRUARY 2008



The Word Has It

Ken Floyd
MARBC State Representative

“Strengthen me according to Your word,”

— Psalm 119:28

FEBRUARY’S WORD:

“Partnering”

This past week our local news media shared stories commemorating the 30th anniversary of the “blizzard of ’78.” Sharon and I were newlyweds then and I was in my first year of seminary. We were snowed in at our rural trailer park for three and a half days. We spent time trying to stay warm and hoping that the power would stay on. I used some of the free time to catch up on collateral reading and reviewing Hebrew vocabulary. Alas, I must confess that more time was spent trudging back and forth through snow drifts to continue an impromptu Rook tournament with our special friends, Dave and Carolyn Culver. Those were the early days of what has become a lifelong ministry partnership that grows dearer with each passing year.

Three years after that big storm, Sharon and I moved with excitement and some trepidation from that mobile home park located in the flat northern Indiana farmland to a small town church parsonage nestled in the foothills of the Appalachian Mountains of southeast Ohio. My memories are vivid from those early years of important practical ministry training. I can still envision many of the faces who looked back at me on that hot June Sunday morning, my first as their

new pastor. And I remember the intimidating thoughts I had facing big challenges in a small place. Thoughts, such as, “How can I have a legitimate ministry here when most of the people have been Christians longer than I have been alive and many of the teens have been believers longer than I have?”

Indeed, those early days challenged, chiseled, and changed me. As a young pastor, I saw potential in the church that had extended to me its call and had big goals and dreams for its future. I prayed



“They glorify God for the obedience of your confession to the gospel of Christ, and for your liberal sharing with them and all men.” 2 Corinthians 9:13

fervently, worked hard, and invested much. But much of the time, I was learning the hard way.

Because of our remote location, I often felt isolated. I usually had to drive several miles to attend meetings from which I could gain ministry encouragement and practical help. Making this commitment to attend meant that I would have to sacrifice most of a day of ministry. Some church members didn’t understand this since they felt that everything you needed could be found in their little hamlet. Their misunderstandings were heaped on top of an already growing mound of the self-inflicted guilt I felt as a result of my own over-exaggerated expectations

and what was perceived by many in the church as an underachieving ministry.

During those challenging times, God graciously brought His special ambassadors into our lives to share as ministry partners. These men and women would serve as encouragers and godly role models for us. They helped us make it to new levels of maturity and competency. They told us that it was alright to dream, to try, and even to fail. They shared their own personal stories of frustration and discouragement, as well as the victories and high moments. Their willingness to extend themselves to us helped to keep us afloat and gave us insight in navigating the sometimes rough ministry waters. Many of the greatest lessons we have learned in ministry came during those early days, and we wouldn’t trade it for anything.

Sharon and I have learned that most of the couples we meet have the same desire that we first felt as we walked down the marital aisle and its corresponding path towards pastoral ministry many years ago. Indeed all Christian couples have similar desires. We all want our churches to grow and we want to grow in our own lives as well. It seems that more than anything, all of us want to know that we are not alone in sensing these challenges, these needs, and these opportunities. What we need are ministry partners.

THE CHALLENGE OF PARTNERSHIP

Partnership in ministry is a wonderful thing. It was the vital connection in Christ that prompted the apostle Paul to exclaim to the Philippians: *“I thank my God upon every remembrance of you...for your fellowship [partnership] in the gospel from the first day until now.” (Philippians 1:3,5).* Paul and the believers at Philippi were effective partners in ministry because they were truly committed to one another’s growth, maturity, fruitfulness and success. Their relationship was significant because it was spiritual—Christ-centered, faith-driven and love-empowered.

(continued on page 3)

BAPTIST TESTIMONY
Official Organ of the Michigan Association
Of Regular Baptist Churches
830 Russwood St., NE
Grand Rapids, MI 49505

MARBC NEWS & NOTES

FRUITPORT, CLOVERDALE BAPTIST CHURCH (PASTOR JOSHUA RAGER) –

Cloverdale Baptist Church held a 50th anniversary celebration in October with 144 in attendance. Speakers for the day were former pastors Mark Jochen, Richard Wahl, and Johnathan Rager. There were three Charter Members in attendance who were recognized during the service. Two of the members appear in the picture with Pastor Joshua Rager: Virginia Mackenzie and Delores Osterhart. The third member, Herb Mackenzie, had to leave before the picture was taken. The church rejoices that in November eight individuals were added as members, including four through baptism. The church concluded their “Year of Jubilee” in December with a Christmas Concert and Drama.



Cloverdale Baptist Church 50th Anniversary

TAYLOR, EVANGEL BAPTIST CHURCH (PASTOR KEN PIERPONT, JR.) –

January 18-20 was a special week-end at Evangel Baptist Church in Taylor. National GARBC Representative John Greening spoke at the Deacons and Wives Banquet Friday evening, and then he and his wife, Daria, participated in the Deacon and Wives training seminar on Saturday.

Sunday was a day to celebrate and reflect on the importance of leadership in the

church. MARBC Representative Ken Floyd spoke in a combined ABF session, and John Greening spoke in the morning worship service.

The day culminated with the evening service as Pastor Ken Pierpont was installed as the Sr. Pastor. “Celebrating God’s Faithfulness” was the theme for the service, which included guest speakers Ken Pierpont, Sr. (father of the new pastor), Ron Graef (former Evangel Pastor), and Ken Floyd. A reception for the Pierponts followed the service.



Former Pastor Ron Graef

Pastor Pierpont is a third generation pastor, following in the footsteps of his father and grandfather. His oldest sons, Kyle and Chuck, are youth pastors. He and his wife, Lois, have six additional children -



Pastor Ken Pierpont Sr. shares a testimony about his son



Pastor Ken and Lois Pierpont (second couple from left) and the Evangel Baptist Pastoral Staff Couples

Holly, Heidi, Hannah, Daniel, Wesley, and Hope.

Pastor Pierpont states: “My goal in life is to communicate truth about Jesus Christ and to nudge everyone I meet a little closer to Him every day by living out that faith in my life and family.”

A SPECIAL THANK YOU –

Dear MARBC Family – Thank you for the floral arrangement sent to express your prayers and concerns at the death of our son, Chris, on December 18, 2007. We appreciate so much all the cards, emails, phone calls, and visits of individuals and churches. You have blessed us with your love. We continue to struggle with some moments and days, but mostly we are just amazed as we watch our Awesome God work. Chris’ wife, Amy, came down with Guillian Barre when their son, Ben, was born two years ago. She has multiple physical difficulties, unable to do total care of herself and Ben. Pray with us as we try to find suitable housing for them closer to Lowell. Chris carried a very heavy load and now it is ours to carry. God bless you all – brothers and sisters, Pastor Lee and Bev Taylor (First Baptist Church, Lowell).

BAPTIST TESTIMONY

Official Organ of the Michigan Association of Regular Baptist Churches

KEN FLOYD
Editor

830 Russwood St., NE, Grand Rapids, MI 49505
Phone: (616) 364-5688

Editorial Staff:
Council of Fifteen - MARBC

Baptist Testimony is published monthly (bi-monthly June/July), seeking to serve the cause of Regular Baptists in our association & State Fellowship. It will be sent to churches at a cost of 19 cents per copy. Individual subscriptions are \$5.50 per year. Deadline for copy is the last day of the month.

Masterfully
MOTIVATED

IF YOU SERVE IN THE LOCAL CHURCH
THIS IS THE CONFERENCE FOR YOU!!!

OVER 75 WORKSHOPS AND 3 GENERAL SESSIONS WITH DYNAMIC KEYNOTE SPEAKER KEN FLOYD, MARBC REPRESENTATIVE.

PRE-REGISTRATION COSTS ONLY \$20 WHICH INCLUDES SNACKS AND LUNCH ON SATURDAY. YOU MAY ALSO REGISTER FOR FRIDAY ONLY FOR \$10.

CHURCH MINISTRIES CONFERENCE
MARCH 7-8, 2008
CALVARY BAPTIST CHURCH
1200 28TH ST. SE, GRAND RAPIDS, MI 49508

When it comes to meeting the major challenges of church ministry, partnership is absolutely advantageous for several compelling reasons.

- **Partnership Offers Shared Wisdom and Experience.** Wisdom that comes from experience is invaluable in ministry.
- **Partnership Offers Shared Perspectives.** A ministry partner can provide objective judgment to produce a more objective picture and clearer strategy.
- **Partnership Offers Assistance and Accountability.** Partnership with others keeps us from the isolation of the ivory tower and the insulation of having only one perspective.
- **Partnership Offers Ministry Team Development.** Partnership provides a teamwork model that involves coaching, training, support, and implementation of the game plan.

The master planner of the Church, Jesus Christ, has designed His Church to implement His strategy through a specific partnership. This is declared clearly by our Lord in *Acts 1:8* – “*you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.*” Initially, churches by necessity focus upon their “*Jerusalem.*” Several are effective in sending others to the “*end of the earth.*” Recent initiatives have brought greater effectiveness in sharing compassionate ministry in “*Samaria.*” To completely obey Christ’s *Acts 1:8* mandate it is imperative for the churches to effectively reach their regional geographic realm (“*Judea*”).

I would like to suggest that “*Judea*” for the churches in fellowship with the MARBC is the State of Michigan. We believe that it is critical for our churches to effectively reach and cultivate their “*Judea.*” This is accomplished in two important ways. First, the churches that are currently a part of the MARBC must be effectively strengthened and encouraged. Second, a strategic plan for church planting throughout Michigan must be designed and implemented.

It seems that before new church plants can be widely propagated by our movement, current church plants, mission works, and established churches must be strengthened and united. This will be the focus of the MARBC fellowship for the next few years. The project title which encompasses this strategic plan is “**Church Partnering Relationships**” or CPR. The

CPR strategy is marked by three basic qualities:

- **Caring:** a proactive vision towards mutual edification
- **Praying:** regular sharing of requests and initiatives that promote mutual prayer
- **Resourcing:** embracing the mission of practical encouragement by outsourcing materials and personnel

Looking back on our experience as a couple, Sharon and I can trace our growth and maturity as Christ’s followers to the individuals and churches He has strategically interwoven into the path of our spiritual journey. Our lives and ministry have richly benefited from the partnering that has been offered to us by God’s special servants. We can testify to the fact that this partnership has come from many unexpected places. It has included churches of varying sizes and levels of ministry sophistication. It has also involved people of varying backgrounds and abilities, from trained theologians and capable pastors to humble Christian servants in local churches.

I’m sure that your own personal experience and that of your church is similar to ours. These experiences are what make the “CPR Initiative” so exciting, meaningful, and workable! The God designed partnership of His disciples and churches demands our attention and involvement. Certainly there will be challenges. Even a well-drafted strategy will not be accomplished unless you and I are willing to accept the challenge that corresponds to the plan. Every objective will have an obstacle; every endeavor a corresponding enemy; and every goal will have its imposing goliath.

The Corinthian church was encouraged by Paul to recognize the importance of everyone’s involvement in the ministry of Christ’s church. “*For we are God’s fellow workers; you are God’s field, you are God’s building. According to the grace of God which was given to me, as a wise master builder I have laid the foundation, and another builds on it. But let each one take heed how he builds on it.*” (1 Corinthians 3:9-10) When God’s people work together according to His blueprint, they experience more and achieve more than they ever could apart.

You have His Word on it! (KEF)

(This is the second of three articles regarding the MARBC’s new initiative called “CPR” – Church Partnering Relationships. The March article will deal with practical ways for churches and individuals to be involved in CPR. A brochure detailing this ministry and Ken Floyd’s message regarding “CPR” is available to download at www.marbc.net.)

MARBC EVENTS TO PLACE ON YOUR 2008 CALENDAR

March 1, 2008

EMARBC Men Modeling the Master Conference

Emmanuel Baptist Church, Flint
Answers in Genesis, creation ministry team

March 7-8, 2008

GRARBC Annual Church Ministries Conference

Calvary Baptist Church,
Grand Rapids

“Masterfully Motivated”

Keynote Speaker: Rev. Ken Floyd

MARBC State Representative



Saturday, April 19, 2008

MARBC Talents for Christ Competition

South Baptist Church, Flint

Ken Pyne, Director

Early registration deadline: February 15



May 1-3, 2008

Annual MARBC Men’s Retreat

Lake Ann Baptist Camp

“Being Men of Valor: How to Develop the Character of a Conqueror”

Keynote Speaker:

Rev. Bill Jenkin

President, Continental

Baptist Mission

No price increase

for 2008!!!

2 nights, 6 meals \$105 / 1 night, 5 meals

\$77 / Friday only, 3 meals \$41.

\$40 non-refundable registration fee

Pastors receive a 50% discount

with an overnight stay

Brochures and registration will be

available soon by mail, fax, and online

at www.lakeanncamp.com



June 24-27, 2008

National GARBC Conference

“The Glory of the Cross”

Cedar Rapids, Iowa

September 28, 2008

MARBC Annual Day of Prayer

October 27-28, 2008

66th Annual

MARBC Conference

First Baptist Church,

Rochester, Michigan

Dr. Jim Jeffery

President, Baptist Bible College,

Graduate School, and Seminary



Need an Interim Pastor or Pulpit Supply?

INTERPAS

has godly, experienced men to help you.

Please contact:

Rev. Tom Dolph, Interpas Director
(616) 874-7056 ♦ (616) 874-6740

Ministry Opportunity:

- Serve as Houseparents
- Full Salary & Benefits
- 401(k) Plan & Vacation
- Minister to needy children
- Openings in Indiana & Michigan
- Call Jim Geurink for more information 219.462.4111



Baptist Children's Home
354 West St.,
Valparaiso, IN 48383
www.baptistchildrenshome.org



Pederson
Funeral Homes, Inc.

DAVID A. PEDERSON
Funeral Director

127 N. Monroe Street, Rockford, MI 49341
(616) 866-1515 ♦ Fax (616) 866-6440

BEACONHILL

AT

Eastgate

- Independent living - apartments
- Semi-independent living -
- Residential studio/suite
- Assisted living & Nursing care.



"The Times
of Your Life"

1845 Boston SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49506
(616) 245-9179

Meet us at whwl.net

Are you looking for
Christian radio that
has retained hymns
of the faith, uncompromising
Bible teaching, children's
programming and a Christian
perspective on the news?



David Jeremiah • Chuck Swindoll
John MacArthur • Alistair Begg
Cal Thomas • Phyllis Schlafly

Give us a try on the web!
www.whwl.net

Order program guides by calling
1-800-359-9673
whwl@whwl.net

KEN'S ROAD REPORT

- Feb 4 Berean Baptist Church, Portage, ordination council
- Feb 9 North Park Baptist Church, speak at men's prayer breakfast
- Feb 10 Hesperia Baptist Church, Hesperia
- Feb 15-16 Couples Retreat, First Baptist Church, Rochester
- Feb 17 First Baptist Church, Rochester
- Feb 19 Council of 15 Executive Committee meeting, Grand Rapids
- Feb 24-Mar 5 - Vacation
- Mar 6 Baptists for Life Banquet, Grand Rapids
- Mar 7-8 GRARBC Church Ministries Conference, Grand Rapids, general sessions speaker
- Mar 13 Lincoln Lake Baptist Camp banquet speaker, West Cannon B. C., Belmont
- Mar 14-15 Northern Outreach Conference, Faith Baptist, Cheboygan, general session and workshop speaker
- Mar 16 Evangel Baptist Church, Houghton
- Mar 23 Resurrection Sunday - John 11:25!
- Mar 30 First Baptist Church, North Adams

Special note: Several dates are still available on Ken's speaking calendar for 2008.

Please send all support checks, correspondence, church bulletins, newsletters and requests for speaking engagements to:

MARBC

830 Russwood St., NE
Grand Rapids, MI 49505
Phone: (616)364-5688

MARBCken@aol.com
MARBCSharon@aol.com
www.MARBC.net

FEBRUARY 2008 ANNIVERSARY ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

- 2 - Rev. & Mrs. Gary Akright
- 13 - Rev. & Mrs. Phil Parkin, Faith Bapt., Bay Port - 20 years!
- 14 - Pastor & Mrs. Richard Halfman, Plymouth Bapt., Plymouth
- 22 - Rev. & Mrs. Burt Wachter, Wolf Lake Bapt., Muskegon
- 23 - Rev. & Mrs. Charles Richardson, Chippewa Hills Bapt., Remus

May your marriage and ministry be
marked by God's guidance and blessing!

SPECIAL OPPORTUNITIES

SPECIAL PASTORS AND WIVES DISCOUNT: the Best Western Scenic Hill Resort in Beulah, Michigan, is once again this year offering a special getaway for pastors and wives of the MARBC at their hotel. The special rate is \$50 per night, plus tax, and includes a full hot breakfast. This rate is available through May 23 (based on availability). They also offer a discount of 20% off all Spa services. Contact Dave Easter, 1.800.439.7080, for more information and reservations.

Need Time to Plan & Pray?!

As a pastor we know it is difficult to carve out the time you need to plan and pray, let alone find a place without distractions. We know how beneficial it is to your ministry when it happens. The Springs would like to offer you an invitation to come stay for free any time you need.

Just call and let us know when you're ready.
Contact Dan at 989-426-7604 or
Derreck at 989-709-1800



THE SPRINGS, Gladwin, MI
www.thespringscamp.com

CABIN AVAILABLE: Pastor Greg Carlson, First Baptist Church, Allegan, shares this special opportunity: Our like new cabin in the Eastern Upper Peninsula is available for only the cost of utilities from January through the second week of May, 2008. We would like someone in vocational Christian service to be able to use the cabin for that time. The cabin is fully furnished and has 3 bedrooms, 2 baths. Photos and complete description are available at www.WolfeBayRetreat.com. Contact (269) 673-5289 or gcarlson6@juno.com.

MARBC MESSENGER - The Messenger is a regular email communication from the MARBC office to our pastors and churches. Several MARBC Messengers are sent out each month from the MARBC office. If you have not received MARBC emails recently, be sure to contact marbcken@aol.com or marbcsharon@aol.com to be placed on the email list. Thank you!

Mark Hoskins
REALTOR®



Prudential

Preferred, REALTORS®
502 Northland Dr. NE
Rockford, MI 49341
Bus. 616.866.1212
Cell 616.893.9422

World Wide Relocation
E-mail markhoskins50@grar.com



An independently owned and operated member of the Prudential Real Estate Affiliates, Inc.