

Baptist Testimony

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The Word Has It

Ken Floyd
MARBC Executive Director

*“Strengthen me according
to Your word,”*
— Psalm 119:28

“Amazing!”

In the last issue of the Baptist Testimony I chose the word “Grace” to head this column. I did so based upon the wonderful ways in which God has blessed the churches of the MARBC through shared ministry and in anticipation of His blessings in the fall season of ministry. The anticipated MARBC Conference also centered upon the theme of “grace.”

A word that often accompanies the word “grace” in the Christian world is the word “amazing.” John Newton connected those two words permanently back in the 18th century when he wrote the lyrics to the hymn, “Amazing Grace” –

*Amazing Grace, how sweet the sound,
That saved a wretch like me.
I once was lost but now am found,
Was blind, but now I see.*



We are reminded of this amazing grace of God in providing salvation to those who believe in *Ephesians 2: “But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved)... For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.” (Ephesians 2:4-5, 8-9)*

We are now entering an “amazing” time of the year. “Amazing” is appropriately used during the season of thanksgiving as Christian families and churches reflect upon the majesty of God and His goodness through His gracious provisions in their lives and ministries.

“Amazing” is a fitting expression to be shared in considering all of the miraculous aspects of Christ’s incarnation at Christmastime as we celebrate God’s indescribable grace gift of sending His Son to be the Savior of the world.

Perhaps the most amazing statement regarding God’s grace is shared in

2 Corinthians 8:9, *“For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich!” (2 Corinthians 8:9).* Through Christ it is possible for the poorest of sinners to become the richest of saints because of His grace gift of redemption that was provided through His sacrificial work at Calvary.

During this special season of the year, and any time for that matter, this is the amazing expression of God’s grace to you.

You have His Word on it! – (KEF)

WITH THE LORD

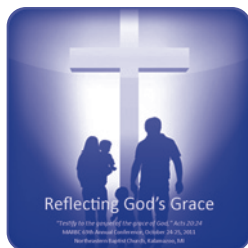
“... that you sorrow not, even as others who have no hope,”

1 Thessalonians 4:13

REV. BRUCE STEWART – Bruce N. Stewart, of Middleville, entered the presence of His Lord on October 24. Bruce was born June 12, 1936, in Springfield, Massachusetts and was a graduate of Baptist Bible Seminary in Johnson City, New York. He served as a pastor for almost 50 years in churches in New York, Massachusetts, West Virginia, Ohio, and Michigan. He was the pastor of the First Baptist Church in Middleville for 19 years until his retirement in 2004. He ministered in several different countries on short term missions work and was an Ambassador for Baptist for Life. Brother Stewart was the former chaplain for the Detroit Police Department and the Barry County Sheriff Department. He also served on the Boards for Cornerstone University, Continental Baptist Mission and the Council of 15 for the Michigan Association of Regular Baptist Churches. Bruce made the wise decision to wed a beautiful Buckeye named Marcene Edwards on June 8, 1958, in Galion, Ohio. He was a true University of Michigan fan and enjoyed the rivalry between the U of M and OSU in his home. In addition to Marcene, Bruce is survived by his children, DiAnn and Josh Randall of Alto, David and Connie Stewart of Middleville, Dale and Jill Stewart of Montana, Darrin and Lisa Stewart of Holland, and Darla and Gary Gabrielse of Kentwood; 21 grandchildren; and one great-grandchild. A praise service in celebration of God’s blessings in Bruce’s life and ministry was held at First Baptist Church of Middleville on October 28. Long time friend and ministry partner Maynard Belt officiated the service which included testimonies from several others representing ministries with whom Bruce served. Memorial contributions to Continental Baptist Missions or Baptist for Life will be appreciated.



69TH MARBC ANNUAL CONFERENCE



A Grace Filled conference

ministries. The first conference session on Monday afternoon featured Executive Director Ken Floyd's message from Acts 20:17-38, "God's Gracious Servants: the Ministry of the Gospel of the Grace of God." The passage shares the Apostle Paul's farewell address to the Ephesian pastors and his emphasis that God's servants must have ministries that are both grace defined and grace determined.



Ken Floyd shares about a grace defined ministry

The Monday afternoon MARBC business session included reports relating to the MARBC budget, the Executive Director's report, and MARBC Talents for Christ. The election of new MARBC

Council of 15 members was also held. George Coon (Northeastern Baptist, Kalamazoo), Scott Florida (Alpine Baptist, Comstock Park), and Ken Pierpont, Jr. (Evangel Baptist, Taylor) were elected to 3-year terms. The new Council of 15 Executive Committee for the coming year was also formed: Chairman, George Coon; Vice-Chairman, Tom Townsend; and Secretary, Aaron Hadley. A new Treasurer will be named by the end of November. Appreciation was shared for outgoing Council members Jim Howard and Jack Dowden for their faithful service. We are grateful for those who serve with the Council of 15 in helping to give direction to the ministries of the MARBC and counsel to the Executive Director. Additional thanks were given to Mrs. Karen Avey who continues her ministry as the MARBC bookkeeper and Pastor Kevin Pierpont of Higgins Lake Baptist Church who serves as the MARBC webmaster.

During the business session, Council of 15 Chairman Jim Howard also announced two important matters relating to the MARBC ministry in the coming year.

- Pastor Howard shared that the proposed MARBC Doctrinal Statement is now

posted for review on the MARBC website (www.marbc.net) and encouraged churches to review the document. The doctrinal statement will be presented for approval at the 2012 Annual Conference. Pastors and churches were encouraged by the Chairman to contact a Council of 15 member with any questions or input. A list of Council of 15 members and their churches is included later in this issue of the Baptist Testimony.

- The Council of 15 has established a Task Force to work with the Executive Director in studying the future structure and financial support of the MARBC. This study will include an evaluation of the position and funding of the ministry of the MARBC Executive Director. Again, input from MARBC churches and pastors is welcomed by the Council of 15. Input should be directed to George Coon, the new Council of 15 chairman, who will direct the task force.

Dr. Charles Ware, President of Crossroads Bible College in Indianapolis, Indiana, preached the main conference sessions as well as a super seminar devoted to the topic of "Grace Relations." Dr. Ware's three messages focused on the importance of the church's need to become multicultural by witnessing to and assimilating every person into its ministry regardless of ethnicity or background. He addressed the challenges that church leaders face in choosing to deal with issues of ethnicity from a Biblical or cultural perspective. Ware warned that churches must teach the next generation that it is important not to just be tolerant of other ethnicities because it is "culturally and politically correct." Rather, it is important that the church teaches ethnic tolerance because it is Biblically and morally right. He cited early church leaders Paul and Peter as two men who were directed by God to cross cultural boundaries to share the love of Christ with other ethnicities. The main emphasis of reaching others is, "No contact, no impact!"

Dr. Ware's book, "One Race: One Blood," which he co-authored with Dr. Ken Ham (Answers in Genesis), was the featured gift book at the conference.



Dr. Charles Ware

(continued on next page)

BAPTIST TESTIMONY

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The wonderful worship sessions were coordinated and led by Nathan Pierpont, Worship Pastor at Northeastern and MARBC Council of 15 member. Several members of Northeastern ministered in the service, including the choir, men's quartet, and Nathan's children, Lissy and Jonathan.



Nathan Pierpont, daughter Lissy, Northeastern choir and orchestra



The Men's Quartet was a blessing



An appropriate comment on PowerPoint



Host Pastor George Coon and conference attendees enjoy a sermon illustration

Bill Blount soloist



A dessert fellowship welcoming new MARBC pastors and wives was hosted by the Council of 15 and Ken and Sharon Floyd on Monday evening. Over 40 were in attendance and were blessed by the testimonies shared by the group. A delicious dessert was provided by Northeastern Baptist Church. We thank the church for their hospitality in providing this special treat.



Council of 15 member Jeff Burr (right) shares with new pastoral couple Michael and Stephanie Breznau



Fellowship at the dessert reception

We are grateful for the ministry of Deanna Miller, missionary with Child Evangelism Fellowship of Greater Detroit. She once again was a blessing to the children in attendance as she shared Bible lessons, special crafts and activities.

Children's teacher Deanna Miller and Karis Ayers enjoy craft time



We are grateful to the members and staff at Northeastern Baptist Church for their encouraging servanthood as they ministered to the MARBC family. We are grateful to Senior Pastor George Coon and Associate Pastors Greg Bishop, Nathan Pierpont, and Charles Black for their gracious and detailed leadership in coordinating the conference details. We are grateful to the Northeastern office staff for their joyful spirit in caring for special needs as they arose.

Workshop sessions were a main part of the Tuesday meetings. Dr. David and Carolyn Culver led a workshop entitled, "But the Siblings are Different Colors," focusing on the specific challenges and dynamics of Christian multi-ethnic families. Mr. Jeff Parker, president of Jeffery Parker Architects in Grand Rapids, shared a two part workshop called "A Roadmap for Building in Tough Economic Times." Dan and Kathy Pugh, Montrose Baptist Church, led two workshops relating to dealing Biblically with conflict. Terre Ritchie, Executive Director of CBH Ministries in Grand Rapids, led four women's sessions relating to developing a closer walk with God, honoring His call, and a special session relating to the internet and its influence upon children and students. Joel Shaffer, Executive Director of Urban Transformation Ministries, Grand Rapids, shared two workshops dealing with practical methods of gospel ministry in the inner city within a Biblical context. Mark Sigmon, Director of Global Impact Services, Jenison, shared sessions relating to "glocal" missions opportunities.



Mark Sigmon shares in a workshop



Karen Avey serves at registration

Messages from the conference's main sessions and workshops are posted on the MARBC website. You may also access other materials that were distributed at the conference at www.marbc.net.

We encourage you to make plans to attend next year's 70th anniversary conference which will be held on Monday and Tuesday, October 29-30, 2012. "NextGen" is the conference theme, focusing upon the heritage and future of the MARBC, and will feature MARBC pastors as main session speakers.

MARBC NEWS & NOTES

ALLEGAN, FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH (GREG CARLSON, PASTOR) – First Baptist Church celebrated its 170th Anniversary on Saturday-Sunday, September 24 and 25. The special weekend included a Saturday evening concert shared by the southern gospel quartet, Skylight, followed by an Ice Cream Social. Previous pastors Ray Mayhew, Jim Turner, and Clare Saliers shared in the Sunday services. Several other former associate and youth pastors were in attendance. A dinner on the grounds, photo displays, and video trip down “Memory Lane” were also a part of the celebration.

Featured below is a photo of present and former pastors and assistants in attendance at the 170th anniversary weekend. From front, left to right: Claire & Jean Saliers, Barbara & Ray Mayhew, Faye & Ken Martin; second row: Fred & Maxine Carlson, Ellen & Dick Burkett; back Row: Jim & Barbara Turner, Greg & Lorelei Carlson, Charlene & Will Davis. Pastor Brad Powell was not able to be present but sent a video greeting.



170th Anniversary

KENTWOOD, KENTWOOD BAPTIST CHURCH (RICHARD LIVERANCE, PASTOR) – Paul Lamberson was ordained by Kentwood Baptist Church in a special morning service held on Sunday, October 30. An ordination council was held to examine Paul’s doctrinal proficiency on October 13. The council unanimously recommended that the church proceed with ordination, commending the candidate for his understanding of Biblical doctrine as well as his knowledge and use of scriptural texts in his defense of the faith. Paul and his wife, Jill, have been a part of the Kentwood Baptist Church family for 4

years. He has served as an associate pastor of youth for two years.

PORTAGE, BEREAN BAPTIST CHURCH (BILL ABERNATHY, PASTOR) – On September 22 an ordination council composed of pastors and messengers from several area churches gathered at Berean Baptist Church in Portage, MI for the purpose of examining Dan Nichols and recommending whether or not the church should proceed with ordination.

After more than 3 hours of questions and answers the council made the following recommendation: “We recommend Berean Baptist Church proceed with the ordination of Dan Nichols into the gospel ministry because of his call, gifts, passion for ministry and people, and knowledge of the scriptures. We commend Dan for his overall handling and knowledge of the Word of God and his integrity and attitude of humility. He also consistently verified his doctrinal beliefs by continually leading us to the scriptures to defend his faith.”

Berean formally ordained Dan on Sunday, September 25. His father, Pastor Steve Nichols, the pastor of worship at Berean gave the charge to the candidate. Dan is a graduate of Baptist Bible College in Clarks Summit, PA. He is pursuing a Masters Degree at Baptist Bible Seminary in Clarks Summit and has been appointed as a missionary with ABWE for church planting in North America.



Dan Nichols ordained by Berean Baptist Church in Portage

PORTAGE, BEREAN BAPTIST CHURCH (BILL ABERNATHY, PASTOR) – Berean Baptist Church of Portage formally commissioned Jon and Joni McGinnis to missionary service on October 2. The

McGinnis family will be serving under ABWE with T.A.C.T.I.C.A. Ministries in Costa Rica. T.A.C.T.I.C.A. stands for Teaching Authorities Christian Truth in Central America.

Jon served for over 5 years as the youth pastor at Berean until he and Joni were appointed with ABWE in 2010. They and their children, Katie, Meghan, Irelynd, and JD will be missed at Berean, but the church rejoices in God’s direction in their lives.

Brad Winkler, ABWE’s Director of Pre-Field Ministries gave the challenge to the church, and Bill Abernathy, Berean’s Lead Pastor, gave the charge to the McGinnis family. Co-worker Ryan Rought and Berean’s Pastor Emeritus, Will Davis, also participated in the service. Members of Jon and Joni’s families, Berean’s deacons, and pastors from supporting churches gathered around the McGinnis family for the formal commissioning prayer as the service drew to a close. The climax of the service was an announcement that additional support had been pledged that day which brought the McGinnis family to 100% support. They plan to leave for Costa Rica the end of October.



Jon and Joni McGinnis commissioning

SPECIAL OPPORTUNITIES

MISSIONARY HOMES FOR RENT. Berlin Baptist Church of Marne, Michigan, (near Grand Rapids) has 2 houses to rent to missionaries, beginning February 1, 2012. The rent on each is \$250.00, plus utilities. One house has 4 bedrooms, 1 full bath plus a toilet and shower in the basement. The other house has 3 bedrooms and 1 full bath. Both houses are furnished and have a washer and dryer. Please contact Candy Sherd – cell 616 430-1076, home 616 997-9676.



2012 TALENTS FOR CHRIST

The 2012 MARBC Talents for Christ competition will be held on Saturday, April 21, 2012 at South Baptist Church in Flint. Students may participate in either the Scholarship or Open Categories. Registration cost is \$25 per individual category and \$35 in the Open Categories. Those desiring to compete in the Scholarship Category should register at the National TFC website where other information and cost details are shared. You may go to www.garbc.org/tfc for more information, downloadable materials, and scholarship details. A link to this website is also available at www.marbc.net.

Registration deadline for the 2012 MARBC State Competition of Talents for Christ is March 1, 2012. Please make checks payable to Evangel Baptist Church and mail the registration to: Michigan TFC, Evangel Baptist Church, 16994 S. Telegraph Rd., Taylor, MI 48180.

Students competing in the Scholarship Category have the opportunity to receive a First Place \$1000 scholarship or a \$500 scholarship for Second Place. All state winners may compete in the National competition at GARBC Conference for additional \$5000 (1st place) and \$2500 (2nd place) scholarships to the participating schools.

MARB churches and young people are strongly encouraged to participate. The preparations for TFC will help develop godly discipline and character. The results of this preparation allow our youth to minister in meaningful ways in several settings. With the opportunities for scholarships from participating colleges in the Scholarship Division and scholarships for participating MARBC camps in the Open Division, there are also practical benefits for TFC participation.

Over the past few years, the main change in TFC is the addition of the TFC Open Competition, which allows students to participate who may not compete in the scholarship competition since they are not attending one of the participating colleges. To add incentive to participate in the open category, Lake Ann Camp, Lincoln Lake

Baptist Camp and The Springs are all offering scholarships to the State 1st and 2nd place winners. Also, those who have won at the national level in the scholarship category in a previous year may compete in the Open competition.

Scholarship Competitions: Bible Knowledge, Brass, Female Public Speaking, Female Voice, Male Voice, Oral Interpretation of Scripture, Piano, Preaching, Strings, Visualized Bible Teaching, Woodwinds, Writing

Open (Non-Scholarship) Individual Categories: Art (a new category this year), Bible Knowledge, Brass, Digital Media (a new category this year), Female Public Speaking, Female Voice, Male Voice, Oral Interpretation of Scripture, Piano, Preaching, Strings, Visualized Bible Teaching, Woodwinds, Writing

Open (Non-Scholarship) Group Competitions: Vocal Duet (a new category this year), Small Vocal Ensemble, Large Vocal Ensemble, Puppet Team, Drama Team, Instrumental Ensemble

For further information or questions regarding Talents for Christ, contact our Michigan coordinator, Pastor Ken Pyne – krpyne@usa.net; 734.946.5680.

SPECIAL OPPORTUNITIES

SPECIAL “SECURITY ISSUES IN THE CHURCH” SEMINAR:

The Michigan State Police Training Academy is once again presenting a one-day seminar on “Security Issues for Places of Worship.” The seminar will be held on Monday, December 12, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. It will be held at the Michigan State Police Training Academy, 7426 N. Canal Rd., in Lansing.

The following topics will be covered: physical campus security issues / proactive steps to children’s ministry protection / how to do a criminal history background for non-profits / policies, procedures, and legal aspects / identifying and handling suspicious or dangerous people / critical incident readiness for places of worship.

The cost for the seminar is \$50.00 and includes lunch and all materials. Space is limited so please register early. The registration deadline is December 1. We once again extend our appreciation to Mark Blocher, Calvary Baptist Church in Grand Rapids, for sharing this information regarding the seminar. Mark serves as a Michigan State Police Chaplain. You may contact Mark for a PDF flyer that includes a registration form: mblocher@cbcgr.org.

“MEN MODELING THE MASTER” SEMINAR SPONSORED BY

THE EMARBC. The seminar which will be held on Saturday, March 3, 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., at First Baptist Church, 1212 Knollwood St., Lapeer, MI 48446. Ken Rudolph will be the keynote speaker. In addition to the main sessions, there will also be four workshop sessions during the seminar. Registration and refreshments will begin at 8:15 a.m. Registration is \$15 per person. Lunch is included for all attendees. Registration details will be available in the next issue of the Baptist Testimony.

CHURCH MINISTRIES CONFERENCE SPONSORED BY THE

GRARBC. “*Serving on Main Street*,” Dr. Charles Ware, President of Crossroads Bible College, will be the keynote speaker. The conference will be held on Friday-Saturday, March 9-10, at Calvary Baptist Church, 1200 28th St. SE, Grand Rapids, MI. In addition to the main sessions, there are almost 100 different workshops available relating to various aspects of church ministry. Registration information will be online soon at: www.churchministriesconference.org.



KEN’S ROAD REPORT

- Nov. 6 Emmanuel Baptist Church, Flint
- Nov. 13 Fellowship Baptist Church, East China, pastor’s installation service
- Nov. 14-16 GARBC Council of 18 meetings, Schaumburg, IL
- Nov. 20 North Park Baptist Church, Grand Rapids
- Nov. 27 North Park Baptist Church, Grand Rapids
- Dec. 2 UP pastors and wives Christmas dinner, L’Anse
- Dec. 3-4 Ministry in the UP
- Dec. 11 Mason Rd. Baptist Church, Fowlerville
- Dec. 13 GRARBC Breakpoint meeting, West Cannon Baptist Church, Belmont
- Dec. 20 Ensley Baptist Church, Sand Lake
- Dec. 23- Jan. 4 MARBC Office closed, may you have a blessed Christmas season!

Contact Ken if you would like him to speak or minister in your church in 2012.

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

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830 Russwood St., NE / Grand Rapids, MI 49505
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www.MARBC.net

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ANNIVERSARY ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

November

- 4 - Pastor & Mrs. Don Chapin, South Bapt., Flint
- 7 - Pastor & Mrs. Tom Bauder, Calvary Bapt., Wakefield
- 11 - Pastor & Mrs. Phil Maxwell, First Bapt., St. Louis
- 12 - Pastor & Mrs. Lewis Hague, Blessed Hope Bapt., Escanaba
- 16 - Pastor & Mrs. Jerry Larkin, Burt Bapt., Montrose
- 20 - Rev. Ken and Sharon Floyd, MARBC, Grand Rapids – 35 years!
- 26 - Pastor & Mrs. Jason LaFlamme, Munising Bapt., Munising
- 27 - Pastor & Mrs. Jeff Helbert, City View Church, Grand Rapids – 35 years!

December

- 10 - Pastor & Mrs. Chris Weeks, Kent City Bapt., Kent City
- 16 - Pastor & Mrs. Rich Griffith, Parma Bapt., Parma
- 17 - Pastor & Mrs. Jory Trim, Trinity Bapt., Grand Rapids
- 18 - Pastor & Mrs. Thomas Stout, Volinia Bapt., Decatur
- 22 - Pastor & Mrs. Douglas Crawford, West Cannon Bapt., Belmont
- 22 - Pastor & Mrs. Jerry Bishop, L'Anse Bapt., L'Anse
- 23 - Pastor & Ms. Paul Osborn, First Bapt., Hastings
- 27 - Pastor & Mrs. Ted Jolls, Limestone Bapt., Limestone
- 27 - Pastor & Mrs. Marc Herron, First Bapt., Caro
- 27 - Pastor & Mrs. Steve Summerfield, First Bapt., Fremont
- 28 - Pastor & Mrs. George Dwelley, Cornerstone Bapt., Shingleton
- 29 - Pastor & Mrs. Josh Gates, First Bapt., Fenton
- 30 - Pastor & Mrs. Jim Ankerberg, Ensley Bapt., Sand Lake

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

A Special Year End Greeting from the Floyds



We pray for the encouragement and strengthening of the churches and friends of the MARBC as the 2011 year comes to a close. While these days in Michigan continue to bring their share of challenges and changes, God's grace is still amazing and its supply is abundant. With that in mind, please join us in giving thanks to God for the "exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus" (Ephesians 2:7). During the Christmas season, let us further rejoice in "the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich!" (2 Corinthians 8:9). We give thanks to God for you and appreciate your prayer and financial support. We pray that 2012 will bring abundant opportunities for the demonstration of God's amazing grace in the lives of each person and church in our MARBC family.

Partnering with you and praying for you, Ken and Sharon Floyd