

Baptist Testimony

VOLUME 54 NUMBER 7 AUGUST 2008



The Word Has It

Ken Floyd
MARBC State Representative

“Strengthen me according to Your word,”

— Psalm 119:28

AUGUST’S WORD:

“Repent”

Sharon and I were stopping for lunch one day while traveling when we were startled by the blaring sound of emergency warning sirens. While we were quite concerned about what prompted such an alarm, we quickly noticed that there seemed to be no sense of panic or urgency on the part of others walking or driving in the area. After speculating for a few seconds, I glanced at my watch. Recognizing that it was noon, I surmised that the abrasive noise of the sirens was probably the result of a routine test of the area warning system. Sure enough, in a few seconds the sirens stopped.

I thought of that incident recently as I was reviewing Matthew’s gospel narrative which opens the New Testament canon. Contained in it are bold declarations by both John the Baptist and Jesus warning, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!” (Matthew 3:2; 4:17) These declarations are proclaimed with a sense of urgency and conviction. Similarly, the New Testament canon is concluded by the Book of the Revelation in which there are six recorded statements of the Lord Jesus Christ challenging His Church to repent (Revelation 2-3).

While repentance is obviously of consistent importance to God, it is an issue that is dangerously neglected by both non-believers and many Christians. The word “repent” carries the idea of “turning.” Biblical repentance requires a person to turn from a self-centered focus and come into agreement with God’s holy standard and God’s way.

Misunderstanding the importance of repentance might be somewhat understandable on the part of those who are blinded to the truth and do not have a familial relationship with God. It is grievously disappointing and disgraceful when followers of Christ ignore or shun the Spirit’s convicting work of repentance. The Apostle Paul warns those living in the last days to avoid this practice when he admonishes: “Do not quench the Spirit. Do not despise prophecies. Test all things; hold fast what is good. Abstain from every form of evil.” (1 Thessalonians 5:19-22).

For some Christians the doctrine of grace has been distorted into a heretical practice that views grace as a license to live in whatever manner an individual chooses. The thought of personal accountability to God and responsibility for thoughts and actions are muted by the pursuit of personal pleasure and selfish accommodation. Too often there is little thought to one’s obligation to God and His Word which regularly heralds, “Thus says the Lord.” Paul follows his admonition to the Thessalonian Christians with this important word of encouragement: “Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He who calls you is faithful, who will also do it.” (1 Thessalonians 5:23-24)

If you have ever flown, you are familiar with a presentation that is shared on every single airline prior to departure on every single flight. Once all passengers have boarded, these familiar words are declared by the flight attendant in the front of the aircraft: “In preparation for departure, be sure that all carry-on items are placed in the overhead bins or stowed under the seat in front of you. Seat backs and tray tables must be in their upright position.” There then follows instructions regarding seat belts, oxygen masks, flotation devices, emergency exits, and no smoking. I have

to admit that though I listened very carefully to these instructions when I first traveled. Now I usually pay little attention to them, unless humor is injected into the presentation. The point is that regardless of the style of presentation, the flight attendant speaks of things that are extremely important.

Now, compare that scenario with the typical response given when the Word of God is declared. If the Christian is not appreciative of the moment, the spiritual opportunity can be squandered by the assumption that there is nothing new to be gained from the presentation. Perhaps familiarity and callousness is the greatest enemy of spiritual brokenness and subsequent spiritual vitality.

Truly there is need for each of us to have a sense of urgency as we approach God’s Word. An honest review of your current involvement with the Word of God is appropriate.

- How are you responding to the volumes of information that you have received from God?
- How many Biblical sermons, lessons, and personal devotions have you received? What has been your response? How have you applied the instruction and encouragement that you have received?
- How often do you approach times of exposure to God’s Word callously or casually?
- Are you really listening with a sense of urgency to Biblical instruction?

Indeed, “The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, a broken and contrite heart – these, O God, You will not despise” (Psalm 51:17). Today is the best day to offer to God a sacrifice of your heart. “Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up” (James 4:10).

You have His Word on it! (KEF)

MARBC NEWS & NOTES

ALLEGAN, FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH (PASTOR GREG CARLSON) – First Baptist Church held its annual missions conference on April 19-22. The conference theme was “Let the Nations Be Glad.” Keynote speaker for the conference was Ken Rudolph. Missionaries participating were Maynard & Ann Belt (Baptist Mid Missions),

Robin & Jeff Awe (God’s Helping Hands), Mark & Betsy Davidhizar (Camp Beechpoint), Rachel Hill (Lakeshore Pregnancy Resource Center), David & Melissa Gillies (Camp Beechpoint), Carol & Bill Bradbury (Advancing Native Missions), Rojean Garlock (New Tribes Missions) Terri & Bill Jenkin (Continental Baptist Missions). An international dinner, generous gift giving to missionaries, preaching, and media presentations were enjoyed at well attended sessions.

John Swartz, a deacon in the church and retired school principal, recently brought an eight week series of messages entitled: “Christianity and Islam:.....” The presentation was well attended on Sunday evenings. The hearers came away with a greater appreciation for Christ and a greater understanding of Islam.

BENZONIA, FAITH BAPTIST CHURCH (PASTOR STEVE AYERS) – Pastor Steve Ayers graduated Summa Cum Laude in receiving his Doctor of Ministry degree from Baptist Bible Seminary in Clarks Summit, PA, on May 9. Dr. Ayers’ doctoral dissertation is titled, “Communication Tools to Aid the Michigan Association of Regular Baptist Churches in Their Efforts to Plant Churches in the State of Michigan.” What a great dissertation! We

look forward to utilizing this important document in the ministry of the MARBC. We thank God for Steve’s leadership at Faith Baptist and his involvement as a council member of the MARBC Council of 15. Congratulations to Steve and his wife, Laura, and family for this special achievement.



Dr. Steve and Laura Ayers and family.

JACKSON, LANSING AVE. BAPTIST CHURCH (PASTOR DAVID OBERST) – July 13-18 was Neighborhood Bible Time at Lansing Avenue Baptist Church. Pastor Oberst reports that between boys, girls and teens, there were 42 decisions declared, of which 30 were for salvation. The church is grateful to see the Lord’s Word have free course in the lives of the young people. The MARBC family is asked to pray for the effective ministry of the church as they do follow up.

REED CITY, FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH (PASTOR JOHN DAWSON) – First Baptist Church of Reed City, MI held a special Installation Service for their new Pastor, John Dawson, on Sunday May 18th. Rev. Jack Richard gave the Charge to the Pastor. Rev. Nate Dawson, son of the new pastor, gave the Charge to the Church.



Pastor John and Linda Dawson

Pastor Dawson and wife Linda began their ministry at First Baptist Church in Reed City on January 24, 2008. Pastor Dawson received his training at Baptist Bible College of Pennsylvania, graduating from there in 1978. He was ordained by the First Baptist Church of Bay City in 1981. The Dawson’s have served churches in Bay City, Ithaca, and Howard City, Michigan before coming to Reed city. The Dawson’s were married in 1978 and

have two children (Nate and Nicole). They also have three grandchildren. Pastor and Mrs. Dawson are looking forward to serving the community of Reed City.

MONTROSE, MONTROSE BAPTIST CHURCH (PASTOR DAN PUGH) – Montrose Baptist Church held an Installation Service for their new Pastor, Dan Pugh, on Sunday, June 29. Pastor Ed Abbott, who served as interim pastor, gave the Charge to the Pastor. Pastor Pugh gave a special message regarding the future ministry of the church. Pastor Dan and his wife, Kathy, come to Montrose from Madison, Wisconsin. The Pughs celebrate their 27th anniversary on August 8.



Pastor Dan and Kathy Pugh

FLINT, EMMANUEL BAPTIST CHURCH (PASTOR HAROLD CONSTANT) – Pastor Harold and Nancy Constant were honored on June 29, as they completed twenty years of service at Emmanuel Baptist Church. A gift was presented to them during the 11 A.M. Worship Service, and a reception was held in their honor following the Evening Service.



Pastor Harold and Nancy Constant

TRAVERSE CITY, IMMANUEL BAPTIST CHURCH (PASTOR MATT HERON) – On May 8, 2008 Pastor Matthew Herron was examined by an ordination council of 24 Northern Michigan Pastors and laymen. Upon their recommendation, Immanuel Baptist Church of Traverse City ordained Pastor Herron on Sunday, May 11. Giving the charge to the church was Pastor Maynard Belt, former MARBC Representative. The charge to the pastor was given by Matt’s father, Pastor Teddy Herron, of Watkins Glen, New York. Those serving on the examining council included Matt’s brother, Pastor Marc Herron of Caro, Michigan; and his brother-in-law, Pastor Mark Cizauskas of West Cannon Baptist in Belmont,

(continued on page 3)

BAPTIST TESTIMONY

Official Organ of the Michigan Association of Regular Baptist Churches

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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.

**THE SECOND ANNUAL
MARBC DAY OF
"ONE ACCORD" PRAYER**

*"They raised their voice to
God in one accord" Acts 4:24*

September 28, 2008

Purpose: a day for MARBC churches to devote their attention to prayer for our churches, pastors, camps, ministries, missionaries, and special needs.

Ideas for Participation:

- **Preach and teach on the topic of prayer** in worship services, Sunday School, ABFs, and small groups. I.e., a study of the Disciple's Prayer in Matthew 5; prayers recorded in the Bible, the qualities of prayer, hindrances to prayer, etc.
- **Plan a 24-hour prayer marathon or other prayer event** leading up to Sunday. Materials on planning a prayer marathon and other prayer events are available from the MARBC office.
- **Join with a sister church or churches in your area** for a Sunday evening prayer service and/or "concert of prayer."
- **Take a moment during the morning worship service to pray** for the churches, pastors, camps, missionaries, and ministries of the MARBC. Pray also for sister churches in your area. Every church in the MARBC fellowship is encouraged to pause at the 11:00 a.m. hour on September 28 to come before the Lord praying in "one accord." While worship and service times vary in our churches, most of our churches are assembled in some ministry setting at the 11:00 a.m. hour. This would also be a good time for deacons and/or other church members to pray on behalf of their pastors in anticipation of Clergy Appreciation Month in October. If you cannot pray as a group at 11:00 a.m., pray at a time that would be most appropriate for your setting.
- **Use the special Day of Prayer to focus upon the ministries of the MARBC.** Bulletin inserts, prayer cards and other literature are available by contacting the MARBC office. Some MARBC churches are receiving a special love offering on behalf of the MARBC. The MARBC ministry office and state representative are supported by the love gifts from churches in the fellowship.
- **Contact the MARBC office** for additional information and/or materials regarding prayer initiatives for your church. Email: marbcken@aol.com

**GARBC ANNUAL
CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS**

The Annual Conference of the General Association of Regular Baptist Churches was held this year, June 24-27, on the campus of Faith Baptist Bible College and Seminary in Ankeny, Iowa. Due to the heavy flooding in eastern Iowa the location was changed just a week prior to the conference from the original site in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. Both the GARBC and FBBC staff are to be commended for their excellent leadership in handling this quick transition. This year's conference theme was "The Glory of the Cross." Highlights of the conference, including downloadable messages and pictures are available online at www.garbc.org.

The National *Talents for Christ* scholarship competition was held during the conference. The MARBC was again well represented at this year's competition by five individuals and one group. The puppet team from Standale Baptist Church in Grand Rapids finished in 1st place. Heidi Willard, Weidman Baptist Church, placed first in piano (Open Division). We congratulate all of our MARBC young people, their parents, and churches for their testimonies and thank all of our MARBC youth who participated in this year's TFC. We encourage our youth and their churches to begin preparations for next year's MARBC (April) and GARBC (June) TFC events.



Heidi Willard



Standale Baptist Church puppet team

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MARBC NEWS & NOTES *(continued)*

Michigan. Pastor Matt has served as Senior Pastor of Immanuel Baptist Church since July 2006 after serving the Lord as Youth Pastor and Assistant Pastor in New York, Pennsylvania, and Ohio. Matt and his wife Kim and 3 daughters are a real blessing to Immanuel Baptist!



Matt Herron is ordained.

**MARBC EVENTS
TO PLACE ON YOUR
2008 CALENDAR**

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*



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AUGUST 2008 ANNIVERSARY ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

- 1 - Pastor & Mrs. Ray Brandon, North Bridge Community Bpt., Kalamazoo
- 1 - Pastor & Mrs. Dave Lamb, Highland Hills, G.R.
- 1 - Pastor & Mrs. John Poole, Lickley's Corners Bpt., Pittsford
- 1 - Pastor & Mrs. Gary Gladfelder, Elk Rapids Baptist Church
- 2 - Pastor & Mrs. Steve Taylor, First Bpt., Portland
- 3 - Pastor & Mrs. Josh Presley, Calvary Bpt., Lansing
- 4 - Pastor & Mrs. Harold Constant, Emmanuel Bpt., Flint
- 4 - Pastor & Mrs. Benjamin Franklin, Munising Bpt., Munising
- 4 - Pastor & Mrs. Mark Looman, First Bpt., Hart - 35 years!
- 4 - Pastor & Mrs. Horace Turner, First Bpt., PawPaw - 40 years!
- 5 - Pastor & Mrs. Jeff Gunderman, Berlin Bpt., Marne - 30 years!
- 5 - Pastor & Mrs. Bruce Sabatos, Leonard Heights Bpt., GR - 30 years!
- 7 - Dr. & Mrs. Danny Cavin, First Bpt., Williamston
- 7 - Pastor & Mrs. Rob Laing, First Bpt., Rochester
- 7 - Pastor & Mrs. Tim Quinn, First Bpt., Holland
- 8 - Pastor & Mrs. Jeff Porter, First Bpt., Oxford
- 8 - Pastor & Mrs. Dan Pugh, Montrose Bpt., Montrose - Welcome to Michigan!
- 9 - Pastor & Mrs. David Crompton, Grandville Bpt., Grandville - Welcome to Michigan!
- 9 - Pastor & Mrs. Eric Holmgren
- 9 - Pastor & Mrs. Scott Kigar, First Bpt., Rochester
- 9 - Pastor & Mrs. David Marshall
- 10 - Pastor & Mrs. James Hill, Bible Baptist Church, Ishpeming
- 10 - Pastor & Mrs. Brad Rickard, Berean Bpt., Lansing
- 11 - Pastor & Mrs. James Howard, First Bpt., Cedar Springs
- 11 - Pastor & Mrs. Doug Blackwell, First Bpt., Clare
- 13 - Pastor & Mrs. John Nixon, West Cannon Bpt., Belmont
- 14 - Pastor & Mrs. Dan Willis, Calvary Bpt., Lake City
- 14 - Pastor & Mrs. Travis Walker, Northeastern Bpt., Kalamazoo
- 15 - Pastor & Mrs. Bill Brittain, Trinity Bpt., Alma - Welcome to Michigan!
- 15 - Pastor & Mrs. Mark Shaw, Calvary Bpt., Greenville
- 15 - Pastor & Mrs. Duane Duhon, Berean Bpt., G.R.
- 16 - Pastor & Mrs. David Sill, Shelby Rd. Bpt., Shelby
- 17 - Pastor & Mrs. Jeffrey Halsted, Calvary Baptist, Grand Rapids
- 17 - Pastor & Mrs. Dean Willard, Weidman Baptist Church
- 18 - Pastor & Mrs. Gerald Diserens, Evangel Bpt., Taylor
- 18 - Pastor & Mrs. Jamey Miller, Fellowship Bpt., East China - Welcome to Michigan!

- 19 - Pastor & Mrs. Matthew Herron, Immanuel Bpt., Traverse City
- 20 - Pastor & Mrs. Tom Dolph, Rockford
- 21 - Pastor & Mrs. Casey Smith, Parr Memorial Bpt., Petoskey
- 22 - Pastor & Mrs. Paul Weaver, Chippewa Hills Bpt., Remus - 10 years!
- 23 - Pastor & Mrs. Tom Mackay, Hesperia Baptist Church
- 24 - Pastor & Mrs. Dan Dickerson, Calvary Bpt., Midland
- 24 - Pastor & Mrs. Tom Rohrer, North Park Bpt., G.R.
- 24 - Pastor & Mrs. Richard Chasse, Crossroads Bpt., Scottville
- 25 - Pastor & Mrs. David Grinnell, York Bpt., Milan
- 26 - Pastor & Mrs. Kevin McAlvey, First Bpt., Carson City
- 27 - Pastor & Mrs. Dan Currie, First Bpt., Hastings
- 29 - Dr. & Mrs. George Coon, Northeastern Bpt., Kalamazoo

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

KEN'S ROAD REPORT

- | | |
|--------------------|--|
| Aug. 3 | Fellowship Baptist Church, East China |
| Aug. 10 | Indian River Baptist Church, Indian River |
| Aug. 13 | Baptists for Life, Grand Rapids (staff devotions) |
| Aug. 20 | Marlette Baptist Church, Marlette |
| Aug. 27 | OPEN |
| Sept. 5-6 | Faith Baptist Church, Cheboygan (Leaders' Retreat) |
| Sept. 7 | Faith Baptist Church, Cheboygan |
| Sept. 9 | Council of 15 meeting |
| Sept. 14 | OPEN |
| Sept. 20-23 | Joint Missions Conference in West Michigan |
| Sept. 25 | West Michigan Missions Consortium meeting, Grand Rapids |
| Sept. 28 | MARBC Day of Prayer |
| Sept. 29-30 | Baptist Bible College and Seminary Trustee Board Meetings, Clarks Summit, PA |
| Oct. 3-5 | Northern Michigan Missions Consortium missions conference, St. Ignace |

Special note: Dates are still available on Ken's speaking calendar for the fall of 2008.

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

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