

Baptist Testimony

VOLUME 55 NUMBER 1 JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2009



The Word Has It

Ken Floyd
MARBC Executive Director

“Strengthen me according to Your word,”

— Psalm 119:28

“Weakness”

I have to admit that as I anticipated writing regular columns for the “Baptist Testimony” under the byline, “The Word Has It,” I never imagined using the word “weakness” as a topic. Based upon the current climate that engulfs us it now seems like an appropriate word to use.

As we begin a new year we are facing several significant challenges in our state. It has not been easy to hear our state and its people being referred to by the media and even by our Congress as being “out of touch” and “behind the times.” Such broad generalizations ignore the committed and hard working people who have been and continue to be a significant part of the backbone of our nation. Now it seems that the rest of the country has now caught up with Michigan in terms of difficulties and hardships.

In our travels throughout Michigan, Sharon and I regularly observe the special issues that our churches are facing as a result of these challenges. Some areas of our state have been dealing with hardship now for several years. The churches in these areas bear evidence of the impact of these hardships. Many faithful members have lost jobs that they have held for years. As a result, they are unable to give to the Lord’s work as they have faithfully done in years past. Some church budgets have been significantly reduced. In some cases, churches have had to reduce staff salaries, reduce or suspend missions support, or even face the prospect of being unable to afford a full-time pastor. There is a greater sense of urgency and accountability at this season of the year when churches typically approve new budgets and hold annual business meetings.

“My grace is sufficient for you, for my strength is made perfect in weakness.”

— 2 Corinthians 12:9

One of the greatest temptations during days of difficulty and discouragement is to feel weary and helpless. It may seem as if the only alternative is to throw up our hands in resignation and ask, “Why bother trying?”



In his online devotional, “Thought-For-The-Day,” writer Adam Smith tells the story of a 10-year-old boy who decided to study judo with an old Japanese judo master despite the fact that he had lost his left arm in a devastating car accident. The boy was doing well, so he couldn’t understand why, after three months of training, the master had taught him only one move. “Sensei,” the boy finally said, “Shouldn’t I be learning more moves?” The sensei replied, “This is the only move you know, but this is the only move you’ll ever need to know.” Not quite understanding, but believing in his teacher, the boy kept training.

Several months later, the sensei took the boy to his first tournament. Surprising himself, the boy easily won his first two matches. The third match proved to be more difficult, but after some time, his opponent became impatient and charged; the boy deftly used his one move to win the match. Still amazed by his success, the boy was now in the finals. This time, his opponent was bigger, stronger, and more experienced. For a while, the boy appeared to be overmatched. Concerned that the boy might get hurt, the referee called a time-out. He was about to stop the match when the sensei intervened. “No,” the sensei insisted, “Let him continue.”

Soon after the match resumed, his opponent made a critical mistake: he dropped his guard. Instantly, the boy used his move to pin him. The boy had won the match and the tournament. He was the champion.

While traveling home, the boy and the sensei reviewed every move in each and every match. The newly crowned champion asked, “Sensei, how did I win the tournament with only one move?” The sensei replied, “You won for two reasons.

(continued on page 2)

**CHURCH
PARTNERING
RELATIONSHIPS**



“CPR” INITIATIVES FOR 2009

We rejoice in the many CPR Initiatives that took place between sister churches in Michigan last year. The MARBC office is in the process of **assigning CPR partnerships** for churches interested in **participating in 2009**. If you would like to assist a sister church or would like a church to assist your ministry, **please contact the MARBC as soon as possible**. Many churches and ministries are in the final stages of planning potential summer ministry and mission trips. Be sure to make CPR a major consideration in your planning. Contact the MARBC by email (marbcken@aol.com), or by phone (616.364.5688). Don’t delay!

CPR OFFERS A VARIETY OF OPPORTUNITIES:

Consider a sister church relationship with a ministry in another part of the state that would emphasize a cooperative partnership.

- Sharing of ideas, prayer requests, and resources.
- Form a consortium of sister churches in your area for joint strategy for church planting and/or missions ventures.
- Send a missions team to help with a building or repair project.
- Send youth or singles groups to conduct DVBS, canvassing ministries, etc.
- Share Sunday School and Bible study materials.
- Share media resource materials.
- Offer pulpit sharing opportunities for summer vacations.
- Receive special offerings for the needs of the sister ministry.
- Conduct a pastoral internship program to help train a sister church’s next pastor.

(continued on page 2)

THE WORD HAS IT *(continued)*

First, you've almost mastered one of the most difficult throws in all of judo. And second, the only known defense for that move is for your opponent to grab your left arm." Incredibly, the boy's biggest weakness had become his biggest strength.



Those who trust in God should remember that the source of their greatest strength begins by recognizing their own personal weakness. This may be most practically illustrated in Scripture by the apostle Paul. In his very autobiographical letter we know as the New Testament book of *Second Corinthians*, Paul describes an agonizing personal affliction he calls a "thorn in the flesh" (12:7). He admits that he had begged fervently for God to remove this affliction during three separate seasons of intense prayer.

The particular issue that Paul prayed about has been speculated upon for years. God chose to leave the identity of the issue unknown to us as we read this account, which is no doubt best for us. If the identity of Paul's personal challenge had been revealed, many of us would have isolated God's answer to Paul's prayer to this one particular malady. Instead, we are all allowed to relate to Paul's prayer burden as well as to God's answer to the prayer. Refusing to remove the thorn, God instead answers Paul by giving a strong declaration and encouraging consolation, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my strength is made perfect in weakness." (12:9)

In a play on words in His response, God declares that His "strength" (the Greek word *dunamis*, from which we get the word "dynamite") is made perfect in "weakness" (the compound Greek word *neurasthenosis*, which means "nerve narrowing"). God is saying to His children that the very situations that would cause the normal person's nerves to narrow with anxiety to the point of paralysis are the conduits through which His dynamic power will surge!

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 bi-monthly, 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 15th day of even-numbered months.

The greatest demonstrations of God's power have come through men and women who have appeared to be very weak. The Bible regularly illustrates how God is able to work despite the weaknesses of men and women, showing forth his power. Consider, for example, the small in stature David against the mighty giant Goliath. Or what about Gideon, the man of no significant background who is covering in a barn only to be called out by God as a "mighty man of valor" who leads a greatly outnumbered band of men to victory? And consider the greatest example of all, the Lord Jesus, who comes to redeem humanity by taking on the form of a helpless baby.

God is in control. He is not caught off guard by the events that expose our vulnerabilities. He does not wring His omnipotent hands in heaven over the seemingly random circumstances of our lives. He is eternally good and trustworthy and sovereignly orchestrates every area of our lives for His glory. God relates in *Isaiah 45:5-7*, "I am the LORD, and there is no other; there is no God besides Me. I will gird you, though you have not known Me, that they may know from the rising of the sun to its setting that there is none besides Me. I am the LORD, and there is no other; I form the light and create darkness, I make peace and create calamity; I, the LORD, do all these things."

Recently, in a board meeting of Christian leaders, my pastor friend Pat Nemmers made this statement about the uncertain times that confront us: "When I struggle with doubt in my walk of faith, I remember the statement from *Psalms 29:10* - "The LORD sat enthroned at the Flood, and the LORD sits as King forever." Pat's testimony from Scripture hit home to all of us who were gathered there to deal with some very difficult issues that demanded wise and tough decisions. First of all, God is in charge at all times and has a perfect plan. Secondly, God will see us through the debilitating times of weakness. Like Paul, we will have to go through those debilitations if God so deems. And in doing so, we will not necessarily know how things will turn out. But we can confidently face them with the promise of God's grace as our sustenance.

Paul's response to God's answer in *2 Corinthians 12:9-10* should be ours as well: "Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong." Even during these difficult days those who trust in God can rejoice in the strength of weakness.

- You have His Word on it! (KEF)



TALENTS FOR CHRIST - The 2009 MARBC Talents for Christ competition will be held on Saturday, April 25, 2009 at West Cannon Baptist Church in Belmont. Students may participate in either the Scholarship or Open Categories. Registration cost is \$25 per individual category and \$35 per group category. Registration deadline for the 2009 MARBC State Competition of Talents for Christ is March 1, 2009. 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. For more information and downloadable materials, go to www.garbc.org/tfc. A link to this website is also available at www.marbc.net.

Our MARBC 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. Award details are included in the downloadable packet.

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

"CPR" INITIATIVES *(continued)*

- Add the sister church to the missions budget of the church.
- Receive a 5th Sunday offering on behalf of the sister ministry.
- Support mutual missionaries.
- Conduct joint mission trips to a foreign field.
- Offer to transport materials and resources when traveling to another area of the state.

For more information regarding "CPR" and how you can be involved as a church or as an individual, contact the MARBC office or refer to the information posted on the MARBC website, www.marbc.net.

MARBC EVENTS TO PLACE ON YOUR 2009 CALENDAR



February 13-14, 2009 **SMARBC VALENTINE'S WEEKEND COUPLES RETREAT**

SMARBC Valentine's Weekend Couples Retreat
Gull Lake Retreat Center, Hickory Corners, MI
Dr. Dave and Carolyn Culver, speakers
Visit www.marbc.net for registration details.

March 7, 2009

EMARBC MEN MODELING THE MASTER CONFERENCE

"Being a Man of Influence at Home and in the World"

Emmanuel Baptist Church, Flint

Speaker: Ken Pierpont, Jr., Senior Pastor of Evangel Baptist, Taylor, MI

Workshops related to men's issues presented by area pastors

9 a.m. to 3 p.m. / cost - \$12 per person

See the MARBC website for Registration Details



March 13-14, 2009

GRARBC ANNUAL CHURCH MINISTRIES CONFERENCE

Calvary Baptist Church, Grand Rapids

"Beyond Fellowship"

Keynote Speaker: Dr. Michael Loftis, President of ABWE

Registration details and downloadable forms are available

www.churchministriesconference.org



Saturday, April 25, 2009

MARBC TALENTS FOR CHRIST COMPETITION

West Cannon Baptist Church, Belmont

Ken Pyne, Director

Early registration deadline: March 1

Download information at: www.garbc.org/tfc



June 22-26, 2009

NATIONAL GARBC CONFERENCE

"Cutting Straight"

Elyria, Ohio

Download information at: www.garbc.org/conference

September 27, 2009

MARBC ANNUAL DAY OF "ONE ACCORD" PRAYER

October 26-27, 2009

67TH ANNUAL MARBC CONFERENCE

Forest Hills Baptist Church, Grand Rapids, Michigan

Conference Speakers:

Dr. Jim Grier, Dr. Hanz Bernard, Ken Floyd, Mel Walker, Peggy Walker

MARBC NEWS & NOTES

GRAND RAPIDS, STANDALE BAPTIST CHURCH (PASTOR JOHN WATSON) –

Standale Baptist Church celebrated its 50th anniversary the week of October 19-26. The anniversary theme was “Together Forever: Romans 8:31-39.” The week included a homecoming of former members and former pastors. Speakers during the week included several former pastors. Former pastors who attended the festivities included: David Gardner, Duane McNeil, Tom Dolph, Wilbur Eifert, Robert Wessell Mark Roosinck, Doug Bartlett, and Max Tucker. Charter members were also recognized during this special celebration. We thank God for the good testimony and faithful ministry of this church.

MONTROSE, MONTROSE BAPTIST CHURCH (PASTOR DAN PUGH) –

Richard Phillips, former pastor of Montrose Baptist Church, went to be with his Lord on Saturday, November 15, after a long bout with cancer. He was 74. Dick served as pastor at Montrose for 40 years and retired from the church two years ago. Montrose's new pastor, Dan Pugh, officiated the memorial service. Here is a tribute written by Pastor Pugh regarding Pastor Phillips.

A TRIBUTE TO PASTOR RICHARD PHILLIPS

submitted by Pastor Dan Pugh
(Montrose Baptist Church)



What a privilege it was to pay tribute to the man who preceded me as the pastor of Montrose Baptist Church for nearly forty years. – As I considered how few newly called pastors probably have any real opportunity to personally get to know their predecessor, and unfortunately sometimes the transition situations even makes this impossible, I'm grateful that the Lord put it on my heart to get to know this Pastor; that he was willing to oblige; and that the Lord sovereignly chose to delay his heaven-going for just awhile longer in order for our acquaintance and friendship to take place.

Pastor Richard Phillips finished well even as he lived out his final days of physical struggle following many years of being ravaged by multiple myeloma cancer.

Although unable to continue in his beloved role at the church, he tried as health allowed to maintain his many relationships in the church and community; served as a jail chaplain with Forgotten Man Ministries; wrote poetry and treatises on several theological issues. He purposely referred to me as ‘Pastor’ and I honored him with the same designated title and function of life that we both realized the Lord had clearly called us each to. – That is how pastoral transitions should be!

His funeral was a tribute event filled with memories from family; church members; and some long time community friends. – Hundreds of people sang with abandon, “It is Well with My Soul”, with musical specials by a friend - “Serenaded by Angels”, and the Gospellers who sang “New Ship Sailing”. – A poem of his, “I Would Be Faithful” was read; I preached from his favorite passage in Philippians 1:6; and the service concluded with “Jesus Loves Me”, very well known by virtually everyone who knew him as his absolutely favorite song!

Please contact me if you would like one of the tribute service programs. The following poem written by Pastor Richard Phillips was printed in it entitled, “One Day He'll Call”.

*One day the Lord will call my name,
And I shall go to be,
With the One who loves me so,
He who died on Calvary's tree.*

*With Him I'll dwell forever more,
In His home beyond the sky.
And find His promise, Oh, so true,
No part of it is a lie.*

*The hurts of life, they'll all be gone.
There's only glory in that land.
Such joy and gladness never known,
Is what my Savior's planned.*

*No longer will my sight be blurred,
For I'll see Him face to face.
And thank Him for His wondrous love,
And ever marvel at His grace.*

*So when He calls, don't weep for me
I'll be better off by far,
For in His presence I shall be,
And not resting on some star.*

SPECIAL OPPORTUNITIES

VALENTINE'S WEEKEND COUPLES RETREAT

“Becoming One for the Master – Couples Staying in Touch,” a special couples retreat sponsored by the Southern MARBC Regional Fellowship, will be held on February 13-14, 2009 at the Gull Lake Retreat Center.



Speakers will be Dr. Dave and Carolyn Culver, Heritage Baptist Church, Clarks Summit, PA.

The Culvers are the co-authors of a couples' Bible study three-book series published by RBP entitled, “Family Matters.” The retreat features 3-buffet style meals and special treats.

Downloadable brochures and information regarding this wonderful way for couples to celebrate Valentine's weekend are available at www.marbc.net. Please contact retreat coordinator Pastor Rich Griffith, Parma Baptist Church (517.531.3645; email – pastorrdgriffith@yahoo.com) ASAP!

EMARBC “MEN MODELING THE MASTER” SEMINAR

An annual event sponsored by the Eastern MARBC Regional Fellowship will be held on Saturday, March 7, from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. This year's theme is “Being a Man of Influence at Home and in the World.” The speaker is Pastor Ken Pierpont (Evangel Baptist Church in Taylor).



Pastor Ken
Pierpont

Pastor Pierpont will explore these questions and others: Are you a man of influence? How can you increase your skills and tools of influence? How can you get close to your kids and stay that way through the teen years? Additional workshops will be taught by other pastors from the EMARBC. The seminar will be held at Emmanuel Baptist Church, 6463 Richfield Rd., Flint, MI 48506. The cost is \$12 per person. Pre-register by February 27th. Send names and payment to Emmanuel Baptist Church; attention Pastor Jack Dowden. Please make checks out to the EMARBC. Downloadable information is available at the MARBC website, www.marbc.net.

(continued on next page)

SPECIAL OPPORTUNITIES *(continued)*

**CHURCH EQUIPMENT AND
MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS
AVAILABLE**

Forest Hills Baptist Church, Grand Rapids, is rejoicing in its recent relocation from its former building to a newly purchased facility. Pastor Jeff Burr reports that there are several items available (i.e. metal chairs, glassware, lecterns, slide projectors, etc.) as a result of combining the two facilities. A detailed list of what is available can be received by contacting the church or Pastor Burr (616.949.0540 or jburr@fhbcgr.org). Be sure to do this ASAP!

**IRS ANNOUNCES 2009
MILEAGE RATES**

The IRS has announced the 2009 business, medical, and moving mileage rates (IR-2008-131). Beginning on January 1, 2009, standard mileage rates for the use of a car (also pickups, vans, or panel trucks) will be:

- 55 cents per mile for business miles driven
- 24 cents per mile for medical or moving purposes
- 14 cents per mile driven in service of charitable organizations

The new rates for business, medical, and moving purposes are slightly lower than rates for the second half of 2008 that were

raised by a special adjustment mid-year in response to a spike in gasoline prices. The rate for charitable purposes is set by law and is unchanged from 2008. The business mileage rate was 50.5 cents in the first half of 2008 and 58.5 cents in the second half. The medical and moving rate was 19 cents in the first half and 27 cents in the second half.

EMAIL ADDRESS – Do we have your accurate e-mail address? Many people and organizations change their email addresses from time to time. Does the MARBC have your current address? Why not be sure by sending us an email and including your updated contact information? Send your information to either marbcsharon@aol.com or marbcken@aol.com.

**YOU CAN HELP A STUDENT
ATTEND BIBLE COLLEGE**
Award a \$2,000 grant today

BBC Pastor Grant
*From Pastors and Youth Pastors ..
.. To students preparing
to serve and lead worldwide.*

Attention Michigan Ministry Leaders

You can help students attend Bible college next year in a very meaningful way. You can help them pay for school by doing nothing more than recommending they attend BBC.

What—A \$2,000 grant provided by BBC is available to incoming students you refer for the 2009–2010 school year. Simply recruit students to apply. Then, ask the students to include your name on their application and check “pastor” as the referral.

Who—Referrals (excluding immediate family) may be made by any Pastor or Youth Pastor. There is no limit to the number of grants and referrals. Other similar grant programs are available for alumni, Christian school administrators, teachers, and missionaries.

Why—The grant is part of the most aggressive financial aid program in our history. It can be combined with the powerful BBC Grant, which gives students up to \$23,000 over four years, and other aid.

Students can cut the cost of tuition substantially, by 20%, 50%, or more.

Details?—Learn more at www.bbc.edu/pastorgrant. Call Admissions at 800.451.7664 or email admissions@bbc.edu.

MENS RETREAT

When all else fails...

April 30-May 2, 2009
Cost: \$105

Where a man stands is a reflection of both his ability to say the truth about a present reality and the decisions he makes accordingly.

Lake Ann Camp presents Men's Retreat 2009 featuring Speaker Ken Rudolph and Special Guest Paul Owens to lead worship.

Where will you stand?

Lake Ann Camp
P.O. Box 109
Lake Ann, MI 49650
www.lakeanncamp.com
(800)223.5722

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

Faith Baptist Bible College



*Experience
Faith!*

www.faith.edu
1.888.FAITH.4.U

1900 NW Fourth Street, Ankeny, Iowa 50021



Pederson
Funeral Homes, Inc.

DAVID A. PEDERSON
Funeral Director

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

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

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.

COTTAGE FOR RENT

near Lake Michigan and Stony Lake
2 BR + Loft \$450/wk.

Don and Judie Laven

9141 Ottawattamie Trl. Shelby, MI 49455
Phone: 231-861-5181 or 863-382-8757

www.ourcabinupnorth.com

ANNIVERSARY ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

February

13 - Pastor & Mrs. Phil Parkin

14 - Pastor & Mrs. Richard Halfman,
Plymouth Bapt., Plymouth

22 - Pastor & Mrs. Burt Wachter, Wolf
Lake Bapt., Muskegon – 40 years!

23 - Pastor & Mrs. Charles Richardson,
Chippewa Hills Bapt., Remus – 30
years!

March

31 - Pastor & Mrs. Fred Slagle, Victory
Baptist, Mancheste

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

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

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

KEN'S ROAD REPORT

- Jan. 4 Calvary Baptist Church,
Owosso
- Jan. 11 First Baptist Church, Alto
- Jan. 14 GRARBC Meeting, Trinity
Baptist Church, Grand Rapids
- Jan. 17 Conduct wedding ceremony,
Grand Rapids
- Jan. 18 Maranatha Baptist Church,
Springfield, OH
- Jan. 24 Closed Door Ministries board
meeting, Grand Rapids
- Jan. 25 First Baptist Church,
Hastings
- Jan. 26-28 Baptist Bible College &
Seminary trustee board
meetings, Clarks Summit, PA
- Jan. 28-29 Speak in college and seminary
chapels at BBC&S
- Feb. 8 Temple Baptist Church,
Ionia
- Feb. 11 Attend GRARBC Breakpoint
meeting, Grand Rapids
- Feb. 12 First Baptist Church, Cedar
Springs (Sweethearts Banquet
speaker)
- Feb. 13-14 Couples Retreat speakers at
First Baptist, Rochester
- Feb. 15 Emmanuel Baptist Church,
Toledo, OH
- Feb. 22 Jamestown Baptist Church,
Jamestown (tentative)
- Feb. 26 Ordination council at Calvary
Baptist Church, Owosso

Ken's 2009 schedule has several open dates.
Contact him if you would like him to speak
or minister in your church.

Please send all support checks, correspond-
ence, 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