

North Central CBA

E-Central E-mail



Great Commandment Passion, Great Commission Focus

April 2007



On February 27-28 the central Illinois cluster met for an overnight gathering. There was great fellowship, food and fun. They are looking at doing this again. It truly does help us get to know each other and to start becoming a community. (See article at the end of this newsletter about the Wisconsin cluster)

A Change Model

One of the issues that create great stress in ministry is change. We have all had to deal with the statement, "We never did it that way before." Yet we all know that not only do things change naturally (look in the mirror) but at times we must make changes. Any tool that might help make change succeed is of great value. One such tool was recently suggested is Our Iceberg Is Melting by John Kotter and Holger Rathgeber.

It is a very short fable about a group of Emperor Penguins. This particular group was living on an iceberg that was melting and putting their very existence in jeopardy. The fable is about how they come to realize the problem, that change was necessary and how they were able to make a successful change. The book suggests eight steps for a successful change process. Hopefully you will note the wisdom of these, and as we proceed to minister in our changing culture we can use these in a way that will help us advance God's kingdom.

Set the Stage

1. Create a sense of urgency/ demonstrate a need.
Help others see the need for change and the importance of [swift] action.
2. Pull together a guiding team/ never do it alone.
Make sure there is a powerful group guiding the change - on with

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Valuable Information for Your Church Growth

Demographic information about your church location is available as a free service. All NCCBA churches are listed. Call Don at 715-538-2298 if you have questions.

www.Link2Lead.com

Ministry Quick Links

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NCCBA

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leadership skills, credibility, communication ability, authority, analytical skills and a sense of urgency.

Decide What to Do

3. Develop the change vision and strategy.

Clarify how the future will be different from the past, and how you can make the future a reality.

Make it Happen

4. Communicate for understanding and buy in.

Make sure as many others as possible understand the vision and strategy.

5. Empower others to act.

Remove as many barriers as possible so that those who want to make the vision a reality can do so.

6. Produce short-term wins.

Create some visible, unambiguous success as soon as possible.

7. Don't let up.

Press harder and faster after the first success. Be relentless with initiating change after change until the vision is a reality.

Make it Stick

8. Create a new culture.

Hold on to the new ways of behaving, and make sure they succeed, until they become strong enough to replace old traditions.

Don Shaw, Regional Director

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PASTOR CARE- "It Is Finished!"

Wait a minute! Don't dismiss this as a day-late and dollar-short article about Easter. It is not about the crucifixion of Jesus and Resurrection Sunday, although it certainly has connections to resurrection life. The other thing that is finished is my tax returns. I hope yours are finished also. This annual exercise of filing our federal and state income taxes produces a lot of anxiety and frustration for a lot of people.

Pastors are not exempt, either from the filing or the paying or the feelings. In fact, we may have more anxiety and frustration than most because of all the strange "special rules" that apply to pastors. The only thing worse than trying to understand them and use them properly is trying to explain them to your official church boards, so that they will take the proper supporting actions.

This year, my preparations for filing tax returns coincided with preparations for a message on Ephesians 4:25-28, which includes "be angry and sin not." This coincidence led me to some interesting thoughts about paying taxes and about being angry.

The first realization was that allowing my frustrations (actually anger) regarding the taxes to carry over from day to day, and from tax preparation to other areas of life, is sinful. Then it dawned on me that the reason it becomes sinful is because I don't use my anger effectively and properly.

Part of this is because I, like other evangelical Christ-followers, struggle with a false belief that we have been taught-that anger is sinful. Anger, like other emotions, is not good or bad, it just is what it is. What is it? Anger is the physiological response to a perceived danger or threat. When we are aware of danger or threat, our bodies prepare to deal with the situation by mobilizing all of our rather significant physical resources to meet the challenge.

The problem for most people today is that the things that have us feeling angry do not call for a maximum physical response. In fact, all kinds of sinful things happen when we angrily respond physically to situations that don't require us to fight or flee in the usual sense. However, instead of using the anger energy in some other way, we squelch our anger as sinful. The results are really destructive-ulcers, depression, violent emotional and physical explosions, verbal and emotional abuse of others, etc.

Anger energy used properly can provide the personal resources that we need to confront and deal with dangerous and threatening situations in effective and beneficial ways. Rather than deny or ignore or reject our anger, we can discover God's purpose in giving us anger. We can use the energy anger generates to effectively deal with the danger.

Many of the usually encouraged steps to "not let the sun go down on your anger" are helpful. We do need to acknowledge, confess and repent of any sinful ways that we have responded to people in our anger. We do need to work toward forgiving those who have done things that are hurtful and/or threatening to us.

However, we also need to use our anger energy to thoroughly and carefully evaluate how we are thinking and feeling about the precipitating event. Most of the time, we are only aware of feeling angry. Usually there are a number of other emotions that are also present. They are equally significant and important. Discovering them, understanding them and submitting them to God's authority

can bring about a powerful transformation in our lives.

The way we are interpreting the situation is also very important. If the meaning we assign to an event is not accurate, we will make poor choices about dealing with it. The outcome will not be as we hoped and intended. Our thoughts and feeling about ourselves, our competence and capability will be damaged. And our faith and trust in God can also be disrupted.

The tax returns are finished and filed for this year. I am relieved and glad that they are. However, I hope that my ponderings about using angry energy well to accomplish positive and beneficial outcomes will stick with me. And with you as well.

Nicholas D. Bell, LMFT

*Interim Pastor, First Baptist Church
Streator, Illinois*

The Depravity of YOUTH

Most of you who work regularly with youth need no special persuasion on the depravity of humankind. Many in youth discussion groups don't see how the precious little mistakes they've made would warrant death or a sacrifice of blood from another. (Christ). Many would argue for the purity and innocence of a child.

Listen to the result of years of research by the Minnesota Crime Commission on the reality of the human heart: *"Every baby starts life as a little savage. He is completely selfish and self-centered. He wants what he wants when he wants it; his bottle, his mother's attention, his playmate's toys, his uncle's watch. Deny him these once, and he seethes with rage and aggressiveness, which could be murderous were he not so helpless. He is dirty, he has no morals, no knowledge, no developed skills. This means that all children are born delinquent, and if permitted to continue in their self-impulsive actions to satisfy each want, every child would grow up a criminal, a killer, and a rapist."*(*Family Life, Multnomah Press, page 102*)

I can even remember my own life of crime at a very young age: I saw something that belonged to my sister Lisa that caught my attention and FILLED me with desire: a lucky rabbit's foot key

chain. Oh, but this was no ordinary lucky rabbit's foot... It was a GREEN rabbit's foot! On a GOLD-looking KEY CHAIN!! I remember stealing it from my sister's room and hiding it in the back of my desk drawer. No one would ever find it there! Oh, how fulfilled my childhood was after that! (Sarcasm) Funny, I even remember it missing a short while afterwards, and I lived my little boyhood life in dread for the next week, waiting for the axe to fall...

I wonder what ever happened to that rabbit's foot?

I've made many mistakes during my first couple years as full-time youth pastor. But I think that few of them compare to this *general approach* I often catch myself doing: I find myself futilely trying to turn the tide of worldliness, instead of simply *showing them the Father's love in Jesus Christ*. As our youth begin to grasp the cost of the Father's love, they see the weight of their individual decisions made in rebellion against Him. And so I plod on with the Lord's strength, praying, teaching and hoping that they will soon realize just how much we ALL need a Savior.

Jason Sorley

Associate Pastor of Youth

Hayden Heights Baptist Church, St. Paul, MN

Pray for Our NCCBA Area Chaplains

We often ask prayers for CBAmerica chaplains in other places but thought we would ask you to specifically pray for the Chaplains from our NCCBA region. Here is a list of them by state:

Michigan - Shane and Janet Vande Vrede going active duty Army from First Baptist Church in Rockford.

Ohio - Jim and Dana Bowie in the Army Chaplain Candidate program

Iowa - John and Susan Hill, a hospital chaplain in the Missouri Valley/Omaha area

Illinois - Jonathan Stephens graduating from seminary at Moody a chaplain candidate with the Navy.

- Chris and Christina Groenendal a student at Trinity Seminary a chaplain candidate with the Army.
- Don and Liz Jones, is chaplain at Windsor Manor, a retirement Center in Carol Stream.
- Phil and Patty McGarvey, hospital chaplain at Carle

Clinic Hospital in Champaign

Minnesota - Jeff and Cindy Cooper , a chaplain in the Air Force Reserves, pastor at Canby.

- Vincent and Darcy Hokkanen, applying with the Minnesota Army National Guard, associate pastor of Oakdale Community Church in Blaine

Missouri - Nathan and Elizabeth Boon a chaplain candidate with the Navy

We also have a number of retired chaplains in our area: Nick Bell - Army (IL), Walter Francis - hospital (MI), Wendell Hawley - Army Reserves (IL), Richard Bariess - Army (IN), Ervin Ingebretson - Army (MN).

This is a group of people that are making a difference in our area and need our prayers. For more information about CBAmerica chaplaincy contact Al Russell at chapruss@earthlink.net or by phone at 218-776-2813.

Western Wisconsin Cluster

Our proposed NCCBA Covenant, to be voted on at Green Lake later this month, has within it the following points:

- We covenant to seek interdependence by working together and strategically partnering so that we will reach people for Christ and bring greater health to our churches.
- We covenant to encourage pastors in North Central CBA to become involved in sub-regional cluster groups, regional gatherings, and events.

In western WI we are working towards these goals. On March 15, Pastors from the CB churches in western WI gathered at Arrowhead Bible Camp near New Auburn, WI for our third "get-away" of the year. A "get-away" is a 24 hour retreat; an opportunity for a CB Pastors' cluster to study, worship, pray, and play together. As we have in the past, we ended our time together with a visionary session; seeking God's leading on how we can work together to impact our area for Jesus.

It is exciting and encouraging to be a part of a group of Pastors who are working together. Each of us is called to a specific church and community and at the get-aways we take time to share about challenges faced and victories won. We are also each at different points in our ministry lives. For me, as a younger

Pastor still in the early years of serving a congregation; there is amazing value in sitting and learning from men who have served congregations for multiple decades. For all of us "older" men, it is good to spend time with the fresh energy and enthusiasm of a Youth Pastor who took us out and soundly trounced us on the disc golf course. I believe each of us leaves our retreats refreshed and personally encouraged.

In addition to the personal value for us as Pastors, the get-aways are creating a sense of identity and interdependence in our group. Our hope and prayer is that we can communicate this to our congregations and begin to see the churches develop this same identity. Imagine a group of churches working together for a common ministry purpose such as church planting. In fact, planting a church is a long-term visionary goal of our cluster. We are taking steps towards building a mutual identity and purpose. Our first cooperative effort will be this next weekend when we do some pulpit swapping around our area. In May we will be having a work day at Arrowhead for the purpose of getting men (and families) together. In November we will be holding a regional youth retreat.

On March 16 as another Pastor and I drove home from the get-away, we shared our mutual enthusiasm for what is happening with our cluster. There were two thoughts in particular that I found to be significant that came out of our conversation. The first was that we are very hopeful that other clusters around the NCCBA are beginning to experience some of this same kind of cooperation., and that the clusters can begin working with other clusters in order to form a strong identity throughout the North Central Region. When that regional identity becomes strong, interdependence in ministry as a region will also occur. When churches are united, the Church will be an amazingly powerful tool in God's hand!

The second significant thought from our conversation was the reality check that the two of us agreed on the likelihood that neither of us would be around to reap the greatest part of the harvest of what was beginning in our cluster. The building of a strong interdependence in our cluster alone will probably take several years, and a regional identity might well take decades. Those of us currently privileged to serve in NCCBA churches are called to be visionary. Our cluster is beginning to build a foundation, but it may be an entirely new group of men pastoring these churches when they successfully plant a new church. I say, praise God! He is doing to work, and it is for His glory.

If your church is not participating in a cluster, consider getting involved. The encouragement and opportunity for working together is well worth the time commitment that is required. As

individuals we are not called to be islands but to live in relationship with other believers. I believe that our individual churches do not need to stand as islands either, but can work together, partnering for the purpose of reaching people for Jesus and building healthy churches. When we stand together for God's glory, He will do great things in us and through us.

*Greg Standafer
Sr. Pastor, First Baptist Church
Whitehall, WI*

See many of you at the Pastors/Wives Retreat or Youth Pastor/Spouse Retreat at Heidel House, Green Lake, Wisconsin.

Go to the [Heidel House](#) website for directions and amenities. The Pastors and Wives retreat starts in the late afternoon on Thursday, April 26, and ends before noon on Saturday. The Youth Pastor/Spouse retreat begins the afternoon of Friday, April 27, and ends Sunday morning.

FYI

Recently one of our churches became aware that a person who had been attending was about to be charged with child internet pornography. The initial reaction was to make certain that this person was ministered to. However, as a church, in matters that pertain to child sexual predators the protection of children **MUST** be our first concern. The church is a prime resource for those who prey on children so we **MUST** be proactive in protecting them or anyone else who might be vulnerable. Here are some suggested steps to take.

- Most insurance companies will provide material and resources for establishing guidelines for protecting children. (Insurance companies are not required to provide coverage if you fail to establish guidelines or fail to act on ones that are established.) Therefore if you have not initiated guidelines for screening those who work with those under the age of 18 you **MUST**. If you have established guidelines and policies you **MUST** be relentless in carrying them out. Any person who will not comply with your policies cannot serve until they do.

- If you become aware that you have a sex offender attending, you need to check with probation as to whether that person can even attend church, and if so under what terms. Churches **MUST** be proactive in protecting potential victims.

Don Shaw--Regional Director

Upcoming Events

Worship Summit - Marion, Iowa	April 20 & 21	More info...
Pastors and Wives Retreat - Green Lake, WI	April 26-28	
Youth Pastor/Spouse Retreat - Green Lake WI	April 27-29	
Annual Meeting of NCCBA, Green Lake WI	April 27	
CONVERGE-Sr. High Evangelism Training Chicago, IL-Contact Bill Badal 815-895-3116	June 10-15	More info...
National Leadership Summit, Edina, MN	July 18-20	Call Don for details 715-538-2298
Prayer Summit, Cedar Lake, IN	September 24-27	
Gordon MacDonald Seminar, Glen Ellyn, IL	October 24	

NCCBA Churches in Need of a Pastor

Please pray for the following churches and Search Committees:

- First Baptist Church--Elmurst, IL ASSOCIATE PASTOR
- First Baptist Church--Long Prairie, MN YOUTH PASTOR
- Bethel Baptist Church--Jackson, MI YOUTH/ASSOCIATE PASTOR

- First Baptist Church--Bradford IL
- Mont Clare Baptist Church--Chicago IL
- First Baptist Church--Lansing IL
- First Baptist Church--Elk Horn IA
- First Baptist Church--Sibley IA
- Ganson Street Baptist Church--Jackson MI
- First Baptist Church--Big Rapids MI
- First Baptist Church--Parkers Prairie MN
- Palisade Baptist Church--Silver Bay MN
- Eureka Baptist Church--St. Croix Falls WI

Contact Our Office

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