

North Central CBA

E-Central E-mail



Great Commandment Passion, Great Commission Focus

March 2010

APRIL 1st DEADLINE! **SCHOLARSHIPS** for High School Seniors--[Click here](#) for details in this newsletter or go to our [website](#) for an application.

Register by April 1st

Pastors Seminar

April 21 lodging & April 22 Seminar with Jim Smith before NCCBA's annual

Pastors & Wives Retreat

April 22-24, 2010



Jim Smith



Joan & George Kenworthy

Come for a time of refreshment and relaxation at beautiful Heidel House Resort in Green Lake, Wisconsin. New this year is an optional **Pastors Seminar** on the topic of *Church Board Development* on Thursday which includes lodging Wednesday night and lunch on Thursday.

Spacious rooms, good food and entertainment by **Headin' Home Quartet** from Colfax, Iowa, are all awaiting you. The retreat's keynote speaker is **George**

Kenworthy, previously a pastor for 32 years and currently founder and president of *Hope for the Hurting Home*. Friday features a **Ladies Brunch** with returning speaker Vicki Smith, Women's Director of CB Southern California. Biographical information for speakers and entertainment are on our [website](#) .

Register for both the Seminar & Retreat for the best deal! More information and registration by check or credit card are available [online](#) .

A brochure and detailed schedule can be viewed or printed from our [website](#) or call Jean at 715-538-2298.

Is Jesus Really Enough?

Surveys reveal that over 80% of Americans believe in God. At first glance that is a rather impressive number of people. On the surface it would seem to indicate that maybe things are not as bleak as the decline in church attendance would seem to indicate.

In the book [The Trouble with Paris](#) by Mark Sayers, he confronts the reader with a sobering reality. He asks, have you ever thought about which god is it this large group of people says they believe in? I think that maybe in our haste to find some good news, we have failed to seriously consider the answer.

Sayers asserts that in reality, the vast majority who say they believe in God, believe in a god and do not believe in the triune God of the Bible. For them god is distant and is removed from the world. Since this god is distant, and they know little about him, he does not give us an ethic to live by. Since there is no god to provide an ethic to live by, something must be found to give the ethic.

Consumerism provides the ethic to inform society on how to live and dream. When this is pressed to its logical conclusion the real god then becomes the "god of me." As a result, it is left up to the individual to find the agenda for living. The agenda is directed by the constant message of hyperconsumerism. Sayers states, "[these] messages are tailor-made to speak to the desires, wants, and needs of the individual and his personal life project, messages that only further strengthen the belief the individual is at the center of the universe."

There are two thoughts that come to mind at this point. First, as I think about this and the additional input from Sayers, I must confess that, more than I care to realize, my life is influenced by the message of hyperconsumerism. It is so easy to get caught up in messages that say if you have this product in your life you will experience something truly significant. For example, I have a fairly

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Natural Church Development

How Healthy is Your Church?

This is a proven tool that can help your church with growth, not just in terms of quality but in terms of evangelism.

NCD will help you identify the eight qualities and six growth factors for a healthy church.

Healthy NCD is seeing a steady growth through conversions and the ongoing discipleship of those who are part of the church.

Give us a call at 715-538-2298.

sophisticated Matthews compound bow for hunting. I spent several hundred dollars for it. Since I purchased it Matthews has come out with several updates. Hyperconsumerism tells me that if you had a good experience with your previous bow it will be even better with this new one (which costs twice as much).

The god of me would love to have the new bow. Not just because it might make my hunting experience better (deep down I know it will not) but it will give a bump in status within the bow hunting crowd. The God that is revealing himself to me in Scripture is telling me from Paul, and others who truly know him, if I have Him then I have all I really need. I know that is true, but the god of me and the allure of hyperconsumerism do not want to give up easily.

The second thought has to do with how we present the gospel. I think there is a struggle at times because we think we need to compete with hyperconsumerism. The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the arrogant pride of life is hard to defeat and hyperconsumerism appeals directly to those. The gospel does not appeal to those but in the end offers something far better.

Sayers puts it this way and also reminds us of the great challenge, ". . . if you approach religion [Christianity] with a framework that is rooted in seeing faith as an all-encompassing way of life . . . you will find religion [Christianity] has a profound effect on your happiness. This is a huge wake-up call to a contemporary Christian culture that has at best couched the gospel in a casing of self-improvement and at worst as a Christian version of the consumer lifestyle package."

So here's the question, how will we reveal to our people and culture the richness we have in Christ?

Don Shaw
Regional Director
donnccba@trivest.net



PASTOR CARE

The Revelations of Spring

In northern Illinois, the last two weeks have been a revelation of sorts. The snow cover has melted. The ground is not white or grey for the first time since late November (as I recall). It has been a long

Valuable Information About Your Church's Area

Customized demographic information available about your church location. This is a free service for all NCCBA churches. Call Don at 715-538-2298

Ministry Quick Links

[CBAmerica](#)

[Illinois State Youth Fellowship](#)

Microsoft Software and More

Microsoft Office Pro Plus 2007 is \$127 plus \$30 for the installation media. Other Microsoft products, Adobe and hardware are also available. Call Jean at the office, 715-538-2298, for price quotes and to order.

NCCBA

www.nccba-gc2.com

WEBSITE

CHILD ABUSE REPORTING laws by State on our website under RESOURCES

New Staff Background Checks

NCCBA is now able to perform background checks for member churches. Call Don at the office, 715-538-2298.

awaited event. Many people have commented about, "How long winter seems this year." I am not quite sure how come this winter seemed so long to folks, but it has.

However, the most interesting thing I have noticed in the last two weeks is all the junk the snow covered. My wife Sandy and I take a walk together each morning that the weather and our schedules allow. Along the country roads where we walk the ditches recently deep in snow are now dotted with McDonald's drink cups, beer cans and bottles, and various other types of debris.

Of course, the disappearing snow also lays bare the rich dirt of this area which produces such an abundance of nourishing food when properly watered, cultivated, fertilized and tended. There are even places where the ground cover is still green and already appears to be growing. The local TV weather reporter has even shown several pictures of plants pushing up out of the ground.

All of this has caused me wonder what kind of debris has been collecting in the ditches of my life "during the winter" that has been covered up by the snow. The snow, especially when new fallen, is beautiful. It glistens and sparkles in the sunlight after the storm. In the enjoyment of the new events of life we can fail to see the debris that is collecting in the ditches, particularly when the snow-plows of life push the remainder of those events into the ditches to make way for us to plunge on to the next new event.

However, eventually the warming of the spring-time sun melts away the snow and ice, and the debris remains exposed and reveals the need for a clean-up detail. Although, as Conservative Baptists, we don't follow the church-year and practice traditions such as lent, perhaps this is a good time for us to think about cleaning up the ditches of our lives. Easter Sunday is not far off. Good Friday-good because on that first Good Friday Jesus Christ died on the cross to pay the debt of my sin and guilt and shame-and yours also-is even nearer. What a wonderful time to clean the ditches of our lives so that when we walk with our Lord early in the morning what we see is the lush new growth of spring-time rather than the debris of winter.

Sometimes the clean-up process is hard work, often filled with sadness and sorrow over what has accumulated. The awareness of the thoughts, feelings and actions that produced that debris may prove humbling, and require much labor to repair or restore the relationships damaged in the process. AND, a significant part of the

MEDIA RESOURCES

Father, Son & Holy Spirit:

Relationships, Roles & Relevance

This book by Bruce Ware is available from the NCCBA office for \$10. Highly recommended. Email the office at nccba@trivest.net



From the Truth Project: DOES GOD EXIST?

This is an outstanding series that will help prepare your high school kids for college. It is produced by the same group that did the Truth Project. It includes ten sessions on DVD and ten student books. Our price is \$50.89 plus \$10.00 for shipping.

Retail for the same set is \$110.89. If you would like to get a preview of why you should consider this go to www.trueu.org and check out: The Toughest Test in College..

Antioch School of Evangelism & Church Planting

Go to College at Your Home Church

Would you be interested in

message of Resurrection Sunday is that God is very much into the clean up with us.

My prayer for you and your families and your churches, as well as for myself and mine, is that this season will produce many bags full of debris put out with the trash, for the Heavenly Garbage Collector to take to the dump-which is as far away from us as the east is from the west. To God be the glory for the things He has done!

After Christmas math report: 2 Month Goal- 10 lbs and 1 inch; actual- 14 lbs and 2 inches. Giving glory and honor to God. Are you being successful in losing weight and inches? Keep on working toward your goal.

Hopefully,

*Nicholas D. Bell, LMFT
Stillman Valley, Illinois*

YOUTH PASTORS:

From the State Youth Fellowship in Illinois

www.syfil.org

Winter Retreat Reports

Approximately 8-10 churches joined together for our annual winter youth retreats in January! A Youth Pastor from the State Youth Fellowship directs each retreat. Jr. High Blizzard took place January 8-10, followed by Sr. High SnoCamp January 15-17. Pine Trail camp (Saugatuck, Michigan) was our host for both retreats. For more information on Pine Trail Camp, go to www.pinetrailcamp.org. The primary purpose for each retreat was for spiritual growth to take place in each of the student's lives. Jr. High Blizzard '10 was directed by Jason Wilson, and co-directed by Joan Vana. Our speaker was Kevin Kasper, (Youth Leader at Christ Community Church of St. Charles). He did a real good job speaking - addressing creation (Genesis 1-3), & the lives of Jesus (Matt. 22) & Elijah (I Kings 16-19), applying these to the students. The worship band was from Ohio - they had served at camp before in the summer. We had around 160 students & staff attend this year!

Sr. High SnoCamp '09 was directed by Andy Polheber. The theme was "Trial By Fire". Our speaker was Mike Severe (Youth Ministry Professor at Toccoa Falls College). In years past, Mike

being able to offer college level material in your local church?

Would you be interested in being able to facilitate in providing a bachelors degree from your local church? Are you interested in being able to develop your current and next generation leadership?

If you answered yes to any or all of these we encourage you to look into this resource.

Antioch School of Evangelism and Church Planting is a resource that will help equip your church for all of the above. We have three churches in the region that have become certified--Forest City Baptist, Rockford, IL; FBC Jackson, MN; and FBC Whitehall, WI. For further information contact Don Shaw at 715-538-2298 or by email nccba@trivest.net

served as Youth Pastor for one of our SYF churches (First Presbyterian Church of Ottawa) and was SnoCamp Director as well, so it was great to reunite with him and his family! He did a great job speaking from Daniel chapters 1 and 3, then Elijah & Mt. Carmel (I Kings 18) - applying them to the students. Dave Pikel (me) led a Concert of Prayer on Saturday Night - providing multiple experiences to interact with the Lord individually and in groups. **Resonate** was our worship band - mainly from the Dekalb/Sycamore area churches. I heard several say that **Resonate** provided worship experiences that were better than ever before - PTL! We had around 130 students & staff attend this year!

"BREAKAWAY '10"

Our annual jr. & sr. high evangelistic outreach event called "Breakaway" is coming up April 17&18. Duane Keleman once again is directing this event. Last year we had over 650 in attendance (512 teens!) from 24 churches! It was estimated that 27% of the students attending last year were not yet Christians, and approximately 20% of the unbelievers attending received Christ that night! The speaker this year is Ray McElroy - former NFL player and Chaplain of the Chicago Bears!

Pray for a great spiritual harvest - not just of salvations at the event, but solid seed plants that the Christian students can follow up on in the future - for those not yet ready to respond positively to the gospel. See www.syfil.org for more info.

HEIDEL HOUSE '10

REST, REFRESH, RELATE, & REFUEL!

NCCBA's Youth Pastor/Leaders & Spouse Retreat
April 23-25, 2010

Sure hope you can join us for our annual weekend getaway at the [Heidel House](#). If you haven't received a flier yet, be sure to contact the NCCBA office [at their website](#) or call 715-538-2298. We will have our own schedule, separate from the Senior Pastors & Spouses. The purpose is for rest, relaxation & relationships. The surroundings greatly help provide for this to happen!

Grace n Peace 2 u,

Dave Pikel

www.cometolifeministries.org

YOUTH PASTOR/LEADER AND SPOUSE RETREAT

Heidel House Resort in Green Lake, Wisconsin

April 23-25, 2010

Youth Leaders: You should have received an invitation in the mail. Registration can be made by mail or [online](#)

Reduced price this year! For details about the retreat, contact Duane Keleman at 708-474-5400 or by email neonpastorduane@netscape.net

Henry Spicer Scholarship

The Henry Spicer Scholarship is awarded each year to high school seniors planning to attend college in the fall. To qualify, an applicant must be a committed Christian AND a regular attendee of a NCCBA affiliated church. Three \$500 scholarships were awarded last year. The amount and number varies from year to year. For more information and an application, go to our [website](#) or call the office at 715-538-2298.

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CHAPLAINCY: "Tell Me the Story"

I recently visited four of our CBAmerica Chaplains at Fort Drum in upstate New York. There is constant movement of soldiers deploying and returning from the two war zones. I spent time with one chaplain who just returned from Afghanistan and with another leaving in a few days. The two other chaplains spent time in Iraq with their soldiers. There were many stories to be told. Let me share one of them with you.

Gordon was one of our chaplains at the Forward Operating Base (FOB) near the city of Mosul in Northern Iraq (old Nineveh). He had a lot of dealings with the local merchants while getting supplies for their ministry. He began to build a relationship with a very large, important business man in that city and their friendship grew.

One day this man invited Gordon to tea. After all the opening formalities were finished, the man looked at Gordon and asked him "tell me the story". Gordon wasn't sure what the man meant and replied, "I know a lot of stories. Which one do you want to hear"? The reply caught Gordon off guard. He wanted to hear the story of the man who bled.

Gordon thought for a bit then told the story of Jesus starting from his praying in the Garden where Jesus sweat fell as great drops of blood. He told of the whipping, the beating with sticks and the crown of thorns. He described the nails being driven into Jesus' hands and feet and then final act of the centurion piercing the side of Jesus with his spear. He then shared the verse from 1 John 1:7, " But if we are living in the light of God's presence, just as Christ is, then we have fellowship with each other, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, cleanses us from every sin". The businessman said he loved this story and that he was a follower of Jesus. He said in that region of Iraq many are Christians but they are severely persecuted for their faith. They are afraid to openly share their faith so they have devised a way to let others know they are followers of Jesus. He pulled a red glass stone from his pocket and said when they buy things and take coins from their pocket they include the red stone for others to see. That lets others know they are believers. How do you share your faith with others?

Pray for **Jonathan Stephens** from Illinois to Afghanistan, **Vincent Hokkanen** of Minnesota to Kuwait/Iraq and **Robert Rand** of Illinois to Afghanistan. These are chaplains from our region who are deployed. If your church would like to send care packages to any of them contact Al Russell by phone at 218-776-2813 or e-mail him at chapruss@earthlink.net and we will get you in touch with them. Remember their families in your prayers.

GOOD IDEA SECTION

"Why Smaller Churches Don't Grow"

By Dan Reiland

Why is it that so many smaller churches are not growing? Good question. It rarely has anything to do with how much the pastor and key leaders love God. Some of the most devoted followers of Jesus I know lead smaller churches that are not growing. It also has little to do with whether or not the church is part of a denomination. There are denominational churches that are growing, and denominational churches that aren't. Location isn't a deal killer

either. Location is important, obviously, but alone doesn't prevent growth. Let's say, for example, your church is located in a small rural area. That will have a definite impact on the rate of growth and overall growth potential of your congregation. But it doesn't prevent it from growing. We know this from smaller churches in little towns that are doing well. We know this even more so because of the reverse. There are smaller churches in huge cities that aren't growing at all.

So what is it? Before I offer some thoughts about why smaller churches aren't growing I want to mention something that I have written about a few times. It's "The Big Three". They are prayer, evangelism and leadership (development). This is a given. There is and will always be a direct relationship between the emphasis on these things and the growth of your church. The intriguing thing about these three elements is that they apply to both smaller and larger churches.

The following five questions are connected to possibilities about why your church isn't growing, or could stop growing. They are meant to serve you as a tool for evaluation that can move to implementation and ultimately change that produces growth. These five ideas are not designed to be specific solutions, but a set of leadership lenses to help you see your church more clearly. I pray that as you consider these five, you may be encouraged about the potential of your church's future.

• **Has friendship outpaced focus?**

One of the best things about a smaller church is that the fellowship is alive and vibrant. People love and care for each other deeply. People know each others names and connections are tight. That's a good thing, a very good thing, but it can backfire when it comes to growing the church. New people visit and the church is friendly, but friendly like in a hotel where the guests are not expected to stay for a long time.

It's easy for a smaller church to turn inward and invest most of its ministry energy into itself. In time this will begin to shape how decisions are made, how money is spent, and ultimately what the church does and doesn't do in order to reach people.

In one way or another, the Great Commission is the focus of your church. It's why your church was started and why you keep it going. A focus on friendship and relationships in general can take your

leadership eyes off the goal. So, how about your church, which is truly first? Is your focus on the Great Commission or caring for established relationships?

• **Have you stopped believing its possible?**

I'm certain that when your church was started there was great passion and hope for its future. That's how all churches start. Years into the journey, however, some or even all the zeal can fade. And when the road has been particularly difficult for some time, it's possible to no longer believe the church will ever grow again. You can talk the talk in the lobby and even on the platform, but deep down inside you may have given up.

This sounds bleak, but I'm compelled to say it because it's true in far too many churches. If you are the pastor or a key leader, you must believe your church can grow. You must believe it has a future. And if you can't believe that, then believe that God has imagined a future and He can grow it, but He needs you in the game. God needs you to change your mind to match His. Capturing the mind of Christ about your church is essential.

Kevin Myers, Senior Pastor of 12Stone Church where I serve as XP in Lawrenceville, GA occasionally tells the story of when he gave up. Many years ago the church was small and struggling and he lost faith in the church's future. He shared this with a close pastor friend and his friend said; if you've lost faith that your church can go on, borrow mine! Kevin did! Today 12Stone has thousands of people attending. The size of the church isn't as important your belief. Find some leaders close to you who still believe and tap into their faith until yours is once again strong enough to take the lead.

• **Have you embraced a shotgun ministry style?**

Over-simplified and exaggerated for affect, there are two approaches to ministry design in your church. 1.) "If you have an idea for a new ministry that might help somebody, do it." 2.) "No new ministries are started here for the next two years." The general vibe of the first one is "Yes." And the general vibe of the second is "No." The second is the wiser of the two.

If you and your church team employ a nearly random freedom to start ministries, even though they may be good, you create a busy mess of activity. You inadvertently experience a lack of focus that drains the best ministries, and exhausts volunteers and staff. In the

big picture, you are doing more and accomplishing less.

It's important that you offer fewer ministries in order to accomplish more life-changing ministry impact. To do this, you need to be very intentional in your choice of ministries. No one church can do every ministry, that's an obvious fact. So what you choose to do needs to be selected wisely and prayerfully. Saying no to all other ministry options is not squelching the Holy Spirit, its common sense granted from God. Doing less allows you to do it better and with deeper impact.

• **Is there a lack of courageous teaching?**

Loud doesn't indicate truth and thundering away doesn't guarantee courage. Courage comes from the inside. This kind of godly boldness overcomes personal fear. When you know God is speaking to you, there is a quiet confidence that allows you to stand before the people and speak the truth, letting the chips fall where they may.

I've been reading commentaries for many years. I respect the hard work the authors put into their craft. But I get frustrated when they get to the difficult verses and glance over them or skip them altogether. I don't need commentaries for the easy verses! People in your church feel the same way about the messages, even if they don't say it. Don't skip saying the hard stuff. I'm not referring only to difficult biblical passages. In fact, I'm really talking about the spiritual leadership contained in your teaching.

If you are the pastor, let me shoot straight. Ask God what He wants to say to your people and say it. Don't back down. Say it in love, but say it. People respond to truth, they don't always like it on the first round, but they instinctively know its right. People respond better, over the long haul, to robust vision over nicely crafted scholarly sermons! Don't expect one Sunday to accomplish the big picture. This is a 52 week a year process.

• **Does popularity override good decision-making?**

Pressure is part of every leader's life. How you handle it internally and what you do with it externally matters. Pastors have to deal with their issues just like anyone else. Pastors love people. That's a good thing. The bad thing that often accompanies that reality is that pastors want to please people. In a smaller church that can turn into an issue of popularity. If the pastor's desire to be liked becomes unhealthy, that can have a huge impact on decision-making in the

church. This does not reflect integrity or morals, just human nature.

I'm a pastor and I love people. I prefer that people love me back. But that doesn't always happen. Especially if I have to deliver an answer that goes against what someone wants. But I must choose the right leadership decision over being liked. Candidly, those moments aren't much fun, but they are necessary. And they can make the difference about whether or not a smaller church stays small or grows larger.

Take an honest look at these five questions. I trust that addressing one or more with serious effort will help your church reach its potential!

Upcoming Events

BREAKAWAY all-niter for Illinois teens Rally, gospel presentation, food & games	April 17-18, 2010	Details at SYF website
Pastors Seminar Pastors & Wives Retreat NCCBA Annual Meeting	April 21-22, 2010 April 22-23, 2010 April 23, 2010	Register for Seminar & Retreat on our website Heidel House Resort Green Lake, Wisconsin
Youth Pastor/Leader & Spouse Retreat	April 23-25	Register on our website Heidel House Resort Green Lake, Wisconsin

NCCBA Churches In Need of a Pastor

Please pray for the following churches and Search Committees:

- Ganson Street Baptist Church--Jackson MI YOUTH PASTOR
- First Baptist Church--Colfax IA YOUTH PASTOR
- First Baptist Church--Elk Horn IA
- First Baptist Church--Luverne MN
- Cavalier Baptist Church--Cavalier ND
- Keystone Baptist Church--Chicago IL

Contact Our Office

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