

THE VOICE NEWSLETTER

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January 2021

PRESIDENT'S CORNER – Pastor Jonathan Edwards

Greetings brothers and sisters in Christ! It seems most everyone is happy to close the books on 2020, but before you do, I would like to you consider a question: How did God use the challenges of 2020 to make you more like Christ?

In Romans 5 and James 1, both Paul and James indicate that one of the great purposes of trials and sufferings is that they are a tool God uses to transform us into the image of Christ. This process is called sanctification and it involves putting off sin and putting on righteous deeds, growing in the fruit of the Spirit, and continuing to set oneself apart from the sinful world. My prayer for you is that the challenges of 2020 revealed some areas of sin, complacency, or ungodliness that need to be fixed. I also pray that as you move into a new year, you'll dedicate yourself to transformation in Christlikeness (Romans 12:2).

As we do look forward to 2021 and to "getting back to normal," I want to offer a word of caution and warning. As the people of God who stand firmly on His truth, our society is going to grow increasing intolerant of the message we proclaim. Jesus said to His disciples, "If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you" (John 15:18). We ought to begin expecting an increase in persecution from both sides of the political aisle for the Gospel that we proclaim is offensive to them! My dear friends, we are entering the time when true discipleship will be tested. Are you ready? I hope you are – let us commit to praying for strength to endure the challenges that lie ahead.

****Conference Dates: July 2-6, 2021****

More details to come in February Voice Newsletter!

LAKELAND CONSERVATIVE GRACE BRETHREN CHURCH

We are happy to announce that David Beyer of the Lakeland Church and Lois Kisner were married on May 7, 2020 in Richmond, Indiana with Pastor Ralph Kisner officiating. David graduated from Grace Seminary with a one-year Certificate and Lois graduated from Grace College with majors in Biblical Studies and Psychology. They currently reside at 405 Twin Bridge Road, Little Hocking, Ohio 45742-5191. David can also be reached at davidgbzx@hotmail.com. Thank you for all your prayers and support over the years!

ANKENYTOWN GRACE BRETHREN CHURCH

We, the congregation of Ankenytown Grace Brethren Church (located in north central Ohio) are seeking a pastor for our rural congregation.

In addition to the Biblical requirements for a pastor found in I Timothy 3:1-8, Titus 1:6-9, and I Peter 5:2-3...We desire a man whose preaching is based solely on the Holy Bible; "the Bible, the whole Bible, and nothing but the Bible in faith and practice" is our church motto. We are, and desire, to remain Brethren and want the pastor to embrace, preach and teach the ordinances of the Brethren church which include trine immersion and threefold communion. As a congregation, we enjoy discussion during teaching sessions and would like a man who encourages this type of open dialog and interaction. We are looking for a true shepherd; a man who cares about the individuals not only attending the services but their families who may not attend, as well as church shut-ins. We seek a man who is listening to and attentive to the leading of the Holy Spirit—no matter when the Spirit might lead (even during an organized program). We have an on-site church secretary, currently a female, and we expect the pastor to be willing to work with the church secretary at the church office. We are a congregationally united church. Interested candidates should contact the Ankenytown Grace Brethren Church at ankenytownngbc20@yahoo.com. Or: Jerry Cook – Chairman, Pastoral Search Committee (740) 694-6936 Jlcook342@gmail.com (740) 398-9081

SOMERSET GRACE BRETHREN CHURCH - PASTOR TOM JOHNSON

PTL! Thank you to everyone who prayed for the sale of our old church building. The sale is now completed and our new (to us) building is paid off. The Lord also got it done before the heating bills from the old building started accumulating. It has been a long process. It looked easy and smooth when we started, but ended up as a disaster. The Lord was faithful and brought us through. We are now looking for the Lord to bring in new people. The church is surrounded by houses, and many people walk by hourly. We have had many new interactions with the neighbors. Pray with us for some members to return who are avoiding the Corona and for others from the neighborhood to visit, get saved, and join.

MISHAWAKA GRACE BRETHREN CHURCH – PASTOR DAVY TROXEL

Praise His grace and mercy! The Lord has brought over half of our congregation through the trial of Covid. Some are still recuperating or are on quarantine. Meanwhile, we continue to meet online, and in person at about 2/3 the usual number, still gradually increasing. We are blessed to have a governor who knows that worship is essential, and doesn't hinder it. We did cancel some big annual events, and made some other smaller changes, but fellowship is still happening, and has never felt so welcome. We even had a beautiful wedding for Bryanna Stergios and Philip Miller.

Thanks to Jesus, and to all who prayed for our saints.

We had to say, "See you later" to our dear brother who helped so much to clean the church, Dick McDonough, who recently was promoted to heaven. Pray for his wonderful serving wife, Mary.

NEW TROY GRACE BRETHREN CHURCH – PASTOR ROBERT MENSINGER

God is continuing to bless here at New Troy. We had our Layman's Sunday on November 15 and pastor Bob's son, Van, preached for the morning service and it was well received. We had our election of officers & approval of the budget on November 22. We also had our "Pie & Praise Night." It was well attended. I was able to call on Dennis Casto and Pastor Russell Panico and observe Covid 19 restrictions. They are doing ok and continue to hang in there.

We lost our dear brother Harold Mensinger on November 2. He was 97 years old and had been a member of our church for 70 years.

I am teaching through 1 Peter in the morning services and 1 Kings in the evening services. We continue to post the morning messages on Facebook and YouTube and on the church website. We had our annual all-church Christmas breakfast and 17 attended. Also, we had our annual Christmas Sing and ten turned out for it.

So far, we have not had any health issues since resuming live services. We praise the Lord for his protection in that matter.

HOME MISSIONS

NATIONAL EVANGELISM TEAM – PASTOR DEL MILLER

***The NET '21 application deadline is February 15th ***

REVITALIZE VERMONT – UPDATE BY PASTOR GORDY HARMON

There have been many trials this past year, but so many blessings. Our God is Faithful! He holds us in His hands continually. His eyes are upon us and His ears are open to us. He is the Great Giver, having lavished upon us the greatest gift of all, our Savior and Redeemer, Jesus. He promised to build His church even while the enemy wars against Him. God is working a work where you are and in Vermont! In order to offer you a first-hand report, I have asked Pastor Scott Libby to write this month's RV Update. His update reads as follows:

"The battle to revive our hearts before the Lord continues, with several encouraging victories occurring over the past two months. I personally have been blessed by the ministry of Pastor Maley as he has helped to initiate new ideas and approaches to evangelism and discipleship in our congregation. We've had a number of new visitors over the summer and fall, with several individuals becoming involved in small groups. One of our great strengths has been the implementation of "Grace Groups" and personal one-on-one, or one-on-few, discipleship meetings that have been ongoing. I myself routinely have four to five small home Bible studies each week. On November 1st, we baptized four young adults whom either Pastor Bryan or I have been discipling. My daughter, Anna has been a witness in her workplace, and just recently one of her coworkers started attending church, along with her mother and daughter. They first "broke the ice" by coming to a "Soup / Dessert Cook-off" fellowship time on Friday night, October 30. Since then, Anna's coworker has come to know the Lord, and we continue to meet with her weekly at our house for discipleship. Over the course of time, Pastor Bryan

has found it very difficult to be splitting his time between our two GBC churches (Irasburg and LVGBC). We see the need for another man to come and assist Pastor Ethan specifically at Morrisville in a more involved and consistent way. Please pray for wisdom among the Elders of both churches. The passage motivating us to “Connect, Grow, Serve” is Colossians 1:28-29. We proclaim Him, admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, so that we may present every man complete in Christ. For this purpose, also I labor, striving according to His power, which mightily works within me.” We appreciate your prayers and loving support! May Jesus be glorified. In Christ, Pastor Scott Libby

Pray—Pastor Scott continues to lead five small group Bible studies most every week.

Pray—Pastor Bryan is attempting to focus more of his time in Lamoille Valley.

Pray—Youth Groups in both churches would continue to grow and serve.

Pray—Pastors Scott, Ethan, Bryan and their families.

Thank you for praying for the Maleys and the work going forth in our Vermont churches. Consider please being a financial supporter. Send your support to:

Pastor Tom Johnson, 222 Marker Drive, Somerset, PA 15501

****REMINDER: ALL FOREIGN AND HOME MISSIONS OFFERINGS ARE TO BE SENT TO: ****

Pastor Tom Johnson, 222 Marker Drive, Somerset, PA 15501

FOREIGN MISSIONS UPDATES

PAPUA NEW GUINEA – PASTOR CRAIG NOYES

Hi Everyone! Hopefully you’ve all had a chance to see our latest update video by now. Exciting isn’t it?!?! We, on this side of the world are both excited and intimidated. We know many of the trials and struggles that wait for us as we start building our houses and begin learning the language of the people there; and there are many more things that we don’t know about (we know that much at least!). If you haven’t seen the latest update video yet, you can find it on my Facebook page or on our website www.newfields.wordpress.com. Now I want to share some big prayer requests with you.

1. We need help building our houses and, because of COVID restrictions, it looks like it’s going to be really difficult to get short term teams in. (We’re still hoping it will work out, but at least for the beginning of building it looks unlikely). However, it looks more likely we’ll be able to get Joel Kuhns and Jonathan Steiner in for up to 6 months to help us build. It will be a very small team and a lot of work for the 4 of us, but we think, if they are able to make it in, we can make it happen. Some tribal believers from several days walk away have also heard about our need and have told us that they are willing to come help us because as they said, “This work can’t wait. You have to get in there and start this work!” They are unskilled but their willingness is so encouraging. Ok, finally we get to the prayer request! PLEASE pray that Jonathan and Joel can get into the country ASAP so we can start building! Please pray too that some short-term teams can get in. Specifically, we need a viable route to PNG to open up for anyone to get in and for quarantine to be lifted for the short term team to make it in.
2. We need someone to take over for me in the logistics job (See the Millers latest post for more details about this www.joshautumnmiller.blogspot.com). We have a family that is willing to come

until Oct 2021 as a short term fix. We probably can't start building until they get into the country, so the same prayer requests from point one apply here! But since they are leaving PNG in OCT of 2021, a long-term replacement would ideally be getting ready to come now with support raising and personal plans, etc. GULP! We don't have any long-term people on the radar. If you've ever wondered if God would have you move from the "sending" side of missions to the "going" side, even for as little as 2 years, please contact me. craigmnoyes@gmail.com. PLEASE pray for the Lord to raise someone up for this role and for the short-term solution to get here ASAP.

We love all of you and miss you dearly. Thanks for your faithfulness. God has raised so many of you up already to play critical roles in this ministry from giving, to encouraging and praying to being willing to come help get tasks done over here. Love, Craig & Sara.

AFRICA – PASTOR KEITH MERRIMAN

The ministry in Africa continues to be very exciting! Seven new Christians were trine immersed by Pastor Moses this past Sunday at Orungo GBC in Uganda. Pastor Roger Yoda (Uganda) is following up on a new contact in Kenya and hopes that we will have another church there next year. Pastor Gilbert Amaswache (Kenya) had a profitable practorium ministry training the men in Nairobi in the past week. Pastor Godfroid (East Cameroon) reports they had their first threefold communion service in Nnom Gwala (pygmy area) in November and the church continues to grow.

Pastor Salomon Zambo (Cameroon) recently baptized Francoise, a new believer in their church at Mfomakap, and Pastor Salomon's sister, Marie Claire, also came to know the Lord!! He asks for prayer as he is discipling these new believers. Also pray for Marie Claire's husband, Maxime, to be saved and their home to be restored.

Please also pray for Pastor Protais Nshogoza in Rwanda as he struggles to finalize the paperwork for CGBCI government recognition in Rwanda.

Thanks to all for your gifts and prayers for the ministry in Africa. Giving has been down this year we are \$24,177.00 behind budget for the first six months as a fellowship.

"The Voice Newsletter" is the communication tool of the Conservative Grace Brethren Churches International; and edited by Pastors Ike Graham and Les Vnasdale.

News Articles and/or Mailing Updates:

Please forward all info to Pastor Chris Knight at cgbcivoicenews@gmail.com Snail mail to: PO BOX 58, Listie, PA 15549