

Four Church Plant Launches in Ohio/Pennsylvania Scheduled for Autumn '06

What a way to start the new program year! All of the prayer-filled hours, weeks and months filled with training, planning and promoting culminate into one event that stretches the physical, emotional and spiritual limits of the church planter and the entire launch team! It's no wonder we refer to it as the *birth* of a new church. As a family celebrates the arrival of a new baby, I invite our entire district to anticipate and celebrate the official arrival of four new churches to our district, each with "due dates" during the Fall season of 2006:



On Sunday, September 10, I had the privilege to witness the launch of the much-anticipated **Steel City Church** in the strip district of downtown Pittsburgh, PA. At 6:00 pm on a Sunday evening, nearly all of the businesses on Penn Avenue were closed down, except for the Altar Bar. It is a church building that has been modified inside to serve the physical and social appetites of those that enter its doors. The symbolism of launching a new church in that building is breathtaking. ***Church planters Damian and Anne Williams, and the launch team of Steel City Church, are being used by God to reclaim His holy ground!***

The atmosphere was very casual. People were invited to come in off of the street, to enjoy the music and refreshments, and to hear the vision God has given to Damian for this new church. Damian's message explained what church was meant to be and how many churches have failed God by misrepresenting Him as ungracious and judgmental. Church is made up of imperfect people! As Damian put it, "This church isn't full of hypocritical people. There's room for one more." What a message of grace! Come just as you are. You will fit in! I encourage you to continue to pray for the ongoing ministry of Steel City Church.

Check out the front page story on the Pittsburgh Post Gazette's September 13 issue at this web address!
<http://postgazette.com/pg/06256/721297-51.stm>



Pastor Damian looks up to those in the balcony as he shares the inaugural sermon.



Pastor Freddie Rodriguez and the worship band lead in an offering of praise to God.

- Central Ohio will witness the birth of three churches:
- September 24 Terra Nova Church; Pastor Jason Allison (Delaware)
 - October 1 New Hope Community Church—Wooster Campus; Campus Pastor Matt Thompson
 - Fall 2006 Filipino Christian Fellowship; Pastor Butch Badar (Columbus)

Please keep these pastors, their families and their launch teams in prayer as they work hard to expand God's Kingdom as He has called them to do.

Love Lift for Ukraine Update



God worked in amazing ways in Ukraine this summer! Over 1,500 children attended day camps through the MBC sister church ministry. Sandi and I believe this was the best trip ever! We had the opportunity to meet with all of the team leaders at the MBC office in early September. What wonderful stories of the benefits of sistering! More in-depth insight into each of the team's experiences will be provided to all MBC churches with the production of the MBC Ukraine News Letter to be sent out in the near future.



Plans for 2007 include:

- Celebrate Love Lift Ukraine A district-wide event held on March 3, at First Baptist Church in New Castle, PA.
- Spring Trip March 21—April 1
- Summer Trips July 18-31
July 25 – Aug 7
July 25 - Aug 6
July 27 – Aug 6



More information on these events, can be found at the MBC Website (www.bgcmideast.com).

Prayer for Churches without Pastors

As we celebrate the vision God has given our pastors for planting churches, we also share in the struggles of our brothers and sisters who are meeting together without a pastor to lead them. Please keep the following churches in our district in prayer as they anxiously search and wait for God to reveal the man He has called to lead them:

Mentor Baptist Church (Mentor, OH)
Hope To You Community Church (Crofton, MD)
Bethel Church of Cleveland Heights (Cleveland Heights, OH)
Woodland Valley Church (Mars, PA)

Baptist General Conference President to speak at Grace Baptist Church in Erie, PA

Dr. Jerry Sheveland, President of the Baptist General Conference, will be speaking at Grace Baptist Church in Erie, PA on Saturday, October 21. The conference is titled *Breaking the Barriers: Leading Congregational Change*. Dr. Sheveland will address the natural barriers that hinder the growth and effectiveness of any church. The day will begin and 9:00 am and conclude at 3:30 pm. Lunch will be provided. All this for only \$20! Call Grace Church at (814) 833-5384 for more information, or visit their web site:

www.grace-erie.org

All MBC churches are invited.

Summer & Fall at Camp Burton (Dave Scull)

Summer was a blur of fun! We had 435 campers this year and praise God because there were many first time decisions for Christ and many more commitments. Plus, we had 17 campers from our new Day Camper program. Day Camp was offered two weeks in the summer for kids age 4 through 4th grade. Things don't slow down for the fall. Camp has retreats booked for every



weekend, except one, through November. Here's a list of what's happening: Work Day – Friday, September 29 & Saturday, September 30; Harvest Party - Saturday, October 29; Winter Camp - Wednesday, December 27 – Friday, December 29. Check out the MBC Web Site for more information!



MBC LEAD Teams Gearing up for Fall '06

Pastors need the encouragement and camaraderie of fellow pastors! Our LEAD teams meet bi-monthly (excluding Summer) to focus on the spiritual vitality of our leaders as well as the multiplication (church planting) and mobilization of the churches in our district. Join other senior pastors in your area as they come together in a retreat atmosphere that includes a fun activity (such as paint-ball or a movie) and dinner out with the guys interspersed with pertinent discussions regarding the goals and direction of our movement. Each meeting begins in the afternoon on the first day and concludes with lunch on the second day.

The dates for the various LEAD Teams for Fall '06 are:

Northeast Ohio - Nov 6-7

DC area - Sep 18-19

Central OH - Nov. 28-29

Northeast (Western NY) - Oct 16-17

North Carolina/Virginia - Dec 4-5

Central/Eastern PA - Nov 29-30 (**New Team!**)

Start making plans to attend the upcoming LEAD Team in your area or contact the Mideast Baptist Conference for more information!

Contact Joan Schroeder at the MBC office for information on LEADNet; a similar support system for senior pastor's wives. (Joan@bgcmideast.com)

Northeast Ohio LEAD Team calls the Knickerbockers to plant in North Lima, OH

The Northeast Ohio LEAD Team met with Dave and Vanda Knickerbocker as part of their August gathering at which time they officially extended the call on behalf of the Mideast Baptist Conference for them to plant a church in North Lima, OH. The name of the new church is **The Gate**, based on Jesus' offer of a full life in John 10:9-10. Dave has been filling in as my executive assistant since December 2005, and will remain here until he takes on church planting full time in January 2007.



New LEAD TEAM Formed!

Pastors from the State College, Harrisburg and Philadelphia areas of Pennsylvania met on September 13 and discussed the potential for forming a new LEAD Team for that part of the state. The unanimous decision of the men present was to officially recognize the formation of the new **Central/Eastern Pennsylvania LEAD Team!** The first LEAD Team meeting is scheduled for **November 29-30**, in Harrisburg, PA. Dan Nold will be serving as Head Coach of this new team.

MBC Financial Update

Giving to the MBC from our churches has remained strong even during the summer months! On behalf of our movement, I want to express a deep and heartfelt THANKS for the faithful financial involvement of every MBC church.

As we move into the fall ministry season, the continued partnership from every MBC member church is crucial! Your church is making a significant impact for Christ through its mission investment in our movement. Thanks again for your partnership in this great Kingdom endeavor!

As you can see, things did not come to a grinding halt over the summer months across the Mideast Baptist Conference! I trust that you have taken ample time to get away so that we can get back to full throttle for the new season. Thanks for all you are doing.

All for His Glory,