

Focus

Healthy Loving Relationships

We will build friendly, safe, and caring circles in which people experience the fullness of God's grace.

Phone (260) 982-6457 Fax (260) 982-1778 Email: office@nmfbc.org Web: www.nmfbc.org

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Our Core Values

Healthy Loving Relationships
Spirit-Led Worship
Persistent Passionate Prayer
Empowered Servant-Leadership
Transformational Discipleship
Need-Based Evangelism



The carols are more than songs they are sermons put to music so we can remember Truth.

Detached Generosity: The Slave is our Brother?

By Pastor Kurt Stout

The carols we sang at Christmas have some great words proclaiming not only the birth of Jesus, but His mission. In the past few years I've tried to ponder on these familiar words and let God's message pierce my hurried, routine heart. The carols are more than songs they are sermons put to music so we can remember Truth. Each year there seems to be one line that God points out to me and says that's from Me to you. Ponder on this phrase this season. In past years the message to me has been, "the *hopes and fears of all the years* are met in thee tonight " (O Little Town of Bethlehem – 1st verse), and "cast out our sin and enter in, *be born in us today*" (O Little Town of Bethlehem – 4th verse), and "He comes to make His blessings flow *far as the curse is found*" (Joy to the World – 3rd verse). This year it was the marvelous promise "*God and sinners reconciled!*" (Hark! The Herald Angels Sing – 1st verse).

However, during the Christmas Service: Bethlehem Stories (12/19) I was hit with another line from a carol I don't often sing, but more often hear – O Holy Night. The third verse contained a challenging message and reminder – "Chains shall He break, for *the slave is our brother, And in His name all oppression shall cease.*" Freedom is not something shared around the world. I hear stories of imprisoned pastors, exploited children, brutalized widows, chained employees, but this carol reminded me that these are more than stories, they are people and many of these people are my brothers and sisters in Christ.

The truth of the carols, the promise of reconciliation, the hopes and fears of humanity, and the message of God caught my attention in that song on that Sunday morning. He doesn't just want me to give a donation or a voice to the plight of slavery or some other concern. God desires my heart, my prayers. He reminded me that He breaks the chains and ceases oppression in His name. Sometimes we get wrapped up in what we're doing for God that we miss what He is doing. We end up unintentionally "replacing" God by ceasing our connection when we "complete" our act of kindness.

Remember, prayer is action. Include prayer alongside "evident" acts of compassion. Beware of detached generosity – giving or serving without genuine emotional attachment. Did you pray for the camp when you gave a donation? Did you pray for the people who would eat the meal you dropped off? Have you considered praying about the families who receive your REACH canned food item? Do you pray for the church to which you give a tithe? Or for the community you visited on a mission trip? How about

Beware of detached generosity – giving or serving without genuine emotional attachment.

Prayer is action.

the kids who open your shoebox? Is there a deeper connection God is wishing to awaken in us? I believe so. You tell me, what is it that He's awaking in you?

Ushers In January



**USHER
SCHEDULE**

8:00 a.m.

Dennis Ayres**
Mike McKee
Craig Walters
Recruit
Recruit

9:15 a.m.

Roger Metzger**
Fred Thompson
Lynn Blocher
Recruit
Recruit

10:30 a.m.

Kevin Watson**
Larry Swihart
Dave Hofer
Steve Bucher
Jason Meredith

** Denotes head usher for that service

Any questions, please call
Carl Petrie 260-417-2246.

Prayer Cards in Pews

The green prayer cards in the pews are available for any prayer request. A group meets to pray each Wednesday at 6:30 a.m. You may place the card in the offering plate or leave it in the church office.



BLOOD PRESSURE

SCREENINGS will be on the third Sunday this month (January 16th) in Pastor

Ron's office. They will be held after first and second services. Blood pressure cuffs are available for loan/check-out in the church office.

2011 Offering Envelopes

Offering envelopes for the year 2011 are available in the office if you have not received yours yet. If you haven't used envelopes previously and would like to start, there are also numbers and envelopes available in the office.



Saturday, January 8th @12:00 p.m. at the Main View.

WMS

Monday, January 3rd

3:30 p.m.

At Timbercrest

Leader: Sandy Burch

Committee: Muffet Gray

Lesson: A Precious Work of Art

By Vickie Taylor

All Women Are Invited

"Come see what we're all about!"



Library Lines

Start off 2011 with a great book or video from the church library! Special thanks to Sherry Searles who is helping clear some of the older unused titles to make room for the many books that have been donated and purchased. We also have great magazines to read through as well. Want a quiet getaway? Grab a mug of your favorite coffee, cocoa, or tea and relax on the couch with a book!

India Pastor Profile

Yacob Ch. (Chinatapalli)* is the pastor of the Brethren church in Burugupudi village. His wife, Mrs. Ch. Mariya, is a good partner in the ministry with him. They have a son and a daughter. He received a certificate of Theology and a Diploma of Theology from the Brethren Bible Institute. Pastor Yacob is a good prayer warrior and has the gift of singing. Among their weekly activities are: Sunday School, Sunday Worship Service, Friday Fasting Prayer Meeting, Saturday Women Prayer Fellowship, and Weekly Youth Meeting. This village has a church building provided by the Brethren Mission with 195 baptized members (up from 185 last year). Continue to pray for the ministry of Pastor Yacob.

*Family Name

Thank You

From the Immels

We want to thank you for your support of our trip to India. We received hygiene items or money to buy them, and the Kumars are so grateful. We have felt your prayers during the planning time, and we know you will be praying for us as we travel and distribute blankets in the remote villages. Remember Keith too in our absence. God bless you all, our church family.

Linda and David Immel



Reggie & Julie Harvey

Reggie's birthday – January 10

Email: United_community@sbcglobal.net

Several years ago Reggie & Julie moved from Indianapolis to Dayton, OH to begin an intercultural ministry. The United Community Brethren Church has many activities for children, such as after school programs and tutoring. They are very involved with the intercultural community where they live. Reggie loves sharing with his Hoosier friends, and his birthday would be a good time to encourage him.

Italo & Rebecca Abuid

Rebecca's birthday – January 11

Email: rebainperu@yahoo.com

As you know, our friends Italo & Rebecca are beginning an orphanage in Puerto Maldonado in Peru, South America. Teams from our church have traveled there 3 times, and our church has been a huge part in this ministry. They are in the process of securing all the paperwork needed to bring children into the orphanage. They have recently decided to plant several acres of banana and papaya trees that will provide food and generate income for them. This would be a wonderful time to encourage them and remember Rebecca's birthday.

Safe Haven Marriage Conference

February 11-12, 2011

First Assembly of God Christian Center
1400 W. Washington Ctr. Rd.,
Fort Wayne

Join Sharon Morris May for an impacting weekend of marriage enrichment. Discover how you can make your marriage a haven of safety for you and your spouse.

Sharon has a Master's in Christian Leadership from Fuller Theological Seminary and a Ph.D. in Marriage and Family Therapy from Fuller Graduate School of Psychology. She is a licensed Marriage and Family Therapist in California and Director of the Haven of Safety Relationships.

Friday and Saturday, she will be presenting her Haven of Safety message to area couples.

For more information, contact Nancy Williams, at Renew Counseling Center, 260-490-8585 or email nancywilliams@firstassemblyfw.org.



Our Deepest Sympathy

Our deepest sympathies to the family of Tom Platt who passed away Thursday, November 25th. Services were held Tuesday, November 30th.

Our deepest sympathies to the family of Toby Shepherd who passed away Saturday, November 27th. Services were held Thursday, December 2nd.

Thank You!

To all the wonderful ladies that gave us a nice meal after Tom's funeral. I appreciated a place to come and have my families together to help support each other through this time and a meal to go with it – plus leftovers. I thank each and every one of you.

Paula Platt

North Manchester Family,

You are such an amazing example of how one local church can change the world. I am blessed by your example! Thank you so much for supporting church planting in the Brethren Church. You are such an encouragement to our planters and to the MissioChurch team. May you be blessed in powerful new ways this Christmas and beyond!

*Warmly,
Bill Ludwig
Church Planting Coordinator*



Just Born

Congratulations to Andy and Kasie Eberly on the birth of their daughter, Rachel Ann, born Friday, November 26th, measuring 21 in. and weighing 7 lbs. 4 oz. She joins her brother and sisters, Jonathon, Hannah and Joanna.

Making the Comparison

During the Christmas season we probably did some comparison shopping; we compared prices for the same item at different stores to see where we can get the best value. God calls us to make comparisons; in fact, it's an essential part of the Christian life. In 2 Corinthians 4:17-18 the apostle Paul, speaking of the sufferings he endured in his ministry (which were tremendous), wrote, *For this slight momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal.* He wrote something similar in Romans 8:18, *For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us.*

The troubles of this life often don't seem slight or momentary; they can seem very heavy and never-ending. But when we compare them to the eternal glory that God has in store for us, then they appear in their true light, and that makes them much easier to bear.

In a commentary on 2 Corinthians, Scott Hafemann writes, "Whatever we long for and expect in the future determines how we live in the present." If our hope is set on what this world offers, then our lives will be accordingly worldly. But if our hope is set on God and spending eternity with Him, that will be seen in our lives, as well. It will

affect what we do with our time, energy and money, how we respond when we're wronged, how we react when we have a serious loss or the threat of a loss; in short, it will affect everything. As Hafemann writes, "Our hopes determine our habits."

Only those who make the comparison between the things of this life on the one hand, and having God on the other hand, can have true joy. Jesus told us to make this comparison in the Sermon on the Mount. He said that when we're persecuted for His sake, we should *rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.* (Matthew 5:12) This kind of joy is what enabled Jesus to endure the cross. Hebrews 12:3, speaking of Jesus, says, *who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.* Jesus compared the cross to the joy, and it was no contest.

Comparing prices can give us the satisfaction that we got a good deal. Comparing the things of this life with God and His glory give us joy, endurance in suffering, and fuels us to serve the Lord with abandon. By all means, let's make the comparison.

Ron Burns, Discipleship Coordinator
(All Scripture references are ESV)

No Lone Rangers

“The Lone Ranger” used to be a popular TV show, and the term “lone ranger” is used to refer to someone who operates by himself or herself. In Christianity, though, there are supposed to be no lone rangers. Ecclesiastes 4:9-10 says, *Two are better than one because they have a good return for their labor. For if either of them falls, the one will lift up his companion. But woe to the one who falls when there is not another to lift him up.* We need each other for support, encouragement and friendship, and we need to allow God to use us in others' lives in that way, as well. One important way that can happen is to be in a Sunday School class or small group. On Sunday, January 9th a brief survey will be taken during the worship services to ascertain peoples' interest in becoming part of a class or group. Please be thinking and praying about your availability for involvement in a class or group.

THANK YOU!
THANK YOU! THANK YOU! THANK YOU!

My family and I wish to thank the congregation for the kindness and generosity shown to us over the past year. In particular, during my Grandmother's death, during Pastor Appreciation month, and most recently the Christmas staff love offering.

We appreciate the loving ways you as a church family encourage and support us and our ministry here.

Pastor Kurt, Heidi, Isaac, Caleb, Beletu, and Hanna

Mission Trip Fundraisers

Painting Services Offered

Trever and Jasmine Jones are planning to go on a mission trip this coming summer. In preparation, Trever is offering to do painting to raise funds. Contact him at 260-228-0551 or worship247@live.com to schedule your winter project.



Truffles for Sale



Stacy Bashore and her daughter Jordan are planning a trip to Ecuador through the Never The Same Mission group the summer of 2011. To raise funds they will be selling homemade truffles from now until Valentine's Day. Call Stacy at 982-7325 to put your order in for six different varieties.

January

Compassion Corner

January 2nd the Justice Team will be making the following items available in the Gathering Area after every service:

Freedom Scarves and dish cloths: Made by local knitters, the proceeds of these scarves go to help Not For Sale's international projects around the world that are helping to rescue and restore slaves.

Hot Pads: Made by the Stout kids, all money goes to organizations that help free slaves.

Fair trade chocolate (chocolate chips, baking cocoa, candy bars, etc.)

**LOOKING
AHEAD**

FEBRUARY

Club RIOT/K.F.C.

Wednesdays
6:30-7:45 p.m.
Beginning February 2nd

VBS

Coming In August

August 1st-5th
6:30-7:45 p.m.

Cancellations Due to Weather

If services should be cancelled due to winter weather, notification will be made by email, message on phone, WBCL, or WANE TV.

JANUARY

30 – Brian Burgan
31 – Paul Langston
Samuel Ayres

Birthdays

1 – Sue Babovec
Bob Cummins
2 – Carol Grindle
Rosie Purdy
4 – DeAnne Clifton
Presley Bradley
5 – Brad Briner
Jenean Rager
Tallulah Gawthrop
6 – Morgan Hicks
Janell Dockter
Wayde Platt
7 – Susan Warren
10 – Marvin Gish
Steve Lambert
11 – Carol Munson
Wilson Nettleton
12 – Joyce Eberly
Mamie Keim
13 – Shirley Mishler
Sydni Hernandez
15 – Tom McClure
16 – Lance Christiansen
Jasmine Jones
18 – Diana Nettleton
20 – Jerry McKee
Tawn McLaughlin
21 – Tim McLaughlin
Anthony Sparks
23 – Lucy McKinley
25 – Linda Pyle
26 – Chris York
27 – Mark Westafer
28 – Lexi Webb
29 – Julia Felgar
Randy Fruitt
Abbie Isbell
Denise Leonhard
Danielle Pyle

Anniversaries

1 – Mark & Chris York '96
11 – Earl & Phyllis Montel '48
16 – Bill & Carol Collett '88
19 – Joe & Marty Stacy '57
30 – Leonard & Linda Pyle '60
31 – Lynn & Wendy Blocher '92

Who is the Justice Team?

The Justice Team is a subgroup of the Ministry of Outreach. We are a group of volunteers with a heart for issues of justice. Everyone is welcome to join.

The goals of the Justice Team are to 1) educate the congregation about issues of injustice, 2) raise awareness in the church, community, and world and 3) take action against injustice.

The Justice Team meets on the second Tuesday of each month at 6:00 pm in the church library. The next meeting is January 11th. We have some exciting things on the horizon for 2011 as we seek to "act justly, seek mercy, and walk humbly with God."

Blessing Opportunity

The Ministry of Outreach has been made aware of an opportunity for us as a church to bless families in our community by helping the MRA next summer. They are in need of teams of 3-4 people to volunteer in the concessions at the Complex. There would be a trained manager there the entire time. Currently slots are open Wednesday nights and every other Tuesday. The timeframe would be approximately 5 to 10 p.m. This would begin the first weekend of May and go through July. Please notify Shannon Cook or Tim McLaughlin of your interest by January 16.

Baptism

There will be a Baptism in the coming months. If interested please see one of the Pastors.

(re)FRESH 2011 Saturday, January 15th 10:00 am-2:00 pm

Here are 10 reasons you should get YOUR ticket:

- 1) Women of all ages are welcome
 - 2) Tickets are 2 for \$10; keep one, give one away
 - 3) Recently published author, Ruth Ayres, will be our keynote speaker
 - 4) A delicious, catered lunch served to you by men
 - 5) A choice of creative, fun, and helpful workshops
 - 6) A great way to introduce a friend or co-worker to FBC
 - 7) Free child care
 - 8) Chocolate
 - 9) Laughing with friends on a cold-winter day
 - 10) Food, fashion, fun,...and a few great door prizes!
-

Operation Christmas Blessing Report

Thank you! From your generous donations and what we brought in, we have a little over \$400. With this money, we've decided to purchase fruit trees, a share of a well, a sheep and a goat, and life-saving medical supplies. In the last year, we also brought in \$300 in loose change which we are giving to the mission in Puerto Maldonado, Peru, to rescue orphans. Thanks for helping us to be a blessing!

An Update From Your Diaconate Leadership Council

The DLC has begun an intensive process of reviewing the various ministry activities of the church. We are earnestly seeking the Holy Spirit's guidance and leading as we assess where the church is and discern where God has called First Brethren to go.

Recent meetings have focused on our counseling ministry and youth ministry. In meeting with Suzanna and Pastor Tim, we have wanted to gain a better understanding of things such as:

- how the ministry fits with the church's vision and mission statement
- scope and activity of the ministry
- ministry emphasis and direction
- what the vision is for the future of the ministry
- what is going well, what is of concern
- facility needs, etc.

It has been helpful for us to gain a better understanding of the kind of longer-term professional care our Christian counseling ministry provides to our church and community. This ministry is truly unique in North Manchester.

Likewise it has been helpful to gain a more complete understanding of the youth ministry's "deeper rather than wider" emphasis (prioritizing spiritual growth) as well as its focus on parental involvement in discipling their teens (the "Orange" program) and small mentoring groups.

Things like spiritual growth, restoration of mental health and healthy relationships can be difficult to measure. As we go through this process, we are finding that not everything that can be counted counts and not everything that counts can be counted. Please pray for our spirit of discernment!

In January we will continue to digest our findings, see where there is consensus on direction and begin planning for a mid-year evaluation of Pastor Kurt. January will also see Mike Pyle assume the responsibilities of Vice Moderator.

As always, we welcome your comments, concerns and input. Please feel free to contact any DLC member – Warren Garner, Mike McLaughlin, Jim Mishler, Gary Purdy, Mike Pyle, Steve Searles, Phil Zile, Kurt Stout and Garen Bushong.

Garen Bushong, Moderator

Children's Ministry

Happy New Year!! Our Focus in the Children's Ministry this month is Jesus. As we start this new year – think of ways to make Jesus the focus at your house also.



Garden 0-2 Parents remember to mark your child's bag, bottle, and cup while they are in the Garden - we have stickers but those don't always come off very good afterwards. Remember to update your child's photo or latest accomplishments on our bulletin board in the Garden Nursery Room.



Garden 3-Kindergarteners Take a trip with us to the Beach as we learn Stories from the Sea and just how amazing Jesus is. Parents remember to talk about the point of the day - it's on their sticker and check out the activities on the back of the take home paper. These two things will help reinforce the things we learn on Sunday.



God's love is our **LOFT** focus while we learn about Jesus being found by the wise men, Jesus being baptized, and Jesus' first followers in LOFT and classes this month. Our worship themes will focus on believing in and worshipping Jesus as our leader.

Our December memory verse was John 3:16. Everyone who can recite it on January 2nd or 9th can sign the HUMONGOUS heart in the room and get a prize. We will be learning Romans 8:38-39 for January and February to remind us that nothing can separate us from God's love.

Club RIOT (3 yrs - 4th grade) Mark your calendar for February Winter Club RIOT as we will be taking a fun look at the BEEattitudes! Each Wednesday in February with Family Night the first Wednesday in March!



WINTER BLAST!!

MARK YOUR CALENDARS
SATURDAY, JANUARY 29th FROM 2-4 P.M.
FOR OUR WILD AND CHILLY SNOW EVENT
FOR KIDS AGE 3 THROUGH GRADE 6!!!



For their safety, ages 3-Kindergarden need to be accompanied by a parent or grandparent.



Club de Ninos (Kids Club) will start again mid February!



K.F.C. (5th & 6th graders) This month we are encouraging you to attend snow camp! There are scholarships available if needed. The cost is \$85.00 and the church will pay half if you are not planning on attending any summer camps. See Teresa for details.



Camp Shishewana - SNOW CAMP for 3-6th graders
Theme: Simply Jesus Join us **January 14-16th** for a weekend full of fun, sledding, Bible lessons, friends, hot chocolate, and other great winter activities. Find a registration form at the LOFT bulletin board. The cost is \$85.00 and needs to be turned in the first week in January.

VBS - August 1-5, 2011 For the last several years we have held VBS at the start of June, with many conflicts with summer sports programs with several of our regular attendees let alone our many outreach kids. We want to reach as many kids and families as possible, so we are pushing the date to the first week in August. Almost all the weeks in June & July are taken by the Brethren Retreat Center and we just don't want to ask any of our kids to choose between VBS and Bible Camp. After having it this year, we will ask for your opinion and see if we want to keep it that week. So, mark your calendars now and plan on attending - just a bit later - our 2011 VBS!

FB C YOUTH MINISTRY

Weekly Schedule

CHAOS (7th-8th Grades) meets on Wednesday nights from 6:15-7:45 at *La Casa*

Ekklesia (9th-12th Grades) meets on Sunday nights from 6 to 8 at the Town Life Center

***Starting Sunday, January 2, Ekklesia will be meeting at the Town Life Center!**

Orange Parents (Parents of Teens) meets on Sunday mornings at 10:30 east end of the Fellowship Hall

Winter Jam

Sunday, January 23

Leaving from the church at 3:30 pm

Tickets are \$10 at the door.

Returning around 10:30 pm

Newsboys, David Crowder, Kutless, Red, KJ-52 and more!

**Bring money for food.*



All Nighter Lock-in!

When: Friday, January 28, from 11 pm to 7 am

Where: Wabash YMCA

What: Swimming, Basketball, Dodgeball, Walleyball, Ping-Pong, Video Games, Pizza, and a Concert

Who: 7th-12th grade students

How much: \$5

**Must fill out a YMCA Day Pass form and abide by our swimsuit policy.*

Dominican Republic Mission Trip

For students currently in 9th-12th grades. We have 20 spots.
Trip is June 9-16, 2011. Cost is \$1300.

- Your application must be turned in by Sunday, January 9th.
- Monday, January 10: Important informational meeting in Huntington for students going on the trip *and* their parents. We'll leave from here at 7 p.m. and get back at 9 p.m.
- Our 1st Team Meeting will be here after church on Sunday, January 16. We will eat lunch together and meet until roughly 1:30 p.m. This is a mandatory meeting, and we will be working on group fundraisers.

Super Bowl Parties

Starting at 6 pm on Sunday, February 6

Junior High Students: Party @ the Collett's

Senior High Students: Party @ the McLaughlin's

Bring a snack or pop, and invite your friends!

WINTER BLAST

February 18-20, 2011

For JH and SH – cost is only \$69!

The theme is "Deeply Rooted" based on Col. 2:6-8



First Brethren Church
407 N. Sycamore Street
North Manchester, IN 46962

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