

BRIDGING THE GAP

FAIRVIEW HEIGHTS CHURCH OF GOD
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From The Pastor's Desk

Priorities: Impossible is Possible

The mission of the church continues unchanged. The priority by which the church conducts its mission does change. Determining priorities is the first task of any church that seeks to grow in response to its actions in fulfilling Christ's commission. We need a strong vision to reach our world for Christ. Vision has been described "as ability empowered with supernatural faith to relate the present to the future by the means of goals." In Proverbs Solomon said, "Where there is no vision, the people perish." One translation says "where there is no vision, the people get out of hand." Vision can become reality when the people of God are united in prayer and effort. Vision always hopes for something better, always expects it, and always believes it will happen. The thing that makes a difference is expectancy. This is faith believing that the impossible is possible. Growth demands work. It also demands patience with God and with each other, and belief in the ability to grow despite circumstance, location, and difficulty. So what does God want from the Fairview Heights Church of God? Far too often the growth activities of the church simply are a stirring over again of the same people. Real, sustained church growth comes only through the conversion of those who accept Jesus Christ as their personal Savior. In other

words true church growth is the result of church people being unwilling to continue business as usual. This direction does not come from a program, but a process of constant rededication to the New Testament life-style. It is a lifetime commitment to the mission of the church. For churches to be effective we must learn to act rather than react to anticipate problems and work out solutions before the problems occur. We must make things happen rather than let things happen. We must make use of circumstances other than fret about misfortunes and listen to God speak about what the church should be and do. To enable the church to grow God sent the Holy Spirit. Church growth, therefore, will probably never fulfill God's purpose unless the people absorb the presence of the Holy Spirit. He gives the power to look beyond self to the multitudes who have never experienced the abundant life. Today we live in the most exciting times for the church. We have had some difficult times this year. God will see us through, and we will move forward building His Kingdom. As we continue in these 30 days of fasting and praying, I hope you are searching your heart as I am mine so that we can all be at our best for Jesus. "If My people who are called by my name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land." 2 Chronicles 7:14. Then I would also add verse 15, "Now My eyes will be open and My ears attentive to prayer made in this place." It is time to prayer more

than we ever have for revival to come into our lives and into the live of our church.

Enjoy the Journey,
Pastor Clayton

Sermon and Service Outline August 2008

August 3 5-Star Sunday

AM Service: Children's hand bells
"Miracle of the Crossing"
Text Joshua 3: 1 Pastor Clayton

PM Service: Leadership Training 101
led by Pastor Clayton

August 10

AM Service: Have You Been Born Again?
Text John 3:16 Pastor Clayton

PM Service: Leadership Training 101
led by Pastor Clayton

August 17

AM Service: "It Is Amazing!"
Text Luke 5:26 Pastor Clayton

PM Service: Board of Christian Education
will be leading this service

August 24

AM Service: Are You Very Religious?
Text Acts 17:22-23 Pastor Clayton

PM Service: Leadership Training 101
led by Pastor Clayton

August 31

AM Service: Does Your Key Fit?
Text Matthew 16:19 Pastor Clayton

PM Service: Family Fun Night
food, fun, fellowship, and softball!

New Sunday Night Children's Program

WOW! We are excited about the "NEW" children's program that will begin September 7th. We have a lot of new workers and a lot of new things that will be talking place each month. The name of the program is "**Living Inside Out**" by Group. This is the same publishers for our FaithWeaver Friends program. Here is a listing of each month's title and our leaders.

September 7, 14, 21 & 28
"In the Dog House" Sibling Rivalry
Steve and Kim Brooks

October 5, 12, 19, & 26
"Treasure Island" Stewardship
Ken and Kathy Bowman /Amy Timmermann

November 2, 9, 16, & 23
"Rescue 911" Salvation
Becky Ball and Grover Johnson

December 14
"Under the Tree" Jesus' Birth
Bill and Shirley Beltz

January 4, 11, 18, & 25
"Star Quest" The Nature of God

February 1, 8, & 22
"Heroes" Bible Heroes
Adam and Shannon Peiffer

March 1, 8, 15, & 22
"Storm Chasers" The Beatitudes

Carmen Hamilton and Jayn Willeford

April 5, 19, & 26

“Wilderness Trail” Respect
Bill and Karen White

May 3, 27, & 24

“Music Camp” Worship
David and Belinda Floyd

Parents, please note the programs will be on Sunday evenings instead of Wednesday evenings. This program looks like it is going to be yet another great one for our children. There are plays, DVD’s, songs, and games all to help them learn more about Jesus. This program is set up for preschool thru 6th grade.

Parents, we have activities for your children on Sunday evenings so come on out for our Evenings Services and enjoy! We look forward to a great year of learning all about God and what He wants for His children!

Darla Clayton, Coordinator

Food Pantry

Gwen Campbell wrote this list of items needed by the Food Pantry:

Flour	salmon
Tea	coffee
Juice	personal items
Paper products (toilet paper, Kleenex, and paper towels)	
Cans of fruit	pork and beans
Crackers	jelly
Jello	Jello puddings
Salt and pepper	cereal
Detergent	dish soap
Peanut butter	potatoes (boxed/cans)

SMALL GROUPS Sunday Evenings September and October

Join the one that you are most interested in!
All leaders have chosen excellent topics.

Darlene Hamilton: Will be leading a group on prayer.

Acts 29 by Dr. Terry Teykl

Imagine gang members, drug dealers, racists and sex offenders being transformed by the Gospel. **Imagine** politicians, judges and other influential leaders taking stands based on the Word of God. **Imagine** hundreds and even thousands of people being saved in a single church service! **Imagine** the unimaginable. It all happened in the pages of Acts, and it can happen again if you are willing to **pray** the price.

Acts 29 is based on ten powerful chapters from the book of Acts. This prayer journey equips you to set the stage for the Holy Spirit to work dramatically in your church and community just as He did following Pentecost. Dr. Teykl, “Once we got started, our church was never the same. The presence of the Holy Spirit was undeniable. When I read, “And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved”, my response was, “Lord do it again!”

(Books will be about \$10.00 each.)

Ruth Pope: What Every Sunday School Teacher Should Know
by Elmer L. Towns

Because we don't have time to read an encyclopedia on teaching, Dr. Towns has written this short and to-the-point book and filled it chock full of “secrets” for effective Sunday School teaching. And because we live in a modern world, he has written this book of wisdom and practical helps in an up-

to-date way that is based on eternal biblical principles. This is a user-friendly book to walk us through steps to building a healthy and productive SS class. Many principles discussed are applicable to all age levels. His challenge is "Read it, enjoy it, and approach the information with a heart to learn and serve the Lord better."

Elmer L. Towns is dean of the School of Religion at Liberty University. He teaches a SS class of 2,000 members! His speaking engagements keep him busy, yet he is home every Sunday to teach his SS class.

(Books will be about \$5.00 each.)

Floyd Whittom: Basics for Belief by Joseph D. Allison

Basics for Belief explains vital theological concepts for Church of God laypersons. New believers and newcomers appreciate this study.

The second edition makes this important book more accessible to today's readers. It clarifies the text, quotes current Bible translations, and provides a topical index.

Joseph D. Allison is coordinator of Publishing and Creative Services for church of God Ministries. He holds an MDiv degree in church history from Christian Theological Seminary.

(Books will be about \$4.00 each.)

Pastor Terry: What's RIGHT with the Church of God by J. Thomas Pelt

What's WRONG with the Church of God? That was my original title. Don't like the sound of it? Not very long into my first draft, it began to get to me, too. This book does not pretend to be a great theological or historical treatise concerning our movement. This book is simply a cry of the heart for all who share a love for the Church of God. It is a dare, if you will—a dare to seek God's guidance as never before, a dare to begin

that quest with a long, hard, introspective look in the mirror.

(Book will be about \$9.00 each.)

Darla Clayton: I'm Too Young to Be This Old! (Surviving and Thriving in the Muddled Middle Years) by Patricia Poppy Smith

Have you ever stared into the mirror and wondered, "What's happening to me? That wrinkle wasn't there yesterday!" With wit, grace, and candor, Smith shows you how to survive and thrive in midlife! Discover how to cope with elastic waistbands, erratic emotions, aging parents, re-entry into the workplace, and more.

(Books will be about \$2.00 each.)

W.C.G. News for August

Well, our time for your recipes to be turned in is coming to an end. The dead line is the 3rd. Please get those recipes to Carol Hamilton "soon" so we can get our cook book together.

Saturday, August 16th is a date to remember! We are planning "our" Prayer Retreat, but we are inviting the area groups to come and join us. And we want to say "If you are not a member of the group, please do not let that keep you from joining in on the activities." The Retreat will be from 10:00 - 12:00 in our Fellowship Hall. We will be studying the scripture passage in Genesis: 6-9 about the story of Noah. Rev. Kim Bacon, Pekin, IL will be our Guest Speaker. Kim is our Illinois WCG State President. Coffee and juice will be available at 9:30am and lunch will be served at noon for a donation of \$5.00. We are really looking for a good group from our congregation to come and welcome those who come from our other area sister congregations. Mark your calendar now and make plans to attend and

learn more about Noah and his journey with God!

Money Map Coaching

This is the final installment of a 4-part series of articles based on Crown Financial Ministries principles on handling money God's way. So far we have traveled through 5 of the 7 destinations on Crown Financial's Money Map. In Summary:

- Destination 1--Develop a spending plan and save \$1000 for emergencies
 - Proverbs 21:20--The wise man saves for the future, but the foolish man spends whatever he gets.
- Destination 2--Pay off Credit Card Debt and increase savings to one month living expenses.
 - Proverbs 22:7--The borrower is servant to the lender
- Destination 3--Pay off all consumer debt and increase savings to 3 month's living expenses.
 - Romans 13:8--Keep out of debt and owe no man anything
- Destination 4--Begin saving for major purchases (house, car, etc), for retirement, for children's education and/or your own business
 - Proverbs 21:5--Steady plodding brings prosperity.
- Destination 5--Buy affordable home, begin prepaying mortgage and begin investing wisely
 - Ecclesiastes 5:13-15--Savings are put into risky investments that turn sour...the man who speculates is soon back to where he began--with nothing.

The sixth destination on the Crown Money Map is entitled "Home Mortgage Paid Off". Our scripture reference for this

destination comes from John 8:32 that says "You will know the truth and the truth will make you free". This destination has the following goals:

1. Home mortgage paid off.
2. Children's education funded
3. Confirm estate plan is in order.

The Bible also tells us: *"But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith, and is worse than an unbeliever"* (1 Timothy 5:8). The first two are achieved by continuing the path that you have already started in the previous destination. Estate planning and inheritance also have biblical principles and the following article from www.crown.org gives a great overview:

Inheritance Wisdom

by Crown Financial Ministries

No generation of people has ever managed more material assets with less training to do so. In a single generation today, an individual can go from near poverty to an estate of millions of dollars. Unfortunately, the succeeding generation can just as quickly lose it all. We seem to be a people of extremes, and inheritance is no exception. One part of our society leaves enormous wealth to its offspring; another segment spends it all and leaves practically nothing.

Most of us have the ability to create an estate today. It may be land, business, home, or an insurance policy payable upon death. Whatever it is, it is your estate.

Current Inheritance Strategy

In today's society, including Christians, it is common to keep as much as possible while we're alive and leave it to our heirs when

we die. Unfortunately, quite often the heirs are poorly trained to manage the assets. Further, less than 30 percent of men leave a valid will, and of those, most leave only about 20 percent of the minimum assets necessary to provide for their families. Why? There are two primary reasons: ignorance and slothfulness—ignorance, because most people have not been taught good stewardship; and slothfulness, because many people know what they should do but procrastinate until it's too late. *“The naïve believes everything, but the sensible man considers his steps”* (Proverbs 14:15).

Biblical Guidelines

The Bible reveals that God provided for each generation through inheritance—the sons inherited their father's properties and thus provided for the rest of the family. What is not obvious is that in most instances the sons received their inheritance while their fathers were still living. Thus, a father was able to oversee their stewardship while they were learning. Based on these biblical principles, the following are some suggested guidelines that, if they are implemented immediately, will help ensure a godly approach to inheritance.

1. *Training both spouses.* It is extremely important for both spouses to be trained in wise money management principles and practical skills. Seven out of eight men die before their wives. On the other hand, in many households, it is the wife who pays the monthly bills and balances the checkbook. At the same time, husbands often make important financial decisions, such as major purchases, business plans, and investing choices. The fact is, the unique skills and strengths that

God gives to each spouse balance the weaknesses of the other. Therefore, if spouses discuss, cooperate, practice handling money-management chores, and pray together, they will achieve better results than either spouse would achieve working alone. Both spouses must be trained to handle both types of duties—routine monthly money-management chores and long-range financial decision making.

2. *Create wills.* Everybody should have a will. Without a will, the state in which you live will distribute your assets according to their laws of intestacy. Rarely, if ever, will this be according to your wishes. Husband and wife both need wills, and each should understand the other's will. First, pray about how you wish your estate to be distributed, including the Lord's work. Then write it out as clearly as possible and have a competent attorney write your plan into your will.
3. *Develop a plan.* In addition to a will, you also need a plan. Although each family's plan will likely be different, the one common factor that should be evident for every Christian family is understanding God's principles for managing money. There are five points on which you need to focus when making a plan.
 - o Age. There is no best age to start teaching children good money management, but the younger the better. As they get older, you can begin to expand their training, including a good study of God's principles.
 - o Practice. Nothing helps more to reinforce principle than problems. As your children

approach the teen years, you need to put them into real-life money situations. That includes letting them open checking and savings accounts, showing them how to balance the accounts, and insist that they balance them monthly.

- Borrowing. The principle of borrowing can best be demonstrated by lending money to your children at interest and requiring that they repay the loans—totally. You may even want to hold personal items as collateral until the loans are paid. Although you may choose to put the interest paid to you in a separate account earmarked for education or a major purchase, they need to learn that borrowing money costs.
- Investing. The risk-reward system of our economy can be clearly demonstrated to our children by entrusting to them sums of money (small sums at first) to be invested. The ups and downs of our economy become very real to our children when their money is at risk.
- Giving. Teach children to give to God's work out of their earnings. Let them learn by your example how to give a tithe to the Lord and how to give offerings, which are given in addition to the tithe. *“Train up a child in the way he should go, even when he is old he will not depart from it”* (Proverbs 22:6). Rarely will you find a generous giver who

manages money poorly.

Conclusion

The most important inheritance we can offer our children is a Christian influence that leads to salvation. Aside from that, parents must develop a godly approach to inheritance—one that is founded on fundamental biblical principles.

Note--next month I will conclude with Destination 7 and more tips for teaching children godly financial principles. I hope you have found this series of articles informative and if you need more information or clarification please feel free to drop a note to jimcandy@wisperhome.com or visit www.crown.org.

Youth Group

As I write this, our group has completed our second Act of Random Kindness. Our first act involved washing the windows on all the cars in our parking lot one Sunday evening as an act of service for fellow believers. Tonight, we wanted to go into the community so we discussed spreading "joy". All the youth made posters with positive messages and we stood in front of the church smiling and waving. This idea came from a variety of sources but the main idea I shared with the youth came from a report from a fellow traveler on a mission trip to Nicaragua. He reported traveling in the back of a pick up truck returning from a construction site. He wondered what the Nicaraguan people were thinking of him--an American--being in their neighborhoods. He decided to wave, smile and say hi to them as he drove past. He was pleasantly surprised that they actually stopped doing

their work and smiled and waved back. I thought about the fact that here in the US, we have lost that joy of just sharing a smile and wave with the hundreds of people we come in contact with in our daily lives so for 20 minutes on a Sunday evening we shared a smile and a wave with those driving by our church. We saw many smiles and waves in return and heard many honks. JOY TO THE WORLD!

COMMUNITY CARWASH FOR \$1

This is a reminder that August 9th is our Community Carwash here at the church. We are asking that everyone arrive at 9:00AM. We will be giving out assignments and Pastor will lead us in a devotion as we prepare to serve our community. Everyone--young and old--can help with this carwash. We need car washers, sign holders, and people for customer service where we will provide cold drinks and share about Angle Food, Tunes 4 the Troops and NiCE Foundation.

Don't forget this will not be a normal carwash--it comes with a twist. You will need to come and be a part of this outreach to participate in the twist. I promise you will be blessed in addition to those that we serve. If you have power washers, buckets, rags, etc, please sign up for what you can bring on the bulletin board.

Board of Deacons

Huge **THANK YOU** from Columbia, Mo

We are bubbling over with appreciation for all that was done by our church family to make this move possible. On July 1st, thirteen church elves showed up at our Caseyville house door to lend their strong backs and helping hands to load the U-Haul truck. "Pastor Clayton, What wonderful packing skills you have!" Each item arrived in Columbia in one piece with no scratches! Amazing!! We gained ownership of our new house on the next day and promptly began to unload the vehicles. Ten family members and friends came to our aid in Columbia. The moving process went so smoothly. We could see God's Hand in each and every detail. Thank You!

Marshall and I were so humbled by the 'Send Off' given in our honor. The worship service was very meaningful; the dinner buffet table was running over with delicious dishes. Your spoken words touched our hearts as only old friends can.

Your gift to us was very special. The scripted pictures are now hanging on our dining room wall. They will be read by all who come to visit us. The fresh flowers lent color and a wonderful smell to our house before we left Caseyville.

We ask that you pray for us as we find new areas to be of service for Our Lord and Savior. We will be praying for you as you continue in God's Service in Fairview Heights.

Love to all,

Phyllis & Marshall Field

