



Growing Churches

What do growing churches do? How do growing churches start to grow? I don't have any real good answers for that question. I read lots of books that give lots of good suggestions, although each book has suggestions that differ from each other. The truth is that what works in one area will not always work in another area. And while one "church growth" book may help one church, it may not help another.

I began thinking about this today as I was flipping through my Bible. I dread some Tuesdays because it is article day, and coming up with a new article every week is tough. Today I decided I would just flip through my Bible and see what inspires me. Here is the passage I landed on: "*On that day a great persecution broke out against the church in Jerusalem, and all except the apostles were scattered throughout Judea and Samaria... Those who had been scattered preached the word wherever they went*" (Acts 8:1, 4).

Did you catch that? *Those who had been scattered preached the word wherever they went.* Did they not realize that the very word they were preaching *wherever they went* was the very word that caused their persecution and scattered them to begin with? I'm sure they did. But this *word* had changed their lives so dramatically and given them so much hope that no amount of persecution and scattering could stop them from sharing it with others.

Nice programs, a good youth ministry, awesome worship, a dynamic preacher, good Bible classes... I believe those are all things that can help a church grow. But I would argue that the common denominator among growing churches is a willingness and passion in most of their members to scatter and preach the word. I'm not suggesting we all need to be Billy Grahams, or that we need to have a gospel tract on us at all times, but I know that I could do a better job of fitting God into my everyday speech with others. I could do a better job putting myself in situations where I am asked to give a reason for my hope (1 Peter 3:15). This is a weakness of mine.

We scatter every Sunday. We scatter on Sunday afternoons and stay scattered until Saturday. We have the scattering part down. How are we doing with the other part? Are we sharing the word wherever we go? Are we putting God into our everyday speech? Are we put into situations where we are able to share our hope? Growing churches may not all look the same, but the common denominator is a passion for scattering and spreading the word.

-Gilbert

Things I Learned in My First Year of Home Ownership

- **There is always something else to work on.**

Whether it's mowing, shoveling, raking, weeding or washing, there is always maintenance to be done on the home.

In the same way, there is main-tenance to be done on our spiritual selves. Whether we need to pray, serve, rest, fast, feed, or commune, we have never reached the point where we can say "Okay, I'm done now."

- **Expect the Unexpected.**

One day I hit the button on my garage door opener remote, and nothing happened. Turns out, a nylon gear in the opener had been stripped. I was not expecting that.

God often works in ways we are not expecting. Sometimes he puts people in our life that change us in profound ways. Sometimes God sends us to places we never intended.

- **While Practice may make perfect...sometimes it gets worse before it gets better.**

When I first moved in, trimming the shrubs was one of my first jobs. The first one I trimmed was decent... but it just got worse. They ended up small enough that I shouldn't have to practice again until next year...or the year after that.

As humans, we are not going to be perfect at everything we attempt, including spiritual activities. Maybe you are not the most cheerful giver. Perhaps you do not have a perfect singing voice. Sometimes we need to hear, "Anything worth doing is worth doing poorly." The drive for perfection in one area can hamstring our other goals. Plants need to be trimmed, people need to sing.

-Phil

Sheryl Willison had successful surgery to remove her gall bladder on Monday....**Annie Crowder** had a melanoma removed on her face, and **Elaine Crowder** had skin cancer under her eye removed last week....**Scheryl Gaylor** recently fell, breaking her wrist and arm requiring surgery to put in a plate and screws to repair it....**Kaden Koebecke** has one more chemotherapy treatment. All has gone well so far. Their hope is that this treatment will put his condition in remission....**Dave Hunt's father, Henry, 79**, is in the final stage of prostate cancer. He is hospitalized in Clarksville, Tennessee....**Camilla Lawson's mother, Ella McCullough, 94**, had a stroke recently. **Camilla's office assistant at Purdue, Christa Phillips**, was diagnosed with thyroid cancer....Continue praying for **Pete Swank, Ginger Maxwell-Spenard, Susan McFadden, LeAnn Egle, Diann Doty, David Brutans, Charles Moore, Eloise Shank, Hattie Coffel, Mary Tavana, Ted Heitman, Dorothy Walters, Irene Fox, Edith McCoy, Eugene Zinn, Valley Stockton, Irene Sims, Marie DeWoody, Paul & Argie Verett, and Minnie Scott.**



In the military: **Josh Martin** (Phyllis Simmerman's nephew), **Brent Kaufman**, and **Matt Kaufman** (nephews of Ronda Tidrick) are serving in Iraq.

Singing Anyone?

Thank you to those Elmwood people who sang and visited with residents at Rosewalk Village the evening of Sunday, July 5. We made several new friends who would like us to come back again soon. If you are interested in singing and visiting with our recent acquaintances and making more new friends, please come to Rosewalk Village this **Friday, July 17, at 3:30 PM**. We'll sing and share time until their dinner hour at 5:00. It meant so much to them before and is a ministry we can all try to participate in occasionally. We hope you'll come if your schedule allows. God bless you for taking some time from your busy lives to try to follow one of scripture's directives to help care for widows (& widowers) and orphans. Again, thank you in advance.

-Farrell Simmerman

You Can Help with Tools for Schools!



There are many in the Lafayette community who have been hit hard with the nation-wide economic situation. Once again Elmwood will be a collection site for Salvation Army's "Tools for Schools." If you would like to help children in the community with school supplies for the upcoming school year, a box has been placed in the Farris

foyer for your donations and will be there until the end of July. Some suggested items: glue sticks, Fiskars scissors (5 in. pointed), zippered pencil packs, 1 inch 3-ring binders, new backpacks, plain pocket folders (no prongs), highlighter markers (yellow), colored pencils (12 count/24 count), solar powered calculators, 8 count large crayons, 8 count regular crayons, Prang oval paints (8 pan), washable markers, notebook filler paper, Pedigree pink erasers, and black, Expo dry erase markers. Bring them anytime during the month of July. Your generosity is much appreciated.

July 12, 2009

Class: 145 Worship: 244 Contribution: \$7,673



Sunday Night, July 19: Live Drama!

This Sunday night, July 19, will be a powerful night as we get to witness a message of the Bible lived out in drama.

Next Sunday night, July 26, we'll have our "Guess Who's Coming to Dinner" opportunity. Burgess Brown, Mindy Hart or Vicky Martin will be contacting you soon about the location.

E-Newsletter?

We have begun sending our newsletter via e-mail in a pdf format. Sending it this way has already saved the church more than \$16 per week. If you opt for e-delivery of the newsletter, let the church office know via e-mail or write your request on your yellow card on Sunday.

Our Sympathies

Our sincere sympathies to Joe Woody whose grandmother, **Betty Garrard, 91**, died on Saturday. Her funeral is Wednesday in Bloomingdale, Indiana.



The food pantry is always in need of personal items: **soap, shampoo, deodorant, toothpaste & toothbrushes, and especially toilet paper.** We appreciate any donations you make.



Sycamore Trees

One of my favorite stories is the story about Zacchaeus. If you want to read the whole story you can find it in the Gospel of Luke, chapter 19. But, I will give you a short version of it here. A short man who happened to be the chief tax collector was trying to get a look at Jesus. Apparently, everybody else in the town had the same idea. He couldn't see Jesus because of the crowd so he found a sycamore tree and climbed it to get a better look. That's when Jesus spotted him. I'll stop my story right there so I won't ruin the ending for those who haven't heard this one yet.

An important, but often overlooked character from this story is the sycamore tree. There is no telling how long that sycamore tree had been rooted there and also no telling how many people passed by that tree without even giving it a second glance. But, I like to think that since the very beginning of that tree's existence and growth, God had a plan for it. It may not seem like a big thing to us, but it was God's plan. It was God's plan for that tree to grow and mature. It was God's plan for that tree to be at the right place. It was God's plan for that tree to be strong enough and tall enough for Zacchaeus to climb it and for him to see Jesus.

What's God's plan for you? I believe that He is calling all of us to be sycamore trees. He is helping us to grow and to mature for the times when people will look to us to lift them up and see Jesus. So I encourage you to plant your roots deep in the word of God and get ready for what God has planned for you!

-Randy Kerrigan

This week Lee Porter, Randy Kerrigan, Erin Simmerman, and Elmwood students are attending Spring Mill Bible Camp in Mitchell, Indiana. Pray for them as they participate in activities that will draw them closer to God.

Weekly Prayer Focus

July Prayer Focus: God's Spiritual Warriors

Our prayer focus this week is for our elders at Elmwood. Pray for Joe Mathews, Don Vice, Bill Bell, Rick Swensen, and Joe Ruhl individually. Just as I'm sure that each week they pray collectively for each of us as well as individually for some specifically, let us encourage them by praying for them. Pray that the word of God will make them strong elders who are ever watchful over us and ever loving and caring. Pray that our elders will guide Elmwood in the power of the Spirit. Offer prayers of thankfulness for their willingness to serve and for their constant watchful spirit for the well-being of the church.

Women's Ministry News:

All Elmwood women are invited to "Ladies' Tea Number Two" on **Saturday afternoon, August 1**. Sign up on your yellow card on Sunday indicating whether you want to attend or host.

Bingo at Tippecanoe Villa is scheduled for Tuesday evening, July 21, at 6:30. This is a great opportunity to show God's love to the residents and enjoy an evening of fun. Consider coming to help, and bring any Bingo donations you might have to the ladies' classroom this weekend. If there is a good turnout of Elmwood people to help, we may consider doing it again in the future.

-Terri Miller



*Dear family at Elmwood,
Thank you for all your prayers, phone calls, cards, and meals. The Bell family has been blessed dearly. We know that Carol's good progress is due to your tender loving care and prayer. In His Love, Carol, Bill & Peter Bell*



July 15, 7 PM....Bible classes for all
July 19, 6 PM....Live Drama at Elmwood
July 26, 6 PM....Guess Who's Coming to Dinner?

Read:
Ezra 6-Nehemiah;
Romans 8-12

2009 Spiritual Adventure

Week 31: July 27-August 2

Cling to What is Good

Of the many challenges presented in Romans 12, there is one that sticks out to us as we read through this chapter. Verse nine commands that we “*hate what is evil; cling to what is good.*”


Clinging to what is good is not as much of the challenge. I think many would agree that we look for good in an effort to cling to it. Most of us want to find positivity and goodness in our lives so that we can feed off of and be encouraged by it.

For us, the part that pricks the heart is the commandment to hate what is evil. A strange statement, we know. How can we struggle with hating evil? The struggle comes when we reach verse eleven: “*Never be lacking in zeal...*” I would think that this would apply to the degree to which we hate evil. This is where my problem lies. Seeing sin in our own lives and in the lives of others is greatly disturbing. We are saddened by the role that evil plays in our lives and in the lives of those that we love. But do we truly *hate* it? Does it anger us? Are we outraged by the presence of it in this world? The NASB says that we should *abhor* evil. Sounds like a pretty strong word.

One of the problems is that, while it disturbs and saddens us, we have learned to tolerate it. We have learned to live with it and accept it. But that is not zeal. That is not evidence that we hate what is evil. And it definitely makes it more difficult to cling to what is good.

Let us never be lacking in zeal to hate what is evil, and to cling to what is good.

-Gilbert & Kate Kerrigan

 Weekly Schedule	 Elders	 World Missions
Sunday Worship 8:00 a.m. Bible Study 9:30 a.m. Worship 10:45 a.m. Life Groups 6:00 p.m. Wednesday Bible Study 7:00 p.m.	Bill Bell 463-1139 Joe Mathews 474-8369 Rick Swensen 463-6822 Don Vice 471-8653  Staff Ministers Gilbert Kerrigan 418-3652 Lee Porter 463-6993 Phil Travis 447-2874 Office Sherry Marks, Manager 447-2874 Carol Bell, Secretary 447-2874	Kevin Chambers World Christian Broadcasting Anchor Point, Alaska 99536 Loren and Penny Hollingsworth Phuket, Thailand 83000 E-mail: lholly54@yahoo.com Bren and Cheryl White P.O. Box 245 New Market, MD 21774
 Our Vision: Knowing Christ, Making Christ Known.		



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