

## Visiting Home Missionaries



Our church looks forward to missionaries' visiting and reporting on what God is doing. Consequently, I was disappointed when a church planter whom we support declined an invitation to visit because he first needed to share his ministry with eight other supporting churches. I was surprised when he suggested that my family visit his home and ministry for a weekend. We accepted his invitation. It was easier for me to get away from an established church with an associate pastor than for this missionary to miss another service at his infant church. My family and I headed for the church plant, putting our son in charge of capturing the ministry through the lens of the video camera. We took the missionary family out to eat,

then videotaped an interview with the husband and wife in their home. What a blessing to attend the church services, meet the people, and hear our missionary preach! During the day we toured the city and viewed the land where they are planning to build their own building. The next Sunday night we brought the missionary family to our church family via video. The report was effective; our people got to know the missionaries and their work, and we helped missionaries who found it difficult to be away from their infant church.

*Miles Grismore, pastor  
Faith Baptist Church  
Mason City, Iowa*



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## synergy

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1300 North Meacham Road  
Schaumburg, IL 60173-4806

Fax: 847-843-3757

E-mail: [dgreening@garbc.org](mailto:dgreening@garbc.org)

Editors: John and Daria Greening

Graphics: Carol Swanson

PrayerLink Network

E-mail: [prayer@garbc.org](mailto:prayer@garbc.org)

Phone: 888-588-1600, ext. 880

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# synergy

a newsletter for pastors & wives

Vol. 6, No. 3

## A note from John and Daria . . .



Dear friends,

“Get it real!” These admonishing words came from the lips of a retired missionary with whom we visited in the early days of our ministry. The “it” to which he was referring was faith. We as church leaders must ooze real faith. As we transparently express joys and sorrows and honestly relate the Lord's working in our lives, our congregations experience freedom to express their day-to-day walk with the Lord. This issue's Toolbox article gives us a great challenge: “Get it real!”

In service with you,  
John & Daria

## TOOLBOX

## THE BLESSINGS OF BEING REAL

In our nearly twenty-five years as pastor and wife in three churches, we have received many kind and encouraging words. Mark Twain once commented that he could live three months on one compliment. The Lord truly has sustained us at times with sincere and supportive comments such as, “Thanks for teaching us the Word,” “We appreciate your hospitality,” and “We know you love us.” But the words that have touched us the most are, “Thanks for being real and so transparent.”

Being real has its risks, but the liabilities of not being real are far greater. Our experience tells us the benefits and blessings of being transparent greatly outweigh the safety of shielding our “warts” from others. Our effectiveness in teaching, counseling, and leading is in direct proportion to the extent we let people see our real selves. Although we try to maintain appropriate levels of privacy as a couple and family, being real—sharing our struggles and our successes, our disappointments and our delights, our burdens and our blessings—has only increased others' respect and confidence.

Consider the following blessings of being real!

**Carolyn:** I testified during Dave's installation service at a new church that I hadn't wanted to uproot our home and ministry by moving from Wisconsin to Pennsylvania, but that I had done so out of obedience. The congregation responded with understanding and love.

**Dave:** I shared with the congregation on Father's Day that I wanted to be a man and father like Job and invited men to pray to be the same. Eighty men spontaneously filled the front of the auditorium.

**Both:** We asked our former church in Wisconsin to pray for us as we candidated in Pennsylvania and invited them to be part of the process in discerning God's will. Our request yielded their appreciation and prayer support.

**Both:** When one of us has shed tears of joy or sadness while preaching a sermon, teaching a Sunday School lesson, or giving a testimony, others have been encouraged to let their emotions show as well.

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KEEP FOR FUTURE REFERENCE.

## Celebrating Our Church's Anniversary

For our church's 50th anniversary, we celebrated God's accomplishments with our church family and community. On Saturday we invited our community to an open house at which we served refreshments, exhibited our VBS promotion, and sponsored a classic car display in our parking lot. During Sunday School, we facilitated an “Everything you ever wanted to know about LeClaire Baptist Church, but were afraid to ask” discussion with a panel of former and current pastors and wives and longtime members. The panel responded to the following questions, sent in advance, regarding the church's ministry: What is a funny or embarrassing moment you've experienced? What is a major highlight you remember? What ministry do you enjoy serving in? What answer to prayer do you remember? Which church service had special meaning? What positive qualities of the church do you appreciate? What are your memories of significant church events (list events)? What was an exciting time? What impact has the church had on your family?

A master of ceremonies introduced the panel members and kept the interaction moving, positive, and lighthearted. Community and church people alike enjoyed the weekend.

*Lane Bleeker, associate pastor  
LeClaire Baptist Church  
LeClaire, Iowa*



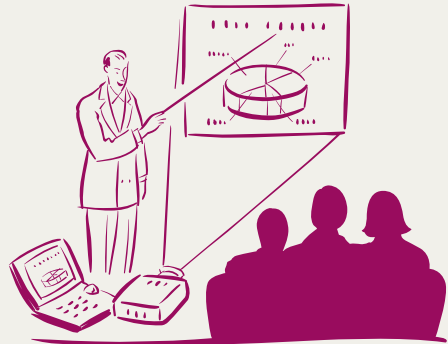
Together We Can Accomplish More **GARBC**

## Toolbox *continued*

Jesus said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." How true! We have learned it is more blessed to be real and transparent than to be safe and cautious. The most effective leadership is by example. In pastoral ministry, we must set a right example by being real. When we do this, we receive blessings and God uses us to bless others.

David & Carolyn Culver, pastor and wife  
Heritage Baptist Church  
Clarks Summit, Pennsylvania

## I D E A Exchange



## CHRISTIANS IN THE WORKPLACE

To help our people develop a Biblical perspective of their work, lay leaders presented "Your Work Matters to God," a series of seminars during three consecutive Sunday evening services. After a brief time of worship in the auditorium, businessmen and businesswomen held individual workshops on topics such as juggling responsibilities at work and home, challenges women face in the workplace, the contemporary crisis in work and leisure, transitioning from career to motherhood, retirement, ethics in the workplace, and witnessing on the job. The results were encouraging. Our people appreciated the instruction by those in the trenches.

Jim Vogel, pastor  
South Baptist Church  
Flint, Michigan

# MINISTRY TIPS

## Assisting a Church Plant

Help a church plant take root in your area! The Chicago Area Church Planters offers the following ways your church can assist a new church.

1. Loan people from your congregation to get the work started.
2. Make phone calls for a phone campaign.
3. Lend a hand in canvassing surrounding neighborhoods.
4. Arrange for your youth group to help with VBS, backyard Bible clubs, or other special events.
5. Supply special music for worship services.
6. Offer the use of your baptistry, gym, or fellowship hall.
7. Provide church supplies (e.g., teaching materials, hymn and chorus books, copy machine, portable piano keyboard, sound system, computers, or nursery equipment).
8. Contribute financial gifts to help with start-up costs.
9. Pray for the church plant on a regular basis and keep informed.
10. Invite the new congregation to church banquets, concerts, hymn sings, athletic events, seminars, and special meetings. Offer rides to state or regional meetings and retreats.

Don't miss the special blessing of involving your church family in Great Commission work: assist a church plant!

## Reach Out

### Witnessing to Community Leaders

As a pastor concerned about the salvation of community leaders, I invited a different leader to lunch each week. During our lunchtime conversations, I shared the gospel, describing my personal faith in Christ and telling them of my responsibility to present the way of salvation. I offered to pray for their concerns and to be a listening friend. I began with the superintendent of schools and then invited the mayor, police chief, bankers, funeral directors, and shop owners—for a total of fifty-one men. At least one of these leaders came to faith in Christ. Most of the men attended the dedication of our new church building. Many of these leaders were lonely men, consumed with their love for the community and their challenges in leadership, finding few who honestly cared.

Frank Chittock, retired pastor  
Heritage Baptist Church  
Lakeland, Florida

## I D E A Exchange

### Pastor's PALS

"Suffer [the] little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God" (Luke 18:16). To communicate the priority of ministry for the whole family, we invite children to the front of the church at the beginning of the morning service for Pastor's Pals. I share a brief object lesson, memory verse, or Bible story and pray for the children. Communicating creatively and simply every week is a challenge, but the effort is worth it. Oftentimes the adults remember more about Pastor's Pals than about the sermon!

David Altman, pastor  
Southside Baptist Church  
Sebring, Florida

## 5 Ways to Enhance Church Ministry

*Small changes can make a big difference in church ministry.  
Consider implementing the following upgrades.*

1. Hold the Bible up from the pulpit or lectern when publicly reading Scripture. The reading is far more effective when the reader makes eye contact with the congregation. By reading Scripture with understanding and conviction, the reader encourages hearers to believe that this is God's eternally significant truth.
2. Make eye contact with the "choir congregation" when leading the worship service. Singing becomes more vibrant when the song leader lifts his head from the music and focuses on connecting with people in praise to God.
3. Place bookshelves and coat hooks in the restrooms. Visitors and church members alike appreciate the extra touches.
4. Ensure plenty of light in auditoriums and classrooms to help people read better. Light reflects life rather than the gloom of darkness often associated with dreary rooms.
5. Use discussion and student participation in Sunday School or in intermediate-sized groups. Make these meetings attractively different from the preaching services. Enable students to grow by giving them the opportunity to ask questions or express their thoughts. Their understanding of Scripture can be immediately acknowledged, clarified, and enhanced.

Joe Hayes, state representative  
Iowa Association of Regular Baptist Churches

## Reach Out

### Sunday Evening Break-out

To encourage our people to become involved in evangelism, we dismiss the Sunday evening service once a month and our church family breaks out into the community. Break-out teams pass out flyers, visit nursing homes and hospitals, and follow up new contacts. One team has been working to evangelize Spanish-speaking people. In a nearby Hispanic neighborhood, we passed out Bibles the first month and gospel literature the second month. For the third month, we held a free hot dog roast in a common area of the neighborhood and presented the gospel to a large group. For the following month, we showed the Jesus film in a neighborhood community room. Nearly thirty people came; many made professions of faith! We have been working since that time to follow up these new believers. Our Break-out ministries have yielded many spiritual blessings, including our teens' forming their own Break-out group.



Randal Gilmore, pastor  
Hamilton Hills Baptist Church  
Fishers, Indiana

## Reach Out



### Senior Citizen Luncheons

In our small town with no more than a post office, volunteer fire department, and a bar, our church's monthly Senior Citizen Luncheon is a big hit. We have 60 to 80 guests for each luncheon, with only a handful from our church. Our ladies cook a wonderful meal that we provide free of charge, although we place a basket by the door for donations at the seniors' request. Speakers such as nurses, firemen, state senators, and landscape specialists present a 30- to 40-minute program, which I follow with a gospel presentation. Each November the children of the church put on a Thanksgiving program. Consider these tips for hosting the luncheon:

- Keep the luncheon and program simple and fun.
- Be consistent with scheduling, as changes could lower attendance.
- Be sensitive to weather. We hold our luncheons between May and November so snow is not a problem.
- Use the term "senior citizen," as opposed to "senior saint," for evangelistic purposes.
- Be patient. Seniors tend to be set in their denominational and religious ways. When I asked one lady if she knew Jesus Christ as her personal Savior, she indignantly replied, "I certainly do not! I'm a Methodist!"

Remember our job is to sow the seed; God will bring the increase.

Art George, pastor  
First Baptist Church  
Memphis, New York



The Ministry Initiative (TMI) resource packet helps churches identify, equip, and send people into vocational ministry. TMI provides churches with a guidebook, suggestions on preparing individuals for ministry, and assistance in planning and tracking their development. Start preparing now for the church's future! **Call RBP at 1.800.727.4440.**