

THE VOICE NEWSLETTER

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SEPTEMBER 2019

PRESIDENT'S CORNER- PASTOR JONATHAN EDWARDS

Due to a conflict which arose that was out of our control, we have had to relocate the 2020 Conference. It will no longer be at the Laurelville Conference and Retreat Center, but instead will be back at the CROWNE PLAZA HOTEL IN GRAND RAPIDS, MI. We were able to negotiate a rate of \$85/night + tax for rooms. Conference will begin on Friday, June 26 and go through Wednesday, July 1, 2020.

The theme of the 2020 Conference is "Make Disciples." I would encourage everyone, whether you go to Conference or not, to acquire a copy of Mark Dever's book *Discipling*. It's about 120 pages long and it explains how every local church and individual believer can carry out Christ's command to "make disciples."

Reading this book is the first "assignment" of the upcoming Conference year; I'll be giving several more assignments (or you could look at them as challenges...) for us to work on together as we prepare to think through how we can be better disciple makers.

May God bless you as you seek to serve Christ and put Him first in your life!



CONFERENCE 2020

June 26 - July 1, 2020

The Crowne Plaza Hotel

5700 28th St., SE

Grand Rapids MI 49546

1-877-270-1393

616-957-1770

Mention Conservative Grace Brethren Churches,
International or CGBCI for the group rate

2019 CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS

PASTOR CHRISTOPHER KNIGHT, PAST CONFERENCE PRESIDENT: On the first full day of the CGBCI Conference there were two men examined for ordination. Pastor Bob Mensinger (New Troy GBC, New Troy, MI) and Pastor Kevin Yoder (GBBC, Hastings, MI) both passed their examinations. It was a great blessing to receive these two men as well as Pastor Rob Cover (LCGBC, Warsaw, IN) into the College of Pastors. Continue to pray for men who are preparing for future ordination exams. May God continue to raise up men to lead!

NEWS FROM FELLOWSHIP CHURCHES AND OTHER MINISTRIES

Updates from New Troy Grace Brethren Church by: PASTOR BOB MENSINGER

God is continuing to bless here at New Troy. This was a very busy month, we continue to minister to our elderly in assisted living and those confined at home for health issues.

Pastor Bob was passed for ordination at National Conference in July and had his ordination ceremony at the Church on July 20. There were 14 other pastors and elders in attendance including his brothers, Dr. Edward Mensinger and Pastor Wayne Mensinger. Dr. Russell Simpson led the service.

We had a memorial service on July 27 for one of our faithful attendees, Leona Skopec. She will be greatly missed.

We had a great gospel music concert on July 28 with The New Legacy Project out of Nashville, Tennessee. We had 31 in attendance which was down from 67 last year – not sure why there was such a big drop-off.

Pastor Jeff Eno and his wife Pat visited us on August 25 and ministered in the Sunday School hour and morning worship service. Pastor Eno did his magic show incorporated in his morning message. We had our annual All-church Picnic following the morning services at 1:30 p.m. and had 18 in attendance. We had a great time of food and fellowship with the Enos at the picnic.

NEWS FROM NATIONAL EVANGELISM TEAM (NET)

This month two of the NET 19 members share highlights of the trip. Thanks for your prayers. Please continue to pray for the follow up efforts that take place in Limestone, TN.

JOHNATHAN STEINER shares: Training week brought about some challenges but also some great joys as well. One of those joys for me was being able to stay in a cabin with all the single NET guys and with a camp staffer and his son as well. Every evening after campfire we would have cabin devotions together. I really appreciated how the counselor led them. Just about every night we would go around the cabin, each guy sharing an answer to a spiritual question that had been posed by the leader. It was during these times that I got to know the guys better, and I think through them, we all were led into having a greater appreciation for who God is. I also enjoyed the many conversations that we were able to have at other times as well. It was a great time to learn to know each other better.

JULIA WEEKS writes: Looking back over this year on NET and trying to pick one memorable event is quite the task. What a blessing it was to serve the Lord for those two weeks. A few things really stood out to me (like the M&Ms in trail mix). One being the fellowship with other believers not just on the team but with the churches we stayed at. Not to mention our time with the campers at Camp Albryoca and our host homes. Truly the sweet fellowship that believers are able to have as brothers and sisters in Christ was seen. Being with our host homes for the second week was great. Although not too much time was spent with them, my team members and I made a point to wake up early and have our devotions and breakfast with the people in our host home. What a sweet time that was, and I so savored every minute. Hearing their stories and their encouragement was a huge testament to me. Another thing was door to door. I was a little nervous to take

on such an endeavor, but God gives great peace, does He not? One experience that really stuck out to me was one incident where the trailer we walked up to was not in great condition. I was expecting someone who didn't know Christ as personal Lord and Savior to answer the door, but this man ended up being saved. I quickly felt bad for my thinking. But, how much as believers do we do this? Turning away someone because they don't seem to want to hear the message or listen. This was an opportunity that made an impression me.

Another aspect of NET that I looked forward to was time with my prayer partner. This was such a sweet time to separate ourselves from the hustle and bustle of the schedule and pray for other team members, things back at home, and the ministry that we were doing, whether that was in Pennsylvania or Tennessee. Another team member and I also had an opportunity to talk to one of the campers at Camp Albryoca. While we were talking and praying with this girl, hoping that the Lord was working in her heart, He was actually working in our hearts too. Our week at Camp Albryoca was a stretching week, but very good! Church camp has such a big place in my heart, so our time there was very special.

ALLEGHENY DISTRICT CAMP

PASTOR CHRISTOPHER KNIGHT shared: We were blessed with another great year of camp at Camp Albryoca. Although some numbers have been down in the last few years, we know that God has been at work among the campers and staff. We were able to have a three-day camp for Senior High with a total of 23 campers and 12 staff. Junior High Week had 14 campers and 9 staff. Finally, Junior Camp had 21 campers and 16 staff. Totals: 58 Campers, 37 Staff. We had the added blessing of hosting the 16 NET members during Junior High Week for their training. There were 5 decisions for salvation and many other commitments made. Praise God for His blessings!

LISTIE GBC AWANA PROGRAM

PASTOR CHRISTOPHER KNIGHT writes: August always brings the start of the AWANA year to Listie GBC. A three-day Jumpstart with the theme of "On the Winning Side" took place. We averaged 35 in attendance for the three days. We had a picnic at the end of the Jumpstart with "concession stand" style foods. What a great opportunity for fellowship and study in God's precious Word!

FOREIGN MISSIONS - PNG UPDATE:

CRAIG NOYES: Passports are back, Visas are included and correct, and tickets are purchased! We fly out of Montreal for Tokyo on Sept 2nd. Then after spending a few days in the big city of Tokyo we'll fly to Papua New Guinea. Thanks for ALL the prayers and encouragement and support! We're excited/nervous/sad to leave and move on to the next step. Praise the Lord we got decent prices and found a route with great times and with only 3 flights, I could barely believe it!

Nine years ago today, September 2, I asked my girl to marry me on this spot. Now having moved well over 20 times, we leave this morning for the adventure to continue; drive to Montreal, fly to Tokyo for a few days

and on to PNG. Like any marriage we have things that bug each other, but it serves me well when I'm getting frustrated to reflect on the question, what woman would be willing to do this with her husband and family? She's not just willing to go, we're in this together. She believes in what we're doing! Add that to the fact she's joyful, beautiful, faithful, and loves people so much more than things. Wow, she truly is worth far more than riches! (Prov 31:10).

The work we are doing provides so many unique joys and experiences, it really is a privilege that we love and enjoy most of the time. Days like today, however, are tough ones. Saying goodbye to family knowing it will be several years and even harder, many life experiences come and gone, before we meet again. Sara feels deeply and is very close to her family. Don't pray that she and the rest of us aren't sad. Pray that we mourn properly through a Biblical worldview, knowing that Jesus is worthy, that this time on earth "is but the cover page of a book that goes on forever with each chapter getting better than the last." We're not missing out on joy; we're just deferring some of it till later for an out of this world return on our investment! Luke 18:28-30.



The "Voice Newsletter" is the communication tool of the Conservative Grace Brethren Churches International; EDITED by: Pastors Ike Graham, Les Vnasdale, and Christopher Knight.

PLEASE NOTE: Regarding NEWS AND/OR MAILING UPDATES

PLEASE FORWARD INFORMATION TO: PAM O'KINSKY at OKINSKYS@COMCAST.NET

SNAIL MAIL TO: 135 WILDCAT ROAD, FRIEDENS PA 15541

Articles must be received **BY THE 20TH OF THE MONTH** to be included in the next issue of the "Voice Newsletter." Thank you in advance for your cooperation and participation.