

FORWARD TOGETHER: A UNIFIED NETWORK IN A DIVIDED WORLD

MOMENTUM

ISSUE #6 • OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF COLORADO BAPTISTS

COLORADOBAPTISTS.ORG

DOES YOUR
CHURCH
HAVE A
NEXT
STEP?

Every church has a next step. We have developed a process to help your church bring clarity to its vision.

+ GOD & COFFEE + WHY YOUR LEADERS AREN'T LEADING,
AND 3 STEPS TO FIX IT



WHY NOT HERE? WHY NOT US? WHY NOT NOW?

THE LONGER I LIVE and the walk with the Lord the more I desire one simple thing in life. I desperately want to experience a movement of God among us. I constantly find myself reading stories of men and women of years past that God has used greatly and asking myself; why could we not experience these same powerful movements of God among us? I believe we can! However, in order to do so, we must be intentional in every sense of the word. We must serve from a unified vision to reach Colorado with the gospel of Jesus Christ. We must each take our “Next Step” in making a greater gospel impact across our state. While each “Next Step” will look different for each church, the overall unified vision will move us forward together.

As I travel across the state and meet with pastors and church leaders, I am reminded of how blessed we are here in Colorado. God has given us incredible people, resources, and facilities to make his name known. I truly believe the greatest days of gospel advancement are ahead of us as we move forward together. In fact, the more I travel across the state and hear from people, the more I see three particular areas that I sense God wanting to do a great work among Colorado Baptists. Allow me to share these three areas with you and encourage you to jump in and be a part of what God is doing.

1) AN INCREASED FOCUS ON DIVERSITY IN OUR NETWORK.

In January of this year, we had a change in our elected officers. Due to a transition of our President, Our First Vice President, Pastor John Moreland became our new President. This marks a historical moment in the life of Colorado Baptists. In this transition, John becomes the first African American President in the history of Colorado Baptist General Convention. God has given us yet another opportunity to lead the way as we become increasingly intentional with involving more ethnicities in the life of our network. We simply need to

focus on looking more like Heaven! I look forward to the leadership that our President will give to us in the coming days.

2) DEVELOPING A PRAYER CULTURE AMONG CHURCHES AND PASTORS.

I have moved from being convinced to being convicted that we will not see the gospel movement we desire in Colorado until we see the prayer movement we need in Colorado. As I have talked to many, God has been stirring the hearts of pastors and leaders to become more fervent in our prayers. So, we want to encourage pathways for pastors to pray together and develop cultures of prayer in the churches of the CBGC. One of the ways we desire to spark this will take place in September. We have been given the opportunity to lead a group of pastors to the Brooklyn Tabernacle in New York to meet with Pastor Jim Cymbala and some of his team to discuss prayer culture. This will be an incredible trip. You will hear more about this opportunity very soon.

3) STRATEGIC COOPERATION AND PARTICIPATION.

The new “Next Step” vision has taken off in an unbelievable way. Many of our churches have made the commitment to take the “Next Step” together to make a greater gospel impact in Colorado. We could not be more thrilled about how God is using this. We simply desire to see God move us together in a unified vision and we believe he is doing just that. However, we also desire to see our churches increase cooperation and participation together. It can be challenging to feel like you are isolated as you are seeking to fulfill your mission. The good news is, you’re not! You have a network of churches all around you who are here for you. Let’s be intentional to partner with our family of churches across the state to see God move in a great way.

I desperately want to see a God movement. I am praying for it, believing for it, and anticipating it. Our state is in such need of the gospel advancement and God has been gracious enough to provide us with what we need to see it. The real questions today are; Why not here? Why not us? Why not now?



Dr. Nathan Lorick
Executive Director



TABLE OF CONTENTS

PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE

FORWARD TOGETHER: A UNIFIED NETWORK IN A DIVIDED WORLD 2

DISASTER RELIEF AWARDS BANQUET COLORADO HONOREES 3

SEVEN LAUNCHES OF CHURCH PLANTS AND REPLANTS 4

HISPANIC MINISTRY IN SOUTH CENTRAL COLORADO 5



SUCCESS: REDEFINED 6

Yet, let us not forget the metrics that matter most: the stories of life transformation taking place in the hearts of those confronted with and conformed to the gospel. Celebrate stories of transformation for the benefit of your church and the encouragement to your heart to keep going.

DISASTER RELIEF:

HELPING OUR OWN 9



In the Cross we see God's provision for that broken relationship to be restored, through the forgiveness, freedom, hope, and new life received by faith in Jesus Christ and His resurrection. It's a story that's been brewing all of human history, and yes, it's that simple. Just like this cup of coffee.



Remember the scene at the end of *The Wizard of Oz* when Toto pulls back the curtain to reveal that the great and powerful wizard was nothing but a normal guy hiding behind an impressive image? That's how I feel whenever I'm asked to describe ministry.

SOUL REVITALIZATION 14



MARRIED 4 LIFE 16

WHY YOUR LEADERS AREN'T LEADING, AND 3 STEPS TO FIX IT 18

BENEFITS OF CAMP AT PONDEROSA 20



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FORWARD TOGETHER: A UNIFIED NETWORK IN A DIVIDED WORLD

OF ALL THAT DESCRIBES THE TIMES in which we live, most notable in my mind is *divided*. We are divided among racial lines, political parties, class, personal interests, and too many more factors to name. Thus, as I've prayed about our focus, the theme of *unity* has been pressed deeply into my spirit.

I recently had the privilege of worshipping at Hope Church, Las Vegas, and listening to Pastor Vance Pittman. On this particular morning he invited us into the prayer closet of Jesus, and allowed us to listen in as Jesus talked to the Father, in what Vance described as "... arguably the most holy and intimate conversation ever recorded in human history ..." (John 17). In light of his impending death, Jesus asked the Father to cause the Apostles to "... be one as We [Father and Son] are one ..." (Emphasis added).

In a word, Jesus was asking for unity to exist among those who would carry on the work which He began during His earthly ministry. In the verses that follow Jesus gave the rationale for His request, "... that the world may

believe that You [The Father] sent me." Wow! Unity of believers is evidence of the very ministry of Jesus. As Colorado Baptists carry out the mission, which we believe has been given to us by God, and articulated by our Executive Director Dr. Nathan Lorick and the leadership team, our efforts are futile if our hearts are not unified in at least three areas.

Above all, we must be unified in our love. John declared in 1 John 3:14, "We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren ..." As division defines the condition of our world, we must make a statement that confronts the status quo. Our unity must first and foremost be displayed in the single, clearest mark of the Christian, which is also the principal attribute of God Himself-LOVE! Some may doubt our message, question our tactics, and be skeptical of our faith, but may they never doubt our love.

Additionally, we must be unified in our mission. Inherent in the 5 paradigm shifts of our network is a foundation of unity, which propels the local

church, rather than the State Convention, to the front line of pushing back lostness in our state. The call for every pastor, church, and Colorado Baptist, is to carry out our mission with prayer-filled passion and Spirit-led intensity.

Above all, we must be unified in Gospel truth! While there are many cheap alternatives to truth-universalism, postmodernism, atheism, agnosticism, and plain ole' ignorance, you and I know that the Gospel still works if we work it! May we never compromise the potency, offensiveness, and life-giving truth of the Gospel. This is what has defined Southern Baptists for nearly 175 years, and may it be so until that glorious day when we hear the welcome voice of our Lord say, "Well done my good and faithful servant..." Until then, may God grant each of us strength to be faithful and unified on our journey together.

John Moreland
President



Disaster Relief Awards Banquet Colorado Honorees



Colorado Baptist disaster relief volunteer, Cheryl Wood (right) of North Metro Church in Thornton, CO, received a distinguished service award during the Southern Baptist Disaster Relief awards banquet on Wednesday, January 23. The award was given for her performance as a volunteer during 2018. The banquet was held in Kansas City, MO, during the annual meeting of disaster relief leaders from around North America. Colorado Baptist disaster relief director Dennis Belz (left) presented her with the award.

—Photo by Brandon Elrod

Celebration



On Sunday, March 3, we set apart Josh Caudill as an additional covocational elder at Faith Journey. Josh is biblically qualified, called, gifted, and tested in teaching. He has come alongside me as a fellow shepherd of this flock. Less than 4 years into this church re-plant, in a combined community of around 5000 people, I now consider us a legitimate church plant. I know if I were “hit by a bus” tomorrow, this church will survive, and even thrive, not being dependent on my solo leadership. Josh provides a unique gifting where my gifting lacks, knowing I can never be all our congregation needs in a pastor. I now have a pastor as well.

—Dave Blehm, Pastor, Faith Journey, Parachute, CO



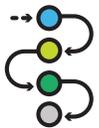
HOW CAN WE HELP YOU?

Our Strategy is a 4-step process to help you: Discover, Design, Engage, and Celebrate!



Discover Your Next Step

Every church has a Next Step. What’s yours? We have partnered with Auxano, a leading ministry organization helping churches bring clarity to their vision, to assist our churches in discovering their Next Step.



Design Your Road Map

Having a strategic plan to achieve your Next Step is key to focusing your church’s people, resources, and efforts to have a greater Gospel impact together. Your Next Step Guide will help you design a road map that is customized to your church.



Engage Your Journey

Now that you have a road map, engage the journey to see culture changed and communities transformed! As a convention we will come alongside you to cheer you on and look for opportunities to resource you.



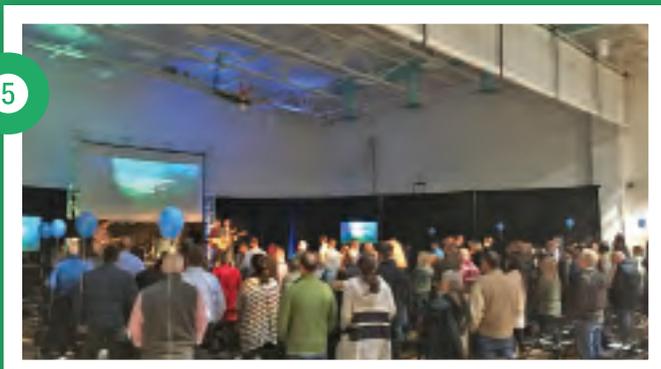
Celebrate Your Gospel Impact

The journey may be long and wearisome at times, but taking every opportunity to celebrate what God is doing is vital to our momentum. We want to help you look for how God is at work, and celebrate as a church how the Gospel is advancing in your community.

DISCOVER YOUR NEXT STEP AT COLORADOBAPTISTS.ORG!

Seven Launches of Church Plants and Replants

The first three months of 2019 have been exciting for church planting. Since January, five church plants and two replants launched. Take a few minutes and celebrate what God is doing by establishing His church in various places around Colorado. Also, remember to pray for these planters and replanters as they share the Gospel in their communities.



- ❶ **January 6** – Grace of the Lord Bible Fellowship, Aurora (replant of Mission Under Grace) – Replanter: CJ Counts; Sending Church: Mississippi Avenue Baptist Church, Aurora
- ❷ **January 13** – Living Rock Severance – Planter: Josh Green; Sending Church: Green Acres Baptist Church, Tyler, TX
- ❸ **January 27** – Overland Church, Ft Collins – Planter: Zack Thurman; Sending Church: Buck Run Baptist Church, Frankfort, KY
- ❹ **January 27** – Keystone Church, Loveland – Planter: AJ Neely; Sending Church: Lake Arlington Baptist Church, Arlington, TX
- ❺ **February 10** – Journey Point Church, Stapleton area of Denver – Planter: Chris Phillips; Sending Churches: Storyline Fellowship, Arvada and Bellevue Baptist Church, Memphis, TN
- ❻ **March 3** – Open Range Cowboy Church, Meeker – Planter: Tom Moulden; Sending Church: Open Range Cowboy Church, Craig
- ❼ **March 3** – Replant of Florida Baptist Church – Replanter: Josh Lewis; Sending Church: FBC Bayfield

Hispanic Ministry in South Central Colorado

We are grateful for the Hispanic Ministry in Colorado and praise God for the growth they have experienced!



Iglesia Bautista Emmanuel Center, CO

Pastor Rene Chavez had a minor stroke, but has been recovering, and took a sabbatical. He is doing well, and while he was out, Co-Pastor Alvaro Ibarra has been leading the church and doing an amazing job. Pastor Rene and his family are so thankful for the blessings that were provided by the churches of the Continental Divide Association. He is grateful for all of the support.



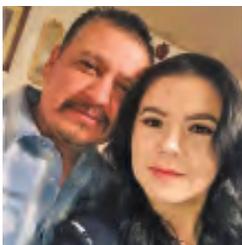
Iglesia Bautista Beth-el Alamosa, CO

Bethel Church has been working with the community and making plans for all of their activities this year. Keep the church and their pastor Alfredo Garcia in your prayers. The Agape ministry has been a big blessing to our community, and we thank all the pastors and their churches for their support. This ministry has extended all the way to Mexico where we have blessed families with food, clothing, and blankets, but the most important thing we have given them is the gospel of Jesus Christ! We are planning to start churches in that area. We have been praying for a sixteen-passenger van, and God has answered our prayers, thanks to our brothers and sisters in Christ!



Agua De Vida Church Monte Vista, CO

Agua De Vida has been in fellowship with Grace Baptist Church. They have been holding worship services and working together to reach out to the community. Pastor David Corral will be staying one more year to work in Colorado.



Iglesia Triunfante Center, CO

The church of Triunfante has been gathering in the house of Pastor Miguel Macias and having services and Bible studies every week. Please keep praying that God would provide them a building where they could meet and reach out to their community.



Mission in Manassa

The work in Manassa, being coordinated by Pastor Alvaro Ibarra and his team, is progressing. They have cleaned the inside and outside of the temple and started working on restoring the inside. We hope the temple will be ready for use by the end of summer. During Spring and Summer we will have family retreats, youth rallies, and other activities to Glorify our Lord Jesus Christ.

Iglesia Rios De Agua Viva Gunnison, CO

Rio De Agua Viva church has been growing. They are delegating leadership, so they can be more effective in their work for the community, and show the community the love of Jesus Christ through their life.

In the past year, God has been working with the Hispanic churches making changes that have made a huge impact. When God is in charge, marvelous things happen as we can see in Acts 2:47 which says, "praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved." When they see that we are one in Christ, they want to be a part of what we have.



SUCCESS: REDEFINED

BY ADAM YOUNG

ELEMENT CHURCH, AURORA, CO

DEFINING SUCCESS IN MINISTRY, corporately as a church and individually as a ministry leader, is difficult to do. I've had the pleasure of serving in small churches as well as large churches. I've experienced the excitement of being in rooms filled with thousands, and the challenge of trying to fill my own living room for Bible study. Every shape and size of church comes with its own challenges. Ministry in any setting can be lonely and a heavy weight to carry, but it was never meant to be a journey walked alone. The relationships I made with fellow leaders, pastors, and planters across the state in my years at the Rocky Mountain Campus of Gateway Seminary have kept me going through some of the most

challenging seasons of ministry.

One of the most difficult was the first year of church planting.

In the early days of our church plant, we weren't progressing as quickly as we had envisioned, nor as we had cast vision to our supporting partners. In that first year no one had prayed the 'sinners' prayer or been baptized. Attendance and giving were metrics that could be tracked, but were so small it was more painful to do it than to ignore it. At the point we had planned to be "launching," we were still struggling to build a core team that met weekly in my home. I began questioning my effectiveness and gifting. There were many nights wondering if our work, planning, and prayers had any effect. Things began to change one normal, no-reason-to-expect-anything-different night, as our Bible study was beginning to

gather in our kitchen.

A young couple and their two small children walked in. They lived just down the street and had been hanging out at our weekly Bible study for a few months. They seemed to really enjoy the fellowship and new relationships they were making, but were only moderately interested in the real reason we gathered each week. Both had a little religious exposure from their childhood, he with a Catholic grandmother and she with a Jewish mother who tragically died while she was still very young. Neither had shown any real interest in their adult lives prior to their introduction to our group.

As was typical on most of these evenings, people gathered in our kitchen for coffee and cookies to talk about life and current events until I ushered everyone into our living room to signal a shift in

the nightly itinerary. Before any of that could take place, however, the husband of this young couple walked in carrying one of the largest Bibles I've ever held. He handed it to me, asking, "Is this a good one?" You see, he had heard Christians debating one another before about 'good' and 'bad' Bibles and wanted my opinion as to how his should be categorized. It was the Bible his grandmother gave to him as he graduated high school and was shipping off to Army basic training. It was obvious, both by its appearance and his sheepish confession, that it had never really been opened or read. I could tell he had done his best to wipe off the many years of thick dust that had accumulated on it as it sat somewhere in his home. I don't remember what translation or brand of study Bible it was, but as I was looking through it, pretending to examine it carefully as though my judgment of the Bible was hanging on what I might find, he began to tell me how he had spent a few weeks searching for it. Having just recently found it after years of neglect, he had also begun to read it each night with his wife.

I quickly declared he had a "very good one," deciding to save the discussion of what these seemingly unaware Christians had been trying to debate in front of him for another

Yet, let us not forget the metrics that matter most: the stories of life transformation taking place in the hearts of those confronted with and conformed to the gospel. Celebrate stories of transformation for the benefit of your church and the encouragement to your heart to keep going.

time. I wanted to give him every reassurance I could that he was on the right track. I wanted to hear more about what was taking place in his heart that would lead him to his recent actions. Secretly, I think I also wanted reassurance that, in fact, all of our efforts in ministry were making a difference. It was during my time of prayer and reflection that night in my basement, when everyone was gone, that I resolved to redefine how we measured success in our church and in my ministry.

I once heard Andy Stanley say at a Catalyst One event, "What gets celebrated, gets repeated." It was that night, after hearing the story of what God was doing on the inside of this young family, that I decided we were going to celebrate stories of life transformation more than we would numbers in a spreadsheet. Now don't get me wrong, if it can be counted, we count it, track it, and set goals for it in our church. Numerical growth

can signal things are moving in the right direction and I'm thankful for the progression we've witnessed over the years. Numbers, however, can also be deceptive. We can be deceived by the numbers that communicate our mission is being accomplished, when, in fact, it might only show that our marketing is being effective. We can be deceived by less-than-expected numbers, which reinforce our insecurities that our ministry is broken and we are failures. I've seen churches of all shapes and sizes track their progression and rate their success in varying ways, none any more 'right' than another. Yet, let us not forget the metrics that matter most: the stories of life transformation taking place in the hearts of those confronted with and conformed to the gospel. Celebrate stories of transformation for the benefit of your church and the encouragement to your heart to keep going.



**BAPTIST FOUNDATION
OF COLORADO**

A Financial Ministry to Colorado Churches

ACCOUNTING HUB JOB OPENING

There is a job position available with the Accounting Hub of the The Baptist Foundation of Colorado (BFC). This position can be either a part-time or full-time position for the right person. Accounting knowledge is preferred, but an accounting degree is not required.

If you are interested, please contact Doug Lohrey, at (719) 651-4377 or dlohrey@coloradobaptists.org.

WHAT IS THE COOPERATIVE PROGRAM?

The Cooperative Program is Southern Baptists' unified plan of giving through which cooperating Southern Baptist churches give a percentage of their undesignated receipts in support of their respective state convention and the Southern Baptist Convention missions and ministries



How does CP work?



It starts with you!

With a gracious heart and obedience to God for all He has done for you, you commit to give back to Him, through your church, a portion of what He provides. (Lev. 27:30, Mal. 3:10)



Your Church

Every year your church prayerfully decides how much of its undesignated gifts will be sent through Colorado Baptists for the purpose of reaching Colorado and the world.



Your State

Colorado Baptists invests a portion of undesignated gifts to the ministries supporting our Colorado churches and associations.



Your World

Colorado Baptists sends a portion of undesignated gifts to the Southern Baptist Convention. These gifts are used by SBC entities to send and support missionaries, train pastors and leaders, and to address social, moral, and ethical concerns relating to our faith and families.

Let's do more together!

coloradobaptists.org

HELPING OUR OWN

BY JUDY CALE

CBDR, PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER

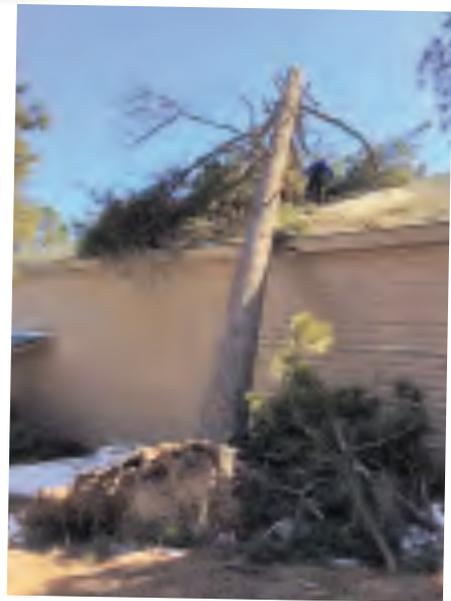
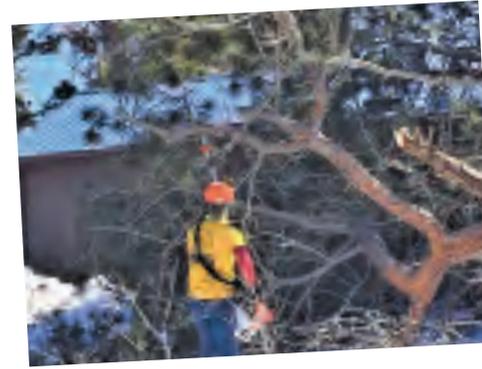
Spring Storm “Ulmer” affected one of our own tremendously! Ponderosa Retreat and Conference Center in Larkspur needed help with the mitigation of over twenty downed trees. They were expecting groups for Spring Break to check-in within a few days, but had trees and branches laying everywhere including on the roof of the gymnasium. As the trees were dropping, Marcus Rawls called Dennis Belz, the Colorado Southern Baptist Disaster Relief Director, for help. Immediately Dennis placed a Call Out to Colorado Baptist Disaster Relief volunteers. Two days later, and having to shovel out our recovery units from the 3 to 4-foot snow drifts, forty-six volunteers from CBDR and churches arrived at 9:00 AM. Eager men, women, and children wearing boots and bundled up in layers were ready to help. After a time of prayer, volunteers were placed into groups. Shortly thereafter, the buzzing of chainsaws could be heard all around. Several had brought their own chainsaws, which made the work move even more quickly. After the trees and limbs were cut, slash teams loaded the branches and small limbs onto flatbed trailers to be hauled off. Marcus was amazed at how fast the work was being completed.

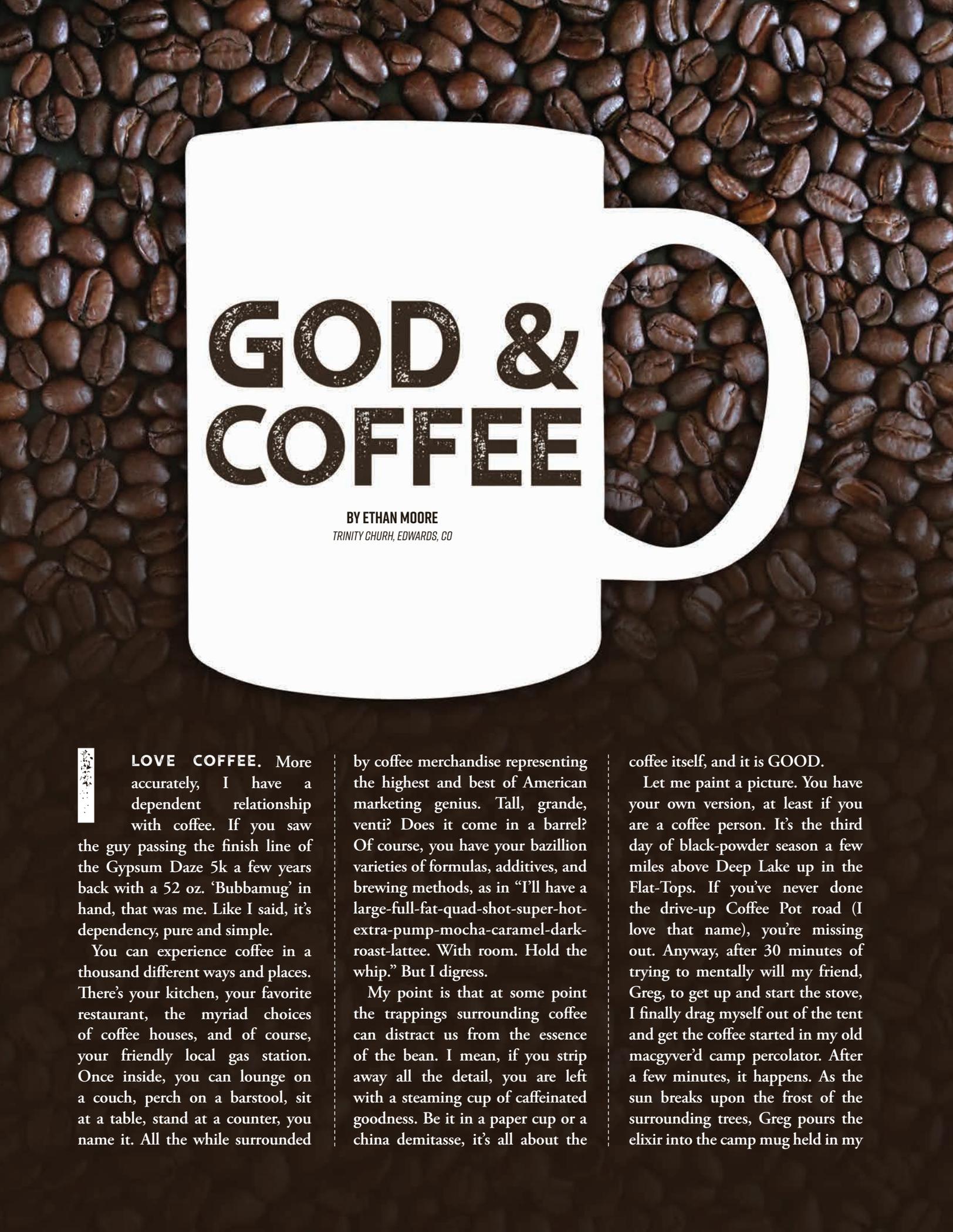
Lots of laughter and fellowship could be heard during a hearty lunch prepared by the Ponderosa staff. Several seasoned CBDR volunteers got reacquainted and reminisced after not having seen each other since the fall of 2018 during the Spring Fire in La Veta. After a big thank you from Marcus, the teams returned to their locations to

finish their work. Meanwhile, Dennis and Marcus drove to the surrounding neighborhood to see if any homes were affected. Five homeowners had downed trees with one having a 250-year-old Ponderosa pine landing on his roof with two limbs into the house. After the work at Ponderosa Retreat and Conference Center was accomplished, several chainsaw teams were sent to help the nearby homeowners.

Neighborhood homeowners, Diego and Emily, had a 50-foot Ponderosa pine that fell in their yard. They were so grateful it did not land on their home or their car which was parked in the driveway. Within two hours, it was all cut up and the slash removed. Neighbors from across the street came out and greeted the volunteers thanking them profusely for helping Diego and Emily. Being a working family with two young children, they had no idea how they were going to clean up their large front yard. As the team was packing up their equipment, they asked Emily and Diego if they could pray for them. They all joined hands on the porch and prayed for the future of this young family. Just before the team left, Emily exclaimed, “This would have cost us so much of our time and money! Thank you, thank you, thank you for all you have done!”

The forty-six volunteers donated a total of 342.5 hours of their Saturday helping Ponderosa Encampment and their neighbors in the Larkspur area after a horrific snow storm. A total of 51 trees were cut! As stated in Matthew 22:39, “...You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” (ESV) These volunteers were showing Christ-like love for others through their skills, hard work, and effort.





GOD & COFFEE

BY ETHAN MOORE
TRINITY CHURCH, EDWARDS, CO

LOVE COFFEE. More accurately, I have a dependent relationship with coffee. If you saw the guy passing the finish line of the Gypsum Daze 5k a few years back with a 52 oz. 'Bubbamug' in hand, that was me. Like I said, it's dependency, pure and simple.

You can experience coffee in a thousand different ways and places. There's your kitchen, your favorite restaurant, the myriad choices of coffee houses, and of course, your friendly local gas station. Once inside, you can lounge on a couch, perch on a barstool, sit at a table, stand at a counter, you name it. All the while surrounded

by coffee merchandise representing the highest and best of American marketing genius. Tall, grande, venti? Does it come in a barrel? Of course, you have your bazillion varieties of formulas, additives, and brewing methods, as in "I'll have a large-full-fat-quad-shot-super-hot-extra-pump-mocha-caramel-dark-roast-latte. With room. Hold the whip." But I digress.

My point is that at some point the trappings surrounding coffee can distract us from the essence of the bean. I mean, if you strip away all the detail, you are left with a steaming cup of caffeinated goodness. Be it in a paper cup or a china demitasse, it's all about the

coffee itself, and it is GOOD.

Let me paint a picture. You have your own version, at least if you are a coffee person. It's the third day of black-powder season a few miles above Deep Lake up in the Flat-Tops. If you've never done the drive-up Coffee Pot road (I love that name), you're missing out. Anyway, after 30 minutes of trying to mentally will my friend, Greg, to get up and start the stove, I finally drag myself out of the tent and get the coffee started in my old macgyver'd camp percolator. After a few minutes, it happens. As the sun breaks upon the frost of the surrounding trees, Greg pours the elixir into the camp mug held in my

freezing hands. With the steam rising in front of my eyes, the warmth moves from my hands to my lips as I anticipate the coming bliss. For me, this is the essence of coffee. After a few minutes of silence, Greg looks up from his cup and asks “how can so much joy come from something so simple?”

My name is Ethan Moore and I’m the pastor of Trinity Church in the Vail Valley. I write a column in the local paper entitled “God and Coffee,” through which I seek to share the joy that comes from something ultimately simple. But it’s not coffee. It is the thing in life I am far more dependent upon, and that is faith in Jesus Christ. Like that cup of coffee you might be holding, there are uncountable varieties, settings, and trappings that so often surround this thing called Christianity. What if we could strip away the trappings and baggage of religion and Christian culture that too often obscure what is most important? At least for me, this isn’t about religion at all. It’s about Jesus himself, and the essential claim that He is God, and He is good. As my friend Greg asked, “How can so much joy come from something so simple?” So, let’s take a first step.

You may object to my assertion that faith in Christ is simple. If you’re talking about the expanse of Christian religious culture, I completely agree. But I’m not talking about Christian culture, I’m talking about faith in Jesus, and these aren’t always the same.

I’ll agree that saying faith in Christ is ‘simple’, well, overly simple. The same is true with coffee. The simple joy of hot java is possible because of the complex work of roasting a coffee bean. In a beautiful example of human ingenuity, the art of coffee roasting involves craftsmanship developed over centuries. Generations of tradition have led to that triple

shot masterpiece you’re savoring right now. And yet, underneath it all, there stands a handful of essential principles—I’ll call it coffee truth—from which all those years of development pour.

At the risk of metaphorical over-brewing, let’s apply this to the question of faith in Christ. Without question, historic and cultural Christianity is complicated. If you work to peel back all those layers however, what starts to emerge is a core of essential Biblical truth claims that lie at the heart of the New Testament. A few examples are the literal Resurrection of Jesus, the reality of sin, the gift of forgiveness, Grace, and the

choice between good and evil. I don’t need Jesus to save me from perishing just because I choose wrong over right ... it’s much simpler than that.

If you carefully read the beginning of Genesis chapter three, you will find that when Adam and Eve ate that apple, they didn’t yet know the difference between good and evil. This is crucial. At the point of ‘original sin’, the choice wasn’t moral wrong over moral right. There wasn’t even any concept of wrong and right. Rather, the choice was to trust themselves rather than God. To put themselves in control, rather than allowing God to be in control. That my friend, is the essence of sin, and we all do it.

IN THE CROSS we see God’s provision for that broken relationship to be restored, through the forgiveness, freedom, **HOPE, AND NEW LIFE** received by faith **IN JESUS CHRIST** and His resurrection. It’s a story that’s been brewing all of human history, and yes, it’s that simple. **Just like this cup of coffee.**

fundamental assertion that God is Love. These all are summed up in the famous Bible verse John 3:16, “for God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.”

That may sound simple, but it raises some very important questions. I would love to talk with you about any of them (over coffee, of course, pick your venue), but let’s address just one right now. What does Jesus mean by ‘perish?’ Is this about the consequences of sin? Why does this idea of sin cause me to need Jesus? What is sin that it should be a concern for me? And herein lies the critical Biblical reality so many miss. This underlying ‘coffee truth’ is that at its core, sin isn’t a wrong moral

We fight so bitterly over questions of morality, but a Biblical world view asserts that sin is not a question of who is right, but who is God. When Adam and Eve ate that apple, they chose self-dependence over God dependence, and humanity appointed itself its own moral authority rather than trusting God’s authority. In this sense all our moral bickering is a massive adventure in missing the point, because our greatest need is not moral superiority, it is God Himself. In the Cross we see God’s provision for that broken relationship to be restored, through the forgiveness, freedom, hope, and new life received by faith in Jesus Christ and His resurrection. It’s a story that’s been brewing all of human history, and yes, it’s that simple. Just like this cup of coffee.

BEHIND THE CURTAIN

BY MICHAEL CRAFT ALPINE CHAPEL, TELLURIDE, CO

Remember the scene at the end of *The Wizard of Oz* when Toto pulls back the curtain to reveal that the great and powerful wizard was nothing but a normal guy hiding behind an impressive image? That's how I feel whenever I'm asked to describe ministry. After pastoring for thirty years, reading a ridiculous amount of books, and attending more leadership conferences than I can count, I had built up a pretty good idea of what leading in ministry should look like:

A successful leader in ministry is an incredibly gifted **alpha male CEO**, **an armored knight** who can withstand any attack, **a rock star hero who** can fly in and answer any question, **meet any need**, and eloquently **explain any and every Bible passage**. No sweat.

However, like young David trying on King Saul's armor when he was a size S, and the armor was a size XXL, **I soon realized that something was wrong.**

My wife and I were youth pastors for eight years. We then planted a church in our living room that grew to well over a thousand people in a small suburb of Kansas City, Missouri. We pastored that church for eighteen wonderful years. We then moved to Colorado Springs and became equipping pastors of a church that regularly ran over three thousand in attendance. Many times, throughout these ministry positions, I was asked to share my thoughts on how to be successful and reveal the hidden formula I had somehow obtained. At these times, I was able to share small bits of wisdom, but truthfully, I always felt like that normal, little guy behind the curtain. I constantly had the feeling that I was somehow fooling everybody, and if they ever caught on to the fact that I was really not that impressive or special, they would pull the plug and reveal my utter lameness to the world.

Through a serious health issue that my wife went through, which included two brain surgeries, the Lord slowed me down. And in the midst of genuine pain, where I was caring for my wife, raising five children, and continuing in full time ministry, the curtain was indeed pulled back. It was then that the truth of who I am, and who I am not, became blaringly evident. I began to realize that authentic ministry has very little to do with us. My preconceived ideas of how ministry should look

and what a leader should look like began to be challenged.

Ironically, in a movie titled *The Wizard of Oz*, the wizard is not the main character... Dorothy is. Instead of the guy who knows how to manipulate images and come off as a know-it-all, the hero is not at all who anyone would expect. She is the wrong gender and the wrong age. Rather than being a person with all the answers, who is constantly informed of



What the Lord desires is for us to simply be obedient, even in our weakness. Why? Because then He gets all the credit ... and the true Hero is revealed: Jesus.

what's up and where to go, she is herself lost, a seeker, vulnerable, often bewildered. She is stuck in a predicament—still a little dizzy from the tornado, feeling lost and far from home. These are characteristics that would disqualify her from most people's thinking of modern leadership. She didn't have all the answers, and surprisingly surrounded herself with others who didn't have the answers either. She honestly thought that their needs, although completely different than hers, could be fulfilled on a common

quest. Her sincere heart, her compassion, her determination, and willingness to take chances helped each of them get exactly what they needed in the end.

My wife's health demanded that we move to a higher altitude, and so, by God's grace He has moved us to Telluride, Colorado. I now pastor a beautiful church that is quite a bit smaller than the ones I used to pastor. After our Sunday morning service, I take a gondola to

the top of a beautiful mountain and I lead another service for those who are visiting our beautiful area. Some weekends there are tens of people, other weekends I am ministering to less than a handful. Some weekends I am standing in the sun with unimaginable beauty surrounding me on every side, other weekends I am standing in negative zero temperatures and in a blizzard. Gone are the spotlights, the ushers and security

teams, the large crowds, and the radio interviews. But what has been exposed is the return of a sincere and compassionate heart, a radical determination and willingness to surround myself with others who are seeking, and finally, a realization that I'm nowhere near perfect. I can only wear regular sized armor, because that's who God has made me to be. What the Lord desires is for us to simply be obedient, even in our weakness. Why? Because then He gets all the credit ... and the true Hero is revealed: Jesus.

SOUL REVITALIZATION!

BY MIKE MCVEY TRINITY BAPTIST CHURCH, GUNNISON, CO

Soul—internal, private, invisible, “the me I want to be,” chaotic, untended, neglected, the “inner me.”

and that most are fearful to inquire about. Imagine that the soul most in need of revitalizing is—your own.

Every person is a soul made by God (Gen. 2:7), for God, and to need God, which means you are not made to be self-sufficient. (Dallas Willard). Willard goes on to say, “The soul is that aspect of your whole being that correlates, integrates, and enlivens everything going on in the various dimensions of the self. The soul is the life center of human beings.”

We can ill-afford to endeavor any aspect of church ministry without first safeguarding that our “inner-being” our very “life-center,” our soul, is being revitalized. Ortberg in his book *Soul Keeping* states it well “the neglected soul doesn’t go away, it goes awry.” So how do you care for

the most important part of you?

Let’s hone in on how we nourish and strengthen our own persona. “Strengthening the soul of your leadership is an invitation to enter more deeply into the process of spiritual transformation and to choose to lead from that place,” writes Ruth Haley Barton. So, what is required to find our way back home to a life of intimacy with God?

ASK THE RIGHT QUESTION(S)

Ask yourself am I leading from the presence of God? Do I desire to lead incarnationally (fleshing out Christ in my life) by listening to God’s voice, and by contemplatively reflecting on God’s Word? Don’t forget God’s power is not released from performance but through His presence.

Why? Why do we engage in performance based ministry without caring for the soul? The bottom line is simple: we are more concerned with what we are doing than who we are.

To quote an ancient adage, we have “the cart before the horse!” No one would argue against the fact that healthy churches need healthy leaders. Perhaps another reason might be that we are engaged to the “cult of busyness.” Or yet another motivation might be that we are not developing key spiritual disciplines in our lives as ministry leaders.

Maybe before we begin our quest to plant, to build, and to revitalize churches the most urgent question should be, “is it well with my soul?” That part of you that no one sees

PRACTICE SOLITUDE AND SILENCE

Soul keeping best begins in the closet where we can find ourselves undistracted by the cares of the day. To be still and know God (Psalm 46:10) means that we remove ourselves from the noise that sidetracks us from listening intently to our heavenly Father. Being silent is not only a means of obedience but a source of strength and an incredible time of worship before the Almighty.

CULTIVATE SPIRITUAL FRIENDSHIPS

Most of us have friends. We have friends who are interested in the same things we are interested in. We have friends who share our faith perspectives. We have friends who help us. But in my mind, the best kind of friends are 'soul friends.' Those are people with whom I can be forthcoming and honest about my own soul. In return, they reflect

God's love for me in their words, their attitudes and their actions. These are friends who 'enflesh' God for me. God loves and nourishes my soul through these friends. –Alice Fryling in *Seeking God Together*

NAVIGATE FROM THE WILDERNESS

Like Moses, we will be better equipped to lead people out of their bondage into the place of spiritual freedom when we pilot from our own wilderness experiences. Wintley Phipps said, "It is in the quiet crucible of your personal,

private sufferings that your noblest dreams are born and God's greatest gifts are given in compensation for what you have been through." Perhaps we are dreaming if we think we can lead someone out of wilderness without first having been there ourselves.

After you have asked the right question, taken time to be still, cultivated spiritual friendships, and navigated from the wilderness then you will be able to resonate with the song writer, "It is well, it is well with my soul."

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Married 4 Life

BY DAVID SMITH NUCLA, CO



In June of 2013, my wife, Tracy, received a text message from her best friend telling us that their marriage was over. We wept and prayed. God led us to invite this couple, Josh and Michelle, to NightVision, a Christian concert series in Olathe, CO. We knew we had to do something, so we bought them tickets and wouldn't take no for an answer.

God, unbeknownst to us, was leading us toward a divine meeting. When we arrived and began setting up, we met the people next to us, Sean and Ila. As they began helping us, God opened a door we never saw coming. Throughout the day we got to know them and learned that they had been through an affair, and God had led Sean to salvation and restored their marriage. Amazingly, God was using them to now counsel couples who were hurting.

Josh and Michelle showed up and we spent the day getting to know each other and listening to great Christian bands. As time went by, we

began to see Josh and Michelle move a little closer to each other, and even hold hands. After that night Tracy and I continued in prayer and knew we had to do more. NightVision was a great start, but they were still a broken couple.

Josh and Michelle began to meet with Sean and Ila, as well as met for counseling with a nearby pastor friend. Meanwhile, God led Tracy and me to create a retreat that would help them see how God intended marriage to be. We called it the Married4Life Retreat.

We invited Sean and Ila to share their testimony, invited Josh and Michelle, and added a young couple from our church, Nate and Amanda. We spent a weekend in a secluded place with no internet or cell service, and shared the teaching for their marriage. It was a remarkable time together.

Within a month of the retreat Josh and Michelle were both saved by the blood of Jesus, and I had the pleasure of baptizing them in the Colorado

River. Praise God! They are now obediently working with youth at their church and desiring to do more for hurting marriages. What a great story of obedience and faithfulness. If it ended there it would be enough, but God had bigger plans.

Almost immediately after the first retreat, these couples began to ask for another retreat. As I worked to develop the teachings for the next retreat, it took me much longer than I expected. Unfortunately, during that time Nate and Amanda fell into marital problems leading to an affair. Brokenhearted, Josh and Michelle, Sean and Ila, and Tracy and I stood in the gap. Through prayer, counseling, and hard conversations Nate and Amanda's marriage was healed and they were restored. We finally had our second retreat focusing on protecting your marriage, and experienced God move again.

Wait! God doesn't do this in small towns, does he? Lives touched, marriages healed, relationships built? God is awesome! And if this story

in smalltown southwestern Colorado ended there, it would bring great honor to God. But He wasn't done yet.

In July of 2017, Tracy began to lay out for me a vision God had given her to start Married4Life Ministries. I thought we were finished, but God had given Tracy a vision for something greater. Even now as I type this, the emotion overtakes me and tears are filling my eyes. She told me of starting a retreat center and helping as many couples as we could through this ministry. I was amazed at the clarity she had and all I could say was yes.

After much prayer, we approached the original three couples that participated in the first two retreats and asked them to be a part of this ministry, to which they all obediently responded "Yes!" On September 2, 2017, Married4Life Ministries officially started. But now what? Where do we meet? How do we get people there? How do we pay for it? We talked about cabins, and

You think God can't use you in a small town in Colorado. Think again. And don't be afraid to say yes when God says go!

glamping, retreats on the Western Slope, the Eastern Slope, traveling retreats, everything we could possibly think of. But once we said yes to God, He said, "HOLD ON!" We have seen God move in ways that we couldn't have anticipated, and we are doing our best to keep up!

To our amazement, God provided a donation large enough to purchase a house on 20 acres in Cahone, CO. In the last year and a half, we have hosted five retreats, and currently

have a waiting list. We have invited local ministries and businesses, and our brochures have even made it to police stations where officers have asked about attending retreats. Couples who have come to a retreat have spread the word to their friends, co-workers, and churches.

When we are obedient to God, God moves in ways we can't even imagine. This was not a ministry started out of a big church in a big city. It was not a team of people brainstorming ideas and coming up with the best one. This was the heart of a small town pastor's wife that God gave a vision to and we followed it. Every person reading this can do the same thing. You think God can't use you in a small town in Colorado. Think again. And don't be afraid to say yes when God says go!

*Married4Life Ministries is available to any couple who needs restoring, equipping, or strengthening.
www.married4lifeministries.com.*



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Why Your Leaders Aren't Leading, and 3 Steps to Fix It

BY MAG LAKE *MAG LAKE ONLINE*

A church planter recently asked me what seemed to be the most basic question: how do you define “leader”?

This is actually a crucial question that all of us who lead churches or organizations need to wrestle with.

Definition = Expectation

So many times we put someone in a leadership position and expect them to do the work but not lead a team.

I define a leader as someone who leverages their relational

influence with a team of people to get the right things accomplished through those people.

But often when we put someone in a leadership position, we ultimately don't care whether they lead through others. That's secondary.

Our higher expectation is simply that the work gets done. It doesn't matter to us how it gets done, even if it means that they do it themselves.

But when you allow a leader to get into the bad habit of doing rather than leading, it weakens leadership. If you set the

When you allow a leader to get into the bad habit of doing rather than leading, it weakens leadership.

expectation that the person will do the work themselves, you make them into a doer, not a leader.

7 Expectations for Leaders

When I was a church planter, we had no money, no resources, and very little time, but we had some amazing lay leaders.

I did have the wisdom to establish a leadership team of seven people to oversee the seven ministries of the church. But I did not have the wisdom to know what I wanted these leaders to do.

A year in, I knew there was something wrong. I had not given them a clear definition of what a leader is and what I expected of them.

So, I defined in writing seven things that I wanted each of them to provide for their team. I literally spelled it out for them: “L.E.A.D.E.R.S.”:

- ◆ **Leadership Development** – provide initial and ongoing training to the members of their ministry teams
- ◆ **Empowerment** – delegate the roles and responsibilities to team

members to operate the ministry area effectively

- ◆ **Affirmation** – catch people doing things right and encourage them in how they display their strengths and their passions

- ◆ **Direction** – cast a clear and compelling vision for their ministry area that is aligned with the overall vision of the church

- ◆ **Evaluation** – regularly identify strengths and growth areas together with their team and make plans for continual improvement

- ◆ **Recruitment** – continually enlist new volunteers and adequately staff their area of ministry

- ◆ **Soul Care** – encourage the spiritual health and development of team members

Providing this 7-point job description gave my leaders the clear expectations they needed to lead effectively. And it gave me a great tool to evaluate and coach them in their leadership role.

3 Steps to Elevate Expectations

Here are three things you can do to install this in your organization:

1. Make the L.E.A.D.E.R.S. job description a part of each leader’s job description.

Put it in writing. Go over it with your existing leaders and communicate it to every new leader you onboard.

2. Use L.E.A.D.E.R.S. as ongoing training topics for your leaders.

Pick one of the seven points and lead a training session on it, then do another. Develop leaders continually so that they continually develop as leaders.

3. Use L.E.A.D.E.R.S. to evaluate leaders.

Go over these seven points one on one to ask a leader how they’re doing. Or share the seven points in a huddle for them to evaluate themselves as a group.

You don’t have to use my definition of a leader, but you do have to provide clarity to people you put into leadership roles. When you don’t, both you and they are going to get frustrated. When you do, you begin to get the leadership results you expect of your area of ministry.



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When you do, you begin to get the leadership results you expect of your area of ministry.

BENEFITS OF CAMP AT PONDEROSA



Excerpts taken from “What is the value in attending a Christian camp?”

#1 Intense and extensive exposure to the Word of God.

Hebrews 4:12 tells us that the Bible is living and powerful. A typical day at Ponderosa Camps will have personal and group devotions, twice-a-day worship, scripture memory, and repeated use of the Word of God (Colossians 3:16).

#2 Opportunity to observe and learn from godly mentors (sponsors, speakers, staff).

This is an immeasurable thing! Having influences outside of parents allows students to discern who to trust and listen to for advice. Mentors are also able to model Christian disciplines and display God-centered living (I Corinthians 11:1).

#3 Camps are supported by the local church. This structure ensures that the leaders hear and experience camp with them, also go home with them, providing adults that can continue to build on lessons learned and disciple and mentor students weekly.

#4 Things that are ABSENT at Christian camp... like TVs, social media, computers, video games, etc. These can be distractions that serve to busy the mind and keep young people from focusing on deeper questions of life (Ephesians 2:3). The absence of these things gives campers time to ponder the Word in a deeper way and be surrounded by God’s creation, an environment that naturally turns our minds to Him and away from the world.

#5 Campers learn how to interact again.

They are often broken into teams or discussion groups, which brings out different character qualities, forces leaders to emerge, and requires verbal communication – which kids may not use on a daily basis anymore. Within this unique and temporary community, they can walk away more confident in who God is and how he has created them.

#6 Camp also broadens one’s circle of fellowship. For many campers, they meet new faces, keep in touch, and may find a lifelong friend or even a future spouse.

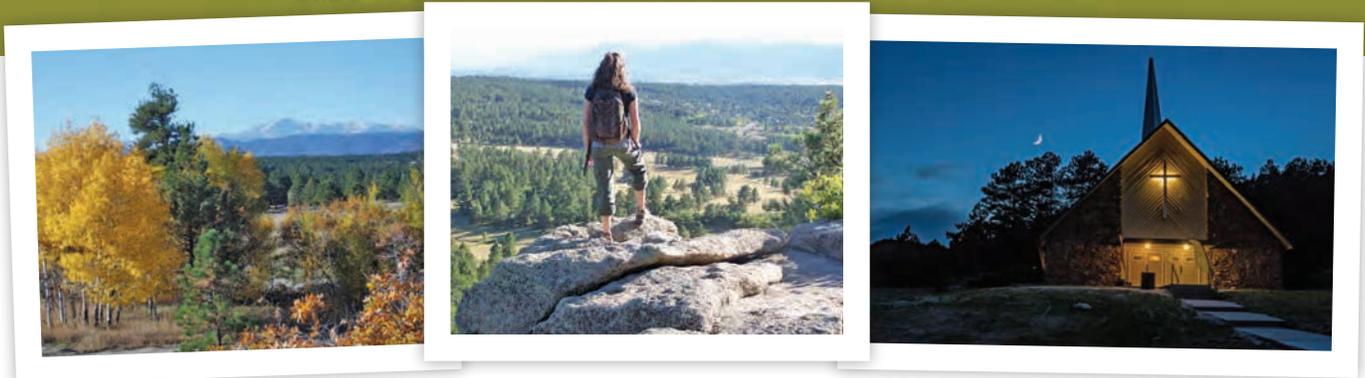
#7 Most importantly, God uses Christian camping to call nonbelievers to salvation, believers to confession of sin (James 5:16), and others to full-time vocational ministry!

#8 The Power of Camp Study done in 2018

throughout Christian Camps in America show the following measurable results:

- ◆ 51% of parents said their campers returned home "nicer or more pleasant to other family members"
- ◆ 44% of campers said they want to spend more time in nature since returning home
- ◆ 48% of campers strongly agreed they feel more confident in themselves since returning home
- ◆ 71% of campers strongly agreed their faith was strengthened

Take advantage of these benefits by sending your kids to camp at Ponderosa!



THE CALL

We are excited to provide a workshop for youth surrendering to vocational ministry! This workshop encourages growing in spiritual disciplines, and discovering options for education. “The Call” Workshop will be held during both camps this summer on June 18 and July 16. If interested contact (719) 481-2482 ext #17 to attend.

VIP

We need you! Would you like to join Ponderosa's ministry to kids, students, and families this summer and fall? In August, our students go back to school/college and volunteers are incredibly valuable. If you're interested, please call Clint at (719) 481-2482.

If you are interested in joining Ponderosa's ministry go to:

visitponderosa.com



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