

THE Contact

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Raising the Roof— BUILDING PROGRESS IN SPARTA, MICHIGAN

The CBM missionary builders are making good progress in Sparta, Michigan, as Baptist Bible Church takes on a new shape. The builders have “dried in” the building and the roofing is complete. Most of the framing is finished; plumbing, electrical, spray foam insulation, and siding are underway. God continues to clear the way for this new place of worship.

Three CBM missionary families—the **Woosters**, the **Kruegers**, and the **Smiths**—have been pushing forward for months to complete the addition to Baptist Bible Church. Saturday work teams from area churches have joined the CBM builders on this project, along with several family groups and week-long ministry teams over the course of the summer.

It is quite an addition, including an auditorium, foyer, nursery, offices, and more! The missionary builders remain diligent not only as builders but also as missionaries. They have been active in representing Christ to neighbors and contractors. Jeremy Smith had an opportunity to have a Bible Study with one of the neighbors and share the gospel. Pray for the timely completion of this project and continued development of relationships within the community.



What's Inside:



REACHING FAMILIES...



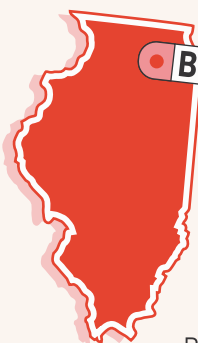
GOD CAN DO IT



HELLO, FROM BUFFALO!

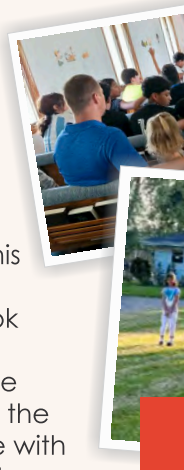
Reaching Families

As a ministry tool, Vacation Bible School (VBS) serves to connect mission churches with children and families in their community. Through music, creative Bible lessons, and themed activities, VBS provides a unique opportunity to share the gospel with children who often do not regularly attend a local church. Highlighted in this issue of the *CBM Contact* are three mission churches who are faithfully telling the next generation “...the praises of the Lord, and His strength and His wonderful works that He has done” (Psalm 78:4).



BENSENVILLE

At Calvary Baptist Church in Bensenville, Illinois, associate pastor Matt Bothwell organizes and leads Vacation Bible School—and does an excellent job! This year Pastor Matt advertised for VBS on Facebook, and the church family placed invitation hangers on doors in the neighborhood. Manny, one of the children who attends Calvary Baptist regularly, invited several of his friends to come. A family of five attended after seeing the Facebook ad; they are looking for a faith community to become part of in the Bensenville area. One of the nights, the children's grandmother even came with them! Missionary pastor **Todd Cook's** co-chaplain from the hospice center attended with his daughter; they watch the church's Saturday Kid's Bible Club online. The VBS week provided good opportunity for Pastor Todd to get to know his co-worker better.



Vacation Bible School at Grace Baptist Church in Orem, Utah went extremely well this year. CBM missionaries, **Daniel & Aja Long**, were particularly grateful for those who came to

help, including Anna, a member of a supporting church in South Dakota, and a group of seven from one of the Longs' supporting churches in Northern Michigan. Praise God for sending these fellow laborers—VBS could not have been done without them!

During the week of VBS, three children trusted in Christ as their Savior: Eleese, Danny, and Izzy. Daniel and Aja's son, Dawson, invited Eleese to come and witnessed to her earlier on the day that she was saved. Many other children who came from unsaved and even unchurched families thoughtfully engaged with the gospel and showed a lot of new interest in Jesus. Pray for these children and for God's continued work in their hearts and lives.



Nine adults from Calvary served throughout the week. There were 22 children who registered—five of them achieved perfect attendance! A highlight of this year's VBS was on the final night: one of the

children, Jaden, in retired missionary pastor Art Williams' class, made the decision to receive Christ as his Savior. What a joy!



Serving together makes VBS a joyful endeavor!

for Christ...

(Pastor Art and Joanne Williams served as CBM missionaries at Calvary Baptist for over 20 years prior to retirement.) Four children came on Sunday morning for the closing program. Manny is the only child who comes faithfully to church, so to have 22 children to minister to was encouraging.



VBS is family-focused at Calvary Baptist!

Calvary Baptist is located in an ethnically diverse neighborhood where VBS is culturally-acceptable to attend (even if one is, for example, Catholic and VBS is held at a Baptist church). Every year there are children who make professions of faith.

The Cooks, the Williams, and the Bothwells, along with the church family, desire an opportunity to disciple these children and reach their parents with the gospel. Continue to pray for these faithful laborers as they build relationships and minister in the community for the sake of Christ.



This year's "Stompers & Chompers" dinosaur-themed Vacation Bible School at Berean Baptist Church in Watertown, Connecticut, was both a tremendous challenge and a tremendous blessing, according to missionary church planters, **Dan & Vicki Benton**.

The greatest challenge was getting kids to come to VBS in the first place. The church family prayed for 20 children to attend and had 11 whose parents said they would come. In the end, only six children showed up. Despite advertising, fliers,

personal invitations, Facebook posts, and other avenues of spreading the word, none of the children who attended VBS were from outside of the Berean Baptist church family. This is often the reality of ministering in the New England area.

Despite the challenges, God's hand of blessing was evident. One of those blessings was abundant staff. Five of BBC's workers had never been a part of a VBS program before, either as kids or helpers, so it was new and exciting for them. As Pastor Dan taught the Bible lesson each night, the workers "hung on every word" just like the kids. They learned the songs and memorized the Bible verses, too, with the kids cheering them on. One of the newer members manages the church's Facebook page. She works with schools and other organizations and was able to get the information about VBS broadcast on many sites. Several churches also sent or delivered their VBS decorations to Berean. This was a great blessing to the church financially. When it came to decorating the building, at least a dozen folks from Berean showed up to help. Eight of those helpers are new to Berean Baptist Church since last year!

Was this year's VBS a "success"? In some ways, yes, and in some ways, no. Will Berean Baptist Church do it again? Absolutely!



VBS is worth the effort!

Service Recognition



*From Left to Right: Bill & Terri Jenkin III, Dallas Putnam, Daniel & Aja Long, Jerry & Crystal Miller
(Not Pictured: Greg & Beth Baum, Nancy Putnam, Dan & Vicki Benton)*

In the spirit of respecting those who labor among us and esteeming them very highly in love, CBM missionaries are recognized for their years of faithful service in five-year increments, beginning with ten years. This year, six couples were recognized during the annual CBM Family Conference. Combined, these missionaries have invested 155 years in planting, revitalizing, and building biblically sound, spiritually healthy, disciple-making churches in North America.

Jerry & Crystal Miller - 10 Years
Greg & Beth Baum - 15 Years
Daniel & Aja Long - 25 Years
Dan & Vicki Benton - 30 Years
Dallas & Nancy Putnam - 35 Years
Bill & Terri Jenkin III - 40 Years

Memorial Giving

The following gifts were gratefully received by Continental Baptist Missions in remembrance of loved ones now with the Lord—

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 West Michigan Chiropractic
 Mr & Mrs Rob Wynalda

IN MEMORY OF BILL VAN DAM

The Van Dam Family

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God Can Do It

A GOSPEL LIGHT IN NORTHWEST MONTANA

In northwest Montana, nine miles from the Canadian border, is a small town called Eureka. Valley Baptist Church (VBC) has taken root there as a CBM church plant. Church builders **Matt & Juanetta Schrepfer** noticed a change in 2003. Church building projects were booked a year and a half in advance, but as church plant growth slowed and fewer planters were available, these projects were soon caught up. The Lord used this change to call the Schrepfers from church building to church planting.

It was a courageous step of faith, but God always led the way. Matt and Juanetta did due diligence in multiple communities, researching where the Lord might send them. He gave them a passion for the small town of Eureka, and the work began in 2006. Matt gives God the glory for this ministry. Although there are many, three blessings stand out over the years—

The first is a man named Ron. He came to Christ at VBC, and the Lord profoundly transformed him. Ron became a growing believer and a charter member, and served as church treasurer for many years.

The second was God's provision of nearly four acres of land perfectly suitable for a church building. The price was remarkably low and matched what Valley Baptist could afford, nearly to the penny. This land now holds the concrete foundation for a new building that will be constructed in the spring of 2024.

And the final blessing is that God brought ministry partners to Matt and Juanetta. Another builder couple-turned-planters, **Shawn & Valerie Genung**, followed the Lord's lead to relocate to Montana in March of 2023, coming alongside the Schrepfers as assistant church planters. The Genungs have been a real asset, serving as fellowship

coordinators, planning and hosting different events to strengthen bonds within the church family, and inviting folks from the community to visit and get to know VBC. Valerie has also filled the void of a piano player for worship and will soon begin a Bible study with about ten ladies.

The Schrepfers and Genungs ask you to pray that the following milestones will be realized at VBC in the near future. First, the successful completion of their new church building in 2024. Second, the Lord's calling of a young pastor who can adapt well to northwestern Montana culture and minister successfully and comfortably at VBC. And, finally, that VBC will graduate soon from CBM mission church status. God can do it!



Groundbreaking Sunday at
Valley Baptist Church, Eureka MT



Hello, from *Buffalo!*

After two and a half years of deputation and ministry preparation, and one year of ministry in the city of Buffalo, New York, **Nathan & Christie Robbins**, their children, Amelia, Margaret, and Haddon, and a small core group excitedly—and officially—met together on Sunday, October 8th as *City of Light Baptist Church*.

For the last year, the Robbins family has built relationships, shared the gospel, and discipled new believers with this significant day in mind. As core group training and preparation drew to an end, Nathan and Christie clearly saw the timing was right for the next step in the process: meeting publicly as a church family. As the group prayed and prepared for this important moment, God opened doors each and every step of the way. The greatest motivator in this process was God's evident work as the church family grew through evangelism and discipleship. These new believers needed to be plugged into an active church!

While Nathan and Christie were willing to hold services in their home, God had other plans. He provided a location just two blocks from their house, in the neighborhood where they have ministered over the course of the last year. Not only is the meeting location close to home, but it is located off a major bus route and has off-street parking for almost 30 cars!

City of Light Baptist Church is renting a small building that is part of the Salvation Army's chapel corps. Most of the ministry taking place at this location is among Latino families in Nathan and Christie's neighborhood. The organization is excited about the opportunity for City of Light to use



*First Sunday at
City of Light!*



this facility to actively minister in the surrounding community.

The building includes a fully-equipped chapel with seating for 80 people, classroom space for nursery and children's ministries, handicapped-accessible restrooms, and a commercial kitchen and fellowship hall. City of Light has entered a short-term lease that will allow the church family a trial period through the end of the year to determine if everything is working well for both parties.

As you praise God for these significant milestones, would you also pray for City of Light Baptist Church? At this time, the small congregation consists of a core group, and families and individuals whom Nathan and Christie have been actively ministering to over the past year. Pray that the unsaved who are participating in weekly Bible studies would recognize their sin and place their faith in Christ alone for salvation. Pray for wisdom during this time of transition for the City of Light church family. And pray for spiritual growth. It is exciting to see God continue to work in the city of Buffalo!



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