

# The Connection

Volume 8, Issue 1, January 2010



## Parachute Party

Tuesday, January 19, 2010

Baker Hall

6:00 – Soup and Salad

7:00 – Construct parachutes to drop Christian literature in FARC territory in Columbia, South America.

Last year we made 97 parachutes. This year our goal is 100.

Needed:

- White cotton or polyester cloth – minimum size 22” by 22”
- 8 sewing machines that can sew zig-zag stitching

For any questions ask Vic Phillips (529-0089) or any other member of the Missions Commission.

## SEMI-ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING AN IMPORTANT STEP IN MOVING FORWARD

by Chairman Bret Larreau

Your Board of Elders are dedicated to leading our church with all of our heart, mind, body, and soul. We (Elders) understand that it starts with us to create an environment where ministry is done with excellence. In this time of transition, we are re-evaluating our current organizational structure while we also passionately search for our next senior pastor. After much debate within the members of the Bridge Team, and with other members of our body, the expression, “the old will be new again” certainly seems to hold true. We are moving forward with a structure that clearly separates Governance from Ministry, following the successful model of “Accountable Leadership Strategy.” In the words of a member who has been here for over 15 years, “this sounds the same as what we used to have.” It may or may not be. What we do know is that it’s a model which has proven successful in Church of God locations nation wide.

Let’s begin by defining the two roles:

**Governance** – this role is filled by the Board of Elders, and includes the senior pastor. The function of Governance is to provide our church body with long term vision. The Board will also focus on the spiritual integrity of our Senior Pastor, Staff and church body.

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## Family Life

by Pastor Brent

### Ministry update

Back in September I started two new ministries. They were named 'Link' and 'Climb.' One was a support for blended families, the other for single parents. Although only two individuals attended these support ministries, I pray that the material was encouraging and beneficial to them both. Due to the significantly low attendance, I will be looking at alternate methods of offering family support and information to families both in our church body and in the community. More information will be coming soon.

**Parent Link** is a monthly e-newsletter that is published by Group Publishing. They offer one for parents of teens and one for parents of younger children. Subscribers are given the freedom to add, delete, and modify any of the information that comes with the newsletter each month. Although I rarely do any editing of this kind, I would really like to address specific needs that families in our community are dealing with. This means that I need to hear from you. Send me your questions/ideas and I'll make sure there's an article on that topic in the newsletter. I am so passionate for marriages/families to be healthy, fun, and full of love.

Currently, roughly thirty people receive the Parent Link in our church. If you, a friend or neighbor, or a co-worker would like to subscribe to this **FREE** parenting resource, simply send your name and email address to [bmcc\\_pbrent@charterinternet.com](mailto:bmcc_pbrent@charterinternet.com) ...it's that easy! (hard-copies are available upon request)

### Mark your calendars

#### **FOCUS Marriage Retreat 2010!**

This year's retreat is in the final planning stage...and is looking like it will be the weekend of March 26-28. More info should be coming soon. It's looking like there will be limited space available this year, so keep your eye out for registration details.



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## *Get Your Act Together*

*by Alan Allegra\**

We have a saying that goes, “Give credit to whom credit is due.” This means we should praise or acknowledge (or blame) someone for the work he or she has done, and not for someone else’s work. Movies have a list of credits at the end so we can see who contributed what to the film. It would be confusing to list the Director as the Writer or the Editor as the Makeup Artist or the Second Unit Technical Director as the Key Grip (whatever that is). Then the workers wouldn’t get the recognition they deserve. Have you ever noticed that, when something pleasant happens, we credit it to Mother Nature or Lady Luck? Yet, when a disaster occurs, we call it an “act of God.” In other words, nature smiles benignly upon us, showering us with happy things while, when He gets mad enough or gets up on the wrong side of a cloud, mean ol’ God smites us with storms, earthquakes, and hailstones the size of golf balls. At least that’s the impression we’re given.

The truth is that all good things come from a loving God. “Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows” (James 1:17). God does not play favorites when He acts; He provides for all equally: “He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust” (Matthew 5:45). His goodness is proof that He exists: “Yet he has not left himself without testimony: He has shown kindness by giving you rain from

heaven and crops in their seasons; he provides you with plenty of food and fills your hearts with joy” (Acts 14:17). It seems God is getting a bad rap.

Good things in our lives come from a loving God, not nature or luck. Not only do acts of God include good things, He expects us to do acts of God as well. We may not be able to control time and space and nature and create colors and rainbows and stars, but we are called to emulate God in other ways: “Be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children and live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God” (Ephesians 5:1, 2). We are to walk in love as God has shown us in His son, Jesus. Acts of love are the true acts of God.

We’ve just emerged from the season for gift giving. A lot of thought went into each gift, reflecting the personality of the giver and the value of the recipient. God’s personality and our value to Him were reflected in the gift of His Son Jesus to die for our sins and reconcile us to Him (John 3:16). He also gives us spiritual gifts for empowering our service to Him and others: “Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God’s grace in its various forms” (1 Peter 4:10).

It’s time we give credit to whom credit is due. It’s time we show the world how good God is and how He loves people. We can do that by getting our act together and determining to do the acts of God with the gifts He has given us. “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven” (Matthew 5:16).

*\*Alan Allegra is the Executive Administrative Assistant of an Evangelical Church in Pennsylvania. This article was published at [faithwriters.com](http://faithwriters.com).*

### **Newsletter Deadline**

Articles are always welcome from any member of Blue Mountain Community Church. Submit it to [bmcc\\_newsletter@charter.net](mailto:bmcc_newsletter@charter.net). The deadline is the second Tuesday of each month at 9:00 AM. The editor reserves the right to edit for content and space.

*Celebrating January Birthdays and Anniversaries*

- |    |                            |
|----|----------------------------|
| 16 | <i>Christine Alexander</i> |
|    | <i>Ethan Guse</i>          |
|    | <i>Shane Mings</i>         |
| 17 | <i>Louise Doyle</i>        |
|    | <i>Rick Guse</i>           |
|    | <i>Frances Winters</i>     |
| 18 | <i>Rick Maxwell</i>        |
|    | <i>Chris Osborn</i>        |
|    | <i>Austin Walker</i>       |
| 19 | <i>Carrie Freiberg</i>     |
|    | <i>Ed Hendricksen</i>      |
|    | <i>Dave Houk</i>           |
|    | <i>Erik Jensen</i>         |
|    | <i>Elise Pettyjohn</i>     |
|    | <i>Nancy Stewart</i>       |
| 21 | <i>Andrew McMillan</i>     |
| 23 | <i>Chelsea Steiner</i>     |
| 24 | <i>Jessica Groat</i>       |
| 26 | <i>Morghan Carrera</i>     |
|    | <i>Jerold Cook</i>         |
|    | <i>Betty Eyestone</i>      |
|    | <i>Donna Hibner</i>        |
|    | <i>Stephanie Sept</i>      |
| 27 | <i>Jean Lamb</i>           |
|    | <i>Steve Mize</i>          |
| 29 | <i>Brenda Hobbs</i>        |
| 30 | <i>Anna Frazier</i>        |
|    | <i>Ron McBride</i>         |
|    | <i>Bill Parker</i>         |
| 31 | <i>Randy Knudson</i>       |
|    | <i>Myron Rogers</i>        |



- |    |                                    |
|----|------------------------------------|
| 7  | <i>Dave and Cindy Houk</i>         |
| 9  | <i>Jack &amp; Debbie Sands</i>     |
|    | <i>Paul &amp; Leanne Howard</i>    |
| 17 | <i>Rick &amp; Jolene Queen</i>     |
| 24 | <i>Vincent &amp; Kelle Cannone</i> |



*Women's Ministry*

All Ladies of Blue Mt. Community Church are invited to meet us at

**The Well**

a place where . . .  
 Women  
 Encounter the  
 Love of the  
 Lord



"The Joy of the Lord is our Strength"

Monday evening, January 25  
 6:30 - 8:00  
 and then stay and join us for  
 Beyond the Well  
 from 8:00 - 9:00 p.m.

Inviting new ladies to join us at our Beth Moore Bible Study on Daniel, that will resume on January 11th. We'd love to have you join us. Call Susan Huie at 525-0188 if interested.

CHRISTMAS REMEMBERED our annual Women's Tea was held on December 7. It truly was a memorable night. One hundred eighty two ladies gathered together for a beautiful evening of laughter, fellowship and inspiration. Thanks to all the hostesses and speakers and helpers it truly was a night to remember!



## *From Your* Administrative Pastor

2010...really? What happened to 2009? What a blur! What a year! For many of us, 2009 had lots of ups and downs, blessings and challenges, sunshine and dark stormy days. But if you are reading this, guess what? You made it...you survived! Way to go!

What can we take with us from last year other than memories? The Bible tells us that there are three things that continue into a new year. Paul reminds us in I Corinthians 13:13 that faith, hope and love will last forever!

Faith-hope and love...that's exactly what each of us needs as we begin a new year.

## Faith...

I have always loved Corrie Ten Boom's acrostic for faith. She said that faith is a **F**antastic **A**dventure **I**n **T**rusting **H**im. Let's trust Him more this year than ever before.

## Hope...

Psalm 42:5-"I will put my hope in God." Romans 15:4-"...the Scriptures gives us hope and encouragement as we wait patiently for God's promises to be fulfilled." Let's be more hopeful this year than ever before.

## Love...

Galatians 5:14-"Love your neighbor as yourself." Let's be more loving this year than ever before.

Let's see what He has planned for us this year!

Until next time-  
Pastor Dan

What's Happening at . . .



*The month of January the Before and After School program will be having a bake sale to raise money to buy blankets. The Ark will be donating blankets to a local agency to distribute to those in need.*

*If you would like to donate a blanket, we will have a box available at Ministry Central for your donations.*



## When God Leans Down

*by Jim Barringer\**

I'm taller than my girlfriend Andrea, which makes hugging a very interesting experience for us. I basically have two choices: mash her face into my sternum, or bend my knees a little bit and make myself shorter so we mesh better. "I have to stand on my tiptoes just to reach you," she observed, "and even then you still have to lean down for me."

I had a pretty vivid mental image, at that point, of me doing the same thing to God, standing on my tiptoes like a toddler who doesn't quite know what he wants, trying to make myself closer to God, who leans all the way down from heaven and brings himself near to me.

I've been thinking a lot lately about how much ridiculous stuff God puts up with from us. I have friends from a lot of different theological backgrounds, different denominations, and the whole nine yards. On every single issue we disagree on - baptism for infants or believers only, worship with new music or old hymns only, and so on down the line - at least one of us is completely wrong, and the odds are pretty good that all of us are at least a little bit wrong. Yet here we go, strutting around like we think we know things, declaring with our heads held high that we know exactly how God is. We've got his number. And I can only imagine God up there, laughing his head off at how silly and naive we are to think we could ever figure him all the way out.

I keep forgetting that a finite human mind simply doesn't have the ability to conceive of an infinite God. I try, of course, because there's value in the trying, but I have a concept of God that only vaguely resembles God, the way a toddler's crayon drawing only kind of barely resembles the house he lives in. A.W. Tozer once wrote that he likes to start

prayers by addressing "The God that truly is, not the God I think you are." The surprising thing should be that, as much as our opinion of him differs from how he really is, even sometimes differs from what he explicitly tells us in the Bible, he still shrugs and leans down to embrace us.

Scholar or fool, it doesn't matter at all to God, as long as we call on him as savior, because he doesn't want people who are scholars or people who are fools, only people who lean on him for salvation and forgiveness. Pentecostal, Baptist, Presbyterian, Disciple of Christ - the labels and the differences mean nothing to him. He accepts worship played with musical instruments and without, sung on-key and off, from songs written two hundred years ago and songs written yesterday. He accepts pre-written, elaborately eloquent prayers as well as fumbling half-sentences. He smiles on the soldier as well as the anti-war protester. He says to pray continually and we pray three times a day if we remember. He says to feed the hungry and clothe the sick, and we pat ourselves on the back if we do it once a month. We fall so far short of his standard that we don't even register on the holiness meter. He doesn't care. He just wants to be our savior.

We try to hug him, feeble arms extending a mere eight feet above this earth that chains us down, and he swoops down a million million miles to clutch us tightly to himself and speak words into our hearts about how we're loved and we mean something to him. He chooses to love us even though our best efforts would never be enough to make us love him. His love for us never falters, never wavers, never lessens.

*\*Jim Barringer is a 26-year-old writer, musician, teacher, and traveler, serving at The Church of Life in Orlando, Florida. More of his work can be found at [facebook.com/jmbarringer](https://www.facebook.com/jmbarringer).*

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**Ministry** – Ministry, as you would expect, is led by the Senior Pastor. His primary role is to  
1) Lead our congregation in our growing relationship with Jesus Christ. 2) To organize and lead the ministry team (pastors and staff – or perhaps a “council”) which serves under him to formulate, plan, and execute according to the mutually-agreed Ministry Strategy the Board and Senior Pastor have developed and approved and  
3) To lead our missionary movement within our valley, across our country and to all corners of our world.

This is a slight departure from the current organizational structure as dictated by our by-laws, as outlined in the “Commission” section.

**The Board will be asking for you to vote to support this revision to our current structure at the semi-annual business meeting on January 24, 2010.**



**We will be asking for a “yes” vote to allow us to operate in abeyance of our current bylaws for a period of one year.** At the conclusion of one year we will evaluate the changes implemented and make a formal recommendation for moving forward from that point. Voting to allow BMCC to function within the Accountable Leadership Strategy for this year would allow us to accomplish several things:

Implement the Accountable Leadership Strategy principles in areas that need immediate attention while deferring those that are working well.

Provide a new senior pastor with hope and encouragement that we are open to, and actually in the process of, making changes for the better in our organization

Create a better ministry environment for the church as a whole, not simply the Sr. Pastor by providing clear guidelines of responsibility, authority and accountability for each of the ministry positions.

**PLEASE NOTE:** This is a one year trial basis for this new structure, intended to more clearly define the Responsibility, Authority, and Accountability of our Board of Elders, Senior Pastor, Staff and all volunteers. At the end of this one year abeyance, you will have the opportunity to approve or reject this proposed change to our current structure and by-laws.

The Bridge Team wants you to Know More, so that you can make an informed vote. It is imperative that you are an informed voter and to that end, **WE WANT YOU TO KNOW** as much of the detail as you need to have confidence in your vote on January 24.

We have made considerable effort to inform everyone so that this would not be a surprise, but if this is really news to you, better now than on the 24<sup>th</sup>. Please come by the **WE WANT YOU TO KNOW** area in Baker Hall after service to get answers to your questions. We are there every Sunday. We have included several “volunteers” (we’re collectively referred to as the “Bridge Team”) whose input has been critical in examining and re-thinking what is best for our body. We also have been, and will continue to be, in close consultation with our district pastor, Lloyd Moritz, who strongly endorses this course of action. We solidly believe we have done (and are doing) our homework. Talk with your friends and family, and please come challenge us as we strive for consensus in moving our church forward.



## *Weekly Events*

### **Sunday**

Middle School Youth 7:00 PM

### **Wednesday**

Adult Bible Study 6:30 PM

High School Youth 7:00 PM

### **Thursday**

Taking Off Pounds Sensibly 5:30 PM

Worship Team Rehearsal 6:30 PM

### **Friday**

Celebrate Recovery Dinner 6:00 PM

Celebrate Recovery 7:00 PM

## *Monthly Events*

- 1 Office Closed for New Year**
- 4 Board of Elders Meeting 6:30 PM
- 7 SAMS\* 10:00 AM
- Celebrate Recovery Leaders 6:30 PM
- 9 Men's Breakfast 8:00 AM
- 11 EOD Commission Meeting 6:30 PM
- Worship Commission Meeting 6:30 PM
- The Ark Commission Meeting 6:30 PM
- 12 Quilter's Guild 6:30 PM
- 14 MOPS\* 9:00 AM
- Board of Elders Meeting 6:30 PM
- 18 CE Commission Meeting 6:30 PM
- 19 Parachute Party 6:00PM
- 21 SAMS\* 10:00 AM
- Building & Grounds Commission 6:45 PM
- Missions Commission Meeting 7:00 PM
- 24 Semi- Annual Business Meeting 12:00 PM
- 25 The WELL 6:30 PM
- 28 MOPS\* 9:00 AM

*SAMS- Senior Adult Ministries*

*MOPS- Mothers of Preschoolers*