

ARKANSAS CRUSADER

NEWS FROM THE CHURCHES ABOUT THE FAMILY OF GOD.

Annette M. Rickard, Editor
501-455-5506
Arickard.ret@sbcglobal.net

12700 Goldleaf
Little Rock, AR 72210

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Newsletter #2

Thank you to the churches that have responded to my request for information about your church and activities. This newsletter will only be as successful as the information that you submit. If you have suggestions or information you would like included please let me know. There is too much to be excited about from the responses I have, see the section on News from the Churches, and rejoice with the progress in our state.

WEB SITE FOR THE CHURCH

Bert Brown and Bill DeYoung are working to update this site. Those who would like can check out their progress at the following Web site. www.choark.org. They would appreciate any special news to be added to the state web.

“**PARTNERS IN MISSIONS**” is taking applications for their next trips. Contact Karvin Adams, First Church in Crossett for more information.

MINISTERS RETREAT, MT. MAGAZINE

February 8th/9th, 2007, sponsored by the General Assembly and Southwest Assembly.

If you

This should be a time of refreshment and Renewal for our pastors and their spouses. Additional information will be coming but You need to schedule this on your calendar Now so your congregation will know your Plans to attend. Contact Jerry Riddle or Cheryl DeYoung for more information.

CHRISTS BIRTHDAY OFFERING SUNDAY, DECEMBER 17TH

This is a special time in the church, each church has received materials and information regarding the purpose of the CBO offering and the benefits to all facets Of the Church Ministries programs. Hopefully, pastors are sharing this information with your congregations and encouraging the purpose of the nation wide offering. The offering should be forwarded To Dollie Brink, 225 Sparling Road Hot Springs, AR 71913

WOMEN OF FAITH will be at Alltel Arena, North Little Rock, in April.

are interested look up their website or ask Marilyn Wilson for information. You will be surprised as to whom will be attending, and singing. It is a wonderful chance to be with other women and worship together.

WOMEN OF THE CHURCH OF GOD PRAYER RETREAT

On November 10th and 11th, the State WCG Prayer Retreat was held at our lovely Snow Springs Campground. We began the retreat on Friday afternoon with supper hosted by the ladies from Little Rock First Church. Velma Wilson from Grape Chapel then led us in an inspiring time of music and worship. Our theme for the retreat was “Women changed by the Word”. We were blessed to have Sister Martha Patmon from Little Rock as our speaker on Friday night. Saturday morning began with breakfast furnished by the Grape Chapel ladies. Music and worship was again led by Velma Wilson and Sister Terri Dunn from Grape Chapel was our speaker. The retreat closed with a Communion service. The retreat was a great time for us to enjoy visiting and fellowshiping with our sisters throughout the state and also a time to worship and draw closer to our heavenly Father and renew our walk with the Lord. The women who attended were truly “Changed by the Word”. I would like to encourage all ladies throughout the state to attend the state WCG conventions and Retreats and get to know your sisters around the state.

Mary Alice Lambert
State WCG Secretary

CHAIRMANS NOTES

Every so often a book comes along that speaks clearly about issues of leadership in the local church. I want to introduce a book, which is authored by a practitioner and not a theorist. The author is Dr. Paul Borden, his book is entitled “*Hit the Bullseye*”. Borden is Executive Minister of the American Baptists Churches of the West. He has led that region of churches to make significant changes that have resulted in growing, vibrant churches. He also is used as a consultant to many other church groups including the Church of God. He has an ongoing relationship with Florida, and has consulted with the Ohio State Ministries.

In his book, “*Hit the Bullseye*”, Paul shares two major metaphors in church culture that are ultimately destructive to effectiveness in ministry. I will mention the first in this article, and the second will be saved for next month. The first metaphor is that of a shepherd. Most church folks see the pastor as the shepherd who takes care of the sheep for the sake of the flock. Borden says that is a romantic notion compared to what a Shepherd did in biblical times. He states “Shepherds were entrepreneurs who raise sheep for their livelihood, for food and clothing”. He continues by saying “In congregational life our declining institutions think that shepherds take care of sheep for the sheep’s benefit, rather than to benefit the Chief Shepherd by accomplishing God’s mission. The paradox of Christianity is that sheep are most fulfilled when they are risking life for the Chief Shepherd rather than being pampered by appointed shepherds”.

Pastors are normally taught that they are to function as a shepherd, meaning chaplains to care for, serve and meet the needs of the sheep. The problem is this is not the biblical role according to Ephesians 4:10-16. The biblical role is to equip the Saints for ministry. It is the responsibility of the congregation to care for the needs of the flock. It is more biblical to speak of congregational care rather than pastoral care. Imagine a church that understood their responsibility to care for One another.

Pastor Charles Wright
General Assembly Chairman

STATE YOUTH REPORT

Fall Retreat

This years fall retreat was awesome. We were lead to worship by Kingsdown. And the message was given by Pastor David Owens of Gurdon. We started off the weekend with the Ice Breaker games and then had a small carnival with inflated rides. Saturday evening we had a great service and then a concert by Kingsdown. We ended the evening with Night games. A bonfire and some s'mores. Sunday we kicked off the morning with prayer and time around the campfire. We had a morning service and then everyone said their goodbyes and headed back home. I would like to thank the following for their help.

Cheryl DeYoung and the planning council for planning the event

David Owens for his time and teaching

Kingsdown for their time and leading worship

FunDunk for providing the Inflatable games

Jackie Goodwin for her time as cook

All the counselors for coming and giving their hearts and time to the students.

Everyone else for their prayers and thoughts.

Upcoming State Youth Events and details

State Youth Convention - March 30th - April 1st. It will be held at the C.A. Vines 4-H Center in Little Rock. The speaker will be Dwayne Goldman. Registration is \$140.00.

- This will include Registration, Boarding and Meals. If you would like to know more about the 4-H Center you can go online to <http://www.arkansas4hcenter.org>.
- **Youth Camp is tentatively scheduled for July 23rd - 27th, 2007**
- **Fall Retreat is tentatively scheduled for October 20th - 21st**.

Be sure to put these dates on your Church Planning Calendar and prepare to attend.

State Youth Leadership

The 2007 year brings with it changes to the State Youth leadership. The term for State Youth Director will be ending and with that Rachael has decided not to run for another term. If you have any recommendations for a new State Youth Leader please contact Cheryl DeYoung or Rachael Elder. We will also have the position for State Youth Ministerial Advisor open. Again Contact Cheryl or Rachael with recommendations. There will also be several positions for the planning council that we will need students to run for. Forms will be sent out soon for students that are interested to fill out. They will be elected at the 2007 State Youth Convention.

Rachael Elder
State Youth Director

NEWS FROM THE CHURCHES

BENTON

GRAPE CHAPEL CHURCH OF GOD

Richard Dunn, Pastor

Grape Chapel has had roundup Sundays on the first Sunday for the months of September, October and November. Bro. Rick Dunn feels this has been successful and church attendance has gone up. The response has been heartwarming.

The Sunshine Ambassadors are still shining. We continue to support a child through the "Children of Promise" program and have given an extra goat through Heifer Project Intl. Next month we plan to give at least one hundred dollars to Saline-Perry County's Foster Childrens Program. The money will provide Christmas gifts for the children. Without pressure or prompting the Sunshine Ambassadors give willingly and generously. All of our meetings are well attended and we always have a good time. May God continue to bless our group as we strive to be a blessing to other people. We meet on Mondays at noon and all are welcome.

Clayton Perry,
Chairman

BENTON/BRYANT

NEW SONG COMMUNITY CHURCH

Ray Borel, Pastor

New Song Community Church sent 10 members from our congregation to La Cieba, Honduras for a mission trip. Working with the congregation of Iglesia de Dios Hermandad Cristiana and their pastor, Bro. Donny Allen, we were able to lay tiles in the classrooms of their school. We also were able to visit the church sponsored prison ministry, visit the church sponsored day care, attend services with the El Pino congregation, hand out food packets and visit a boy's orphanage.

We decided to go to Honduras because God placed a young man in our congregation, Leo Riveria, who is from la Cieba, Honduras. He encouraged us to consider a mission trip to Honduras. When we investigated it, we found that the most thriving Church of God congregation in Honduras is in La Cieba (Though Leo knew nothing of this church). We also discovered that they needed work done to help build the school. Since Leo was from La Ceiba, his family offered us free lodging. We knew only God could have orchestrated this. Our next challenge was to raise \$10,000 in 8 months. Between New Song, Crossroads Community Church in Harrison, AR and other congregations and private donations, we were able to raise the money in 6 months. Again, only God could have done this. We hope this will become a yearly event, and hope that other congregations in the state would like to be involved.

New Song has an adult ministry for the "Over 50" group. They meet monthly. Most recently they met to sing Church of God heritage songs. They have shared those songs as a choir in several recent services.

New Song Report continued.

We also have started a young adults ministry and they also meet monthly. They have taken a lake trip, gone bowling, and got together to watch a Razorbacks game. They are organizing some remodeling of the church building and meeting at the local park to show a movie to the neighborhood kids.

The Youth at New Song are active as well. In addition to attending the recent Youth Fall Retreat, they painted the floor of the worship center of the Southwest Assembly Church of God in Hope, AR. (Reported by Bill DeYoung.)

BENTONVILLE/SPRINGDALE
SONBRIDGE CHURCH OF GOD

Bill Reynolds, Pastor

No report given.

CROSSETT
FIRST CHURCH OF GOD

Karvin Adams, Pastor

Our New Building was dedicated on Sunday, November 5th. This was truly a great celebration for the church. Crossett has been working hard to finance this new building and all the purchases that go with it. Such a new facility will be a real asset in our work for the Lord. If you are interested, we are selling Memorial Bricks for \$25.00 each if you would wish to place a memorial for a loved one.

ELDORADO
FIRST CHURCH OF GOD

James Geahlen, Interim Pastor

Greetings in Jesus' Name! Praise the Lord for another good month. I am happy to report to you that while October was a five Sunday month, and we did not have any special days to build our attendance, we were able to average 52 for the month. It was great to see First Church in El Dorado making progress. We are looking forward to December being a great month, and hope you will be a part of making it so. On November 5th we joined Crossett First Church for the dedication of their new building, November 12th we honored our Vets, my sermon was on "The

Man who carried the wrong flag". November 19th our WCG sponsored a fund raising luncheon after the morning service. We also Honored Rev. and Mrs. Alex Adams for their years of service for the Lord, many of those years helping the church here in El Dorado.

November 26th is the first Sunday of Advent, different families in our congregation will be having a part in our Advent Sundays.

FORT SMITH
JACKSON STREET CHURCH OF GOD

Stanley Farrar, Pastor

On November 4th we held a community outreach event called Harvest of Blessings Celebration. It featured a chili supper, a live bluegrass band and karaoke. It was well attended and we all had a great time. The children were given the opportunity to participate in a coloring contest and they came through with flying colors! The entries were great and made the judging a harder job than anticipated. Now we are beginning our Christmas program practice with the Children's Church and Adult Choir for our Christmas performance. (Reported by Brenda Veloski)

GURDON

FIRST CHURCH OF GOD

David Owens, Pastor

The First Church of God in Gurdon has wrapped up a 10 week Wednesday Youth Night Program. Rivers of the World has a VBS program called GROWTH (God Reach Out With These Hands). This material provided the foundation of our program. We expanded it and ran it as a 10 week program. There were between 35 and 50 kids, ranging from Pre-K through High School each week studying missions and God’s call on their lives to “Go into all the world and make disciples”. The kids were divided into age-based “tribes” and rotated through four theme-based stations. The stations included Missions, Crafts, Games and Food. We began each Wednesday together in worship before rotating through the stations. All of the children responded with enthusiasm to the program.

HARRISON

CROSS ROADS COMMUNITY CHURCH

Johnny Walters, Pastor

Fall of 2006 has seen God bless in so many ways at Cross Roads Community Church. Our new youth complex is in the dry and work continues on the completion of that facility. The new sanctuary is under construction with a target completion day in May or June of 2007. This year we have seen many come to the saving knowledge of Jesus. God has sent many new fellow Christians our way as well. Our morning worship services have averaged 468 for the past four months. An all time high in giving has been reached in 2006. We desire your prayers as we attempt to be faithful to God’s direction for this fellowship. God Bless you all.

HOT SPRINGS

OAKLAWN COMMUNITY CHURCH

Charles Wright, Pastor

With the fire and restoration behind us, Oaklawn Church had a “Celebration Sunday” on November 19th. The rebuilding took five months to complete and we appreciate those who offered condolences. We are so grateful to God’s faithfulness. (For those who don’t know, Oaklawn had a fire in their Sunday School area and fortunately contained before more damage was done).

JESSIEVILLE

JESSIEVILLE CHURCH OF GOD

Larry McNeely, Pastor

No report given

KINGSLAND

SMITH CHAPEL CHURCH OF GOD

Shane Matthews, Pastor

LITTLE ROCK
EAGLE POINT CHURCH

Jerry Riddle, Pastor

The final six weeks of 2006 will provide a calendar full of ministry and church family events. Our Wednesday Night Bible Study constituents converged at the home of Kris Thomason for an awesome night including a Thanksgiving Potluck and a precious time together ministering love to one another and Pastor Jerry and Nancy.

Saturday, December 9, a Men's Worship Band and Vocal Team, as well as men from EPCOG plan to team with Pastor Ivory Curry and the men of Carrie Street Church of God in Gurdon for their very first Men's Conference.

On Sunday, December 10th, the Eagle Point Church family will meet in the Worship Center for an all church Christmas Party under the direction of Carol Lewis and her team of helpers.

As a part of the Prevailing Church Project, Rachael Elder and Wes Norris are investigating and will soon identify ministry opportunities with the Hope Center and Linda McConnell. We hope to wrap and deliver presents for the Christmas Season.

Finally, the Elder Guidance Team has asked several persons from within the congregation to put together a mission trip opportunity for 2007. It will be exciting to see where God directs our investment of time, treasure, talents and testimony.

FIRST CHURCH OF GOD

Mark Lewis, Pastor

Rockin' in the Rock! God is working!

Our men, under the leadership of Steve Jones, raised enough money for 40 food baskets. On Saturday, November 18th, about 15 of our men and women got the food together and distributed it to needy families in our area. The Lord really blessed and many elderly and children received food for Thanksgiving. We will do the same for Christmas

We are really looking forward to the Christ Birthday Offering this month, our goal is \$2,000 and we expect to exceed that goal.

We also have started a Wednesday Evening Fellowship Supper that is ready by 6:30 p.m.

Our ladies are selling "Butterbraids" and raising a ton of money for missions.

We are blessed these days with all the Lord is bringing our way.

We are also making our facilities available for a new Church of God work in Southwest Little Rock. Pastor Reuben Thomas and his wife Cynthia are just beginning the Great Commission Community of Faith Church. Please pray and consider how your congregation might help this work. You might consider putting Great Commission in your mission budget next year.

HOWARD STREET CHURCH OF GOD

Johnny Nunley, Pastor

No report given

PARAGOULD
FIRST CHURCH OF GOD

Kevin Edgar, Pastor

No report given

PIGGOTT

FIRST CHURCH OF GOD

Gary Laughlin, Pastor

We have been worshipping, praising God and enjoying each others company since you heard from us last. In October we had a 3 day revival with Brothers Kelvin Lustick. We were blessed and challenged by his messages and his banjo playing. During revival we had 2 fellowships and enjoyed having Kennett, MO First Church of God join us in worship and fellowship during the revival.

The first weekend in November we had a Sunday School camp out at Jerry and Glenda Holifield's house. We had a good old fashioned wiener roast, complete with marshmallows and an after dark hike. Our Saturday morning Fallon took everyone fishing at their pond. John caught his first fish, it was his first time fishing! I think Jerry said it weighed about 1 pound. It was a great time of fun!

PLAINVIEW

HILLTOP CHURCH OF GOD

Tim Via, Pastor

Mr. and Mrs. Clayton Perry visited our church on November 4th. It is always good to visit with the Perry's, they are such a joy to be around and a real source of inspiration to Cindi and me. The Church had it's Thanksgiving Day dinner on November 19th.

I have a lot to be thankful for this year and I hope everyone has a wonderful Thanksgiving and Christmas and remember to give thanksgiving to the Lord for his bountiful blessings!

Psalm 100

1. Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all you lands
2. Serve the LORD with gladness: come before his presence with singing.
3. Know ye that the LORD he is God: it is he that hath made us and not we ourselves; we
Are his people and the sheep of his pasture.
4. Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him,
And bless his name.
5. For the LORD is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations.

TEXARKANA

FIRST CHURCH OF GOD

Mark Roper, Pastor

On October 14th we hosted a ladies Garden tea with 18 in attendance. The fellowship hall was decorated like a garden. Tables ere et with china and real silver service. Finger foods were served and all had a great time and several visitors are ready for us to have another.

Brother Mark has been using power point in the services to enhance the message, it has been a great help.

Jeanne Turco has been teaching the congregation sign language in the song service. We pray that we can use it to minister to the deaf in our community.

(Reported by Nancy Roper)

TRASKWOOD
HOLY RIDGE CHURCH OF GOD

No report given

Phillip Prenkert, Pastor

VAN BUREN
CROSSPOINTE COMMUNITY CHURCH

No report given

Ronny Mayfield, Pastor

CHURCH OF GOD MAGAZINES AVAILABLE TO YOU.

Church of God Ministries started publishing a new magazine for the church. It is called ONEVoice! To Celebrate the Message and Ministry of the Church of God. For those who have not seen the magazine you need to request a copy to see how excellent the information is for the church and the range of subjects that are covered. One years subscription is \$20.00, or two years for \$35.00. You can call 800-848-2464, Ext 2203 or use their web site www.onevoicemag.org

There is also a Missions Magazine published by the Church of God Ministries and is informative about our Missions work around the world. The cost of this magazine is \$12.00 per year or \$21 for two years. You can use the above information also to order.

CHRISTS BIRTHDAY OFFERING

The theme for this year is "Keeping Watch" and our National goal is \$1,400,000. As a reminder the support is used for CBH radio broadcasts, congregational health and growth initiatives, leadership development, communications, National Prayer Ministry, NAC Convention, International Youth Convention, family ministries, Global Missions Outreach and Support. Multicultural ministries, our College's and the Board of Pensions. The offering should be forwarded to Dollie Brink, State GA Treasurer, 225 Sparling Road, Hot Springs, AR 71913.

Editors Note

As you can see after reading these 9 pages, God is at work in our State. Even though all the churches are not using the same programs, what they have is effective and could be used as a model or a suggestion for others to use in their congregations.

Also, there are several plans for mission trips, if I can publish the destination and dates in the newsletter perhaps there will be others who could join your group and get more done.

This newsletter is later than planned, but I had a major problem with my computer and it took longer to retype the entire newsletter and get it out. But I still need your reports later in December and look forward to your activities in January too.

Annette Rickard