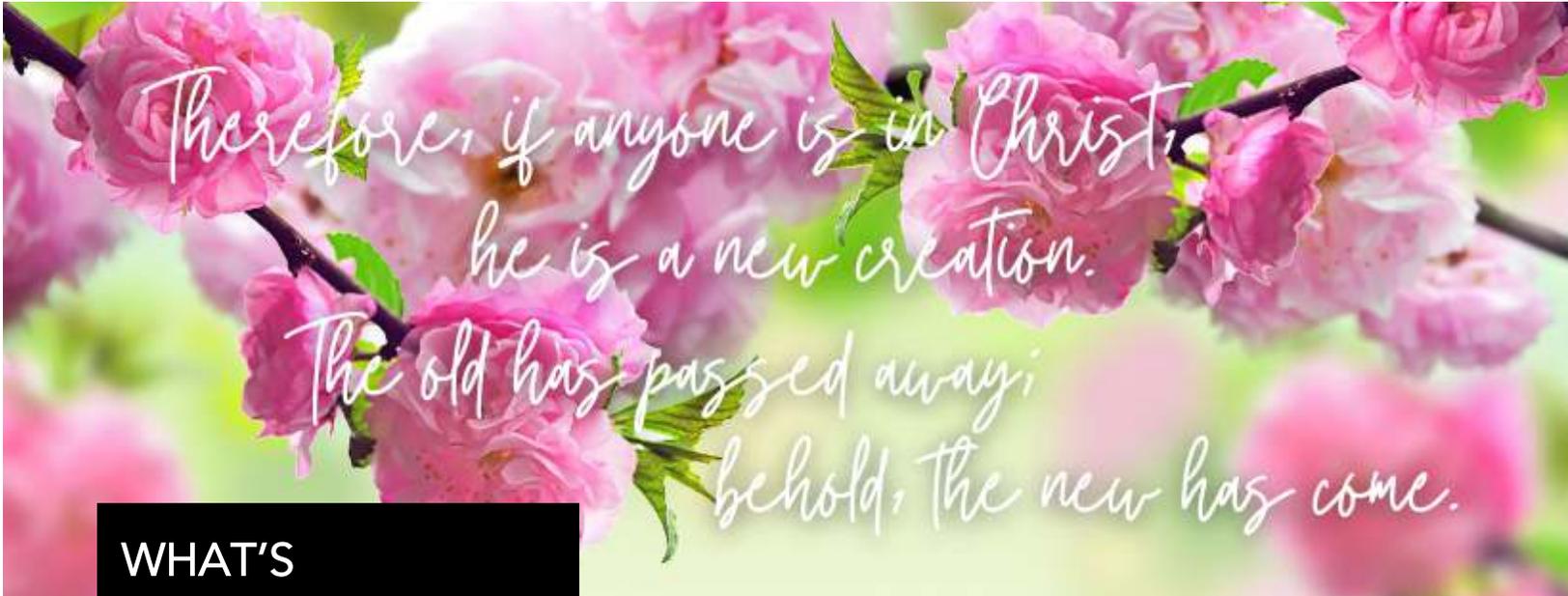


CONCORD COVENANT

INDIVIDUAL CHURCHES UNITED IN FULFILLING THE GREAT COMMISSION.



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OFFICE HOURS:

MONDAY | 8:00 AM – 4:30 PM
TUESDAY | 8:00 AM – 4:30 PM
WEDNESDAY | 8:00 AM – 4:30 PM
THURSDAY | 8:00 AM – 4:30 PM
FRIDAY | 8:00 AM – NOON

ALAN EARLS, DIRECTOR OF MISSIONS
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ALICIA AMOS, MINISTRY ASSISTANT
office@cbamo.org
(573) 635-4832

A NOTE FROM THE MINISTRY ASSISTANT:

You may have noticed that we didn't publish a newsletter last month. Well, there was good reason for that! We had hoped to get it out before the baby was born, but little miss decided to come 3 weeks early, and I have been on maternity leave, so the newsletter did not get put together!

Nevertheless, I am easing my way back, and I don't know about you, but I am excited for all the activity that we have going on at and within the association! It's wonderful to see everything getting back to normal after this past year and we're sharing a lot of exciting information with you this month, so be sure to make plans to participate in all the things that are happening the next few months. We hope to see you all throughout the summer as we work together to serve each other and our communities!

I won't be seeing you at the office for a bit yet, but if you need anything, please don't hesitate to reach out to me via email. I am happy to serve you in any way that I can.

God Bless,
Alicia

A WORD FROM OUR DOM



Dear CBA Churches,

A little over two thousand years ago, the world experienced a day that changed history and man's trajectory. As shared in Luke's Gospel, two men in gleaming clothes standing in the empty tomb of Jesus said, "...**Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here; he has Risen! Remember how he told you, while He was still with you in Galilee:**" Luke 24:5b-6

The celebration of Resurrection Sunday is a day to remember. The sacrificial death of Jesus and the shedding of His life blood on the cross, served to pay the penalty of mankind. The facts found in the pages of scripture confirms the death of Jesus, His burial and three glorious days later, His resurrection. We do not serve a dead Savior! We serve a living and all-powerful Savior!

The month of April this year stands to remind us of the hope of salvation through Jesus. For those who seek the forgiveness of sin and who choose to turn from sin and turn to Jesus; for those who accept and believe Jesus is God the son; for those who believe Jesus died on the cross as payment for our sin; for those who believe in His burial; for those who believe and accept His Glorious Resurrection and for those who profess Jesus as the absolute authority of their life, we receive salvation. As we celebrate Resurrection Sunday this month, we celebrate New Life and a New Beginning.

When we encounter the Resurrected Jesus, our life is never the same. We are Forgiven, Freed and Fixed. None of which comes from our own power or authority. It is the power of God. God brings life and through Jesus we recognize that He brings eternal life. When we have a real and personal encounter with Jesus, it changes us. The moment we accept the resurrected Jesus as Lord, we are no longer the same. We become transformed: A Transformed Creation (2 Corinthians 5:17); Transformed into His Image (2 Corinthians 3:18); and A Transformed Mind (Romans 12:2). The moment Jesus becomes our Lord we must no longer look like, think like or act like the sinful world. With Jesus we are totally new and changed.

What a joy to remember the resurrection. But we are not limited on remembering the resurrection on Easter Sunday. We must remember the resurrection everyday of our life. For without the resurrection, we would not know life.

May God's Blessings be with you and your family during this Easter season as you live for Jesus, share Jesus and allow His Word to be seen in your life as a witness to His greatness.

God Bless,

Bro. Alan

THE EARLS' FRONT PORCH:

Hello, I am Paula, wife of your Director of Missions, Alan Earls. I will be sharing a little about us over the next several months. So welcome to our porch.

With gardening season right around the corner, I think of my childhood days, growing up a coalminer's daughter in Kentucky brought forth challenges as well as rewards. You see my Mama was a stay home Mom who worked probably harder than moms who left the house every day.

Each year at Spring Break from school which in Kentucky language meant Spring planting. My grandparents and parents put out a huge garden. One thing about it, we were never going to go hungry.

I remember my first year to help plant the seeds when I was about 5. I was just walking along with my seeds pouring them out like there was no tomorrow. I love beets so that was what I was planting. I got to the end of the second row, and I was out of seeds. My Mama scolded me and said they would never grow! She said we had enough seeds for 5 rows. My Granny Ruth took my hand and thanked me for helping. She said God would bless them. She would use the other rows for something else we needed.

I grew up eating beets because my blood was short on iron. Mama said they were a treat and we only got to eat them on special occasions. But I grew up loving them as much as most kids love candy.

Well, we got everything planted that year and I was a little concerned we wouldn't have any beets. Mama normally canned around 30 quarts every summer with her special pickling juice.

As the garden began to grow, so did the weeds. I wasn't a fan of pulling weeds. However, every day after school we went to the garden and pulled weeds until dark. Mama always said we had to 'cause if we didn't, they would overtake the vegetables. Kinda like sin overtakes us when we don't pray and have a relationship with the Lord.

I remember the first day of picking was our last day of school. We got our five-gallon buckets and headed down the garden path. I went straight to my beets and began to pull the vines. They grew!! There were so many beets, that year Mama canned 65 quarts and I got to eat them all year, not just for special occasions.

My beets were planted with love by dirty little hands. It seems the more seeds I planted together the better they grew. Granny Ruth always said you don't have to be a fancy talker to love people and share God's love. You just have to depend on God to bless the seeds you sow.

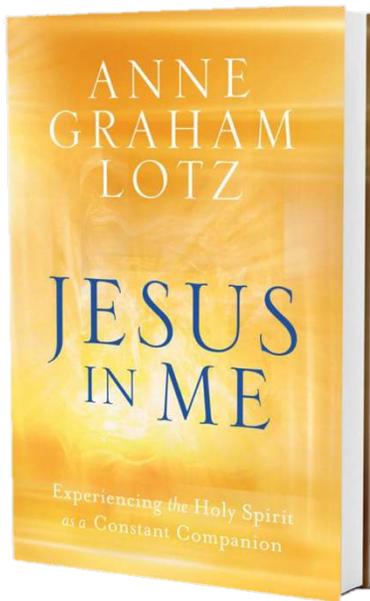
Until we visit again, remember what 2 Corinthians 9:6 tells us "Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, whoever sows generously will also reap generously."

Blessings,

Paula



JESUS IN ME: EXPERIENCING THE HOLY SPIRIT AS A CONSTANT COMPANION BY ANNE GRAHAM LOTZ



Is the Holy Spirit real to you? Is He a part of your daily life? Are you aware of who He is, and what His role in your life should be? In this book, Anne Graham Lotz (daughter of evangelist Billy Graham) explores all areas of the Holy Spirit: who He is, His personality, and His responsibilities. Lotz examines some of the different names scripture gives Him: Comforter, Helper, Advocate, Intercessor, Counselor, Strengtheners, and Standby. Lotz delves into how to enjoy the presence of the Holy Spirit, how to rely on His Power, and how to embrace His Presence. Along the way, she illustrates each insight with testimonials and examples from her personal life. Lotz focuses primarily on her recent years: the loss of her husband of forty-nine years, her father's passing, and her diagnosis of breast cancer. She encourages her readers to spend time in prayer and confession, offering practical guidelines for seeking more of the Holy Spirit in life. Don't expect to skim through this book merely learning some interesting things about the Holy Spirit. You will be challenged to surrender more of yourself to the Holy Spirit and to sharpen your focus on God's purpose for your life. The book ends with appendixes giving practical advice and guidelines to further your study into the Holy Spirit: how to hear His whispers as you read the Bible, how to be filled—and stay filled—with the Holy Spirit, a self-examination guide of personal sin, and a brief explanation of the gifts of the Spirit.

There are several especially meaningful quotes, but two particularly stood out:

"We lack clarity in prioritizing our days because we have no clearly defined purpose in life. This leaves us to simply react to life's challenges and opportunities...what we all need is a clearly defined overall purpose to live for." (Lotz, 2019, p.113).

Toward the end of the book, Lotz talks about more global issues and makes a statement I have felt led to include in my own prayers.

"I believe the church today is in desperate need of revival...a spiritual awakening that will compel God's people to repent of our sin, return to the cross, and recommit ourselves to living lives that reflect His purity." (Lotz, 2019, p.174).

Jesus in Me is available from most, if not all, major book retailers; there is a study guide available to go along with the book. This would be an excellent personal or small group study as an opportunity for deliberate focus on the "forgotten" member of the Trinity.



This book review was submitted by Sarah Kennedy. Sarah is a member at Mt. Olive Baptist Church. If you have a book or study you are interested in having reviewed for your ladies group, please contact the CBA office (office@cbamo.org).

MISSIONS CORNER:

3MT - MID MISSOURI MISSIONS TEAM



3MT came to be when Kevin Kohler took a group of students to LifeChangers in Inner City Detroit. At the end of the week, Kevin decided that there is nothing stopping central Missouri from having a similar program, so LifeChangers came to central Missouri in 2005. After a few years, the name was changed to Mid-Missouri Missions Team, or as it is most commonly known - 3MT. 3MT participants are made up of local students and have also included students from Kansas, Illinois, Tennessee and Wisconsin. The project has also brought together over 40 churches in those local areas to work together to help serve their communities. Over the last 16 years, students and adults have come, slept in classrooms, showered in trailers and have helped to fix and spruce up homes in Morgan, Miller, Moniteau, Cole and Cooper Counties. But, as Kevin would often say, "It's not about the paint. It's about sharing the love of Jesus".

And even though Kevin went home to be with the Lord last fall, that mission continues. The 2021 Mid-Missouri Missions Project is slated to take place from Sunday Evening June 27th to Thursday Evening July 1st. Typically, 3MT hosts and boards its students in a local School District building. This year, the 3MT Board decided to ask each individual church (or churches within the same community) to host its own students to allow for social distancing. This model is different but will include Worship each evening at 7:00 pm at FBC California. We hope to return to the normal model next summer.

Since this mission is in the heart of the CBA footprint, the 3MT board wants to invite any CBA churches to be a part of this mission opportunity. 3MT has a fee of \$75.00 for each participant and that will include two shirts and a mask. The Estimated Participant Deadline is **Monday May 3rd**. This deadline requires you to list any participants that you may have for the week and also requires a \$25 deposit per participant. The Full Participation Deadline is June 1st and the remaining balance for each student will be owed on that date. A Medical Release form will also be due for each student and a 3MT issued background check must be done for each participant over the age of 18.

Your church can get involved by being a host church and having your students do the work in your community, or by teaming up with another church in your community, if you don't have students to send. As a host church you will be required to provide jobs and a lunch for the participants on each workday Monday through Thursday. These jobs are limited to painting, cleaning siding, general lawn care, brush clearing and anything that can be done on a 6ft ladder or shorter. For a full list visit of acceptable jobs and the required forms visit 3MT.org.

If you have any questions about 3MT and/or being a host church, please contact Tony Amos at rbcyouthleader@gmail.com. If you have any questions about registration or where to send the money for deposit, email Sue Kohler at kohlerks@yahoo.com

Thanks,
Tony Amos
3MT Board Member

The CBA Missions Corner is an opportunity for CBA churches to share special missions and ministries for which they are a part. Please forward any special mission/ministry in which your church is involved to Alicia Amos at office@cbamo.org so we can include your mission and ministry to *Make Disciples of All Nations*.

LOVE DEMONSTRATED THROUGH SALVATION

No greater love was demonstrated throughout history than when Jesus who is God the Son, came from heaven to earth to die on the cross and pay the penalty for the sins of mankind. The road to salvation and understanding the love of God is found in God's word:

"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." (John 3:16)

"for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God," (Romans 3:23)

"For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Romans 6:23)

But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us." (Romans 5:8)

"That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰ For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved." (Romans 10:9-10)

"for, Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." (Romans 10:13)

"Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God" (John 1:12)

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness." (1 John 1:9)

"Whoever acknowledges me before men, I will also acknowledge him before my Father in heaven. ³³ But whoever disowns me before men, I will disown him before my Father in heaven." (Matthew 10:32-33)

"If anyone acknowledges that Jesus is the Son of God, God lives in him and he in God." (1 John 4:15)

If God has drawn you to Himself and you are ready to accept Jesus as Lord and the love He offers; say and mean the following prayer:

Dear God, I know I'm a sinner. Please forgive me of my sins. I turn from sin and turn to Jesus. I believe that Jesus is God the Son who died and shed His blood on the cross for the payment of my sins, was buried and that He rose from the grave three days later. Father, I want Jesus to come into my life. I want Jesus to be my boss and Lord. Thank you for saving me. In Jesus name, Amen.

MISSIONS OPPORTUNITIES FOR CBA CHURCHES

Mission Opportunities in North America:

The Concord Baptist Association is prayerfully considering possible Missions partnerships between CBA churches with churches in Minnesota/Wisconsin and Montana. If you or your church is interested in traveling to these states and participating in a Vision trip to explore a church partnership, please contact Alicia at office@cbamo.org or Bro. Alan at alaneails@cbamo.org

Mission Trip to El Salvador:

The Concord Baptist Association is exploring another mission trip to El Salvador. The specific date, time and specific mission is still being considered. If you feel God calling you to a short term inter-national mission trip, please pray and seek God's guidance to determine if this trip is for you. We will be sharing more information as it becomes available. In addition to your calling and spiritual preparation, one of the first steps is to check your passport to ensure that it has not expired. If you have never received a passport, please follow the following link: <https://www.usa.gov/passport>

Opportunities in Montana:

Bro. Alan will be heading to Montana from May 3-8 with a group from the MBC. There, he will explore the opportunities for the Concord Baptist Association to partner with MBC connections within the state to aid in the advancement of the gospel.

Bro. Alan will share his findings after his return. He would be happy to schedule a return trip for anyone interested in participating in a vision trip for the association as well.

International Mission Trip - Vision 3:16:

Vision 3:16 is international again! In June 2021 we will be going to Mexico to do an eyeglass clinic. We will be working in the state of Oaxaca with Elida and Ubaldo, our mission partners.

The cost of the trip is approximately \$1,500 and we leave **on June 14 returning on June 20**. Obviously, you need to have a passport. If you are interested in the trip, contact Larry Merry with your email, text or phone. He may be reached at (573) 619-0013. We will need to hear from you soon because we will be purchasing airline tickets as soon as possible.

Missouri Baptist Children's Home:

Is your church looking for a mission project or developing an on-going ministry that will make a huge difference in the Kingdom of God and in the lives of children and hurting people? Please consider exploring a partnership, mission or ministry with the Missouri Baptist Children's Home.

For more information on the Missouri Baptist Children's Home or how you can become involved, please visit:

<https://www.mbch.org/common/downloads/public/pub00307.pdf>

<https://www.mbch.org/index>

The Missouri Baptist Children's Home and its affiliates are making a lasting difference in the lives of children, youth and families. If you are interested in hosting an official representative to speak at your church, please contact Kenny Vawter, Regional Representative at (573) 241-1113 or Kenny.Vawter@MBCH.org

FUTURE MINISTRY PROJECTS:

Enon Baptist Church:

A month or so ago Enon Baptist Church's water pipes froze and busted. They have been working very hard to address the matter. The Association reached out to them soon after the incident and offered to assist. They were very appreciative but were able to work on the plumbing issues on their own. Now that the plumbing repairs are coming to an end, they have shared that they could use some help with replacing the flooring. Enon is currently working to determine when they will be ready and the full scope of what will be done. I wanted to share this information with you, so members from your church may be aware of an opportunity in the near future to volunteer to help our sister church in Enon. As soon as I receive the information from Enon, I will pass it along.

One in Christ Baptist Church:

Many churches have asked how they can assist our Sister Church One in Christ Baptist Church. They have been working on their own to initiate repairs. They are aware that the association is still willing to help. I am in hopes that we will be able to schedule an association workday in the future.

Bless Every Home:

Some of you may remember Dr. Phil Hunter. Dr. Hunter served as the Evangelism Director for the Missouri Baptist Convention in the 1980's. He lives out of state but called me recently to share about a ministry entitled *Bless Every Home*. Perhaps you have heard about it or you and your church are participants. *Bless Every Home* is an opportunity for individual members of your church to register as "lights". Once registered they will receive an email each day of 5 neighbors in their own neighborhood. They will be asked to lift those specific families up in prayer. The hope and prayer is for revival and that those unsaved families in your neighborhood will be prayed for, find opportunities to build relationships with them, share Jesus and work with them to become disciples. You can learn more from their website: <https://blesseveryhome.com/> I hope to work with Phil and the man that God used to create this ministry, Chris Cooper. As I learn more, I will share with you. Please pray and if you have questions, please contact me and we will discover the answers together. This could be a wonderful follow-up to "Who's Your One". If you are not aware of the "Who's Your One" campaign, please let me know and I would be glad to share more. It is exciting to be workers with God to share the Gospel of Jesus. *Bless Every Home* and *Who's Your One* are two great resources to "make Disciples..."



UPCOMING DATES

Revelation Bible Study – Join us at the CBA office on Tuesday mornings from 10:00 am to noon as we study the book of Revelations. The cost of \$20 is to cover the printed materials. *There will be no study on May 4th.*

Pastor's Roundtables – have resumed meeting once a month at the CBA office. The next Roundtable will be held on Tuesday, May 18th at 12:00 p.m. A light lunch will be provided, so please let us know in advance if you plan to attend.

Newsletter Deadline – If you have an item you wish to have in the June issue, please send it to office@cbamo.org no later than Thursday, May 20th.

Office Closed – the CBA office will be closed May 31st in observation of Memorial Day.

PLEASE JOIN US IN PRAYER FOR...

**OUR CHURCHES WITHOUT PASTORS, THE MEN
LEADING IN THE INTERIM, & THE MINISTER GOD IS
PREPARING TO LEAD THEIR CONGREGATIONS:**

CENTERTOWN (Interim Shawn Higgins)
FIRST BAPTIST JEFFERSON CITY
HIGH POINT (Interim Heber Mena)
LUPUS (Interim Billy Bolden)
MT. OLIVE (Interim Alex Earls)
MT. PLEASANT-CLARKSBURG (Interim Frank Whitney)
PLEASANT HILL (Interim Stephen Bickel)

**SUMMER ACTIVITIES - THOSE ORGANIZING THEM
AND THE LIVES THEY WILL TOUCH:**

3MT
CONCORD BUILDERS
CHILDREN'S CAMP
VBS' THROUGHOUT OUR ASSOCIATION

2021 SUMMER ACTIVITIES AND MINISTRIES



Mid Missouri Missions Team – 3MT will be held from June 27th-July 1st. This local mission week is open to students who have completed the 6th grade and older. This year, youth groups and churches are asked to serve their own towns/surrounding area. We will not be staying overnight or having meals at the school. However, there will still be an evening worship service at 7:00 pm, hosted by California First Baptist Church, which all participating groups are asked to attend. Virtual options will be available for groups who don't wish to travel. Instructions for Host Churches, deadlines and all forms are available for download at 3mt.org. Cost is \$75/student.

Be sure that you are following "3MT- Mid Missouri Missions Team" on Facebook so you won't miss any updates from the 3MT Board.



Concord Builders Team – Concord Builders will hold its annual mission trip July 11th-17th. This team does a variety of construction projects around the area and state. No experience necessary! The only requirement is that you must be 12 years or older (minors must attend with a sponsor) and that you come with a servant's heart. Cost is \$40/participant and \$8/t-shirt. The Deadline to register is July 2nd. Forms will be available on cbamo.org under the Events tab. Contact Lucy Engelbrecht (lengel0625@gmail.com) for more details.



Children's Camp – Join the Concord Baptist Association and the Heart of Missouri Baptist Association for a joint children's camp, to be held from July 18th-23rd at Camp Cedar Crest in Santa Fe, MO! This camp is open to students who have completed 3rd-6th grades, and cost is \$80/student.

Registration will be live from April 30th-July 2nd, or until the camp is full. There are 150 spots available, and this is a joint camp, so don't wait! Once those spots fill, there will be a waiting list. Closer to camp, you will receive a letter with any further instructions and a packing list. Registration and forms are located at cbamo.org under the Events tab.

We are also seeking volunteers to serve. If you or someone from your church is interested in joining us for this important children's ministry, we are in need of: counselors, teachers, recreation volunteers, cafeteria help and lifeguards. Registration and forms are also located at cbamo.org under the Events tab.

If you need financial assistance, please check with your church.

If you have any questions, please contact Kari Sullivan at (573) 291-1313.

OPEN MINISTRY POSITIONS

FULL/BIVOCATIONAL PASTOR

Mt. Olive Baptist Church in Russellville, MO is searching for a pastor. Candidates should be Southern Baptist by conviction and biblically based. This can be a full-time or a bi-vocational position in a small, mid-Missouri town. Resumes are now being received by the Pastor Search Committee by email: mtolive-russellville@outlook.com or by mail: Pastor Search Committee, Mt. Olive Baptist Church, P.O. Box 416, Russellville, MO 65074

PART-TIME YOUTH DIRECTOR

Corticelli Baptist Church, Russellville, MO, is seeking a part-time youth director. Approximately 15-20 hours a week. \$15,000 per year. Job description can be seen at corticelli.org or call the pastor at (573) 680-0192. Please send resumés to rwseaton@embarqmail.com

CBA SUMMER MISSIONS INTERN

The Concord Baptist Association is now accepting applications for the Summer Missions Internship. You must be available for 10 weeks, beginning June 1st. Hours will vary according to need. Duties will include working with CBA Churches for outreach events (VBS, Sports Crusaders, etc...), Children's Camp, mission projects and other duties as assigned. The application is available at cbamo.org. The deadline for submitting applications is May 14th, 2021.

AVAILABLE RESOURCES:

Ministry Book/Video/Audio Resources

The Association has received a number of materials that can be of great assistance to our churches and especially young ministers coming up. If you are mentoring a leader or minister, please consider these free resources that may help your continued discipleship investment. These resources will be available during the Pastor Round Table and I will make them accessible to our pastors and churches for a month. After this month, I will need to rehome them. However, I want our churches to benefit from them first if at all possible.

Electric Organ

Pisgah Baptist Church has an electric organ available. It is in need of a few minor repairs but is in working condition. For more information, please contact the church at (573) 680-2395.

VBS Materials

Summer is coming! Traditionally, the association orders a VBS kit that is available to churches to borrow. If this is something that your church would be interested in, please email Alicia Amos at office@cbamo.org as soon as you know what dates you would be interested in reserving the kit for.

Block Party Trailer

If you are planning a summer outreach event, VBS celebration, etc...the CBA Block Party Trailer is available for churches! It contains a bounce house, popcorn and snow cone machines, as well as a variety of games and evangelism tools. Requests will be taken on a first come, first served basis. Please email Alicia Amos at office@cbamo.org for more information.

For the Church Institute through Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary

The CBA office is excited to introduce you to a new initiative from Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary (MBTS). It is called For the Church Institute or FTC Institute. MBTS through FTC Institute is offering free online courses for who may be seeking theological education. These courses are **offered free of charge to anyone within your church that is interested in theological education but is not necessarily after a degree or paying a lot of money.** You are encouraged to click on the link below and see what you think. It is possible for you to offer these courses within your church. The 10-week lesson plans are all online and there is no additional requirement to purchase any additional resources. For the Church Institute is part of Midwestern's core value to serve the church. You do not receive seminary credit, however, upon completion of the course you do receive a certificate and are eligible for Continuing Education Credit, if any of your licensures would require CEU's. Some of you may have your seminary degree and want to have a refresher; some of you may not have had an opportunity to attend Seminary; some of you are mentoring those called to the ministry and could use these courses in organized mentorship; some of you are seeking to work on leadership development for your church lay leaders and will find this opportunity to greatly help them enhance their Biblical understanding. It is great for Sunday School teachers, small group leaders, pastoral staff, and anyone that desires and needs the training. Oh, and did I mention it is FREE, it is provided to the churches by Midwestern Seminary because their mission is to serve the CHURCH! For more information, please visit <https://ftcinstitute.squarespace.com/>

CHRISTIAN COUNSELING

The Concord Baptist Association is proud to announce a new partnership with Still Waters Counseling, LLC. Still Waters Counseling provides Christian counseling through a Licensed Professional Counselor in the Jefferson City area. Rhonda Myers, MA, LPC is now available to pastors and churches throughout our association. She currently offers Christian Counseling at the Concord Baptist Association office on Friday mornings. If you are aware of anyone in need of Christian counseling, please contact Rhonda Myers by cell phone at (573) 680-3718 or email for an appointment at stillwaterscounselingmo@gmail.com

THE ART OF FORGIVENESS

"To cease feeling a resentment or a claim a requital" is the Webster's definition of the word, forgiveness. It ties hope with love and can be found in every form of relationship. There are health benefits to the giving and receiving of forgiveness. Emotionally, it can take as well as give lots of energy.

There are four main types of forgiveness. The first is Decisional Forgiveness, which is when we intentionally give our bet to the offender. "Do unto others whatever you would like them to do to you. This is the essence of all that is taught in the law & the prophets." (Matthew 7:12, NLT) It is the act of purpose, yet frees the most. "Make allowance for each other's faults, forgive any who offends you. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others." (Colossians 3:13, NLT)

There will be times of "relapse" in our human ability to forgive. It may be due to a trigger or event that is responding to a situation. This is called State Forgiveness. It will be in line with your overall and current level of forgiveness ability or history. We seek the gauge of Scripture to assist us in the task. "Jesus said to them, 'I do not say to you seven times, but seventy times seven.'" (Matthew 18:22, NLT)

Trait Forgiveness is also referred to as Forgivingness. As we look at many traits that the Lord gives us, one is a person's general ability or disposition towards being forgiving. It is genetic and environmental, thus can be learned. "Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God through Christ forgave you." (Ephesians 4:32)

Many ask, "How do I forgive?" There are five identified steps to game this peace. Ask the Lord to guide you through these in His timing.

Step 1: Recall the Hurt – Be honest about the harm done with respect. To deny the pain is to delay healing. Think about your words and present them in a logical manner.

Step 2: Empathize – This will be the hardest step. Work to understand, but maybe not agree, the stance the other person holds. Clarify with them what it seems to be that they are communicating.

Step 3: Altruistic Gift – This is the ultimate self-offering gift that we give the other. Instead of wishing them harm or hurt, we DECIDE to wish them well. It is intended to relieve the giver but can benefit the receiver of course.

Step 4: Commit – Commit to forgiving each other. Remember that it is painful because there is love and this love has been damaged. It can also heal. It is possible that it can be one sided. Accountability is helpful here by telling a friend, a partner or a counselor.

Step 5: Hold on – Since this is not an easy journey, we may circle back to the other steps in time with the focus of eventually finding a renewal. It may bring a freshness or the realization of living your own path with changes.

Remember that forgiving takes time. "With tender humility and quiet patience, always demonstrate gentleness and generous love toward one another, especially toward those who may try your patience." (Ephesians 4:2, TPT)



This article was submitted by Rhonda Myers, M.A., LPC. She is a licensed professional counselor with certification in Christian Counseling with 20 years of private and agency experience. Her practice is Still Waters Counseling of Missouri where she provides services from the Concord Baptist Association office, as well as televisits. She also consults and speaks at events. For assistance, please contact her at (573) 680-3718, email at stillwaterscounselingmo@gmail.com or find her on Facebook.