



May 2013

ON TARGET



Hello:

A few months ago one of my co-DOEM'S here in Arizona quoted some statistics about his Association and its baptismal rate—frankly, he said they experienced a 40 year low number in baptisms last year. This prompted me to look at where we were in the Yavapai Baptist Association. I only looked at the last 10 years to see how we are doing. Sue did a good deal of digging for me and here is what the study says: in the last 10 years we had our highest attendance in 2006 when our churches had an average weekly worship attendance of 2106. Our highest baptisms came the same year when our churches reported a total of 295 baptisms. Last year we hit a 10 year low; 17 of our churches reported 1272 in average attendance which averages 75 per church per week. The same churches reported 69 total baptisms, which is an average of 4 baptisms per church.

What has happened? Why are we losing ground so dramatically? There may be many reasons why some churches lose ground in attendance and in baptisms, but one is that things have changed in our culture. When I was a younger minister, we saw a lot of unsaved/unchurched people attend our church in search of spiritual answers. We would visit them, share the gospel, and see many come to faith. Today, however, fewer and fewer unsaved/unchurched people are visiting Evangelical churches seeking spiritual answers. People are looking for spiritual answers in all sorts of places, but they are not looking for their answers in Christian churches. Sadly, very few of our churches have any kind of outreach plans. As a result we are not meeting unchurched people or sharing the gospel with them.

What will it take to reverse this negative trend? In my opinion there are two critical steps to turning things around:

- 1) We need a true spiritual revival. Lost people are drawn to the Lord by the Holy Spirit; without his work, we will see even fewer people drawn to the church and the Lord. If we are not walking with the Lord and filled with the Spirit, we will not see people drawn to the Lord.
- 2) We need a plan born in the heart and mind of the Lord to take God's love and caring ministry to the people who need him so desperately. People will not come to the Lord by accident; we must pursue them as the Lord has pursued us. We must care for them as the Lord cares for us.

If we don't make some changes in the way we do ministry, we will see the downward trend continue. We will see many lives changed, however, if we choose to follow God's plan of taking the gospel to the unsaved/unchurched people of our community.

I stand ready to help you and your congregation develop plans to take the gospel to your community. Please call and give me a chance to help.

Your brother,
Rik Danielsen

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT TEAM

The How to Bring Biblical Change Conference was awesome! The main speaker, Keith Palmer, gave us the Word, as well as the workshop speakers. Here is but a taste of the messages...

'Conflict is really about idolatry.'

'All problems are ultimately worship problems...yet Jesus died for idolaters!'

'Idolatry is anything that replaces God in my life.'

'What is the lie? There's something better than God.'

'Relationships are occasions through which our hearts reveal themselves.'

'Thinking leads to what we want, which leads to what we worship, which leads to what we do.'

'We do the wrong thing because we think the wrong thing.'

'What we want is closely connected to what we are worshiping.'

I could go on and on! If you would like to watch **any** of the main session messages and/or some of the workshop messages, you can go to our website at www.firstsouthern cottonwood.com. Enjoy!

Jim Masters

GREAT COMMISSION TEAM

Loving Your Daughter Church -- Even through Puberty

Whoever first starting naming the new church a "daughter church" certainly struck the nail on the head. Raising a new daughter is one of the most difficult challenges in life and in ministry, but certainly it is also one of the most rewarding. Where do the comparisons begin? Let us count the ways...

For starters, what great joy it is to see your daughter born! The first big smile warms our hearts and we are sooo proud to call her our own. The bows, the sweet cheeks, and the cute dresses endear us to them deeply. Likewise the birthday of a new church is inspiring and uplifting. While the rest of the town will likely forget the day the church is birthed, (and certainly they will) the parents never forget the birthday.

Second, there is this "little matter" of tears. Little girls just cry. That's what they do. Tangled hair. Spilled juice. Spiders. Nothing to wear. Rain. Dirt. Frogs. You get the picture. Anytime, anywhere, they can unload. The tears are world class and come with the territory for the church planter too. What's a caring father have to do after the 100th cry? Show the same compassion and the same love as they do on the first cry, that's what. And, that's tough to do. The Lord gives us grace and mercy in our hour of need, and boy, (or should I say, "girl") do we need it.

Third, girls have awkward phases. They want to grow up and experience all there is to being a grown woman and they're still in the third grade. "Wait," we tell them. "You'll be a

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beautiful, vibrant, and strong woman someday." But they want it to happen yesterday. New daughter churches also go through a variety of growing pains (gaining strength, and balance, finding their way, and learning to stand on their own) More grace, anyone?

Truthfully, the growing process is about overcoming many hurdles. We celebrate their first steps, first bike ride, and first time taking out the car. We have teenage boys and false influencers who want to take them out for all the wrong reasons. We step up to discipline them when it is difficult. We struggle to help them find their true value and worth in the eyes of the Lord. We cross our fingers as they go through puberty. We grieve when adversity crushes their spirit. We pray, and most of all we trust their welfare to their Heavenly Father's care regularly. Still, more grace.

In spite of all the challenges, we can't ever lose sight of the future ahead of them. One day the beautiful, young daughter will mature to shine out in the darkness with the brilliant light of Christ flowing out of her with vibrant love, strong character, and deep faith. What a difference she can make!!

Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need. Hebrews 4:16

How many times do we need grace raising these girls? More times that we can count. But then again, we have pictures of girls in pony tails that we wouldn't trade for the world. And, in ministry, we thank God for the lives that he has touched... that are changed forever.
Dave Arden

ASSOCIATIONAL CALENDAR

May 2013

- 2 National Day of Prayer**
- 3-4 ASBC Hispanic Women's Conference**
- 9 Pastor's Fellowship Lunch 11:30 at Robert Rd. BC**
- 9 Admin. Council Meeting 1:30 at Robert Rd. BC**
- 12 Mother's Day**
- 20-21 ASBC Convention Council**
- 27 Memorial Day**

DAY SERVICE

Can you imagine if local churches came together to show the love of Jesus to our community in our words and actions? Can you imagine 30-50 service projects on one day all over the Quad-Cities area? Can you imagine working on a team with people from other churches to build a garden, clean up a property, write a letter to a soldier or collect food for a local food bank?

If you can, you've imagined Day of Service! And these are just a fraction of the opportunities to serve!

But we want to do more than imagine. For this to become real, we need volunteers. We've got the projects. We've got the leaders. We just need workers.

Contact The Ridge Christian Fellowship for more information.

CHURCH EVENTS

MAY 2013

- 11 Mayer Days parade & Reaching Out in Love Ministry clothes give away.***
 - 18 Day of Service**
 - 19 Worship in the Pines at Goldwater Lake ***
 - 19 Night of Worship***
 - 26 Jason Donne & "The Open Graves" will be in concert at Mountain View Baptist Church. The concert starts at 5:30 with refreshments to follow. All are invited to come and enjoy some great music.**
 - 31-2 FSBC Cordes Lakes Youth Retreat**
- *See Church News for details.**

CHURCH NEWS

First Southern Baptist Church of Mayer

Mayer will have a float in the Mayer Days parade on Saturday, May 11. The float is sponsored by the Women's Ministry. Reaching Out in Love Ministry from Cordes Junction will be at the church on that day giving away clothes! Mayer will be holding Club VBS-Jungle Jaunt, July 15-19 from 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Billy & Janeen Palmer are hard at work putting together another great VBS!

Willow Hills Baptist Church

On June 30th, Willow Hills and FBC Prescott will hold the Patriotic Musical. Dinner starts at 5:00 PM with the concert to follow. For more information contact the church.

May 18th will be the Daughters Tea at the Hassayampa Inn with special Guest Speaker Sharon Martinez.

The Ridge Christian Fellowship

The Ridge will be participating in the Day of Service on May 18th, and the Night of Worship on May 19th, starting at 7:00 PM at the Courthouse Square in Prescott.

The Women's Ministry will be holding a Yard Sale on May 11th.

Our Rock Climbers will be having a summer long VBS program on Sunday mornings starting in June.

First Southern Baptist Church of Cordes Lakes

Join FSBC Cordes Lakes for a day of worship, lunch and fun activities as they Worship in the Pines at Goldwater Lake. Meet under the Ramada at 10:30 AM. Lunch will be at Noon.

The Youth will be having their retreat May 31st to June 2nd. For more details contact the church office.

CONTACT INFORMATION

For more information about our Association please click here to visit our website:

yavbaptists.com

Please forward this newsletter to all your Christian friends and Church members.

Rik Danielsen