

INDIANA SOUTH WESLEYAN



March 2005



Dr. Mark S. F. Eckart
DIST. SUPERINTENDENT

Superintendent's Schedule

March

- 6 A.M. Bloomfield Mt. Zion
- P.M. Church Visit
- 7-9 District Ministerial Convention
- 12 DBA Meeting
- 13 A.M. Martinsville
- P.M. Shepherd of the Hills-LCC
- 20 A.M. Shelbyville Grace
- Pastor Installation
- P.M. Columbus Ohio Street-LCC
- 23 Versailles LCC
- 27 Easter Sunday
- 31 I.W.U. Trustee Meeting

April

- 1 A.M. I.W.U. Trustee Meeting
- 3 A.M. Poplar Grove
- P.M. Orleans
- 4 Headquarters Meeting
- 6 English LCC
- 10 A.M. Evansville Forest Hills
- P.M. North Park LCC
- 12 DS Meeting
- 13 West Terre Haute 8th LCC
- 17 A.M. Church Visit
- P.M. Edinburgh
- 20 Sylvania LCC
- 24 A.M. Church Visit
- P.M. Evansville Trinity LCC
- 27 Paoli LCC

Mega-Lessons From A Mega-Church

By Pastor Mark Reed / Bicknell Wesleyan Church

Imagine a youth group growing into a brand new church! In 1975 a youth pastor in the Chicago area had seen a small group of teens swell to an incredible 1,000 kids! The ministry had been in place for a number of years and many of the youth were not finding a church to transition into as they got older. They wanted a church they could relate to. Out of this dilemma came a vision to provide a place of worship that would incorporate new methods of communicating the gospel in a way that was relevant to young adults. The truth of the Gospel was to be retained without laying unnecessary stumbling blocks in front of people who were coming into contact with its message of hope for the first time. From that early vision has grown one of the largest congregations in North America: Willow Creek Community Church (WCCC). This past fall a group of Wesleyan pastors from Indiana South District paid a visit to the Mega Church which is still pastored by that youth leader that first had the vision, best-selling author and church growth expert Bill Hybels. I learned some Mega-lessons from this mega-church.

Knowing there would be a lot to see, we arrived over an hour before the mid-week service was scheduled to begin. From the moment we pulled into the parking lot, which spread across many, many acres, we knew this would be a new experience. The building that greeted us was nothing short of gargantuan! Even from the outer edge of the parking lot, with my camera lens at its widest angle, the entire building could not be contained in my view finder.

Seeing that we were guests, a very friendly couple came over and introduced themselves. They asked us if this was our first visit to WCCC. (I suspect

they could tell it was!) When we told them who we were and where we were from they seemed genuinely delighted and honored that we would come so far for a visit. They made sure we knew we were welcome and gave us information about the layout of the building.

When the time for service approached the doors of the auditorium opened and we joined the flow of people who moved into the sanctuary. The history of WCCC has been one of out-growing facilities and building bigger ones. The area we entered is the latest Willow Creek addition and it is both beautiful and huge. Designed like a theater there are three tiers of seating; the main floor, the mezzanine and a balcony. Altogether the auditorium seats thousands.

When the service began everyone seemed to participate in the singing. Two enormous screens magnified the stage area so you could see speakers and singers clearly and the music was done in a spirit of worship. When the Bible study was presented it was challenging and grounded in scripture. Later, several Wesleyan preachers noted the study did not cut any theological corners as Christians were exhorted to holy living.

WCCC graciously provided us with a tour of the facilities after the service and we came to appreciate our tour guide. He told us the history of the church as well as the direction it is currently headed and was able to clearly explain the vision of the church and the expectations that are made of all members. In fact, he explained that all members are able to do the same thing. The expectations WCCC has of its members are called the 5 G's.

Here are the five "G's"

1. **Grace**—The Foundation of Our Life with God
 2. **Growth**—Progressing as a Christian
- continued on page 2*

continued from page 1

3. **Group**—Relationships that Optimize Life-Change

4. **Gifts**—God-Given Abilities Used for the Common Good

5. **Good Stewardship**—The Reasonable Response to Our Gracious God

What can a pastor from rural South Indiana possibly learn from one of the greatest Mega-churches in America? Actually, quite a lot! Let me share six lessons I learned from our trip to Willow Creek.

(1) First, WELCOME VISITORS! The people of WCCC are intentionally welcoming. Culture shock isn't only experienced by rural preachers walking into a church the size of Willow Creek. People who have rarely been inside a church or are first-time visitors to our church may experience "culture shock" as well. A visit to a new church can be a stressful experience! It makes a difference when someone goes out of their way to answer your questions and let you know you are welcome.

(2) Second, SHOW ENTHUSIASM! Note the word "show." Sometimes we "feel" enthusiastic but we have to "show" it. The positive attitude of the people about their church and pastors was contagious! They were enthusiastic about being in church on a Wednesday night and they let you know it! They came expecting great things and (as is usually the case) they got what they expected.

(3) Third, FOCUS ON JESUS! They didn't let the setting undermine the message. The Gospel remains the source of our authority and Christ must remain the

center of our worship. All the lights, technology, size and surroundings pale in significance to Christ, the Word. On the evening we visited, WCCC kept the Lord at the center of the service and we were blessed by it.

(4) Fourth, CATER TO VISITORS. They understand the difference between visitors and members. Visitors are catered to, made to feel comfortable and communicated with in a way that is meaningful to them.

(5) Fifth, LET MEMBERS KNOW WHAT IS EXPECTED! Members at WCCC are expected to be committed to the church through the five G's.

(6) Sixth, TAKE YOUTH SERIOUSLY. 1 Timothy 4:16 says, "Let no one despise you for your youth, but set the believers an example in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity." WCCC takes this truth seriously. If it wasn't for the original youth group, there would be no Willow Creek Community Church.

Let me close with six check-up questions:

1. When first-time visitors walk through the doors of your church are they greeted with genuine warmth? Do they know immediately that they are important and cared for?

2. Do you project an authentic excitement about what God is doing in your church that other people "catch" from being around you? Do you brag on the ministers and ministries of your church?

3. Do you allow your setting to undermine your focus? Or do you maintain your focus on Jesus and the Word regardless of what setting you are in? For the

people of WCCC it would be easy to focus on how many *people* are present and lose sight of the only *essential* presence. In most of our settings it is easy to focus on how few people are present and do the same thing: lose sight of the only *essential Presence*. Either error results in our losing focus on Jesus Christ.

4. Are the mature Christians in your church the ones who are most flexible so newer Christians can be fed in a way that is meaningful to them? Jesus packaged the most profound truth in stories that dealt with common topics such as fishing and farming.

5. Are members in your church faithful to the five "G's" listed above?

6. Finally, are you taking the youth in your church seriously? Are you utilizing their gifts in the body of Christ? Are you offering them opportunities to express their love for God in ways that are meaningful to them?

I thank God for our Wesleyan doctrine. I wouldn't trade it for anything. I don't know any truth the church needs to live out more than holiness. Because it is so important we must rise to the challenge of communicating it to new generations of believers. I can honestly say I learned much from my brothers and sisters in Christ at Willow Creek Community Church. Who would guess that a Mega-Church would have so many lessons that can be applied in the rural church settings many of us serve in South Indiana.

Best Year's Fellowship Banquet

Saturday, May 7, 2005 • 12:00 p.m. (noon)
Orleans Campground, Orleans, IN • Cost \$10 per person
Guest Speaker: Rev. Wayne Maze
Special Music: Heaven Bound Bluegrass

I plan to attend: _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Church _____

Number Attending _____ Amount Enclosed \$ _____

Will Pay at banquet _____

Mail to:

Please return this form as soon as possible, so we will know how many plan to attend.

Thank you.

Rev. Philo Jones
6739 E. Speed Rd.
Milltown, IN 47145

REVIVAL Springs Valley Wesleyan Church April 6 - 10

7:00 p.m.

Evangelist: Dr. O. W. Willis
Singer: Judith Montgomery

Sunday Services 10:30 & 7:00

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Wild Game Sunday

On February 20th Pastor Jim Terry and the people of the North Vernon Wesleyan Church enjoyed a great day of fun, food and fellowship. We call it "Wild Game Sunday." A vast number of guys and gals showed up in camouflage and hunter orange for the morning service. Mark

Gray, a long time and successful hunter and fisherman from Illinois, gave some impressive correlations between being a hunter of wild game to being a seeker of the lost for Jesus Christ. "This was awesome, I love coming to this church," said visitor Mark McCall. After the service we headed to the fellowship center for deer steak, roast, fried rabbit and squirrel dumplings, wild game stew and roast duck. There was barbeque and meatloaf for those who didn't feel quite as adventurous.

Condolences

Our deepest sympathy goes to our District Superintendent, Dr. Mark S. F. Eckart, and his family in the loss of his mother, **Ella Louise Eckart**, who passed into Glory to be with our Lord on the 8th day of February. Let us continue to keep Dr. Mark in our prayers.

We also wish to extend our sympathy and prayers to the family of **Ruth Irene Swayzee**, who joined our Lord on Feb. 15th. Mrs. Swayzee was a member of the Orleans Wesleyan Church and she served as the former first lady of this district.

Although both these ladies will be missed greatly here on this earth, we know that we will see and rejoice with them again as the old song says—when we all get to Heaven, what a day of rejoicing that will be!

—Carolyn Manship

Upcoming Dates for Indiana South District

- 2/9 - 3/27 Forty Days of Prayer & Fasting
- 4/18-22 Camp Work Week
- 5/2-6 Ministerial Seminar
- 5/7 Best Years Fellowship Banquet
- 6/14 District Conference
- 6/20-24 Kids Camp
- 7/11-15 Teen Camp
- 7/11 Wesleyan Women Convention
- 7/29 - 8/7 Family Camp
- 9/7-10 Best Years Fellowship Retreat

Indiana South District Ministerial Seminar

May 2 – 6, 2005

Orleans, Indiana Wesleyan Campgrounds

Monday through Wednesday Noon

- ❖ Introduction to Theology/C-05, Dr. Wright
- ❖ Wesleyan Church History & Discipline/C-35, Dr. Caldwell
- ❖ Pastoral Counseling/C-44, Dr. Eckart

Wednesday Noon through Friday

- ❖ Evangelism & Missions/C-27, Dr. Wright
- ❖ Philosophy/C-31, Dr. Caldwell
- ❖ Pastoral Ministries/C-34, Dr. Eckart

"The professors are there to help prepare us for ministry through the courses we take, but there is always time for praising God and sharing with one another; it's almost like revival."

—Pastor Harold Carr

For more information, contact:

Rev. Bob L. England, Seminar Coordinator
812-825-5917 or E-mail: bob_e_sr_47424@yahoo.com

Thank You

Just a word to say "thanks so much" for the condolences offered during the passing of my Mother. The phone calls, e-mails, flowers, cards, and Gideon Bibles given in her memory are so much appreciated. Well over 50 Bibles were given in her behalf. This means according to the Gideons that approximately 135,000 people will have access to these Bibles. Thanks again from my family for being so kind to us during our loss.

—Dr. Mark

Easter Offering

Easter will be here before we know it and that is the day that we are to use our offering to support the Wesleyan Evangelism and Church Growth. This year the theme is "Love Always Finds A Way." Love is about doing what matters where it matters most. This special offering helps to provide evangelism tools to help others find faith in Christ, to plant churches in new communities, opening compassion centers in large cities, developing sports ministries and after school programs for at-risk youth.

Salem Wesleyan Church



We want to congratulate the Salem Wesleyan Church on the new siding that has been installed on their building. Also a new sign has been added. Pastor Johnson and congregation are doing a great job!

Do you have need of a pulpit and wood platform chairs? Or perhaps know of a church that would need these items? The New Hope Wesleyan Church has two (2) pulpits and two (2) large wood platform chairs for sale. For additional information, call Pastor Tony Bye at 812-738-3637.

CHURCH GROWTH REPORT

Church	Pastor	Jan. SS '05	Jan. SS '04	Variation	% Gain	AM	PM	Wk Day
Austin	K. Wingham	13	16	3	0%	16	13	12
Bedford	G. Tilley	21	21	0	0%	28	20	13
Bicknell First	M. Reed	44	46	2	0%	51	24	92
Birdseye	D. Murphy	NR						
Bloomfield Mt. Calvary	F. Collings	NR						
Bloomfield Mt. Zion	J. Nelson	13	46	33	0%	13	9	4
Bloomfield Southside	D. Dustin	15	14	1	7%	12	16	0
Bloomington Central	E. Hayes	47	36	11	31%	52	23	20
Bloomington Shepherd	B. Colburn	0	0	0	0%	15	14	13
Blue River	A. Marshall	18	0	0	0%	37	8	0
Boonville	E. Ames	26	0	0	0%	50	27	14
Brazil Jackson Street	E. Stewart	29	35	6	0%	33	15	14
Carthage New Life	H. Smith	5	5	0	0%	18	7	32
Clear Fork	R. Hotle	12	16	4	0%	21	12	11
Columbus Bethel	B. Carpenter	NR						
Columbus Central	B. Miller	18	12	6	50%	18	10	0
Columbus Flintwood	W. Jones	49	44	5	11%	67	39	54
Columbus Ohio Street	J. Vandervort	36	33	3	9%	55	42	20
Concord	T. Whitham	24	26	2	0%	26	24	18
Connersville Grandview	R. Wallace	NR						
Corydon New Hope	T. Bye	25	16	9	56%	50	25	20
E. Enterprise	R. Albring	13	15	2	0%	17	14	14
Edinburgh	L. Biddle	32	34	2	0%	32	22	14
English	P. Jones	59	66	7	0%	64	39	62
Evansville Forest Hills	M. Stoelting	137	140	3	0%	253	82	161
Evansville North Park	M. Linville	44	55	11	0%	65	14	30
Evansville Trinity	E. Freels	38	44	6	0%	67	23	84
Fort Branch	M. Hughes	20	16	4	25%	23	16	19
Franklin	D. Neal	25	31	6	0%	28	0	19
French Lick S.V.	J. Moffatt	52	60	8	0%	87	53	28
Gnaw Bone	G. Armstrong	17	16	1	6%	21	14	10
Greenfield	J. Anderson	NR						
Greensburg	W. Thompson III	NR						
Greenwood	J. Hughes	NR						
Helmsburg	D. Pfaff	NR						
Holton	W. Vandervort	18	18	0	0%	21	9	7
Hope First	E. Boston	33	20	13	65%	33	18	43
Lawrenceburg	M. Kessen	NR						
Lewisville Trinity	C. Stroud	NR						
Lewis Creek	D. Gates	12	0	0	0%	18	0	12
Loogootee Mt. Zion	J. Simmons	15	19	4	0%	33	11	7
Madison Calvary	M. Mahoney	35	31	4	13%	47	35	40
Marengo Valley	S. Lock	60	64	4	0%	99	55	57
Martinsville	K. Kearby	NR						
Martinsville Bethel	J. Irvin	7	9	2	0%	11	0	8
Mecca New Life	C. Todd	34	44	10	0%	31	22	15
Medora	C. Morgan	NR						
Milan	L. Brown	22	27	5	0%	28	17	0

Church	Pastor	Jan. SS '05	Jan. SS '04	Variation	% Gain	AM	PM	Wk Day
Mitchell	S. Jones	105	113	8	0%	215	99	190
Mooresville New Life	M. Linville	20	21	1	0%	32	17	15
Morgantown Emmaus	S. Yager	NR						
New Albany Spring Ave.	N. Watters	NR						
North Vernon	J. Terry	48	41	7	17%	63	23	0
Orleans	H. Carr	40	27	13	48%	45	25	45
Otwell	H. Leehe	23	20	3	15%	23	10	0
Paoli	L. Manship	119	206	87	15%	284	122	109
Petersburg	L. Lamar	11	14	3	0%	11	0	0
Poplar Grove	J. Downs	8	14	6	0%	26	14	12
Prairie Creek	T. Fennell	NR						
Princeton	D. Reed	NR						
Rising Sun	J. Kelly	8	7	1	14%	0	0	6
Rodney	M. Miller	14	13	1	8%	17	15	7
Rushville	H. Baker	NR						
Salem	C. Johnson	11	11	0	0%	17	15	11
Sandford	C. Hedden	17	12	5	42%	11	11	11
Scott City	D. Ault	NR						
Scottsburg	P. Mills	9	9	0	0%	12	9	9
Seelyville	F. Burk, Jr.	NR						
Seymour	I. Holt	25	22	3	14%	34	26	26
Shelburn	B. Noel	0	0	0	0%	13	0	0
Shelbyville Grace	J. Travis	52	59	7	0%	70	38	18
Shelbyville Westside	W. Seymour	20	13	7	54%	28	17	8
Simpson Chapel	R. Brown	NR						
Somerville	D. Brandon	40	44	4	0%	42	45	20
Spearsville	C. Bell	26	18	8	44%	26	23	17
Spencer - Emanuel	J. Knight	NR						
Sullivan	G. Larimer	31	26	5	19%	34	31	20
Sylvania	B. England	65	46	19	41%	95	50	44
Terre Haute Faith	D. Gormong	163	160	3	2%	224	136	124
Terre Haute Hulman	D. Willis	85	75	10	13%	126	60	41
Terre Haute North	V. Reed	NR						
Trafalgar	C. Hilton	4	4	0	0%	4	4	5
Valeene	D. Manship	22	0	0	0%	65	42	40
Versailles	D. Jewell	28	33	5	0%	28	12	10
Walker Chapel	R. Hendershot	16	13	3	23%	38	0	10
Washington Main St.	P. Kessen	38	35	3	9%	63	30	20
Washington Vincennes	J. Gilley	22	0	0	0%	22	28	11
Wesley Chapel	P. Kirk	32	0	0	0%	52	39	24
Westport	E. Wakefield	70	46	24	52%	75	48	30
West Terre Haute 6th	R. Weeks	22	19	3	16%	23	11	9
West Terre Haute 8th	P. Shelton	62	64	2	0%	63	50	44
Wheatland	K. Mitchell	NR						
Whitehall	D. Campbell	21	26	5	0%	21	13	16
Wilmington Hills	D. Meriwether	20	23	3	0%	22	19	12
TOTALS		2365	2309	56	2%	3464	1854	1931

*NR-No Report

Top Ten Churches for Numerical Gain for Jan. 2005

Church	Pastor	Gain	Church	Pastor	Gain
Westport	Rev. Emmett Wakefield	24	Terre Haute Hulman	Rev. Dan Willis	10
Sylvania	Rev. Bob England	19	Corydon New Hope	Rev. Tony Bye	9
Hope First	Rev. Ed Boston	13	Spearsville	Rev. Craig Bell	8
Orleans	Rev. Harold Carr	13	Shelbyville Westside	Rev. Wilbur Seymour	7
Bloomington Central	Rev. Ed Hayes	11	North Vernon	Rev. Jim Terry	7

Top Ten Percentage Gain for Jan. 2005

Church	Pastor	Percentage Gain
Hope First	Rev. Ed Boston	65%
Corydon New Hope	Rev. Tony Bye	56%
Shelbyville Westside	Rev. Wilbur Seymour	54%
Westport	Rev. Emmett Wakefield	52%
Columbus Central	Rev. Bence Miller	50%
Orleans	Rev. Harold Carr	48%
Spearsville	Rev. Craig Bell	44%
Sandford	Rev. Carl Hedden	42%
Sylvania	Rev. Bob England	41%
Bloomington Central	Rev. Ed Hayes	31%

