

the *Good News* banner

Thoughts from the Pastor

By Jack Gill

This month, I wanted to give you an idea of what we covered in our July Strategic planning meeting in order to keep you informed about our direction and thought process.

For the first half of our time, the team sought to find a clear, simple, memorable **pathway for making disciples** that anyone in the church could remember and also gauge where they are in the process. Using Luke’s perspective in Acts 2, a baseline of five characteristics were considered that a growing disciple will engage in — worship, fellowship, biblical instruction, evangelism, and ministry or service. Next, the team began to consider by what means our church could help a follower of Christ to implement these things in his or her life. As a church, we need and want to have a plan in motion by which we help to facilitate a disciple’s growth in these areas. The team took the perspective of a person that might come to us and ask this question:

“What kind of path do you have for me to become a devoted follower of Christ?”

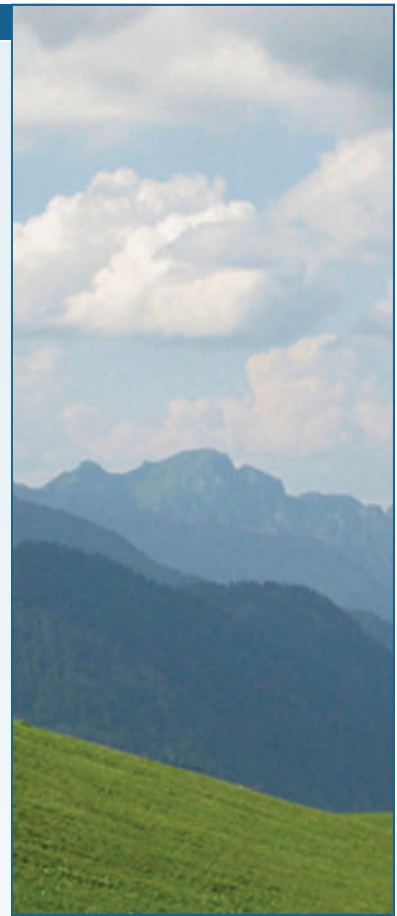
How would we direct them? That direction must be established through our primary ministries, and we found those ministries to currently be our time of preaching and worship on Sunday mornings, Sunday school, and small groups.

Of all of those ministries considered, *the one that contributes the most towards life change is still the small group*. Our worship and preaching time addresses the characteristics of worship and biblical instruction, and the Sunday school is designed primarily to deliver biblical instruction. However, the small groups incorporate worship, *deep* fellowship, biblical instruction, and opportunities for ministry towards one another.

Finally, we noted a big weakness. Of all of the current ministries we listed, none are specifically geared towards evangelism. In order to fix that, we will be working to find various ways in which the small groups will be able to incorporate that, not only in their training but in their *doing* it as well.

All of this had us asking and considering: To what end are each of our

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- Jack Gill - Pastor
 - Rich Shipe - Associate Pastor
 - Tom Gossage - Worship Pastor
 - Debbie Stevenson - Administrator
 - Chris George - Layout & Editor

July Attendance

7/4/10		
Sunday School		
Adults		97
Children		88
Total		185
Worship		
Auditorium		460
Classes		34
Total		493
7/11/10		
Sunday School		
Adults		76
Children		101
Total		177
Worship		
Auditorium		420
Classes		41
Total		461
7/18/10		
Sunday School		
Adults		105
Children		86
Total		191
Worship		
Auditorium		481
Classes		30
Total		511
7/25/10		
Sunday School		
Adults		106
Children		97
Total		203
Worship		
Auditorium		462
Classes		39
Total		501

ministries purposely going? This is what our discipleship implementation team will be seeking to help us solve. Now it's up to them to assist the elders in crafting a full and determined plan for Blue Ridge.

The second half of our meeting focused on congregational mobilization. How can we help to incorporate more people into doing the work of the ministries of the church? We all recognized that Ephesians 4 points out that *everyone is a minister!* We want everyone who comes through our doors to understand that doctrine!

But how do we help to facilitate each "minister" to engage in ministry? Currently, our newcomers class has people look at their spiritual gifts, personalities, and temperaments. We began to question how we can utilize that information better so that people will take ministry positions and tasks in accordance with their spiritual giftings, as well as the way that God has made them in their personalities and interests. We have a means of helping others to *discover* that information, but we want to find a better way to *place people* in the vision of our ministry. Now it's up to the Congregational Mobilization Implementation Team to take this material and assist the elders in crafting a process for Blue Ridge Bible Church!

These are just two pieces to the grand picture that God is establishing for us. As we continue to discover our process, we will emerge with a plan and we will be informing you of that vision in its entirety when we have tackled each important piece of the vision. When will that be? Not for another several months. However, we will strive to keep you as informed as we can while the process unfolds! And you can periodically check our website under "strategic planning" for updates too.

Know this though...God is revealing to us all what we believe will be a great and focused plan. It's a plan that will continue to call people to work together in order to seek to follow Christ in our generation and in our time — and to make disciples that will go forth to minister, grow, equip, and to evangelize in every arena and relationship of life! It's a plan that will be aligned with Colossians 1:28-29:

We proclaim Him, admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, so that we may present every man complete in Christ. For this purpose also I labor, striving according to His power, which mightily works within me.

ADMINISTRATIVELY SPEAKING

by Debbie Stevenson

In my opinion, I think we need more laughter in our lives. We need to be able to laugh at ourselves and with each other. We need a really good belly laugh on a regular basis. The following laughter-producing list was first included in my August 2007 newsletter column, but I think it may just be good medicine which we all could use right now. Even if you aren't brave enough to actually do these things, just the mental image of them being done can provide fun for all. So have a good laugh on me...

FUN THINGS TO DO IN AN ELEVATOR

- Whistle the first seven notes of "It's a Small World" incessantly.
- Crack open your briefcase or purse and while peering inside ask, "Got enough air in there?"
- Offer name tags to everyone getting on the elevator and wear yours upside-down.
- Grimace painfully while smacking your forehead and muttering, "Shut up, all of you in there, just shut up."
- Stand silent and motionless in the corner, facing the wall, without getting off.
- When arriving at your floor, grunt and strain to yank the doors open, then act embarrassed when they open by themselves.
- Greet everyone getting on the elevator with a warm handshake and ask them to call you Admiral.
- Stare, grinning, at another passenger for awhile, and then announce, "I have new socks on."
- When at least eight people have boarded, moan from the back, "Oh, no, not now...motion sickness."
- Meow occasionally.
- Walk on with a cooler that says "human head" on the side
- Wear a puppet on your hand and talk to other passengers "through" it.
- Say "Ding" at each floor.
- Make explosion noises when anyone presses a button.

P.S. So what ways does your family find to have a good laugh? I would love to hear your stories of your family vacation adventures, or any other ways you have brought laughter to all. We could publish them in future newsletters so that we can all laugh together.

WORSHIP ARTS NEWS

by Tom Gossage

I know there are many of you or maybe you of know someone who desires to sing in a chorus (choir) at Blue Ridge Bible Church. This is your chance to join such a worship group.

Here is a special invitation just for you – Starting on September 15th at 6:00 p.m. we are adding a chorus to our 6 o'clock band. The 6 o'clock band practices every Wednesday at 6:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. This chorus will be part of the 6 o'clock band and sing right alongside the already established praise team. The chorus will work on worship songs and specials and sing on the second Sunday of every month in our worship services.

If you are interested in joining this group please send me an email at Tom@brbible.org.



Missions

by Breana Paist



Belize has been a place where I have seen beauty and sorrow meet – two very poignant realities that often seem to intermingle in poor countries. Maybe that’s why the Belizeans are so open to the gospel, because the greatest place where beauty and sorrow came together was at the cross. Even the joy of sharing this message with them however is tainted by knowing that there’s not too much you can do to change their physical circumstances. We’ve learned all we can really do during our short time with the Belizeans is love them.

I ask a little boy at an orphanage his name, and he tells me in his beautiful broken voice that it’s “Batman!” I climb a tree with another kid and laugh when he calls the nice, black ants “Jesus-ants,” but says the biting, red ants are “Satan-ants.” I cringe as my feet are bitten up by those Satan-ants later that night, but rejoice at the beautiful way a 10-year-old kid earnestly listens to me tell him more about Jesus. I make a balloon animal for a kid named Victor. When I ask him, “Can I pray with you about anything?” he tells me his brother is not doing so good – he almost killed a man. And as I leave that kid and climb into the bus a wave of sorrow washes over me because I wonder if he might grow up to be just like his older brother.

I watch a guy on my team play the guitar and for some reason it just makes me praise God for the unity within my team of 26 – each of us with a similar single-minded desire to be focused on Christ. I love the long bus rides to and from Belize City when you and whoever you’re sitting by can just talk about what you’ve been learning, uninterrupted. Our team rides that bus to a different school assembly each morning to perform a 20-minute drama for the kids. Through a story about a Toyland, they hear the story of the gospel. Afterwards, we talk to the kids and try to remember all their different names.

We paint shops and a police station in Belize City. When finished, we gaze at our beautiful handiwork before our eyes drift across the street to a broken-down, shack-like house and realize that someone actually lives in there. And it’s kind of sad because just a fresh coat of paint won’t help the family that lives there. A fresh coat of fingernail polish for a little girl, however, can be all it takes to start up a beautiful conversation about her life.

We connect with the street kids, and with the orphans, and with the school kids, and it’s so blessedly easy because we all have that common ground of speaking English. But sometimes when we try to connect with the older kids, you can see their eyes drift away, and it reminds you of how distracted we get when God tries to connect with us.

One guy on our team brings delight to a young kid by playing basketball with him. A second teammate paints a little boy’s face, and then lets him paint all over her face. Another friend just wishes she could adopt all of the children in the orphanage. One girl on our team feels the sharp pain of sorrow when an orphan asks, “Do you have a momma?” Another guy patiently pitches a baseball to a tiny boy over and over until the little guy finally gets a hit.

As my team and I look around and watch all this, we find it's bittersweet, because this ever-present sorrow always seems to be mingled with the beautiful times. Experiencing sorrow, however, is not necessarily a bad thing. Our team will no longer be able to ignore the fact that not everyone lives in the same comfortable way that we do in Virginia. God knows that sometimes sorrow is just what you need in order to grow closer to Himself – to become a more mature believer. And understanding that truth is what can turn sorrow into something much more beautiful.



Building Your Marriage To Last Sunday School Class

We've had a FANTASTIC time of growing, sharing, and learning how to make our marriages a priority. We talked about preventing isolation, developing oneness, receiving your spouse, securing the relationship, fitting together, building in the spirit and shaping our legacy. The homework is dating your spouse each week! It has been enriching and rewarding for all.

Our second half study is on Improving Communication in Your Marriage. To understand and be understood, that's real communication. And it takes more than words. In fact, we sometimes say the most when we speak the least. Communication has the power to make or break relationships. Come gather with some friends and discover how to recognize the barriers that sometimes keep you from understanding each other, fight fair when conflict comes, and support each other through the trials of life.

After all, talk is cheap, but communication is priceless. Start the improvement today and watch your understanding and love grow. Invest August in your marriage and reap a lifetime of benefits! Come Join the group every Sunday in August at 9:45 a.m.

CLOTHING EXCHANGE OCTOBER 25 – 30



Clean those closets and save those clothes! Our annual clothing exchange will be October 25 to 30! The basic idea – You bring your clothes which you no longer need or want, and “shop” for you and your family from the abundance of what others bring. All free for the taking...and blessing!

Hours – Monday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.;
evening shopping only hours, Wednesday & Friday, 7:00 to 9:00 p.m.

Clothing is accepted through Friday with open outreach to the community Saturday morning.

Everyone who drops off clothes is asked to distribute their clothes into the proper categories before shopping. Volunteers are needed to help with the distribution of clothing. (This will eliminate clothes piling up in the hallways!!)

This is primarily an opportunity to clothe our BRBC church family and bless one another, so shopping will certainly be open during the entire week we are running. Also, because we have each been abundantly blessed, we want to be able to give back to our community with the free clothing give away on Saturday morning.

More details will be included in next month’s newsletter article. If you have any further questions or wish to volunteer to help, contact Geni Hall (genihall@aol.com) or Courtney Shipe (allshipesandsizes@gmail.com).



Mark your calendar for our first Awana meeting on Sunday, September 12. Registration will begin at 5:30 p.m. with club starting at 6:00 p.m. sharp!

We offer two opportunities for our leader training – Sunday, August 29 from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. OR Friday, September 10 from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. If you are feeling the Lord tugging at your heart to participate in this

dynamic ministry which reaches boys and girls with the Gospel of Christ and trains them to serve Him, please contact Earl & Geni Hall (earl@phc.edu, genihall@aol.com, home phone 540-338-4287).

We also have an opportunity for youth to lead. Leaders-in-Training (LIT) is for clubbers, ages 14 to 18. We have an LIT program that trains tomorrow’s leaders today. Each week, the LIT’s get practical training, working as a leader and modeling their Christian walk to younger clubbers. In addition, the LIT’s are required to complete the 24/7 Bible curriculum which helps keep the LIT’s grounded in prayer, Bible memorization and scripture reading. This is an excellent program for the older teens who feel called to lead the next generation in their spiritual training. Attendance at the Leaders Training Meeting on August 29 or September 10 is required.

August 2010

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1	2 Scouts	3 Beth Moore Study (9.30 a.m.—11:30 a.m.) Christy Shipe Study (7.00 p.m.—9.00 p.m.)	4 Worship Practice Youth Group (7:00p.m.—8:45p.m.) Men's Group (6.30 a.m.—7.30 a.m.)	5 Beth Moore Study (7.00 p.m.—9:00 p.m.)	6 Refuge Home Group (7.30 p.m.—9.30 p.m.)	7 Men's Breakfast (7.00 a.m.—8.30 a.m.)
8	9 Scouts	10 Beth Moore Study (9.30 a.m.—11:30 a.m.) Christy Shipe Study (7.00 p.m.—9.00 p.m.)	11 Missions Committee Worship Practice Youth Group (7:00p.m.—8:45p.m.) Men's Group (6.30 a.m.—7.30 a.m.)	12 Beth Moore Study (7.00 p.m.—9:00 p.m.)	13 Refuge Home Group (7.30 p.m.—9.30 p.m.) Strategic Leadership Team (6.00 p.m.—9.00 p.m.)	14 Men's Breakfast (7.00 a.m.—8.30 a.m.) Strategic Leadership Team (8.00 a.m.—Noon)
15 Newsletter Deadline	16 Scouts	17 Beth Moore Study (9.30 a.m.—11:30 a.m.) Christy Shipe Study (7.00 p.m.—9.00 p.m.)	18 Worship Practice Youth Group (7:00p.m.—8:45p.m.) Men's Group (6.30 a.m.—7.30 a.m.)	19 Beth Moore Study (7.00 p.m.—9:00 p.m.)	20 Refuge Home Group (7.30 p.m.—9.30 p.m.)	21 Men's Breakfast (7.00 a.m.—8.30 a.m.)
22 Luke Cutherell Preaching Missionary Potluck	23	24 Beth Moore Study (9.30 a.m.—11:30 a.m.) Christy Shipe Study (7.00 p.m.—9.00 p.m.)	25 Worship Practice Youth Group (7:00p.m.—8:45p.m.) Men's Group (6.30 a.m.—7.30 a.m.)	26 Beth Moore Study (7.00 p.m.—9:00 p.m.)	27 Refuge Home Group (7.30 p.m.—9.30 p.m.)	28 Men's Breakfast (7.00 a.m.—8.30 a.m.)
29 Communion AWANA Training (7p.m.—9p.m.)	30	31 Beth Moore Study (9.30 a.m.—11:30 a.m.) Christy Shipe Study (7.00 p.m.—9.00 p.m.)				

Blue Ridge Bible Church

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Blue Ridge Bible Church

...helping people know God better
and love him more!

"For I know the plans that I have for you", declares the Lord, "plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a future and a hope. Then you will call upon Me and come and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. You will seek Me and find Me when you search for Me with all your heart. I will be found by you," declares the Lord.
Jeremiah 29:11-14a

**OUR MISSION—
COMMUNICATING CHRIST
BUILDING BELIEVERS
SENDING SERVANTS**