

A GRASS-ROOTS MOVEMENT

Missions Celebration 2013

It Starts with You!

Current

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*Equipping the church to reach the world
for the glory of God through Christ*

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A young man with dark hair, wearing a grey and blue hoodie and a black backpack, is walking away from the camera on a city street. The background is blurred, showing cars and buildings. The image is used as a background for the text overlay.

What We Are Learning Now

MAKING THE GOSPEL VISIBLE

Pastor Bob

The two most important questions facing the world and the organized church today are: **what is the Gospel**, and **what is a church**? And you thought it was the economy! Nay and nope. The economy is all smoke and mirrors for the crucial eternal realities facing everyone: what is the Gospel and what is a church? There are intertwined in importance because without a true Gospel, the church loses its reason for being; without the true church, the Gospel is without its primary means of expression and propagation.

So what is the Gospel? St. Paul's expression of it in 1 Corinthians 15 gives a classic summary in five words, "Christ died for our sins." A historical event (Christ died) is given theological meaning (for our sins). Sin is breaking the commands of the one and only sovereign ruler and creator of the universe, the God of the Bible, fully and completely revealed in His Son the Lord Jesus Christ and His death, burial and resurrection. All those who come to Him in true repentance and belief are saved. Of course, there are many fac-

ets to this wonderful diamond of biblical truth – but those are the basics.

What about the church? What is a church? Here's the definition we use at TACC:

"A local church is a community of true believers in Jesus Christ, established by God, who gather together regularly in order to make the glory of God visible through the Gospel, using biblical means and purposes, under recognized spiritual leadership, caring for and affirming each other's salvation, and are then sent into the world to preach the Gospel" (Ephesians 1:3-14, 10; 3:10-13).

We will skip to the last phrase for our purposes today, but the rest deserves explanation at a later time. Preaching the Gospel must be at the heart of our ministry, not only to ourselves, but as we disperse and go into the world. Notice that the making of the Gospel visible must be at the heart of our activities while gathered, but also is at the heart of our efforts while dispersed. Gospel dispersion activities is our

A photograph of a building facade with a large, illuminated sign that reads "CITRUS CITY GRILLE" in a stylized, white, cursive font. The sign is mounted on a dark red background. The building has several windows with white frames. The overall scene is slightly dimly lit, suggesting an evening or dusk setting.

CITRUS CITY GRILLE

mission to Orange. That's the heart of the "For the City" campaign this Easter. A Gospel church is a church who understands that the mission of the church to the world is to announce with words the Gospel. We must do so in all-church events designed with our city in mind, in Life Group activities, in ministries of mercy in Orange, and most importantly and effectively, in our personal lives. Most new Christians are chiefly influenced through personal friendships.

This preaching of the Gospel purpose of the church has been summed up by those who study the church with the word *missional*. Ed Stetzer, in his excellent book, *Planting New Churches in a Postmodern Age*, comments, "A missional church is a church that is 'on mission' in its setting. ...A missional church is willing and eager to engage the culture with the truths of the gospel. ...To be a disciple of Jesus Christ and a member of his body is to live a missionary experience in the world. There is no doubt that this was how the earliest Christians understood their calling." There is no doubt that this

is how TACC must understand its calling. God calls us to engage our city by meeting, finding, connecting, introducing, initiating friendships... with real people in meaningful ways in order to share with them the urgent message that has transformed our lives forever, "Christ died for our sins!"

I believe God has called each one of us at TACC to engage our city in meaningful ways on an individual basis. God has sent us, in similar fashion as He sent His Son, into the world to engage people.

Our Missions Celebration this year will be focusing on reaching our city with the Gospel. We will be encouraging you to develop *pathways to relationships* that will yield spiritual conversations and the opportunity and the right to share the good news of the Gospel. Come prepared to be challenged, convicted, encouraged, stretched and eventually blessed as God fashions and shapes you into a more effective instrument of the spread of His and our Gospel.

Missions Celebration: A Grassroots Movement

It Starts With You! Isaiah 6:8

TACC's Missions Celebration Weekend is coming up! Join us this year April 19th – 21st as we focus our efforts on reaching Orange and our surrounding communities for the glory of God through Christ as the next generations of church planters.

This year our theme is **"A Grassroots Movement. It starts with you!"**

Our church has numerous ministries that focus on reaching our community and we want to highlight these ministries. God is calling TACC to get involved. So join the Grassroots Movement and come pray, serve, and learn about our community at TACC's Missions Celebration Weekend.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS April 19th – 21st

Friday Night: Prayer Night @ 7:00pm

Come and pray for Orange and our surrounding communities.

Saturday Morning: Service Projects

Come start your Saturday morning with a waffle breakfast prepared by our Elders; then go on to different service projects scheduled in our community.

9:00am **Waffle Breakfast**

10:00am **Service Projects**

Saturday Night: Prayer Rooms

Come enjoy delicious food and visit the prayer rooms, represent our church's different ministries, set up by each of our Life Groups. These rooms will be a place to respond through prayer to spiritual needs in our community and hopefully ignite a fire in our hearts for these hollow areas.

6:30pm **Dinner**

7:30pm **Prayer Rooms**

Sunday Morning: Service Celebration

Come and learn how we can reach Orange and our surrounding communities for the glory of God through Christ as the next generations' church planters. Then come together after the services and enjoy some delicious food.

9:00am **How to Sessions**
How to Build your Testimony
How to Share the Gospel
Discipleship

10:30am **Service**

12:00am **Lunch**

What I Learned From Being a Foreign Missionary

Laura Baxter

I am extremely grateful for my experience as a foreign missionary in Shanghai, China, from 1999-2001. Because China did not allow open, full-time missionaries, I was a "tent-maker." I worked part-time at an international law firm, and volunteered part-time at an orphanage. Those two years were very precious to me, and I would like to share just a few of the things God taught me during that time.

1. The world is bigger than the U.S., but not bigger than God.

Living overseas, you quickly realize that the rest of the world does not revolve around U.S. politics. I thought it was a big deal when George W. Bush visited Shanghai. But when I told my Chinese friends, they remarked "Oh really?" and moved on. Most of my friends had never been to Hong Kong, much less the Western world. And yet the gospel reaches around the globe. I saw first-hand how God loves and is working through Chinese Christians, both through the official church and also through the underground house church. It was humbling to realize how U.S.-centric my worldview had been.

2. People trump money.

There were many wives of Western businessmen who were interested in orphanage work. They had plenty of disposable income, and they were disposed to help the precious orphans. However, this was not a situation where throwing cash at the problem would help. Westerners could line the shelves with expensive toys, but the children would not play with them -- they were crib-bound. The children just needed people: people with arms to carry them, faces to

smile at them, laps to hold them. Some of the volunteers tried to give money to the orphanage workers, but the workers refused it. According to the official party line, the orphans' material needs were already provided for by the government. But I found the workers also needed people: people with hands to help them, experience to share with them, and hearts to pray for them.

3. A little language study goes a long way.

I was fortunate to be able to speak some Mandarin. This allowed me to live in a Chinese neighborhood, mingle with Chinese friends, speak directly with the orphanage workers, and even appear on Shanghai TV! A little language study (ok, it was several years of language study) opened many doors for me. And it became a positive feedback loop -- by spending more time among the local Chinese population, I gained greater awareness of Chinese culture and customs, and my language ability increased. Taking the time to study the language and culture of your host country will greatly enhance your experience as a missionary.

4. Missionaries face hardship and need our loyal support, especially our prayers.

The two years I spent in Shanghai were the best and worst of my life. I became close to an underground church leader, a woman, and heard wonderful stories about the spread of the gospel. I also saw how she was persecuted, not only by the government, but also by her closest friends and family members. My own marriage came under attack, and I was forced to return to the U.S. as a broken and single mother. Thankfully, I was blessed beyond words by the faithful

Laura Baxter *Cont. from page 5*

support of TACC – emotionally, materially and spiritually -- during that dark time of my life.

Despite the “unhappy” ending, I would not trade my missionary experience for anything. When you are overseas on a gospel mission, even ordinary activities are filled with purpose. For some reason, God’s hand seems much more obvious than at home. To share your faith, and to see someone from another culture become your brother or sister in Christ, is an experience that causes everything else to fade into the background. For sure, your simple, black-and-white notions of life will be challenged. Even now, I still struggle to understand some of the things that happened in China. Nonetheless, I strongly urge all of you to consider going to Mexico or India with TACC. And when you come back, please share with us what you have learned.

On the Frontlines

Mark & Carolyn Williams

Serving as Church Planters World-Wide

March 6, 2013

PRAISES:

Thanks for praying for Global Church Planting Sunday. I was invited to celebrate the day and share about church planting in 3 churches on 3 weekends.

I also spoke at Bonita Valley Baptist Church in San Diego where Pastor Jim Carpenter is leading toward planting a daughter church. Jim wrote that one of the men who was most critical of the church planting idea heard my message that day and . . . "said later that he had changed his mind about church planting! We had a prayer time for the project last Sunday night, and he was there, prayed for lost people, and told me afterward he was willing to go out door-to-door for our blitz next month. All of that is a huge deal." Praise God!

PRAYER:

This Friday, March 8, I leave for Ecuador and return the 16th. Our team of about 20 will do evangelism, medical ministry, minister to AIDs patients and assist in church planting. I will be training a group of nationals in how to plant churches. Please pray for safety, health, many to come to Christ and effective training.

Thanks for Praying,

Mark (& Carolyn)

www.dcp.org

Keep connected: *Twitter @pastormar*



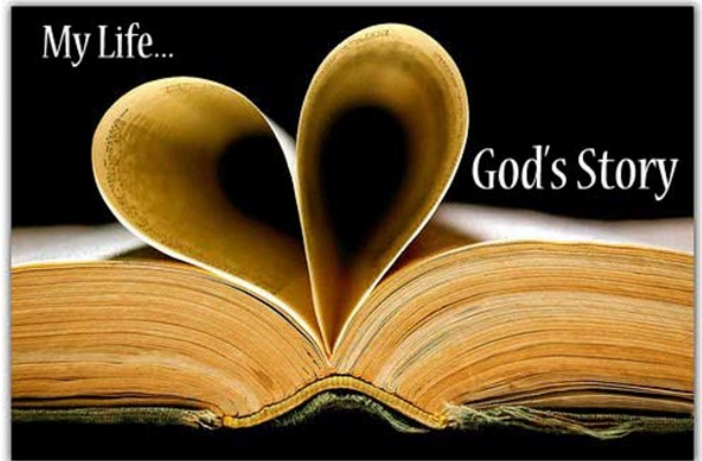
MAY PREVIEW

"My Life, God's Story"

Saturday May 4th, 11:30am to 2:00pm

Catered lunch, \$6.00 per person

Speaker: Roxanne Nilsen



Sure they're our lives, but God is the author of our personal stories and of the larger narrative into which our stories all fit. Really, it's God's story and each of our lives is just a part of the fulfillment of the bigger picture of God's sovereign plan. Roxanne Nilsen has learned this truth in her lifetime. She will share her life story through words and song of how she has seen God's hand in the events and twists and turns of her life.

Join us for a day of celebration of our lives in Christ and with each other. Bring friends, daughters, mothers, aunts – the women in your life who share your little part of God's big story. We will be selling tickets for this event at the Women's Ministries Cart from 10:00am to 10:30am and after worship. Contact womens@taftavenue.org for more information or to reserve tickets.



Going on in April...

Monday, April 8, 6:30 to 8pm: *Table Talk Evening of Fellowship*

*Potato bar - potatoes provided, sign up to bring your favorite topping

*Sign-ups at the Women's Ministries cart

*More info: womens@taftavenue.org

Friday, April 19-Saturday, April 21: *Missions Celebration*

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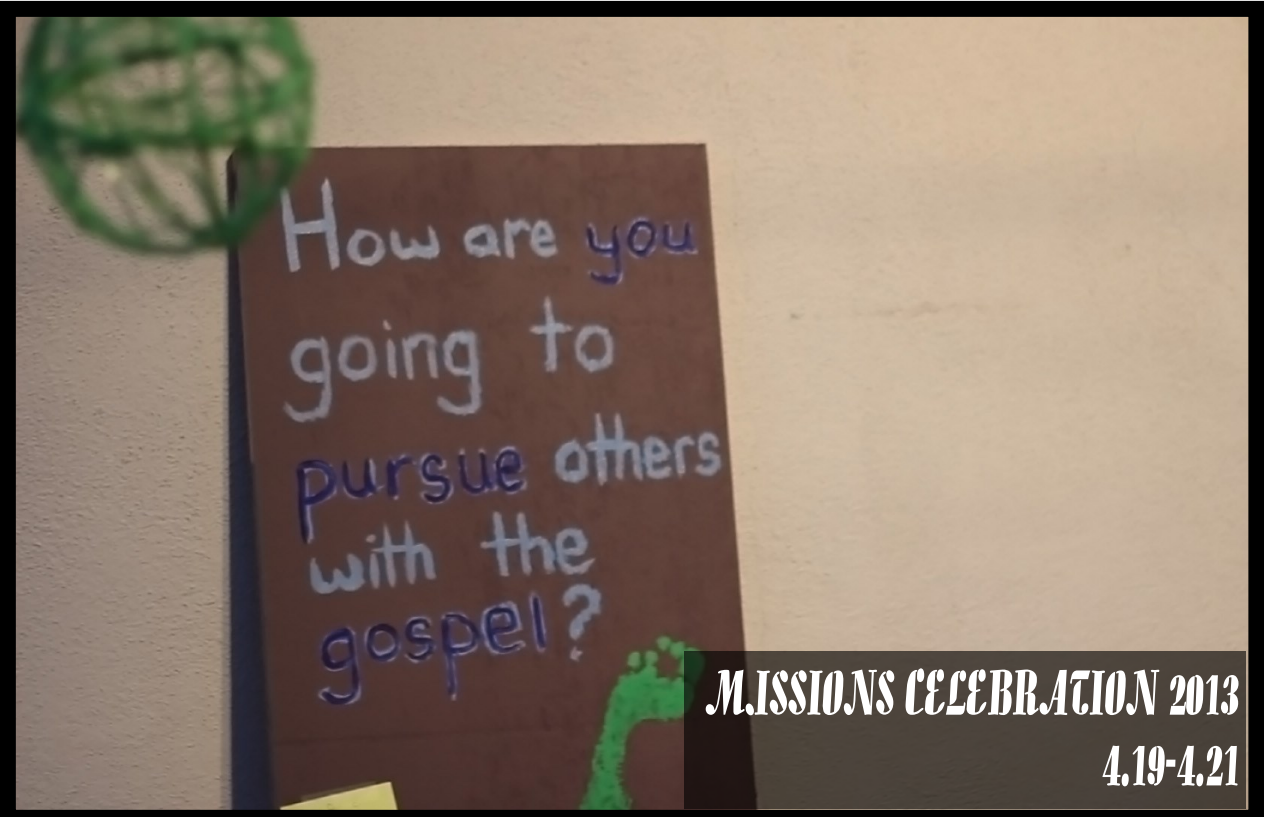
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MISSIONS CELEBRATION 2013

4.19-4.21