

A person in a blue tank top and dark shorts is running up a set of concrete stairs in a stadium. The stairs are flanked by white bleachers. The person is captured in mid-stride, moving away from the camera.

# Current

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

Building up the Body



## In Focus: The Body

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# The Body: Each Member Essential

By Pastor Andrew

What would happen if your foot said, “because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body?” Or what if your ear could talk, and started to complain, “because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body”? Such questions seem absurd when we think of the human body. We all recognize that nearly every part of our body is necessary for our whole body to function.

If our foot suddenly had self-esteem issues and stopped functioning just because it was not a hand, we would have some real problems getting around! As we go through life and different parts of our body become injured or impaired for a short time or even a long time, we begin to see how essential each part is for the function of our whole body. The same is true of the church; every true, believing member is necessary and placed into the church by the hand of God and serves a vital role in the overall function of the body of Christ.

The questions above may seem absurd, but they were originally posed by the Apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 12:12-27 to highlight the unity and diversity of the body. In particular, Paul uses the image of the human body with its diverse members performing diverse functions in a unified organism to provide a vivid picture of God’s design for the church. Join me as we dig deeper to uncover several vital theological truths about the body of Christ which have key relevance for our church body at TACC.

## **The Unity of the Body of Christ is Found in the One Spirit (1 Cor. 12:12-13)**

***“The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all parts are many, they form one body. So it is with Christ. For we were all baptized by one Spirit into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink.”***

In the Holy Spirit, the members of the body of Christ all have the same source of membership in the body. The unity of the members of the body is based foundationally not on their relationship with each other but in their mutual and vital relationship to the Head of the body, Jesus Christ. God is the One who has placed each member into the body.

In light of this truth, the members should accept their gifts and role within the body in humility without flaunting them, belittling another’s, or envying another’s. Furthermore, each member of the body must recognize that each of his brothers and sisters have also been gifted for the benefit of the body (12:20-21). In other words, the hand cannot say to the foot, “Because you are



not a hand, you do not belong to the body!” Neither can the hand say to the foot, “You are not as good as me!” Both the foot and the hand are vital for the whole body to function. Each member has been given their place in the body and equipped to fulfill a particular function by the sovereign hand of God.

The unity of our church at TACC is not sourced in a similarity of social background. It is not based on our all being of the same ethnicity or race. It is not even fixed on socio-economic parallels, how much money we make, what cars we drive, or what we do with our spare time. No, the body of Christ is a diverse mix of people from various ethnicities, socio-economic levels, preferences, all united through our common identity in one body in the one Spirit of God.

#### **The Body of Christ is Interdependent (1 Cor. 12:17-19)**

***“If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be? If the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of smell be? But in fact, God has arranged the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be. If they were all one part, where would the body be?”***

Of all of the images of the church in the New Testament, the image of the body presents the best single analogy of the interdependent nature of the church. Each member plays a vital role in ministering to the needs of the rest of the community. No member or group of members can discount the contributions of other members to the body, for we have all alike been placed in the body just as God designed (12:18).

In fact, God has designed the body so that the involvement of every member is necessary for the proper functioning of the community (12:21). This means that each member has a unique role to play, yet is also dependent upon everyone else.

This interdependence leads to direct application in the contemporary Western church, which includes our church. In our society, where individualism is valued above corporate identity and responsibility, the metaphor of the body refocuses the community of Christians on our primary identity as a corporate body, a community of believers. For Paul, there are no “lone-ranger” Christians who are exempt from attachment in a local church body. To be a believer in Jesus, indwelt by the Holy Spirit, is to be a part of the corporate body of Christ. Each member should recognize its unique placement in the body and the special gifting given it for the purpose of serving the other members and the body as a whole.

The interdependence of the body also underlines the importance of each member. The different members of the body have been given different functions by the Designer Himself. There is no inferior gift or role. Each part of the body is to perform its God-given function and to together care for the other members (12:25). Each believer at TACC is equally valued by the Creator and plays a necessary role in how effectively our church body functions for His purposes.

### **The Common Experience of the Body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:26-27)**

***“If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it. Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.”***

The body is designed in such a way that whenever one member hurts, the other members feel pain. Furthermore, as Paul elaborates, the body is also to rejoice mutually in the honoring of its members. The body of Christ is so tightly knit together, that what affects one member *necessarily* affects all the others. It is marked by a mutual experience of both suffering and triumph.

This common experience of the body flows most naturally out of the common life of the body. The church is to be characterized by a community of believers who walk the journey of life together, sharing in its peaks and in its valleys. Such a community is united not only spiritually, but emotionally and physically as well. This is the reality of our church body at TACC.

Here at TACC, we are called by God to share life together. Without each other, we are not complete. By God’s design, a group of diverse members have been brought together into one, unified body. He alone has done this and it is by His design that we are what we are. Such is the beauty of the unity and diversity of the body of Christ. Let us together bring glory to the head of the body, Christ, as we experience body life together at TACC.

# What Can I Do?

By Source Unknown

**There have been a few times over the years when first-time visitors to our church have informed me they have a particular ministry.**

One couple informed me their first Sunday they had a teaching ministry. I thought, *Well, let's see if you come back next week. Then let's see if you join the church. Then let's see if you'd be happy setting up chairs. Then maybe later we'll see if you have a teaching ministry.*

**What if you can't do what you want to do? What if you'd like to sing on the worship team, but there aren't any open positions? What if you'd like to be in ministry but have to work a secular job?**

Should you slide into discouragement or bitterness? Give in to believing people are thwarting you? Resign yourself to being unhappy till you are able to serve in the way you want?

**Here's what you should do. Just start serving wherever you are.**

Look around. There's something you can do. Don't worry about if you have a "call" to do it. Just serve. In his providence, God put you where you are for a reason. Consider Chuck Colson's experience:

"On July 8, 1974, Chuck Colson went to prison. Only a couple years before, he had been chief counsel on the Nixon White House staff he was nearing his 44th birthday when he went to prison for his involvement in Watergate. On January 31, 1975 he was released from prison after serving seven months. 'When I arrived in prison, my caseworker told me, "Just settle in, accept it. This is where you live now. Don't think about your home." Reading Bonhoeffer convinced me to do just the opposite.... I drove myself to work as hard as I could. My entire day was consumed with writing, studying, doing my job in prison laundry, and exercising, and helping other inmates. I seldom allowed myself any recreation. More than anything else, I feared doing nothing.'"

"Today Colson is thankful for his seven months in prison. He knows God used those miserable days to prepare him for a great ministry. His time in prison made it possible for him to begin Prison Fellowship. Now he thanks God for the circumstances he faced that put him in prison. 'I thank God for Water-

gate. Not only did prison radically transform my view of life, but the experience also gave me the one thing I thought I would never have again — an opportunity to serve others in significant ways. In my case, that service has been in ministry to prisoners around the world.’ ” —Chris Brauns, *Unpacking Forgiveness*

God may not exalt us like Chuck Colson but we can learn from his experience to serve where we are. When Joseph was sold into slavery in Egypt, he didn't succumb to self-pity. He served his master. Even when thrown into prison unjustly, he busied himself looking to the interests of others.

**Don't think about what you don't have or what you can't do. Ask yourself, Who can I encourage? Who can I bless? Who can I invite to my place for a meal? Who can I offer to babysit for? God will exalt you if he wants to. But you can be fruitful no matter where you are. Source unknown**



# Dale and SuZann Beverly, Africa Inland Mission

By Bill Petersen



Dale and SuZann have been working with Africa Inland Mission since 1978. They ministered to remote people groups in the northern part of Kenya for twenty-four years and have now been back in the U.S. for about five years and they continue to minister full time to Africans at River Bend Ranch in Kansas.

Dale and SuZann wear several different hats of responsibility for Africa Inland Mission. Dale continues to be an area administrator in Kansas, New Mexico, & Arizona. They also take trips to AIM's Headquarters in New York to assist with Candidate Week. The Lord has opened doors to Wichita State University, who invited the Beverly's to set up a table at their international student orientation/fair to introduce River Bend Ranch and the services they offer to African students. "We have had 14 goat roasts now, introducing ourselves to over 500 students."

## ***September Prayer Requests For AIM's US/African Ministry***

1. PRAISE for two weeks of youth camp at the River Bend Ranch. For two different weeks, we had all the teen boys from the church out to the ranch to work on projects in the mornings and then swim, target practice, fish, and learn to drive in the afternoons. Great one-on-one time with Pastor Dale!
2. PRAISE for good contacts made through the "corn days" at the River Bend Ranch.
3. PRAYER for plans for the upcoming fall season.
4. PRAISE for the money that came in for Dale's teeth. Still a ways to go so keep praying for this.
5. PRAYER is needed for reducing some friction at the church. Pray for unity and that Dale will have wisdom as he deals with situations.

Check out their website at [www.RiverBendRanchKS.com](http://www.RiverBendRanchKS.com) and partner in prayer as they reach out to African students.

# Tuning into Jesus

By Ed Nilsen



In order to have harmony, instruments must be ‘in tune.’ In the case of a guitar, the strings are set to exactly match predetermined tones. If an instrument is out of tune, it doesn’t matter how excellent the player is, it just won’t sound good.

Before our band plays a song, all band members assume everyone is in tune. If not, it’s no problem to say to the one who is out of tune, “You need to tune.” There’s no offense taken by the player who is out of tune, because they recognize the importance of being ‘in tune.’

So what does it look like for the church to be ‘in tune?’ Maybe asked another way, what does it *sound* like when the church is out of tune? Think of how you feel when you hear out-of-tune instruments play—you wish they would stop playing, tune up, and then play. Similarly, we listen to each other speak every day. And we all know when we hear someone who is “out of tune”—what does that sound like to you?

How do we get in tune as the church? As there are predetermined sounds for our instruments, there is a predetermined voice for our faith—Jesus. Even though He was fully God, He emptied Himself, became a servant, and died in obedience to the Father, fully tuned into Him. His example of service and obedience models for us all the tune for all our speaking and relating. Brothers and sisters, I exhort you to take a moment and prayerfully consider how God might be calling you to “tune into Him” more, and thereby be in harmony with the church. Do I have a complaining spirit? Do I just go through the motions of loving others in my conversation, but am actually disengaged? Do I subtly control others? What are other ways I can tune into You, Lord? How can I love and serve my brothers and sisters, even at the expense of my own comfort and (foreseeable) benefit?

Perhaps we will be surprised at the melodious music issuing forth.

## *Mission to Orange, India and the World*

*By Steve Hicks*



As you read this edition of the Current, our 2011 India team has just returned from sharing the gospel in the Adivasi villages near Siliguri. The team will be attending Sunday School classes and other group meetings, so plan on dropping in on one of these meetings to catch up on how things in India are going. Additionally, we should get an idea of how the area around Siliguri weathered the 6.9 earthquake that hit Sikkim on September 18. Sikkim is located about 70 miles north of Siliguri, and suffered widespread damage and casualties. Please pray that this disaster brings people there to examine who the one true God is, and seek Him.

John and Deanna Hayes visited TACC in late August. It was great to actually see them, as it had been several years

since their last visit. Deanna shared with a Sunday School class how it was to live in one of the poorest sections of London, and the challenges of helping meet the needs of those struggling to get by. She is developing a relationship with a couple of non-believing neighbors, in order to open up doors to share the gospel. John then led the class in a study from Scripture. After church, John and Deanna met with the Missions Team for lunch, providing further details of their ministry. Their ministry is growing, causing John to be away from home a lot. Their living conditions have been affected by mold. But God is faithful, and has provided for their needs. Please continue to pray for them, and ask that God would use them in a mighty way to bring the lost to know and live in Him.

## Community

By Ingrid Chung

Commingle we are  
Co-mandated to take dominion  
Commissioned we have been  
Communion we find ourselves in  
Community we've been given  
No ideal  
But reality  
You, me  
And the fragile space in between.

### **What then shall we do?**

So, then  
As we find ourselves  
Many members, one body  
One community

Let us tune into Jesus, our risen Lord,  
And serve one another.

## Operation Christmas Child

On Sunday, October 2 at 9:00am, the Friends in Christ class will be hosting the kick-off for "Operation Christmas Child" from Samaritan's Purse in the Fireside Room. Janet Proffit will be sharing about the ministry, which is committed to supplying Christmas gifts and the gospel of Jesus Christ to millions of children who are victims of poverty, war, famine and disease; this year, we will fill 100 shoe boxes with gifts. Please join us in this outreach to the children of the world.