

## **Part I: Joint Elder & Deacon Meeting**

### **Roll Call:**

- Elders present: Hoy, Culton, Bickings, Capaldi, Sommons, Holwick, Brimer
- Elders excused: Van Doren, Batten
- Deacons present: Eckel, Kritzberger, Kalubi, Hardy (George), Hardy (Mark), Christiansen, Meier, Romero
- Deacons excused: Smith, Powell, Lofthouse
- Special Guest: Carl Cassel

### **Prayer:**

Pastor Jason Hoy opened the meeting in prayer.

### **Discussion:**

- Pastor Jason Hoy led a discussion on the current state of Ebenezer based on the four pillars of the church which have been introduced during the current sermon series. Prayer, Praise, Proclamation, People (inside and outside) of the Church.
- The discussion focused on both strengths and weaknesses as the men had a candid conversation about striving towards leading the Church to be the beautiful bride of Christ.

### **Parish Nursing Ministry Proposal:**

- In April Carol Warner, member of EBFC, proposed a Parish Nursing Program be adopted at EBFC with her serving as the ministry point of contact. (see April 9<sup>th</sup> Board of Elders Meeting minutes)
- The elders discussed it further with the Deacons who were generally agreeable to the concept.
- There were a few questions and concerns that will be shared with Carol Warner before proceeding. Mike agreed to contact Carol for the follow-up.

### **Transportation Discussion:**

- Reading, PA Bible Fellowship Church is in need of a van for their ministry and outreach purposes.
- EBFC Deacons have been preparing to trade-in the current van and purchase a slightly used van in the coming 6-12 months, pending the transportation fund and budget allows for this.
- In light of Reading BFC's need, we will review the potential of donating the current van to them and purchasing our vehicle more quickly than originally planned so that we can support them in the Kingdom-building work.
- In general the Elders and Deacons were agreeable with this approach and Treasurer, Andy Brimer, asked Deacon, Mark Hardy to follow up with specifics and to speak with Reading, PA. Mark will specifically ask them to ensure that the current van would meet their needs and discern that it will be safe for those usages.

**Ushering:**

There was a brief discussion about the proper way to handle families with small children that may be disruptive in the worship service. First and foremost, we want to be loving towards all parties and come alongside parents, especially who are alone with the children, to make them more comfortable in a private room like the Parlor if appropriate. At the same time, we should also ensure that congregants who protest about a situation, family or child that they do so graciously and in Christian love.

**Security:**

- The security team expressed their concern about the situation that occurred on Easter Sunday where an unknown male was found to be roaming the church at early hours. They reinforced the importance of having more than one person in the church at any given time and that we should remain diligent in our awareness of strangers roaming the church.
- Action: Rob Lofthouse, Deacon and Security lead, will be asked to write a short memo to be shared with all ministry volunteers who come to the church during off hours. This document will reinforce our security standards and encourage congregants and staff to be more proactive.
- Action: Mark Culton will speak with Jennie Flicker and Worship Team members to enlist their support and renewed caution particularly for Sunday mornings.

**Flowers For Freedom:**

The men discussed the recent communications surrounding the Flowers For Freedom program held in April. There were no issues, only that the men wanted to clarify that events such as these truly are the responsibility of the Deacons and the elders do not want to circumvent their authority or get involved when we do not need to do so.

**Adjournment:**

Chairman of the Board of Deacons, Bruce Eckel closed this portion of the meeting in prayer.

## Part II: Board of Elders Meeting

### Approval of Minutes:

**Motion** was made to approve the minutes from the Board of Elders meeting on April 9<sup>th</sup> along with edit, seconded and passed.

### Financial Report:

- Treasurer, Andy Brimer reviewed the May report. (Attachment #1)
- Andy praised God for His faithfulness in April and all year as giving is above budget.
- **Motion** was made to approve the report, seconded and passed.
- Andy shared an updated proposal from the Deacons to cover the cost of the HVAC unit in one of the classrooms that needs to be replaced after breaking down.
- Maintenance on the organ was not budgeted for 2012. This was an oversight, but the cost can be absorbed within the current expenses which are below budget year-to-date.
- We are currently experiencing some performance problems with the piano. The repair man has come out repeatedly to repair it many times without charge to us; yet, the problems have continued. The piano is still under warranty so we are pursuing our options for replacement. Resolution to this matter is being pursued by the Worship Committee. No actions are required at this time.

### Preparation for Senior Pastor Candidate Visit:

- The men reviewed the schedule of events to take place June 2-3.
- Mike Capaldi, SP Committee Chair provided the men with a communication that would be sent to the congregation by Wednesday's e-Newsletter and Sunday's bulletin insert. The elders approved its content.
- Pastor Mark Culton was kind enough to open his home up to the Gibson family on Sunday afternoon and invite some of the kids and staff from the Youth program so that the Gibson's children would feel welcomed.

### Bridge Ministry Update:

- This has been a topic of the past two elders meetings and was briefly discussed with the Deacons earlier in the Joint Deacon & Elder meeting.
- Some of the elders still are trying to visit the ministry on Wednesday night and in lieu of Elder Wayne Batten's absence we decided to table the conversation until next time. This also allows those who haven't attended yet the opportunity to do so.

### Annual Conference Discussion:

- The elders discussed further some of the outcomes from the Bible Fellowship Church Denomination's Annual Conference held on April 24-26<sup>th</sup> at Pinebrook.
- A two-page summary of the conference was shared with the congregation through the email newsletter and hard copies in the foyer beginning May 2<sup>nd</sup>. (Attachment #2)
- We will give a verbal report at the mid-year Congregational Meeting.

### Membership Applications:

Pastor Dick Bickings circulated the following applications for membership and a **motion** was made to approve them to be members, seconded and passed.

- Dan Marks is transferring from Grace BFC in Quakertown, PA.
- Lee & Sharon Ciccotelli
- Marge Harris

**Pastoral Reports:**

- Interim Senior Pastor, Jason Hoy reviewed his monthly report and asked for a couple of specific prayer requests for people. (Attachment #3)
- Pastor of Discipleship, Dick Bickings reviewed his monthly report. (Attachment #4)
- Youth Pastor, Mark Culton reviewed his monthly report. (Attachment #5)

**Discussion Items:**

- People Matter: The men discussed a people matter recently dealt with in keeping with Matt. 18.
- Roof Repairs & Ushering: Deacon Liaison, Shawn Sommons updated the elders on the roof repairs and that the Deacons continue to discuss the importance of Ushering in light of some recent incidents.
- Forks Church Planting: Tim Zuck, Pastor at Saucon BFC and Church Planter recently conducted field work in Forks Township in Easton. He shared his findings with a group representing several BFC churches in the area and is excited to begin meeting with residents in Forks Township to begin the long planning process for planting a church in Forks. The elders welcome these continued discussions with Tim and agree that he should contact Ebenezer members in the Forks area to gauge their interest in this effort.

**Adjournment:**

The elders closed in prayer and the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mike Capaldi', is written over a horizontal line. The signature is stylized and cursive.

Mike Capaldi  
Secretary to the Board of Elders

May 21, 2012

To: Board of Elders  
From: Treasurer, Andy Brimer  
Subject: Financial Report for May 2012

Attached you will find the following documents as the submission for the April 2012 Financial Report:

- April Financial Statement
- 2012 YTD Financial Statement

In reviewing the financial statements, I would like to make the following comments:

- Giving for April was 127% of the budgeted forecast while the YTD giving was at 110% of the annual forecast.
- Expenses for April were 68% of the budgeted forecast while the YTD expenses was at 99% of the annual forecast.

# EBENEZER BIBLE FELLOWSHIP CHURCH - APRIL YTD 2012 FINANCIAL STATEMENT

## BALANCE SHEET GENERAL FUND - BUDGET vs. ACTUAL

	30-Apr-12	31-Dec-11	\$ Change		April YTD	Budget	Variance	% BGT YTD
<b>ASSETS</b>								
<i>Assets - Checking/Savings</i>								
18000 · Checking (KNBT)	469,821.19	404,429.87	65,391.32		311,099.72	285,045.00	26,054.72	109%
18001 · CDs (KNBT)	66,808.26	66,769.97	38.29		246.84	266.67	-19.83	93%
19000 · Savings (M&T Bank)	101,441.34	116,347.12	-14,905.78		825.00	0.00	825.00	*
19001 · Checking (M&T Bank)	6,606.29	3,107.51	3,498.78		2,880.76	1,576.00	1,304.76	183%
<b>Total Checking/Savings</b>	<b>644,677.08</b>	<b>590,654.47</b>	<b>54,022.61</b>		<b>315,052.32</b>	<b>286,987.67</b>	<b>28,164.65</b>	<b>110%</b>

<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>644,677.08</b>	<b>590,654.47</b>	<b>54,022.61</b>					
<b>LIABILITIES</b>								
<i>Current Liabilities</i>								
2111 · Direct Deposit Liabilities	0.00	2.96	-2.96					
901 · Building Fund	5,860.24	(1,123.39)	6,983.63		22,171.88	13,959.35	8,212.53	159%
902 · Capital Improvements	5,746.54	5,746.54	0.00		9,232.31	11,108.18	-1,875.87	83%
903 · Transportation Fund	17,543.00	17,243.00	300.00		14.98	675.00	-660.02	2%
904 · Scholarship Fund	2,458.92	2,090.20	368.72		38,583.39	38,960.00	-376.61	99%
905 · Faith Promise	24,479.11	19,656.44	4,822.67		28,749.76	33,650.05	-4,900.29	85%
907 · Benevolence Fund	15,042.23	13,340.27	1,701.96		1,891.48	2,872.74	-981.26	66%
908 · Music Fund	28.20	(71.80)	100.00		5,778.00	6,768.75	-990.75	85%
910 · Angel Food Ministries	0.00	0.00	0.00		321.00	740.00	-419.00	43%
911 · Year End Accruals	5,990.99	11,536.85	-5,545.86		160,246.87	161,945.10	-1,698.23	99%
912 · Run For The Children	700.23	700.23	0.00		266,989.67	270,679.17	-3,689.50	99%
914 · HRA	5,737.86	(118.43)	5,856.29					
100 · Payroll Liabilities	5,066.16	5,690.65	-624.49					
<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>	<b>88,653.48</b>	<b>74,693.52</b>	<b>13,959.96</b>					
<i>Long Term Liabilities</i>								
802 · Mortgage	0.00	0.00	0.00					
<b>Total Long Term Liabilities</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>					
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>88,653.48</b>	<b>74,693.52</b>	<b>13,959.96</b>					

<b>Net Ordinary Income</b>	<b>48,062.65</b>	<b>16,208.50</b>	<b>31,854.15</b>
<b>Net Fund Transfer between Accts.</b>	<b>8,000.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>8,000.00</b>
<b>Net Income</b>	<b>40,062.65</b>	<b>16,208.50</b>	<b>23,854.15</b>

### DESIGNATED FUNDS INCOME

	Income	Expenses	Net
901 · Building Fund	6,983.63	0.00	6,983.63
903 · Transportation Fund	300.00	0.00	300.00
904 · Scholarship Fund	1,029.72	661.00	368.72
905 · Faith Promise	8,422.67	3,600.00	4,822.67
907 · Benevolence Fund	7,752.99	6,051.03	1,701.96
908 · Music Fund	100.00	0.00	100.00

### OTHER LIABILITY ACCOUNTS

902 · Capital Improvements	0.00	0.00	0.00
910 · Angel Food Ministries	0.00	0.00	0.00
911 · Year End Accruals	0.00	5,545.86	-5,545.86
912 · Run For The Children	0.00	0.00	0.00
914 · HRA	8,000.00	2,143.71	5,856.29
<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>	<b>32,589.01</b>	<b>18,001.60</b>	<b>14,587.41</b>
(Income/Expenses without transfers)	0.00	10,740.39	-10,740.39

  
 Treasurer 5/21/12  
 Date

\* Memorials in the 2012 Budget are \$0.00

# EBENEZER BIBLE FELLOWSHIP CHURCH - APRIL 2012 FINANCIAL STATEMENT

## BALANCE SHEET

ASSETS	30-Apr-12	31-Mar-12	\$ Change
<b>Assets - Checking/Savings</b>			
18000 · Checking (KNBT)	469,821.19	423,212.26	46,608.93
18001 · CDs (KNBT)	66,808.26	66,808.26	0.00
19000 · Savings (M&T Bank)	101,441.34	106,420.39	-4,979.05
19001 · Checking (M&T Bank)	6,606.29	3,948.97	2,657.32
<b>Total Checking/Savings</b>	<b>644,677.08</b>	<b>600,389.88</b>	<b>44,287.20</b>

**TOTAL ASSETS** **644,677.08** **600,389.88** **44,287.20**

### LIABILITIES

#### Current Liabilities

2111 · Direct Deposit Liabilities	0.00	0.00	0.00
901 · Building Fund	5,860.24	4,389.24	1,471.00
902 · Capital Improvements	5,746.54	5,746.54	0.00
903 · Transportation Fund	17,543.00	17,418.00	125.00
904 · Scholarship Fund	2,458.92	2,138.92	320.00
905 · Faith Promise	24,479.11	25,954.11	-1,475.00
907 · Benevolence Fund	15,042.23	16,178.75	-1,136.52
908 · Music Fund	28.20	28.20	0.00
910 · Angel Food Ministries	0.00	0.00	0.00
911 · Year End Accruals	5,990.99	5,990.99	0.00
912 · Run For The Children	700.23	700.23	0.00
914 · HRA	5,737.86	7,128.43	-1,390.57
100 · Payroll Liabilities	5,066.16	5,703.99	-637.83
<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>	<b>88,653.48</b>	<b>91,377.40</b>	<b>-2,723.92</b>

#### Long Term Liabilities

802 · Mortgage	0.00	0.00	0.00
<b>Total Long Term Liabilities</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>88,653.48</b>	<b>91,377.40</b>	<b>-2,723.92</b>

#### Equity

900 · Retained Earnings	923,839.75	923,839.75	0.00
<b>Net Income</b>	<b>40,062.65</b>	<b>-6,948.47</b>	<b>47,011.12</b>
1000 · Opening Bal Equity	-407,878.80	-407,878.80	0.00
<b>Total Equity</b>	<b>556,023.60</b>	<b>509,012.48</b>	<b>47,011.12</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES &amp; EQUITY</b>	<b>644,677.08</b>	<b>600,389.88</b>	<b>44,287.20</b>

*Andrew Bruner*  
Treasurer

Date 5/21/12

## GENERAL FUND - BUDGET vs. ACTUAL

Income	April	Budget	Variance
1100 · Offerings / Gifts	89,421.53	71,261.25	18,160.28
1400 · Interest	50.96	66.67	-15.71
1700 · Memorials	500.00	0.00	500.00
1900 · BCS / Bldg Use	1,194.58	394.00	800.58
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>91,167.07</b>	<b>71,721.92</b>	<b>19,445.15</b>

#### Expenses

2000 · General Finance	73.18	5,673.85	-5,600.67
3000 · Discipleship	-3,274.58	2,601.68	-5,876.26
5000 · Evangelism	0.00	175.00	-175.00
6000 · Missions	263.39	110.00	153.39
7000 · Deacon	6,709.12	7,900.02	-1,190.90
8000 · Worship	325.80	715.92	-390.12
9000 · Office & Admin	1,106.74	1,555.00	-448.26
10000 · Congregational Care	80.00	185.00	-105.00
11000 · Compensation	38,872.30	46,395.14	-7,522.84
<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>44,155.95</b>	<b>65,311.61</b>	<b>-21,155.66</b>

**Net Ordinary Income** **47,011.12** **6,410.31** **40,600.81**

**Net Fund Transfer between Accts.** **0.00** **0.00** **0.00**

**Net Income** **47,011.12** **6,410.31** **40,600.81**

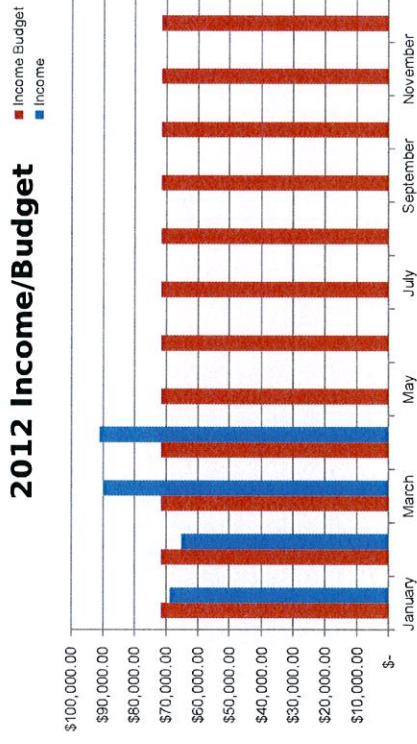
### DESIGNATED FUNDS

	Income	Expenses	Net
901 · Building Fund	1,471.00	0.00	1,471.00
903 · Transportation Fund	125.00	0.00	125.00
904 · Scholarship Fund	320.00	0.00	320.00
905 · Faith Promise	1,725.00	3,200.00	-1,475.00
907 · Benevolence Fund	2,485.00	3,621.52	-1,136.52
908 · Music Fund	0.00	0.00	0.00

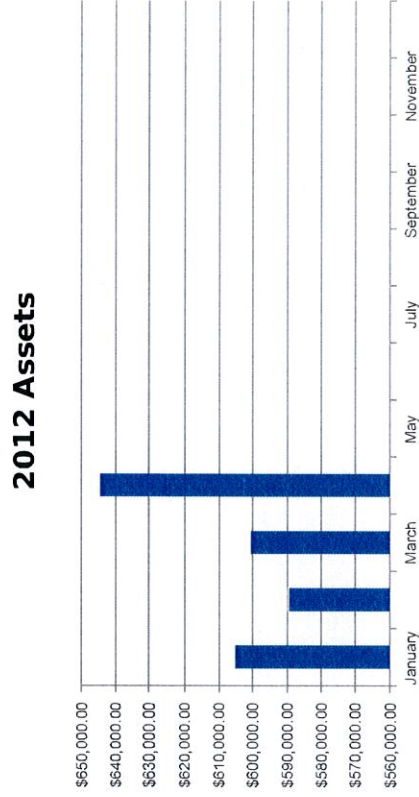
### OTHER LIABILITY ACCOUNTS

902 · Capital Improvements	0.00	0.00	0.00
910 · Angel Food Ministries	0.00	0.00	0.00
911 · Year End Accruals	0.00	0.00	0.00
912 · Run For The Children	0.00	0.00	0.00
914 · HRA	0.00	1,390.57	-1,390.57
<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>	<b>6,126.00</b>	<b>8,212.09</b>	<b>-2,086.09</b>
(Income/Expenses without transfers)	0.00	8,212.09	-8,212.09

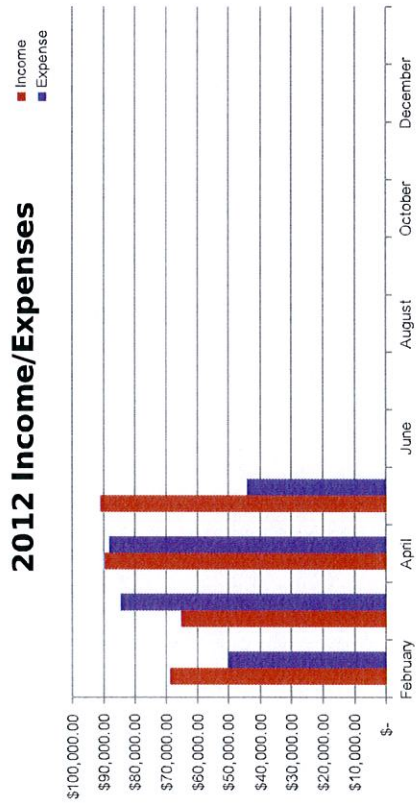
### 2012 Income/Budget



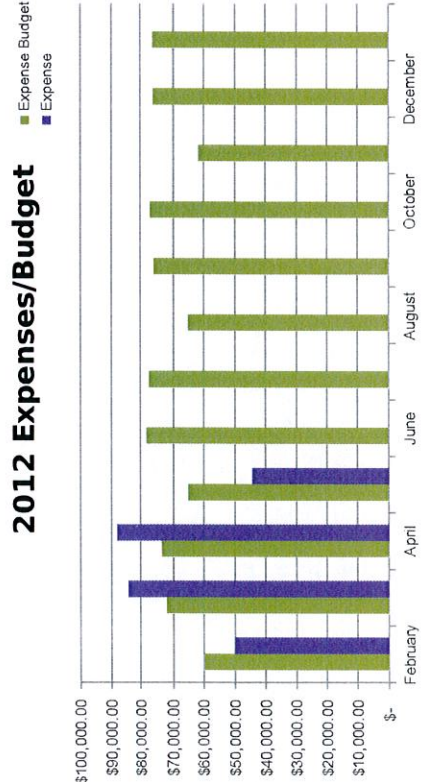
### 2012 Assets



### 2012 Income/Expenses



### 2012 Expenses/Budget





**REPORT OF THE 129<sup>TH</sup> BIBLE FELLOWSHIP CHURCH CONFERENCE**  
**April 23 – 25, 2012**

Beginning with a prayer thanking the Lord for His sovereignty and asking that His Spirit guide the proceedings, Moderator Randall A. Grossman called the 129th BFC Conference to order at 1:00 P.M., Monday, April 23, 2012.

The theme of BFC Conference was Discipleship. Pastor James Arcieri, Red Hill, PA, led in worship through songs which focused on the kingship of Christ. Conference was challenged in a message by Moderator Grossman from Joshua 1 to be strong and courageous.

The first session consisted of essential business including appointing Conference Committees, introducing new members, receiving reports from various boards and committees, and elections. Mark A. Bickel, Colby Weinhofer, and R. Scott Wright were approved for ordination.

During the Report of the Conference Pastor, Ronald C. Mahurin, Pastors Marcos Ramirez, Iglesia Biblica La Roca de Mérida, Mérida, Yucatá, Mexico; Timothy M. Zuck, Hellertown, PA; Joshua Allen, Las Cruces, NM; and Daniel L. Williams, Woodbury Heights, NJ were asked to share the joys and prayer concerns from their respective churches. Praise was given to the Lord that all four younger churches reported substantial numerical and spiritual growth and asked only that Conference pray for the physical resources to continue growing.

During the Monday evening session, Dana E. Weller, Director of the Board of Missions, and David E. Gundrum, Director of Church Extension Ministries, presented their reports. Pastor Weller encouraged everyone to continue to be faithful to missions and to take advantage of Board of Missions resources. All missionaries present were asked to introduce themselves.

Pastor Gundrum spoke briefly highlighting the importance of daughter churches ("churches planting churches"). Four church planters (Ronald B. Smith, Townsend, DE; R. Scott Wright, Lower Providence Township, PA; Keith Strunk, Cape Community Church, Cape May Court House, NJ; and Miguel Gonzalez, Assistant Church Planter under the B.O.M.) presented their works, and a report was read by Pastor Ramirez introducing church planter Freddy Chi, Villa Magna, Yucatá, Mexico. Notably, the works in Townsend, Lower Providence, and Villa Magna are daughter churches.

The evening session was adjourned for a time of worship. Pastor Carlos G. Rodriguez and others from La Roca de Reading, Reading, PA led in worship. Praise was offered joyfully in both English and Spanish. Guest speaker, Dr. Gene A. Getz preached a message entitled, "The Measure of a Healthy Church". Through an examination of the epistles, he concluded that a church ought to be measured by its work of faith, endurance of hope, and labor of love.

The third session began on Tuesday morning with devotional thoughts and songs led by Pastor Arcieri about the name of the Lord. Reports were presented by Executive Director David T. Allen, the BFC Executive Board, Pinebrook Bible Conference, and Victory Valley Camp.

Conference received the two reports (majority and minority) from the Study Committee on Sabbath and heard explanations of both positions. After extensive debate, which spanned the morning and afternoon sessions, Conference voted on the majority resolution which removes the idea of Sabbath from Article 21: "The Lord's Day" of the Articles of Faith. The resolution passed at first reading, receiving the necessary two-thirds majority by only one vote.

Also during the Tuesday afternoon session, Conference accepted the report of the Study Committee on the Kingdom. After a few minor corrections, a resolution to replace the current Article 27: "The Millennium" with a new article entitled "The Kingdom of God" was passed at first reading. Both articles, according to our rules for changes in the Articles of Faith, will now be presented to the churches who will have until the 131st BFC Conference (24 months) to approve or disapprove.

No business was conducted during the Tuesday evening session. Pastor Arcieri led in worship once again, this time on the theme of Christ the Foundation. Dr. Getz preached a message entitled, "Producing a Healthy Church." He encouraged everyone to focus on three experiences which produce a healthy church: a vital learning experience with the Word of God, a vital relational experience with one another and with God, and a vital corporate and personal witness experience.

After a short break, a service of ordination was held for three men approved for ordination during the Monday afternoon session. Each man gave his testimony, and then a charge was given to them by Pastor Carl J. Fischer, Jr. reminding them of the seriousness of their calling. A transcript of each testimony will be printed in a future edition of BFC OneVoice.

On Wednesday, Pastor Arcieri led in a final time of worship. Dr. Getz preached on the topic of "Building Up One Another"

After a brief break, Conference considered a disagreement between the Ministerial Credentials Committee and one of our churches. Discussion continued until after lunch. Because of the sensitive nature of the issue, Moderator Grossman called on Pastor William G. Schlonecker to lead Conference in prayer for the Lord's guidance. The Conference finally referred the disagreement to the Conference Judicatory for review and, hopefully, resolution. This will be the first time the Conference Judicatory has been called into service during its twenty-seven year existence and not really for its intended purpose. Another prayer was offered for continued wisdom and guidance.

Next, the Report of the Study Committee on the Biblical Principles for Living was received. The committee requested a straw poll to determine which of the ten issues they presented Conference was most interested in examining. The committee was reappointed to continue their work. This was the first report by this committee which was set up to suggest changes and updates to the Biblical Principles for Living every seven years.

The day was concluded by considering unfinished business and appointing men to various committees and positions, and a closing prayer was offered.

Additional information about the 129th BFC Conference including the report book, study committee reports, and official minutes are available at [www.bfc.org](http://www.bfc.org).

The 129th BFC Conference thanks Pinebrook Bible Conference for its hospitality, the men who served in various capacities for their faithfulness, and, most importantly, the Lord for his guidance during every session. By God's grace, may we return next year having made progress in making disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ to His honor and glory.

R. Edward Snyder-Ritter,  
Conference Reporter

## INTERIM SR PASTOR REPORT

Elders Meeting – May 21, 2012

***Our Vision:*** To introduce people to Jesus Christ and help them become devoted followers of him!

### Goals accomplished last month and continuing into this month:

1. **Preaching and Teaching** – People are responding to the Four Pillars Series, praise God. More people are attending prayer meeting and 1 family in particular is praying in room 5 during 2<sup>nd</sup> service. People have commented that they came to the NDP because of the sermon. I am eager to begin this week's sermon on listening to God's voice through the preaching and teaching of His Word. I've had the privilege of preaching the gospel at one funeral and two weddings during the past month. I always want to take the opportunity to preach the gospel, and praise God, follow up conversations have happened.

Finished my preaching practicum course and almost done with my ministry practicum course. Once completed, I will need to complete 8 more credits for my Masters in Theological Studies.

2. **Shepherding** – Working with 1 couple for pre-marital counseling; another for depression. Working on a heavy issue that deals with leadership in another church. On-going meeting with a few men. Continue doing the weekly prayer sheet and attend prayer meeting as time allows. Contacting members and new visitors along with Shawn Van Doren. Attended Bridge Ministry 2 times.
3. **Overall Leadership** – Attended the Together For the Gospel Conference in KY, Had an impromptu elder board meeting on the 21<sup>st</sup> of April to prepare for the BFC Annual Conference which was held on April 23, 24, 25. Led pastoral and staff meetings (one meeting was our annual staff appreciate breakfast). Attended BFC Board of Church Health Meeting (nominated as Vice Chair of the committee).

### Goals for upcoming weeks:

- Proclaiming the Word of God faithfully, accurately, and passionately!  
Determine short term preaching plans pending SR Pastor transition.  
Any suggestions for our next series?
- Spending time with the Strunks over Memorial Day
- Keep plugging away with seminary studies!

## POD (Pastor of Discipleship) Cast – Apr/May 2012

Praise the Lord for His presence as I've been personally studying the book of Isaiah. Realizing that the prophet is forth telling the judgment of God upon Israel's consistently sinful condition, it would leave one to believe that the situation is hopeless. Yet in the midst of Isaiah prophecy of punishment, we read these amazing words:

*“But now thus says the LORD, he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel: “Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine.”<sup>2</sup> When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you.<sup>3</sup> For I am the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior.” (Is 43:1–3 ESV)*

How amazing is our God! Whether we are being tried for growth or disciplined for sin through deep waters or flame, God has chosen to go through it with us...why? Because, He says, “I have called you by name, you are mine.” He never loses sight of those who are His, nor does He ever forget the plan He has for them...so take courage, for He has promised, “I will never leave you nor forsake you.” (Heb 13:5 ESV)

With that in mind, here is a quick summary of some of the ministry opportunities from April/May:

### Kids Crossing

- **Curriculum Evaluation:** From our meeting on April 16, the Kid's Crossing leadership team has made the decision to continue with the present curriculum and evaluate it for another year, since many have been able to make it work in all the classes.
- **Cross Time Sunday School:** Praise the Lord, we now have a full complement of teachers and helpers. Laura Sommons and Pam Capaldi have volunteered to take the 4 yr.-olds - kindergarten class (even months) beginning in June 2012. How mighty is our God!
- **Early Childhood (2&3 year-olds):** We are in the process of reinstating the toddler class for the 2<sup>nd</sup> service. A number of volunteers have come forward to help and Anne Christiansen is working out the details.
- **Children's Church:** No change.
- **Wednesday Evening Programs:** The program functioned well this year in teaching the biblical theme of the week in a “fun” way. This past Wednesday evening (5/16) was our closing program for the summer and was exciting and well attended. I want to personally thank Shawn and Jennifer Van Doren for their leadership in the elementary program for the past two years. Though we are losing them to pursue other ministries, they have left the program in the capable hands of Dave and Kristen Lissy. I would also like to thank Megan Gascho and her team for the great job done in the pre-school program. We are looking forward to next year with a greater emphasis on parent involvement, especially dads in the boys' small groups.
- **Parent Meeting (April 29):** We were privileged to host a very well attended parent meeting. It was refreshing to dialog back in forth between information and concerns about all the children's ministries. I believe we came away from the meeting with some action items and mutual encouragement as we partner with these parents toward the spiritual growth of their children.

### Student Ministry

- See Pastor Mark's report.

### Adult Ministry

- **Adult Electives:** We began Part I of our summertime Adult electives on May 6. The lineup is as follows:
  - Peter: A Fragile Stone (Mike Capaldi)
  - The Life of Paul (Scott Holwick)

- Lives of the Kings of Israel (Dick Bickings)
- Men's Ministry:
  - **Bethel Series:** We completed the OT study on the week of April 23, in both our Wednesday evening (Jason Lee), and Saturday mourning (Dick Bickings) classes, and ended it with a class-to-class Saturday morning competition (5/2). This was a great way to fellowship together and call to remembrance those things we had learned. We are looking forward to the fall when we will begin the NT study.
  - **BattleZone™:** There is one group in full swing with another starting this coming summer (Andy Brimer may comment).
  - **Men's Bible Studies:**
    - Wednesday evenings from 7:00 PM – 9:00 PM, summer hiatus.
    - Saturday mornings from 8:00 AM – 10:00 AM, summer hiatus.
    - Thursday mornings from 6:15 AM – 7:30 AM, Dave VanWinkle facilitates this study along with several other men. They will be completing their study on David on 5/31, and will begin a new study called "Gospel in Life" by Timothy Keller on 6/14.
- **Women's Ministry:** Notes from Laura Sommons...
  - We have finished the James study and had an overwhelming response to what the women took away from this study. I am very thankful for the chance to study this book and lead the women in some great discussion.
  - Bible Studies in the fall seem to already be in place. I am very excited about starting the Colossians study in the fall as well. Summer studies will be starting the week of June 14<sup>th</sup> and meet every Thursday here at the church and Tuesdays at Pat Lofthouse's home. Both studies are by Women of Faith and they will be a lighter study after most of us have either completed Bethel or James.
  - Our next Soup/Salad/Soul food night will be on June 18<sup>th</sup> and Sandy Barron will be speaking on how the Lord filled her cup during her illness. We will be memorizing 2 Corinthians 12:9,10.
  - Lancaster bus trip was a great day, even though we had only 8 ladies attend. We were very glad to see Joyce Achey out for this and she had a great day.
  - We will be hosting the She Leads Conference here on July 14<sup>th</sup> and all women on the leadership team are attending with me.
  - MOPS: It is almost completed!! Our steering team is only missing a Moppets coordinator and Alyssa Nye is very excited about leading us into the fall.
  - I had the privilege to speak at Mops and two other Mother Daughter banquets this May. I really enjoyed being able to share what God had placed on my heart. Many women seemed to respond to what God had me bring. It was so humbling and so invigorating at the same time.
  - I continue to meet with many women one on one, discipling and encouraging them in their walk. This is my favorite part of this job. I thank you again for the chance to minister here.

### Discipleship Support

- **Kinship:** Kinship Groups continue to function well and have been a great blessing to those who attend.
- **Membership Class:** I was privileged to have completed the membership class with 9 in attendance...I am now scheduling 7 membership interviews as a result.

**Other:**

- Continue to meet with one man to counsel and encourage.
- Preached on Prayer
- Completed Adult Elective's class on Church History and began teaching a class on the Kings of Israel (5/6).
- Completed pre-marital counseling for a couple that I will marry in June 2012.
- Continued and completed heading up the 1<sup>1/2</sup> - 2<sup>1/2</sup> year-olds MOPPETS class every other Thursday for MOPS. It was an honor to work alongside my 3 gifted junior leaders
- Continued course work for my AP410 Apologetics class as time permits.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dick Bickings,

Pastor of Discipleship

Student Ministries Report - April 2012

### **1 John 1:1-4**

**That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we looked upon and have touched with our hands, concerning the word of life— the life was made manifest, and we have seen it, and testify to it and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was made manifest to us— that which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ. And we are writing these things so that our joy may be complete.**

I recently read an article about one of the factors that is contributing to the "slow fade" of twenty-somethings. - a lack of relationship.

Do our students understand that we can have a vibrant relationship with the Almighty God of the universe? Despite our monumental sin, this holy God has made a way through His only Son - and we can actually walk and talk with God.

It is one thing to go to church and become well versed in Biblical doctrine (and I think doctrine is very important!). It is another thing to **experience** what it means to know God. Could it be true that many of our young people who walk away from the faith do so because it was never real for them; because they don't know God intimately? I think so.

1 John starts off with the apostle sharing his experience of knowing Jesus Christ intimately - and then the purpose for his letter - that the readers (including us), might have fellowship with God and other believers. It's all about relationship.

And so one of the things we hope to do in student ministry is give teens the opportunity to experience Christ. We also believe it is important to give students the opportunity to share about their relationship with God - with hopes that this will help our students understand what it means to have fellowship with God.

While the solution to the problem of the "slow fade" is not a simple one, one thing is for sure - we must show students what it means to walk and talk with Jesus. It doesn't get much simpler or more important than that.

### **Teaching**

- **Middle School**  
We have been teaching through a series on Loving God and following Jesus..
- **High School**  
We are still working our way through the book of Nehemiah, which has been enjoyable.
- **Sunday School**  
We are still teaching through Faithweaver, and Tom Galloway has been helping me on

occasion with the high school students. Suzi Hardy and my wife continue to teach the middle school girls, while Swannie has the middle school boys.

### Campus Ministry

- Attended the FCA "Night of Champs" at Lehigh University. It was neat to become a little more familiar with the Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA), and observe their ministry that night. I especially enjoyed meeting a couple of the students who are there at Lehigh and are ministering.
- The youth groups of the Lehigh Valley are planning a campus ministry in Spring of 2013, which will involve an assemble in the public schools and then an outreach held at the school at night which will be evangelistic in nature and which the students will do a lot of the ground work before and after. This will be a tremendous opportunity for our students to reach their peers. This ministry is called "The Seven Project."

### Shepherding

- Met with a student to challenge him spiritually
- Met with a student to talk about worldview and some things he is studying in public school
- Meeting weekly with a student to disciple him and study through the Book of Ezekiel
- Still meeting weekly with a youth dad who has recently made a profession of faith in Jesus Christ! I rejoice in the work God is doing in his life.
- Met with youth parents who were struggling as far as college decisions for their child. We had very good discussion as we sought the Lord's will in this matter.

### Staff

We will be meeting this week for staff meetings, and we will discuss summer plans.

### Activities

- **Guadeloupe Missions Team Car Wash**  
God blessed us with a beautiful day, and we had non-stop cars. It was a good opportunity for our missions team to bond, and it was a good opportunity to be a blessing to some in the community, as well as let the community know what our students are doing to serve.
- **College Transition Seminar**  
I went to this with a youth worker, a parent, and one student. It was an excellent seminar which I believe really helps to prepare students or the transition into college. I plan to take all the graduating seniors next year.
- **Invert RWR**  
We had a great time serving together at Pinebrook. The students worked really hard, and we had some great discussions on spiritual gifts. The students filled out spiritual gift surveys, and then we discussed the implications of their results - how they could serve within the body of Christ.

### Other



- Plans are being made with Pastor Keith Strunk for our Cape May Missions Trip. We have about 16 who will be going on this trip. Our first training meeting is coming up on the 20th of this month.
- Continue to mentor another youth pastor in the area.
- Met with the local youth pastors for our monthly meeting.
- Met with BFC youth pastors for our monthly meeting.
- Have just come on the BFC Board of Youth and Young Adults. Our first meeting is June 18th.
- Participated in Annual Conference as a page. My goal is to be voting at next year's conference. :-)

Respectfully Submitted,

Mark Culton