

LEADERSHIP UPDATE of the Southeast Region

Volume 7, Issue 3

March 2012

Pastors: Please distribute to your delegates, leaders & congregation

SPRING TRAINING

By all accounts, it's been a fairly mild winter (stateside anyway). Although folks from up north don't need to make the long trek to Florida this spring just to thaw out, they are still coming and they are on a mission. They are headed to one of fifteen major league baseball Spring Training Camps, to support their team and cheer on their favorite players.

While fans sit and soak in the sun, the players stretch, strain, struggle & sweat. Even the most talented veteran player knows that annually it is important to revisit the fundamentals of the game, to re-calibrate their bodies for the coming season of play, and to ditch their off-season independence for an in-season team player mindset. The goals of the team for the new season are galvanized in their minds during this time— be it to improve upon last year's record, win their division, win their league pennant, or to play in the World Series. While spring training isn't comfortable or easy for the players, they know that it is a necessity if they want to be at their personal best and to be unified as a team before they face their first opponent.

As we enter March, I suppose there are a number of similarities that might be drawn between Spring Training and Lent. Here are just a few I've been thinking about:

- We each need some "time outs" built into our lives when we can more intentionally step back from the daily routine to reflect, replenish and re-focus.
- Is there a "spiritual fundamental" in your life that has been neglected or needs sharpening – are you connecting with God in your times of prayer? Do you need to try a new approach to reading God's Word? How is your health? Your relationships with family members? Your witness to neighbors and co-workers? Your service and giving?
- Do you need one-on-one coaching to grow past a detrimental habit, attitude or hurt that is inhibiting your growth as a believer? What about a supportive network – do you have a small group you can go to with anything and be real with them? How many others could approach you in that same way?
- And what about your "goals," personally and as a church in this new year – have you recently taken time to come before God with no agenda other than to give Him space to reveal Himself to you, and for you to make yourself available to Him?

As Spring Training begins, the players realize that it's not about gathering in the clubhouse to watch highlights from past seasons, nor enjoying each other's company in the dugout. No, they know it's time to focus upon the present season and to utilize every player and resource for maximum impact to move toward a preferred future, one play and one game at a time.

May this Lenten season be a time where you prepare both personally and as congregations, so that you are ready and able to take full advantage of the opportunities God will place before you.

Supt. Darrel Riley

So take a new grip with your tired hands, stand firm on your shaky legs, and mark out a straight, smooth path for your feet, so that those who follow you . . . will become strong. Heb 12:12 LB

LENTEN IDEAS that COST NOTHING but can CHANGE EVERYTHING:

PASTORS: Here are some creative ideas for enriching your Sunday Lenten services:

- Challenge your congregation to all **read one of the Gospels** – say Mark - during Lent; preach weekly from that Gospel. (Youth lessons and at-home family devotions can follow this also)
- Preach a Lenten series based upon 6 of **Jesus' followers**, or just one follower such as Peter; near the end of the service weekly stop and provide moments for everyone to turn to someone near them and **discuss a provided application question** about the situation the Biblical disciple faced that they also face in daily life
- Give your congregation a **weekly assignment** of how to apply the morning's sermon challenge; then have someone weekly give a **follow-up witness / report** of what happened.
- During the 6 weeks, **memorize together a portion of Scripture** - either one section of a chapter of the Bible, or 6 different key verses. Weekly recite it together; use hand motions.
- Have a **special prayer focus weekly** – possibly a different local community need or service organization weekly, that individuals in your congregation might partner with
- Have a **special offering project** during Lent to benefit a local community need

ON-LINE SNEAK PEEK into the CHURCH of the FUTURE: MARCH 1

Leadership Network has gathered some of the brightest practitioners of the Gospel in today's church who are between the ages of 13 – 19, and they have been asked to share what the church will need to look like to reach their generation. **groundSWELL** will provide an insightful peek into how upcoming young Christian leaders will shape the church of 2020 and beyond. Learn from their perspective, as you mentor your own local church young leaders. This FREE online conference is **Thurs, March 1, 1:00 – 4:00 Eastern**. Register at <http://groundswell.tv>

SETTING CAPTIVES FREE

Freedom Sunday – the first Sunday of Lent – people of faith around the world united during their worship services to rid the world of human trafficking and forced labor. Thanks to each church which took special moments to pray and give. Offerings can be sent directly to Freedom Sunday or ICCM. If your church was unable to participate on Feb. 26, you are encouraged to use materials provided to your pastor any Sunday of the year that is appropriate for you. Supplemental resources will also be provided at spring Annual Conference meetings.

SEND LENTEN GREETINGS to our SER MISSIONARIES:

Connect with our SER missionaries via recent newsletters, blogs and support information available on-line at www.fmcusa.org; scroll to the bottom of the home page and click on **FM World Missions**. From the FMWM home page, click on the **Missionaries** tab at the top, and missionaries will appear in alphabetical order. You can also contact via emails:

Josh & Susy Fajardo (Spain)
Mike & Maria Long (Greece)
Jack Munos (Haiti)
Rick & Cookie Ireland (Haiti)

JFajardoM@aol.com
Longmm@the.forthnet.gr
haiti4christjak@yahoo.com
rick.ireland@yahoo.com

PRAY FOR ONE ANOTHER

Pray all the time. Ask God for anything in line with the Holy Spirit's wishes. Plead with Him, reminding Him of your needs, and keep praying earnestly for all Christians everywhere. Eph 6:18 LB

March 2012	SOUTH ATLANTIC CONFERENCE	AL-GA or GCC CONFERENCE
Feb 26 – March 3	Kissimmee: Good Shepherd Pastor Donald Kaufmann (Nanette) Dkaufmannquizr1@yahoo.com	Deville LA: Martha's Chapel Pastor Monty Bower (Jo) mlbower@suddenlink.net
March 4 - 10	Kissimmee: El Buen Pastor CPP Pastor Efrain Hernandez (Rafaela) felahdz@gmail.com	Deville LA: New Hope Pastor Stanley Paulk (Jackie) Spaulk51@yahoo.com
March 11 - 17	Kissimmee: The Edge Pastor Claude Solano (Susan) alabastercn@yahoo.com	Jonesville LA: Oak Grove Pastor Emitte Belgard (Beverly) emittebelgard@hotmail.com
March 18 - 24	Lake Helen: Church on Wheels Pastors Montana & Joy Mormur montanajoy@embarqmail.com	Monterey LA: Acme Pastors Wade & Cindy Robinson Chapelchick37@gmail.com
March 25 - 31	Lakeland: Light & Life Pastor John Hendricks (Bobbie) revjohnE@juno.com	Olla LA: Antioch Under the supt; DL E. W. Nugent 485 Hwy 770 Olla LA 71465

INDIVIDUAL CONFERENCE NEWS GULF COAST CONFERENCE:

- Welcome to new pastor **Jim Williams, wife Cheryl, and daughter Jamie**, who moved from Jackson KY, where he was formerly the Dean of Students at Oakdale Academy. They drove through a snowstorm before safely arriving in Pineville. His ministry to Edgewood FMC begins March 1.
- **Buddy Boswell and wife Janice** are beginning their pastoral ministry at Provencal FMC. The church just paid off their building loan to the GCC, and they are now debt free. The old church building went to good use – the inmates from the prison in Natchitoches removed the church siding, then the fire dept. torched the building as a training exercise.

March 30 – 31: ANNUAL CONFERENCE is a PIVOTAL WEEKEND – BE THERE!

Location: Edgewood FMC 316 Edgewood Dr. Pineville LA 71360

The conference has set a goal of 100 in attendance – come and bring someone with you!

Friday night: Opening of Annual Conference and Ordination Service

6:00 – 7:00 Registration of Clergy & Delegates

7:00 – 8:45 Opening of Annual Conference & Ordination Service

8:45 – 9:30 Reception for Elder Stanley Paulk & new pastors

Saturday events: Continuation of Annual Conference

9:00 – 9:30 Registration of Clergy & Delegates, Coffee

Morning of music, ministry reports, messages by Bishop Roller & Supt Riley

Concluding luncheon; donations for Edgewood Youth to attend Agape at Greenville College in May

Sun, March 25: Jonesville: Oak Grove FMC Old Time Singing Convention, begins at 1:30.

Fri, April 6: Pineville: Edgewood Good Friday Service and Cake Auction

May 6 & 20: FAMILY CAMP Emphasis Sunday options

June 11 - 15: FAMILY CAMP Week at Church of God Campground in Pollock LA

INDIVIDUAL CONFERENCE NEWS AL-GA MISSION CONFERENCE:

- The Executive Team approved a partnership with **LAUNCH**, an interdenominational group that does assessment, coaching and training of church planters.
- Best wishes to **Pastor Greg & Jeanne Nitchman** as they will be moving to Adrian MI to plant a church with the S Michigan Conf. Congratulations to their daughter **Elizabeth** who is engaged to a FM young man from MI; they met when he came as part of a relief work team to clean up Pleasant Grove AL, following last year's devastating tornadoes. Join in prayer for the pastoral transition at **Fayetteville: Word of Hope**, as the Nitchmans prepare to leave.
- **Fri – Sun, March 2 - 4:** Supt. Darrel will be on-site for meetings at Fayetteville Friday evening, Elder interviews at Christ Community Church on Saturday, and worship services Sunday AM.

Saturday, May 5: ANNUAL CONFERENCE with Bishop David Roller

- If you've never come to Annual Conference before – then consider yourself invited!
- Pastors & Delegates – each bring a car filled with your present & future leaders
- Inspirational music, challenging messages, ministry updates, ordination service, etc.
- Plan on investing this day in our connections with one another and with God

SOUTH ATLANTIC CONFERENCE NEWS:

- Congratulations to new parents **Jonathan & Kristen Bergman** on the safe arrival of **Lucas**. The Bergmans returned from a two year VISA ministry in Butuan City, Philippines in October; they are currently living near family in Texas.
- **CMC Lucia Ester & husband Ryan Ramirez** welcome daughter Eliana; proud grandparents are Pastor Juan & Lucy Grullon at Orlando First, and Mirtha Ramirez at Hialeah.

Fri, March 2: Lehman Ministry Grants are due; send your applications to sharonjoy79@aol.com

Sat, March 17: A Half-Day Stephen Ministry Workshop will be hosted at Ocoee Oaks United Methodist Church, 201 S. Clarke Rd., Ocoee, FL 34761 Doors open at 8am, workshop 9:00am – 1:00pm. The cost is \$15/person or \$50/per congregation (4 or more). Stephen Ministry trains lay caregivers across the United States to provide high quality one-to-one Christian care to people who are experiencing various difficulties in life. Register by calling 314-428-2600 or www.stephenministry.org/workshop

Sat, March 24: Elders Interviews by SAC MEG Bd. at the Riley home in Orlando

Thu – Sat, March 29 – 31: Ladies Retreat at Clarion Hotel & Conf. Center in Tampa
Stay one night or two, but make sure to attend! Yvonne Roller will be the speaker
Bring items for the silent auction for missions.

Fri – Sat, April 27 – 28: Annual Conference at Lakeland: Light & Life FMC
It's our biggest gathering of the year - worship, celebration, inspiration, training!
Watch for fliers. If you're going to lodge in a hotel, make your reservations NOW!
Lakeland Park cabin & resident guest reservations will be available mid March.
For now, clear the calendar of those in your congregation so they can attend.