

Roodhouse FBC Dedicates Memorial Fellowship Hall

A dream of more than 50 years was realized on Sunday, March 31, 2019 with a dedication service at **Roodhouse First Baptist Church** for their new Memorial Fellowship Hall with former pastor **G.R. Phillips** as speaker.

Ground was broken last June for the 45 foot by 80 foot building located directly behind the church on property the church purchased more than 20 years ago. It was completed by January and the ceremony had originally been planned for then but the weather forced the cancellation.

Rev. Dale Wilfong opened the ceremony with a brief history of how the building came to be and thanked those who had a part in making this dream a reality with a special thanks to Max Barrow who really spearheaded the project.

After estimates from building companies were too costly, the church decided to hire local contractors to build the plan the church building committee decided on. That brought the cost down from more than \$400,000 to \$250,000.

The building has been completely paid off thanks to the many generous donations received and memorials given over the years toward the project. Pastor Wilfong said that the fact that it is already paid for is a testament to the congregation both past and present.

"This new building sends a message of hope, and it is not a hope that Roodhouse will one day return to what it was in 1930," Phillips said.

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"Rather it is a hope that the citizens of Roodhouse will find a community of hope among themselves nurtured by the community of faith of which you are a part." It will also allow more people in the community to participate and fellowship with others. "It is because of God that we are able to be here today and have this facility and make it available to our community," Pastor Wilfong said.

Mainstream Contact Information

Send your stories of mission and ministry. Please also send the names of new members to:

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GRR Website

Thank you for the opportunity to serve you as webmaster since 2002. An interim webmaster will soon be composing, editing, and posting updates as Linda and I move to be near our grandchildren in Indianapolis.

Richard Ricks



The Mainstream

News of Ministry and Mission

*Be a vessel that God can pour his love through.
Let It Flow*

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2019 Calendar

May:

31 - June 2: **GRR ABWM and AB Girls Conference**
Radison Hotel & Conference
Normal, IL

June:

21 - 23: **ABCUSA Biennial Mission Summit**
Virginia Beach, VA

28 - 29: **ABMen's Summer Gathering**
FBC Edwardsville, IL

July:

20: **Area V Annual Meeting**
Bethel Baptist Church
Columbia, MO

August:

6 - 9: **75th Anniversary Conference**
American Baptist Assembly,
Green Lake, WI

October:

19: **Area IV Annual Meeting**

26: **Professional Boundaries Course**
GRR Conference Center

Church Revitization Initiative Update for May 2019

Pastors and churches are making progress in their revitalization efforts. Here are a few of the things I see happening.

First of all, I see what Lee Kricher said in his book **For a New Generation** which is a mindset change. There is starting to be a mindset change in our churches. Praise God! I have talked with several pastors and leadership teams and they see the real need of mindset changes. The biggest change is from an inward focus to an outward focus. Many pastors and leadership teams used Palm Sunday and Resurrection Sunday as emphasis with excellent results. Those pastors that I have talked to had some of the best, if not the best, Easter attendance in years. Why? Because the church family made it a point to invite family and friends to Easter Worship and it worked. One CRI church had an Invite One Sunday. The church averages around 20. On that Sunday they had 43. Praise God! The way Invite One works is for each person in your congregation to invite at least one person to worship. In churches that I have visited, I sense that people have made up their minds to allow God to take control. Please continue to pray for the churches and the pastors of CRI as they continue in the process of church revitalization.

Wally Holt - Coordinator



A Word From Paul Gibson
ABCGRR
Executive Minister

A BUSY, BUT GREAT SUNDAY!

I started the morning by going to **FBC of Carrolton** to preach on the Sunday before their new pastor arrives. They are a great group of people who will welcome their new pastor with great love and support. Next, I stopped in at **Central Baptist in Springfield** just as they were finishing their service and was I glad that I did. **Kyle and Debby Witmer were the global servant guests that day, and not only did I get to see them, but I got to meet all their kids, Hanna, Brennan, Julia, and Emma.** What a great team, serving God in **Northern Thailand.** But there is more. It just so happened that **Katie Longkumer** was also there, making a short trip back to the states from India to spend a little time with her mom. Katie and Taku are serving in India. Then on to **FBC of Sullivan** to attend the **reception for Gene Godfrey's retirement.** It was wonderful to see folks of the church and community share their love with Gene, Jackie, and family. It was also good to meet Gene's son, Vince, who was the guest speaker. Vince is a music minister at a church in Illinois. But the day was not over yet. I then went home to spend the rest of the afternoon and evening with Melissa, our daughter Emily, and her husband Adam, who were spending a few days with us in the middle of their move from Nashville to Minneapolis.

A full day in so many ways. Busy, but oh so good.

As I began the day I reminded myself of what I am to be about. **Be rightly related to God and find your joy there, then out of you will flow rivers of living water.** Be a vessel that God can pour His love through. I think that phrase applies to every church, every pastor, and every person.

PRAY-- For our ABCUSA Biennial happening at the end of June in Virginia Beach.

For Black Hawk Camp and Lake Springfield Baptist Camp as they begin their very important summer ministries.

For churches and pastors, as summer is a time of change for many.

For ABMen as they have their annual gathering at the end of June.

For you and your family, that you can have some time this summer to be together and enjoy one another.

That you might be rightly related to God and find your joy there, then out of you will flow rivers of living water. Be a vessel that God can pour His love through.



Mission Need Met!

Rev Clark Irwin of FBC Carthage was one of 20 from the GRR who went on a mission trip to Costa Rica in March with Dr John Grisham, the GRR Costa Rica Partnership Liaison. The following is the story he shared of what happened because of this trip.

Less than 48 hours into the trip we were introduced to **Rev. Sonia Solis** who serves at a church in Leon Trece, near downtown San Jose. It is a terrific ministry, working with 50-60 kids on Saturday mornings. On the Saturday we were visiting, we were informed that the church is being required to add handicap accessibility to the second floor. I later learned that that the estimated cost for the elevator/lift was somewhere in the neighborhood of \$5,000. Anyone could look at this situation and realize they had no way of paying even a small percentage of this.

I felt compelled to do something right away. Perhaps it was the kids, who were adorable. Perhaps it was Sonia, who was very persuasive. But one thing that really got to me was the fact that my own church was in the middle of a renovation project. FBC of Carthage, IL has steps at one of our 4 entrances that needs repair. We are ready to spend a great deal of money on this. The steps need repair, but then again, it wasn't like the city was going to shut us down if we delayed the project.

When I returned home, I shared the need at Leon Trece. For us to fix our stairs is no sin...they need repair and it is okay to maintain our building. It would be a sin, however, if we make the cosmetic changes to our church and ignore the plight of another church. Another church that may

shut down if the problem isn't fixed. "If we ignore this, we are no different than the priest and the Levite who walked by the injured man in the story of the Good Samaritan" was how I illustrated it in a sermon.

FBC didn't set an official goal; we just took up an offering on May 5, 2019, and waited to see what kind of response we would get. To put things in perspective our attendance on that day was 72. The special offering for the elevator was \$5,845. This was more than enough to get the need met, even enough to buy a \$600 water tank for another church in need.

According to Google, a mega-church has an average attendance of 2,000. We may be 1,928 people short of that, but I think that definition misses the mark. A church with a heart for missions and a willingness to help complete strangers 3,000 miles away: that is a megachurch!

Spanish English Ministry Studies Holds Graduation

On May 18 the fifth graduation of the SEMS program, (Spanish English Ministry Studies).was held. Sixteen students from Chicago, Elgin and neighboring cities graduated. Rev. Benjamin Manso, pastor of Iglesia Misionera Shalom in Aurora and Primera Iglesia Bautista Hispana in Elgin, received the Outstanding Achievement Award for more than 10 years as the Volunteer Coordinator of the SEMS program that he founded in 2009 with Dr. Jerry Cain, past president of Judson University. Pastor Susana Sierra-Manso, the master of ceremony, also graduated from SEMS and AME.