

# HERSHEY FREE PRESS

NEWSLETTER OF THE EVANGELICAL FREE CHURCH OF HERSHEY

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## 40 DAYS OF PRAYER

### ANTICIPATE

#### By Darice Baird

Our current sermon series on the book of Acts focuses on God's ongoing redemptive mission as revealed in the life of the early church. As part of the sermon series, the church will be launching "40 Days of Prayer: Anticipate" to coincide with the 40-day season of Lent.

"One of the ways in which we participate in God's ongoing redemptive mission is through prayer," Pastor George Davis, senior pastor, explained.

The 40-day prayer emphasis will challenge everyone in our congregation to enter into God's mission by individually praying for three to five people in our lives who need to experience the redemptive love of God. The challenge to pray consistently for 40 days will serve two purposes. First, it will help develop the daily practice of prayer in our lives in an intentional way. Second, it will help us to look beyond ourselves when we pray, instead of focusing exclusively on our needs.

Although the focus of our prayer time will be on the people around us, in the process of praying for others we are often the ones who are changed. "As you are praying for other people I think that it changes the way you interact with them," Pastor George says.

Here are some of the tools that will help us maintain our focus on prayer for 40 days.

- **On February 26** there will be an opportunity to make a public commitment to prayer. The goal of public commitment is to provide a way for the entire church com-

munity to come together as one body to participate in this challenge.

- **Adult devotionals** that focus on prayer will be delivered by e-mail and will be available for download from the website.
- **Family devotionals** will be included in the Sunday bulletin.
- **Visual reminders** will be placed around the church throughout the 40 days.
- **Daily reminders to pray** will be posted on Facebook and sent to Twitter account holders who follow "HersheyFree."
- **Evangelism training** will take place in all Adult Education Fellowship classes on Sundays, March 25 and April 1.

In anticipation of the 40 days of prayer there are some things that you can be doing to prepare yourself for this challenge. First, begin thinking about people in your sphere of influence who need to experience the transforming power of Christ in their lives. Second, start praying now and ask God to open your heart to what he wants to accomplish through this process.

We are calling April 1 "Response Sunday." That's when we will hear about the results of our prayers from some members of the congregation. On that Sunday Pastor George will preach an evangelistic message. Invite some of the people you have been praying for to join you at church that Sunday.

Start asking God to prepare your heart to participate.



# Reflections

## Reflections

By Pastor George Davis  
senior pastor

Several weeks before my wedding, a friend of mine asked me if I had any “last minute jitters.” In case I did, he passed along this advice: “remember, if you wait until you are absolutely ready – you will never get married!”

A year and a half later, he told me that he wanted to update his advice. So he said, “remember, if you wait until you are absolutely ready – you will never have children!”

Looking back, he was right. My journey as a husband and father has included surprising twists and turns; at times, I didn’t feel prepared for what lay ahead. Nonetheless, throughout this journey, God has been faithful all along the way.

In a similar way, as you study the book of Acts, it’s clear that these early followers of Christ constantly found themselves in unexpected situations and circumstances. At moments, they had to wonder if they were “in over their heads.” Yet, in situation after situation, we learn that God is faithful to his promises. Consequently, despite the limitations and faults of these early Christian followers, they were participants in something bigger than themselves—God’s ongoing redemptive mission.

Of course, in reading Acts, it’s easy to say “that was then—this is now,” as if somehow God is no longer at work in powerful ways. Luke, however, doesn’t give us that option. He writes this narrative not simply for us to revel in the past, but also for us to be part of the mission’s ongoing future.

Consequently, as we work our way through this book, we are going to engage God’s ongoing mission in a tangible way. We are calling this emphasis “40 Days of Prayer: Anticipate.” In the forty days leading up to Easter, I am asking you to join me in praying daily for 3-5 people in your life who need the transforming work of Jesus Christ.

As we pray, we will pray with a sense of anticipation, recognizing that God is still at work moving his mission forward, just as he did in the book of Acts. Likewise, as we pray, we need to be open to the opportunities God is giving us to live out the good news of Jesus Christ in our spheres of influence.

So, will you join me in this effort? With those early Christians, may we pray, “grant to your servants all boldness to speak your word” (Acts 4:29).

## Stories from a Previous Prayer Emphasis

At the church I served in Fargo, N.D., we had a similar type of prayer emphasis. Here are a couple of comments from individuals who participated:

*“The first year we had the 40 days of prayer, I put on my list each of my brothers and their families. My prayer for them was for God to meet their spiritual needs. The summer following, I was having lunch with one of my sisters-in-law. She told me about being frustrated with church and turning on the radio one Sunday to hear a*

*clear presentation concerning Jesus Christ. ‘Now I understand that you have to accept the gospel,’ she said. I asked her when that had happened – it had been during the 40 days of prayer...”*

*“I was thrilled to be a part of the 40 days of prayer. It was significant in a change in attitude in my relationship with my Dad’s wife as I prayed for her for 40 days...”*

# Come to the edge with Cathy Gannaway

© By Jane Suter

Cathy Gannaway will hit the ground running February 5 as the new director for children's ministries here at the Hershey Free Church - and boy, does she have big plans! Not just for our children, but for every single one of us who worship here. I had the great pleasure of interviewing her.

## **Tell us about your family.**

I have been married to my husband, Peter, for 40 years. Actually, we met through Campus Crusade for Christ. Peter is a minister and we have three grown children. Our home is in York.

## **Cathy, what age group falls under "Children's Ministry?"**

Birth through grade 5; but in the future I would like to expand that to include a pre-teen ministry.

## **What will be your first order of business?**

To change the image of what children's ministry is. I want it to be more than just Sunday school and child care. My vision is to concentrate on the power and purpose of God in every life. I intend to focus on the *way* we reach these children because I believe we can open them up to fully experiencing the Lord. It is a plan that centers on four core values.

## **Tell me about these four core values.**

The first is: A God-dependent ministry. By this I mean, we are God directed and empowered by the Holy Spirit.

The second core value is: Life on Life. Children need to feel we are invested in them. We can show them this by talking to them, not at them. We will accomplish this through the blessings of a professional leadership team and volunteer teachers in our congregation. It is exemplified in 2 Timothy 2:2, "The things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, entrust these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also."

The third core value I want to emphasize in the children's ministry is: Minister to the whole child. I want our children to cognitively *know* about God, behaviorally put God's word into practice, and mystically/spiritually experience God in their very soul.

The fourth core value is: Build a kingdom of God everywhere around the world.

## **Explain what you call, "The heart of the ministry."**

Oh yes! The heart of children's ministry is volunteers. This is where it gets really exciting! I would like to give our teach-

ers the summer off and run a summer camp utilizing volunteers from our congregation. It will be an opportunity for people of all ages and occupations to share with our children how being a Christian translates in the real world. This goes back to the "life on life" I mentioned earlier. Imagine a retiree or a heart surgeon or a mail carrier ministering to our youth about their individual passion and giving them real time examples of their faith walk? It is so powerful! Of course I

plan to pour myself into every volunteer who wants to take it on! I will also teach classes on how to craft a lesson using just the Bible and mentor anyone who asks for my help. I have seen, first hand, how life-changing it is for kids to engage in conversation with everyday believers!

## **What would people be surprised to know about you?**

Well, I am an award-winning watercolor artist and a garden fanatic.

## **What makes you happy?**

I would have to say, watching God work. I am constantly blown back by the amazing things He does!

## **If you could teach a child just one thing, what would it be?**

For very young children, I would like them to learn how to be comfortable being alone with God; to never feel awkward in God's presence. For older children, my wish is for them to be confident in their sense of destiny. As we read in Jeremiah 1:5, "Before

I formed you in the womb I knew you; before you were born I sanctified you; I ordained you a prophet to the nations." Just imagine how much easier high school (and life) would be if every child knew for a FACT that God has big plans for them. Imagine if they were so sure of this, that no one could tell them differently. Now that would change everything!

I closed my interview with Cathy (who I now adore, by the way) by asking her if she has a favorite quote. She told me this is the one that hangs in her office:

"'Come to the edge.' 'We can't. We're afraid.'  
'Come to the edge.' 'We can't. We will fall!'  
'Come to the edge.' And they came. And he pushed them. And they flew."

Guillaume Apollinaire



Cathy Gannaway

*Jane Suter, aka "plain jane," is an award-winning, syndicated columnist whose column appears in Central PA Parent magazine. She attends our church.*



Dr. Bruce Hinkle listens to a patient's heart in the clinic aboard the *Evangelista II*.

# Evangelism and Medicine on the River

## *A day in the life of our medical team in the Peruvian rainforest*

© By Dr. Jim Spertzel

**At 5 a.m.**, two days up the Ucayali River from Pucallpa, Peru, on the missionary boat *Evangelista II*, a group of 20 Shipibo Indian pastors and church leaders are already hard at work in their Orality classes. The classes are a two-week commitment, six times a year, to memorize 50 Bible stories word-for-word. The oral story-telling technique is used to share the gospel of Jesus Christ to more than 35,000 Shipibo Indians living along the river in this region of Peru.

**By 6 a.m.**, the sun is just rising. The large boat engine revs up and begins propelling the *Evangelista II* up river to the next village. The 2011 medical team from the Hershey Free Church is ready to set up the clinic.

The Hershey group of 15 is just one component of the team. The two other parts are the Shipibo Orality class and the team from the Missionary Church in Pucallpa, Peru. The Pucallpa team consists of the teaching staff for the Orality classes, a dentist, a nurse, the kitchen crew and boat support staff. More than 50 people are living and working together on the four-story river boat.

**At 7 a.m.**, the classes conclude their morning session and breakfast is served by two Peruvian ladies. It consists of rice, banana balls, juice and cereal. After breakfast, group devotions begin. Each day an individual from one of the "people groups" represented on the boat – Hershey, Pucallpa or the Shipibos – leads devotions. Today it is led by one of the Shipibo pastors. Until just a few years ago, the Shipibos did not feel comfortable leading the devotional time, but now embrace it as the Holy Spirit has worked in their lives to mature their spiritual insights and confidence.

"We take for granted all the resources we have to study the Bible. The Shipibos don't have them, but they cherish what opportunities they have to study God's Word," said Chris Miller, a member of the dental team.

Today, one of the pastors shares the Genesis account of creation. He recites the story by memory the way he learned it in his classes and then asks for three volunteers to do the same. One from each group rises to recite the story. Slightly humbled, the Hershey volunteer is not able to do it word for word, but the Shipibo volunteer does an exact recitation of the leader's earlier version, and the Pucallpa pastor is pretty close,

with some commentary. This illustrates the dedication of the students to get it right and be accountable to one another for the presentation of the Gospel. It moves many of the Hershey team to tears.

"At first I did not understand why he was having the three people repeat the story, but then I got it. That was how they learn the story in classes. It really moved me to hear how accurate they were in their recitation...truly humbling," said Dr. Bruce Hinkle, a member of the Hershey Free Church medical team.

**By 9 a.m.** we arrive in the next village and the teams set up. Each day the Shipibo pastors divide into three groups.

An evangelism team goes "door to door" in the village. "Door to door" is an exaggeration because most of the homes are floor and ceiling with no walls. They invite people to come onto the boat for medical attention and they share the gospel.

The water-filter team sets up filters made in Pucallpa and shipped on the *Evangelista*, and teaches families how to use and maintain the filters.

A triage team acts as Shipibo interpreters for the Hershey medical team and registers the patients as they board the boat. The Hershey team is organized by department: adult medical, pediatric medical, chiropractic, dental and eye glasses.

As the evangelistic team reaches one of the last homes in the village they encounter a 20-year-old man who is suffering from a number of physical ailments. This has left him discouraged. The team shares the hope that Jesus can give him and ask the man to accept Jesus as his rescuer and savior. The man does so and they pray together. Little do they know that outside his home an elderly "witch doctor" from the village is listening in on their conversation.

The "witch doctor" is very uneasy because he is getting old, weak and afraid for his life. He has spent his whole life putting curses on people and destroying people's lives in the village. He is afraid that villagers will begin seeking revenge for what he has done to them. So he enters the home and asks if this Jesus he was hearing about could protect him and forgive him for all he had done to people. The team is more than glad to introduce him to Jesus and his love and forgive-

ness. This is the first time that the team can remember seeing a “witch doctor” come to faith in Jesus. A great victory is won through the power of the Holy Spirit’s divine appointment this day in the village.

“We are lucky to be able to witness how God is working in this area of Peru; to see the birth of new churches, where there have never been churches before,” said Chris McIlhenney, a member of the eye glass team.

**By 5 p.m.**, the clinic day ends. The medical team has seen more than 150 patients. The evangelistic team has visited almost every home in the village. The water filter team has installed the allotted filters, but the dental team is still overwhelmed with patients and has to work until past 6 p.m. to finish their work.

After 5 p.m., team members that wish to, board a small “pecky-pecky” boat to find a nice area along the river to bathe and swim. It’s a nice way to end the day in the tropical heat. Unfortunately, this day a hungry fish decides to nip the little toe of a teammate, so their time is cut short by the unwelcome guest.

**At 6 p.m.**, dinner is served. Rice and chicken is the recurring item on the menu, taking on a variety of presentations. After dinner the Shipibos work in small groups or as a team on a Bible translation project. They have the New Testament translated into Shipibo, but not the Old Testament. Wycliffe Bible translators completed a rough draft of the Old Testament and asked this group of pastors to work on their own translation so it can be compared and revisions made before publication. The group works vigilantly during the two weeks on board the boat and completes the first chapter of Genesis. They will continue to work on the project when they return to their villages, coming back together in Pucallpa in early December. With the first written copy of Genesis 1 in hand they will be able to share more of the written Word, a great accomplishment for this group of relatively uneducated, spirit-led Shipibo Indians. This effort is the fruit of a church grounded in God’s Word and aware of the importance of having it to share the good news.

“I was so impressed with the Orality class members’ dedication; how hard they worked on the interpretation of Genesis 1. Even though I could not communicate with them without an interpreter, there was still a bond that formed between us,” said Bob Sattazahn, a nurse with the Hershey medical team.

**It is now 7 p.m.** and the Shipibo pastors are holding

an evangelistic meeting in the village. These programs were led by Americans in the beginning of the Hershey-Pucallpa partnership, but now are always conducted by the Shipibos, another testament to the growth of the Shipibo church and a great victory for God’s kingdom.

As the day concludes, the team enjoys the simple pleasure of popcorn and fellowship as they reflect on what God has done in just one day on the river; a day that might not have been as successful if Satan had his way. We had great opposition to our work and mission. On our first day, as we left port in Pucallpa, we were praising God for how he gave us smooth travel so far. We had great flights, smooth connections, and had arrived on the boat and departed on time, which rarely happens on these trips.

About an hour out of Pucallpa we were abruptly jarred and were almost knocked over by the sudden stopping of the boat. The river was unusually shallow because of lack of rain and we had run aground on a sand bar. The boat’s forward motion propelled the back-end around and capsized our canoe-like auxiliary boat, the “chalupa.” The Evangelista was temporarily grounded. It could not move forward, and the “chalupa” was rapidly sinking.

Three brave men, a 16-year-old Peruvian and two Shipibo pastors, jumped into the water to secure the “chalupa” to the Evangelista by a cable. Their attempts were unsuccessful and it continued to sink. The strong current took the boat and the three men out into the river and they drifted down river into deep waters. We had no other boat to send out for their rescue. The fatigued men were now almost out of sight.

As we were praying on the boat, the engine mechanic arrived on deck presenting a torn belt from the generator. Unrelated to our other problem, it had broken almost simultaneously with the grounding of the boat. Afterwards, we would reflect on how we felt this was a combined attack by Satan to stop our team from traveling up river because both the “chalupa” and the generator are vital parts of the functioning of the boat.

Later, the three men related that as their strength was almost spent treading water, a gas can popped up from under the “chalupa” and gave them a refuge to hang onto until we got the Evangelista back in the channel to rescue them. It was a great reunion when we finally reached them. This was a great victory over opposition, but only one of many that the Lord had for his servants, making a very successful trip up the Ucayali River possible. Praise God for his faithfulness!





After a hike at Mount Gretna, the girls enjoyed a spa treatment while their dads prepared a fondue meal. After the meal, Joy Lippert entertained with music and talked about dad-daughter relationships



## A Special Day for Dads & Daughters

By Paul Lankford  
communications intern

The “Dads and Daughters Day” at the Hershey Free Church was an event aimed at having fathers and daughters grow closer together.

“Dads loved doing something exciting and fun with their daughters without having to plan much themselves, since some are not really creative even though they desire to do these kinds of things often,” said Pastor Gary Lathrop, pastor for community life. So the Men’s Council planned a hike at

Mount Gretna, where the dads and daughters climbed the tower at Governor Dick and participated in a scavenger hunt together.

When they returned to the church, the dads prepared a special fondue meal for their daughters. Joy Lippert, a Christian singer, performed during dinner. After the meal, she talked about dads and daughters getting through the teen years together. These activities were enjoyable, and they opened up communication between the fathers and the daughters.

During the teen years, sometimes it can be difficult for dads to keep in contact with daughters while still trying to help them become independent at the same time. It is important to strengthen the relationship between fathers and daughters so that the lines of communication remain open. Pastor Gary said that dads “were also challenged to not just leave parenting to their wives when their daughters hit the teen years, which is easy to do.”

The girls really loved being pampered by having facials and hairstyling, and enjoyed being served the meal by their dads. “The girls also felt special having their dads cooking a great meal for them,” Pastor Gary said.

In today’s culture, fathers can be very busy with their jobs, causing them to have less time with their daughters. The Bible says that fathers are called to be the spiritual leaders in their families. This is a very important duty that men were reminded of when spending time with their daughters. The dads and daughters signed a resolution that Pastor Gary adopted from the movie, “Courageous.”

It was a great evening, and there was lots of positive feedback from the moms. The dads grew closer to their daughters, and the daughters grew closer to their dads.

# Retiring from the Mission Field But Not from Christian Service

© By Dolly Fankhanel

Hershey Free Church has long been supporting Patty Shenk and Butch and Shirley Hammond as missionaries. With their retirement from full-time missions at the end of 2011, we would like to recognize them for their service.

## Training Pastors and Counselors

**Patty Shenk** was teaching second grade in Central Dauphin School District when she took a year off to go to St Petersburg in 1995. After this experience, she expected to return for summers only but instead sensed God calling her to be a full-time missionary. In 1998 and 1999 she went to St Petersburg for six weeks each summer and then entered a program at Lancaster Bible College, graduating in 2001.

In April 2003, Patty arrived in Kursk Russia to serve with Jim and Lois McNeill who started the Trinity Equipping Center, a college for training local pastors and lay leaders. Working as an administrative assistant, one of her responsibilities was to prepare for visits from teachers from the Hershey Free Church. She handled student financial aid packages and edited support letters from Russian students to American sponsors.

Patty left Russia in June 2007, relocating to Kiev, Ukraine. She partnered with a couple who founded a Christian counseling ministry and was a teacher/trainer and a leader in this service open to the community. The program offered a two-year practicum for those with counseling education, such as pastors seeking counseling experience. She was also on the board of Hinkson Christian Academy, a school created for the children of missionaries, and mentored women in one-on-one relationships.

Settled back in Hershey after retirement from Reach Global in November 2011, Patty has the desire to become

involved in lay counseling for women through the church and would like to befriend a Russian-speaking person through the Home Away from Home ministry. Meanwhile she is experiencing community with family, friends, women's Bible study and community groups. When asked how God stretched her and what she took away from her ministries, without hesitation she emphasized "God was always with me and so faithful." She noted that whatever he wanted her to do he equipped her to do. The ability for the task was provided along with confidence and flexibility. Seeing that it was God doing all the work strengthened her faith.

## 37 Years in Austria

**Butch and Shirley Hammond** have served in Austria under TEAM for 37 years. Recently, their status changed to semi-retired – Christians never really retire from ministry.

While pastoring a church in Ocean Park, Washington, for two years, this couple sensed God's call on their lives. Their desire was to live beyond a life of earning money and purchasing possessions. They studied the German language from 1973 to 1976 and then conducted church planting from 1976 to



Butch and Shirley Hammond (left) with members of the English Language Camp team in Austria.



Patty Shenk (right) with two women taking the Christian counseling course.

1995. In 1995, they began working with nationals from two different churches to develop church leaders.

The rewards of service to them have been being used of the Lord to see various ones come to Christ and to see believers grow in their faith.

By 2003, approximately 25 percent of their assignment was to provide member care for TEAM missionaries. This is the work they continue in semi-retirement. They arrived back in Hershey in September 2011 and almost daily are involved in Skype calls to Spain and Austria as they continue to care for more than 40 TEAM missionaries. Both have master's degrees in counseling and human resources.

They are recognizing the need for a similar ministry in Austria among local church leaders and their wives and are trusting God to develop this as an avenue for much-needed open sharing. Spring and fall visits to these countries will be made to encourage, motivate, pray and help the nationals think outside of the box while offering possible resources. Presently they are adjusting to life in the states while praying about ministry within Hershey Free.

We want to thank Butch, Shirley and Patty for their commitment to the calling of God on their lives as they served abroad and continue at home.

Thanks to all who brought food on January 29 in response to our church-wide food bank drive. This is one of three locations where the bags were dropped off.



# A Year of Compassion Ministry

*Thousands of people were touched by your giving in 2011*

 By Tracy Lewis  
communications intern

We give thanks to God for providing, through his people, the finances, food and labor that allowed God to work through eight ministries under the umbrella of our Compassion Ministries in 2011.

## Food Bank

We ministered to a total of 1,680 families consisting of 4,968 individuals. Included were 2,056 children, 2,580 non-senior adults and 332 senior adults. We welcomed 299 new families consisting of 953 first-time users of the food bank. In addition to the food donations from the congregation, for which we are very thankful, we spent \$46,971.36 for food, which was 45 percent of the Compassion Ministries funds spent in 2011.

For the Thanksgiving holiday we supplied 10 hearty dinners for church members. These were prepared by the Living Life for Christ AEF class and delivered by our local Girl Scout Troop 2171. A total of 15 turkeys were donated by the congregation.

## Clothing Bank

Clothing items were given to 1,106 families consisting of 3,529 individuals. Our clothing bank helps military families, and in turn they help us. The 193rd Special Operations Wing Association held a clothing drive for us in 2011.

## Car Care Clinic

We serviced 43 vehicles free of charge in 2011. Labor and materials were donated by Landis Repairs on Waltonville Road.

## Financial Support

In these difficult economic times this ministry gave \$101,025.38 in 2011 to assist those in the congregation and community in need of financial help for prescription drugs, medical visits, utility bills and other necessary expenses.

## Christmas Packages for the Troops

We assisted the 193rd Association in sending 81 boxes filled with Christmas care packages to troops overseas. The shipping cost of \$721 was paid by the Association and the

Shellsville VFW. Our congregation donated 85 percent of the items. We also helped the 193rd personnel with financial support, financial counseling services, and through the food and clothing banks. They helped us in turn by staffing a food bank open house.

## Compassion Support

Our chore ministry supplied labor for home repairs, transportation, lawn care and other chores. We completed more than 36 jobs during 2011. Through this ministry, two electric wheelchairs were donated to people in the congregation, and we bought two other wheelchairs for use in the church and to loan to church members for short periods of time.

## Financial Counseling

We have 12 counselors and are training more. We only counsel people who attend the church or military personnel. Those outside the church who need financial counseling are referred to Crown Ministries. Currently, we are counseling about 36 families.

## Compassion Ministries Office

We have five dedicated volunteers in the church office who work directly with all the people who call in. They set appointments or give contact telephone numbers as needed for each ministry. They also keep our files updated.

Let's remember that God gave us the ability to minister to members of our congregation and our community. We give him all the praise.

## Food Bank Coverage Area Changes

Please note the upcoming change put in place by the deacon committee that takes effect on April 1, 2012. We will be ministering to the general public through the food bank only for the following zip codes: 17022, 17033, 17036, 17057 and 17078. Active attendees of the Hershey Free Church listed in the church database will be helped no matter where they live.