

CHURCH MOBILIZATION, EQUIPPING AND COMMUNICATIONS REPORT

Steve McNeil, Team Leader

During the 2013-2014 year the State Convention of Baptists in Indiana (SCBI) has been serving by providing camps, training opportunities, consultations and other help to mobilize and equip SCBI churches. Our strategy is to “connect, consult and coach churches in accomplishing the Acts 1:8 challenge.” The next pages briefly describe the team activity working with this purpose.

The Mobilization and Equipping team working with the team leader is made up of two part-time directors: Sarah Bohrer, Children’s Ministry Director, and Allison Kinion, WMU/Women’s Ministry Director; six regional strategists: Steve Blanchard, Garry Jones, Doug Jividen, Bobby Cox, John Horn, Mitch Whidden; and two administrative staff: Bev Olonoh and Sarah Wickersham.

There are many stories of changed lives through salvation, people called to ministry and congregations making the choice to adapt and change so that they can be involved with Jesus as He builds His church (Matthew 16:18).

Many churches around Indiana are seeing vibrant outreach realized, while others struggle to survive. The Mobilization and Equipping Team engages our associations and churches to be involved in our common mission (Matt. 28:18-20). Our team receives relevant training in order to answer the pertinent issues that face our churches. Our strategy is focused on one main priority: “to come alongside SCBI churches and leaders to help them accomplish the mission and vision of their particular church or association.”

Children’s Ministry

Sarah Bohrer, Director

Pure Girl is a weekend retreat at Highland Lakes Baptist Camp with the purpose of drawing moms and girls closer to one another and closer to God. This year at Pure Girl, Page Hughes, a pastor’s wife from Highview Baptist in Louisville, shared her heart with over 225 moms and girls. Teen girls from Hope Community, Brownsburg, shared about their mission trip to Russia and a group of teen girls from various Indiana churches joined to lead worship. One mom stated, “I loved hanging out with my girl, learning how to be a ‘mean mom.’ Every time I attend Pure Girl I get so encouraged to be loud and proud of my God!” Another beamed, “It meant so

much when my daughter wrote on her notecard that she could tell me anything. It was awesome to worship God with my daughter.” One girl affirmed, “I loved spending time with my mom and learning more about God.” Another girl commented, “I loved the fun and games and most of all learning about God and going wild for God!”

Man Camp was bursting at the seams this year with over 250 men and boys attending the weekend retreat at Highland Lakes Baptist Camp. Rob Tuma from Graceland Baptist Church, New Albany, challenged the boys and men to build each other up by investing their time and lives in one another. It was awe-inspiring to see men and boys singing praises to Jesus at the top of their lungs, lifting their hands to Him together in worship. One man proclaimed, “I look forward to this time with my son every year. We always leave closer to each other and looking to Jesus.” Another announced, “God was glorified through this opportunity and I was very impressed with the camp and organization.” It was an amazing weekend full of hatchet-throwing, bows and arrows, ropes course, tug of war, capture the flag, messy games and missions – all pointing to Jesus!

This year at Mission Adventure Camp (MAC) over 200 kids and counselors spent the week hearing from Jason Harris of First Baptist, Jasper, that they “Gotta Tell It!” Each night counselors led devotions with their kids, encouraging them to seek a deeper relationship with Christ. Throughout the week we saw 19 kids accept Christ for the first time. Many more said that they wanted to share Christ with their friends and family. Twelve indicated they felt called to be missionaries. At the closing worship service, one boy from Northside Baptist, Indianapolis, shared, “Jesus has changed my life and I can’t wait to tell my friends at school!” The camp missionary was a college-age student who had just returned from serving two years in China as a Journeyman. She shared her great passion for the Chinese people and plans to return as an IMB missionary. It was amazing to see God use MAC to move the hearts of kids, giving them a passion for people they have never met, praying and giving what little money they brought to missions. What a tremendous, transformative week!

JAM (Jesus, Arts and Music) Camp is different from any other camp SCBI does. Many of the kids and students (grades 3-12) who attend come every year and make friendships that last a lifetime. They are given the opportunity to choose from worship arts classes like guitar, keyboard, sound, drawing, drums, dance, interpretive movement, balloon art and singing. Classes are led by talented volunteers from Indiana churches who give their time, talents and

passion for the week of JAM. This year, Matt Higgins from Calvary Heights, Martinsville, served as camp pastor. Worship was led by Lexington Road from Boyce Bible College. There were three kids that accepted Christ for the first time and many more are being equipped each year to use their talents for the glory of God.

The 2014 reports from Vacation Bible School (VBS) are beginning to pour in from around the state. God has been on the move! Some churches have tried something different this year by doing backyard Bible clubs in several neighborhoods. Through this they have seen new people involved in ministry and have noticed kids attend who may not have come to the church building. While the numbers for 2014 are not complete, in 2013 there were 202 SCBI churches that reported having a VBS with 16,750 people in attendance. This is 1,800 fewer people than in 2012 and 2011. VBS is still one of the most evangelistic outreaches that a church can be involved in. Don't let your church miss out on this major opportunity to reach kids and families for Christ.

WMU/Women's Ministry

Allison Kinion, Director

What a wonderful year it has been for women and children in Indiana! The Lord has been at work. Through church, associational and state efforts, Indiana Baptists are breaking through the darkness and showing the light of Christ to others.

In August of 2013, associational missions leadership gathered at SCBI's Indianapolis office for annual training. They were equipped to lead others in their association to take up the mantle of missions discipleship and involvement through the vehicle of WMU in their local church. Associational WMU directors learned about their responsibilities on the associational and the state levels. They began planning for regional WMU training events for local church leaders.

At the November 2013 Ultimate Sleepover, teenage girls and their leaders gathered at Hope Community Church in Brownsburg to be encouraged and challenged. The theme was "BeYOUtiful," based on Psalm 139:14. The girls experienced exciting worship and messages as well as breakout classes on issues of importance to teenagers. They participated in a mission project by preparing 24 shoe box gifts. A special offering was taken, making it possible for several more shoebox gifts to be made for Samaritan Purse's Operation Christmas Child.

On February 7-8, 2014, over 800 women gathered at the Sheraton

Indianapolis Hotel & Suites for Transformed: Heart. Soul. Mind. Mission. The ladies' responses through evaluations indicated that the weekend challenged them to look at themselves and evaluate where they are in their relationship with Christ and what they were doing for the eternal Kingdom of God. The women cherished time spent together with ladies in their church family as well as time with other sisters in Christ. They reported becoming passionate about reaching others for Him. Twenty-eight women restored their relationship with Christ, while 62 women surrendered to the Lord's call to a specific form of service. The WMU Connection luncheon and Annual Meeting included both international and North American missionaries who spoke on the value of their family-like partnership with WMU. They particularly commented on their reliance on the faithful prayer support and consistent financial support through the Cooperative Program, Annie Armstrong Easter Offering and Lottie Moon Christmas Offering.

The Margaret E. Gillespie Endowment Fund for missions made a way for several to learn about missions as well as be a part of the Great Commission. A special offering taken during Transformed provided scholarships to help several children to attend Mission Adventure Camp. It supplied funds for youth to attend an associational retreat to be trained to use the Bible-storying cloths to share Christ. It also provided funding for special regional training for WMU leaders of SCBI churches.

Student Ministry

SCBI Team

SCBI has several ways to serve the student ministry needs of our churches. Although some churches are able to provide outstanding opportunities for their students, others find they can meet student ministry needs much better when they work in conjunction with other church groups. They find synergy in camps, training and other events offered by SCBI or the associations as they join together for common spiritual goals.

SCBI works with student leaders to plan, promote and staff two primary events: the Student Leadership Summit and Student Fusion, a week-long youth camp offered two times in the summer. The Student Leadership Summit was coordinated by Mark Deering from First Baptist Church of North Vernon. The purpose is to train students to be leaders among their peers in student ministry. The Student Fusion camps were coordinated by Shelby Smith from Hope Community Church in Brownsburg and Allison Kinion from Calvary Baptist in Greenfield. Fusion is designed to give students

an exciting camp experience and to lead students in salvation and discipleship. This year 11 students made first-time decisions to accept Christ, 14 restored broken relations with the Lord and 18 responded to the call to ministry or missions.

Regional Reports

Central Region

Steve Blanchard

Church Planting Catalyst for Mobilization and Equipping

I am very grateful that the North American Mission Board has helped us emphasize our vision for church planting through the *Send Indianapolis* initiative as part of the *Send North America* strategy. Please read the Church Planting report for the Central Region on pages 73-75. One of my specialties is in the area of Asian church planting. Please see page 75 for this report.

One of the trends that we have seen in the central region is existing churches with a similar concern to reach Indiana and the world expressing their desire to join SCBI through cooperative relationships. A major example is Castlevue Baptist Church led by Pastor Eric Bancroft. This church has already jumped into cooperative strategic ministry by sponsoring several of our church plants and providing other support for church planting. We are also in discussion with other established like-minded churches in the area who also desire to join with us in cooperative ministry.

Although church planting was my major emphasis this past year, I also assisted some of our established churches with a variety of growth activities including formal church assessments. Two churches conducted the Transformational Church assessment: New Palestine Bible Church and Calvary Baptist Church in Greenfield. Both churches used the results to spearhead new growth areas.

A primary partner in all these ministries has been the Crossroads Baptist Association which has grown to over 90 churches in Indianapolis and the surrounding counties.

Coaching was another area I enjoyed in helping to develop church leaders. One of the outgrowths of our first High Impact Leader Labs with 15 pastors and church planters was a coaching relationship with two of these: Roger Kinion and Nate Butler. I also coached church planters in my area including Anthony Gibbs, Kerry Jackson, Yosef Desta, and Hang Go Thang.

Another responsibility is leading the development of worship min-

istry across the state. One way I helped churches was to serve as an interim or guest worship leader. I was invited to do so at several churches including Hanover Baptist Church; Calvary Baptist Church, Greenfield; and First Baptist Church, Rockville.

We also take leadership in training people of all ages for worship ministry through camps, retreats and conferences. This included JAM (Jesus, Arts, and Music) Camp for older elementary children and Super JAM (with a combined total of 209 children, youth and adults); Exalt Him Student Worship Retreat which attracted 113 students and their adult leaders. At this writing we are planning a conference in Evansville called Tri-State Music Leaders' Conference which is targeting adult worship leaders in Indiana, Illinois and Kentucky. I also served as a conference leader at Cedarville (Ohio) University's Worship 424 Conference with over 1000 participants.

East Region

Bobby Cox

Church Planting Catalyst for Mobilization and Equipping

Greetings from the East region which is comprised of three associations: Eastern, South Central, and Whitewater. There are 55 churches throughout the region. SCBI's Church Mobilization and Equipping team was instrumental in promoting church health and growth in 2013-14. In this capacity I was able to work with the following churches:

- Central Baptist, Richmond, had their legacy service April 27, 2014. They have closed to the public in order to build and train their core group led by Troy Bishop and Western Avenue Baptist Church.
- Weston Baptist, North Vernon, Pastor Donnie Yates resigned the church effective May 2014. However, the church experienced enormous growth during the last year of his tenure. Two new Sunday School classes and children's church were started. They began with six in Sunday School and 15-20 in Sunday morning worship. In Pastor Yates' last service they had 26 in Sunday School and 100 in Sunday morning worship. During the last year of his pastorate there were 14 salvations and 12 baptisms. Weston continues to move forward slowly but steadily as they search for a new pastor.
- Ravinia Park Baptist, Richmond, and Pastor Jim Slaven participated in the vitalization process. The process was very effective and the church saw growth spiritually and numerically. Several have come to know Jesus as Savior and followed the Lord in believer's baptism. The church also grew financially. They experienced increased unity in all areas of church life. A new monthly

Thursday morning service at the church was implemented, as well as a monthly nursing home ministry at Abor Trace with 18-20 in attendance. The church has become more conscientious about building and grounds appearance. Pastor Slaven is very positive about the future of Ravinia Park, acknowledging the work yet to be done. He recognizes that Ravinia Park will be eternally thankful to Dr. Seagle and SCBI for supporting them through prayer, encouragement and funding during a crossroad in the life of the church. It has made a significant difference for the Kingdom's sake.

I have also worked, or am currently working, with four churches and their pastor search teams: First Baptist of Knightstown, First Southern of Sunman, Weston Baptist in North Vernon and Cornerstone Baptist (formerly Trinity) of Greensburg. While working with Cornerstone, where I also served as interim pastor the first six months of 2014, they were able to have enhanced adult Sunday School class. I was also able to mentor their deacon for discipleship on Wednesday night.

Three churches were represented at a personal evangelism conference for Eastern Indiana Baptist Association that I led. I also led "Why Churches Die: and the Life Cycle of the Church" for Whitewater Baptist Association (12-16 present) and "Seven Steps to Leadership Greatness" at First Baptist Church of Rising Sun (12-14 present).

As part of the High Impact Leader Lab (HILL) at Highland Lakes I am coaching two pastors who participated. I also coach three other pastors and two church planters and am mentoring one other person.

I am working in conjunction with WMU directors and my wife, Mary, in the continued development of the annual regional women's conference. I also currently work with regional associational youth leadership in developing new youth ministry opportunities.

The church planting for the East Region is on pages 76-77.

Thank you for your service to the state convention, your prayer for the work and your witness for the Savior in our state. Partners together (1 Corinthians 3:9), Bobby Cox

North Region

Doug Jividen

Church Planting Catalyst for Mobilization and Equipping

It has been a joy to be part of a team that passionately desires to serve Christ and His churches all over the great state of Indiana. I firmly believe God is at work in our state and it has been evidenced in the areas that I serve north of Indianapolis. Please see the report of church planting in the North Region on pages 77-78.

In our North Central Association we have seen God at work in many ways. This past year we have served the people of Warsaw as Warsaw Baptist Church was in search of a new pastor. During that time the church began coming back to life and focusing on the next steps of its history. At the same time God moved in Josh Goepfrich, who was on staff at Southside with Pastor Scott Smith. God chose to move him to reach a new people group as the pastor of Warsaw Baptist. This church is now growing and developing a powerful vision of the future.

Akron, Indiana, is a small town in Fulton County that has only one Southern Baptist church. This church, Fellowship Community, has struggled for many years. This year God brought a young man to help re-pot the church as a new plant with Jacob Wysong. It is a joy to walk with them through the potential of a restart. Their vision is to be a reproducing church as well.

In North Central we have focused on leadership development through Leader Labs. Pastors meet monthly to walk through leadership concepts. Out of these sessions we have seen concepts of leadership development transferred to the individual churches. It has been a powerful learning opportunity for us all as the church leadership directive has been strengthened.

We have had Disaster Relief training with teams built in North Central Association that are prepared to aid when tragedy strikes. They have served from Colorado to New York and are on the go almost every month.

In Miami Association we have seen the association come back to life in a powerful way. This past year our church in Tipton, which had struggled for years, came to a close. Then a new pastor was called, Sunnycrest Baptist of Marion came alongside as the Mother church and a date was set to relaunch the church. God has moved and new families are coming because these people chose to take a difficult but needed step towards new life. The association is deeply involved in partnering with these churches financially as well as

in prayer support.

We have seen First Baptist, Greentown, grow and move to a new building. Pastor Steve Johnson has done a wonderful work there.

Two struggling churches in Marion, Faith Baptist and Crosspoint, joined together to create a new ministry called The Pointe. God brought Dan Dye, a great young pastor, to lead this work and a strong church has emerged.

Miami Association has had powerful men's and women's conferences with a lasting impact in the churches. Disaster Relief training has been strong and many people have been certified and have served in call outs.

Miami Association is also strong in Leadership development. Pastors come together in Leader Labs on a monthly basis. This has strengthened the churches and pastors as well as lay people joining in the discussions.

Finally, Mt. Pisgah Missionary Baptist Church in Kokomo, an established church, joined our ranks this year. This church is led by Pastor Lonnie Anderson and is a powerful church in Kokomo. It will be a wonderfully impactful church for our state convention. The addition of this church as part of the Southern Baptist Convention and the Miami Association is a great step in reaching out to other African American ministries.

East Central Association has been moving in powerful ways this year especially in the church planting area.

The association hosted a great World Changers team in Muncie again this year with over 200 students serving this community. Several people were saved in the neighborhoods. Four were saved because their car broke down by one of the sites. Kingston Avenue Baptist in Anderson, led by Pastor Jamie Woodyard, and other churches in the association did ministries similar to World Changers in Anderson and other cities as an outreach of Jesus love to our cities.

Over all God has been at work in powerful ways and often I just am amazed that He allows me to be a part of this wonderful work. Thank you for your prayers and service for the King. Doug Jividen

Southwest Region Report John Horn, Church Planting Catalyst

See pages 72-73 for the church planting report for Southwest Region.

Church and Leader Development

In 2013-2014, I continued to meet regularly with the Southwestern Region's pastors, attended worship services in at least four of their churches per month, preached for their congregations as frequently as possible and served as interim pastor at Vann Avenue Baptist Church in Evansville. Five pastor search committees were resourced. Also five churches were led in visioning workshops and I helped them complete their visioning processes. I was used to lead a church through a Biblical peacemaking process to address congregational conflict. I assisted two churches with their Vacation Bible Schools, encouraged participation in SCBI's associational ministry partnership, partnered to begin and facilitate quarterly Leadership Labs and arranged leadership coaching for two pastors. Five churches which are products of our church planting efforts were helped in the credentialing process of joining the Southwestern Association. In addition, I assisted Southeastern Association with a re-visioning process to resource its churches more effectively. I gave a presentation about the Transformational Church Assessment Tool to three Southeastern churches to help them make greater Kingdom impact.

Penetrating Lostness

Partners in the Harvest Servant Evangelism Financial Assistance Request Forms were distributed to our churches to promote participation in the 2014 GPS emphasis. So far eleven SWIBA churches have used these funds to host servant evangelism projects in their communities (see the June 2014 SWIBA newsletter at www.swibaonline.com for stories from these projects).

Chaplains and volunteers have been trained to share the Gospel during times of crisis. They have been recruited to respond to call outs locally and nationally. (See the Disaster Relief Chaplaincy Report on page 86).

Southeast Region Report

Mitch Whidden

Church Planting Catalyst of Mobilization and Equipping

Debbie and I have been in a time of transition to southeastern Indiana. Since this is a new role for us, moving away from the pastorate to serving pastors and church planters has been quite an adjustment. We are enjoying living in southern Indiana and enjoying the

new role of church planting catalyst. We're getting to know many pastors in the area. We find that southeastern region is a great place to be, and one of the ways we witnessed this is by all of the long-term pastors like Pastor James Bullock who has been at Colgate Baptist in Clarksville for over 40 years and still going strong! In a day when pastors don't stay in one church very long most of our pastors have been in their churches for many years. We believe it is because southeastern Indiana is full of hometown churches that make you feel part of the community and we look forward to being part of God's work. See pages 78-79 for my church planting report.

West Region

Garry Jones

Church Planting Catalyst for Mobilization and Equipping

Church planting is an integral part of what God is doing in the Western Region. See pages 75-76 for the report.

Calvary Baptist of West Lafayette called a new pastor last year and has grown 90% in a year. They have transitioned to four worship services each Sunday and still have a problem - space. They have voted to move ahead with construction on their current property to have space for 750 people for worship. Construction should begin early 2015.

First Southern Baptist Church of Terre Haute relocated their ministry in March of this year to a newer facility approximately one and a half miles away. The new facility is on a major road in Terre Haute, with eighteen acres, and an eleven year old church building. Since relocating, attendance has increased 20% and God continues to bless the church with new ministry opportunities through the additional land and highly visible location. The new building also allows the church to minister more effectively to individuals with disabilities with everything being handicapped accessible and on one floor.

There have been several pastor group meetings to openly discuss topics that are pertinent to ministry in the local church. Some of the topics included ordination practices and membership information. These discussions have increased our fellowship and learning together. As a result of these discussions, some documents have been written and shared across associational churches and there has been fruit. One church decided to use the membership information document and hold classes for those attending but not yet members. At the end of the classes they were encouraged to com-

plete a “Request for Membership” form which asked them to tell how they came to know Christ as Savior. Two of the potential members could not tell how they came to know Christ and came under conviction that they were not saved. Both repented of their sins and asked Christ to save them. They were baptized shortly after and it has brought new life into the church body. As to ordination, several churches have adopted the process of a written and oral portion with the council, and then voting before setting the date for the ordination service. All of the churches and candidates using this process have appreciated it and will use it in future ordinations, whether for a deacon or a pastor.

Training Received by SCBI Staff

- Advance America
- Transition Pastor
- Shepherds’ Conference
- LifeWay Summit
- Churches Planting Churches
- NAMB Church Planting Catalyst Training
- Pastors’ Vision Retreat
- Basic Training for Church Planters
- Send North America Conference

Communications

The purpose of the Communications Team is to provide information to our SCBI churches about what is going on in our state convention and with other conventions and Southern Baptist entities. This is done by utilizing all relevant means of communication to tell the stories and to provide relevant information to our churches.

This happens through our quarterly state magazine, “The Indiana Baptist Magazine.” This can be received either in a hard copy (paper version) that is mailed to a subscriber’s mailing address (this subscription is free and only needs to be requested) or a person can read the magazine online at www.scbi.org/ib. SCBI communication also utilizes Facebook, Twitter and email to connect with our churches.

This year the team oversaw the re-design of both the Indiana Baptist Magazine and the State Convention of Baptists in Indiana web page (www.scbi.org). Our magazine has a current subscription list of 6,713 individuals and 582 organizations. There are 95 people who currently receive an email notification when the magazine is

posted online.

Since the launch of the revised website in late January, there have been more than 10,000 users with 20,500 sessions which average three minutes and 2.74 pages per session. The top ten pages viewed are:

1. Home page
2. Indiana Ministry Openings
3. Student Fusion
4. Transformed
5. Pure Girl
6. Staff Directory
7. Church locations
8. Mission Adventure Camp
9. Super Jam
10. Man Camp

The SCBI website is the best place to find current information about events and resources that are available through SCBI. We encourage you to bookmark www.scbi.org or make it your home page. Visit SCBI's website often.