

CHURCH / LEADER DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNICATIONS REPORT

Dr. Steve McNeil, Team Leader

The 2015-2016 year has been a **productive** one. The State Convention of Baptists in Indiana (SCBI) staff team works to serve our churches through our SCBI Purpose, Core Values and team Purpose.

The SCBI Purpose is to “*Exalt Jesus, Encourage Pastors, Equip Churches.*” The Core Values of our SCBI team is “*to penetrate Lostness, plant churches, and develop churches and leaders.*” Our Church/Leader Development Team strategy is to “*connect, consult and coach churches in accomplishing the Acts 1:8 challenge.*” The next few pages are intended to show you examples of how and where these purposes and values are being accomplished. This is not an exhaustive report but a glimpse of some of the work being done to help our SCBI churches.

The Church/Leader Development Team is made up of two part-time directors (**Sarah Bohrer** as Children’s Director and **Allison Kinion** as Women’s Missions and Ministry Director) and seven Regional Strategists/Church Planting Catalysts (CPCs). They are **Steve Blanchard, Bobby Cox, Dale Eakes, Doug Jividen, Jesus Pacheco, Bob Weeks, Mitch Whidden**. The team also works with associations that are served by Directors of Mission Matthew Gullion (NEIBA) and Wes Rankin (NWIBA) and by associational coordinators Ron Osborn (SWIBA), newly called Gary Yokum (SEIBA) and Reggie Alderman (WVBA). These are valued partners in our work to strengthen Indiana churches and to penetrate the lostness of Indiana.

Our team is also made up of two administrative assistants: **Bev Olonoh** and **Sarah Wickersham**. Sarah moved over to work with the Highland Lakes Camp staff in June 2016. **Terah Adams** filled her position in July.

Our team of CPCs work to help existing churches **move toward health** and to plant new churches in order to reach lost people across Indiana. Each of our team will share some of their journey over the past year in the next few pages. You will read stories of changed lives through salvation, people being called to ministry and congregations that are making the choice to adapt and change so that they can be involved with Jesus as He builds His church (Matthew 16:18).

Some of the **tasks** that our team works with each week deal with coaching, providing coach training, consulting, resourcing, conducting Leader Labs, training, doing conflict resolution with churches, training search committees, helping with interim pastor work, filling pulpits, training Sunday School and small group leaders, creating healthy strategies in our churches, participating in the leadership of the HILL (High Impact Leader Lab) for pastors and being available to minister and connect our churches and leaders.

Many churches around Indiana are seeing a vibrant mission accomplished, while others struggle to survive. We seek to be **available** to all of our churches with whatever the need may be. The Church/Leader Development Team engages our associations and churches to be involved in our common mission (Matt. 28:18-20). Our team continues to receive relevant training so that they can answer the pertinent issues that face our churches. Our strategy is focused on one main priority, **“to come alongside our churches and leaders to help them accomplish the mission and vision of each 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. At Pure Girl 2015 - “Wanted,” a western themed event, Debbie Whidden spoke to 190 women and girls about how all are loved and desired by God. Emily Edwards led them in worship. Pure Girl 2016, “God’s Princess,” will be September 23-24. It will include speaker Dana James, a Friday night princess PJ fashion show, breakouts on missions, mother/daughter dates, prayer and fun. The day will conclude with a back to school fashion show that models how girls can be modest and “cool” at the same time.

Man Camp - “Mighty Warrior” was an awesome weekend retreat, with 145 men and boys attending at Highland Lakes Baptist Camp. Mitch Whidden challenged the boys and men to find their strength in Christ alone. Bo Warren led in worship and it was encouraging to see men and boys singing praises to Jesus at the top of their lungs, lifting their hands to Him together in worship.

This year at **Mission Adventure Camp** (MAC) - “Mission Possible,”

185 kids and counselors worshipped and were challenged to be on mission for God by camp pastor Dale Eakes. Each night Dale encouraged kids to pray at the altar for their friends, for salvation and for each other. Every night kids flooded the stage praying! During the week we saw ten kids accept Christ for the first time. Many more said that they wanted to share Christ with their friends and family. Others said they felt called to be missionaries. A missionary who currently serves in Asia shared what God is doing there and challenged the kids to pray for kids in orphanages who need to hear about Jesus. Throughout the week the kids gave an offering of \$400 to will help pay for medical supplies for children in Asia.

JAM (Jesus, Arts and Music) Camp is different from any other camp we do at SCBI. 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, vocal techniques, drawing, drums, dance, interpretive movement, balloon art, puppets and more. These classes are led by talented volunteers from Indiana churches who volunteer their time, talents and passion for the week. This year, Matt Higgins from Northwoods in Evansville, Micah Burkhardt a camp summer missionary, and John Boggs from Portico Church in Bloomington served as camp pastors. Worship was led by the Collective, a worship band from Liberty University. One girl who accepted Christ ran down the aisle the last day to share her decision to follow Christ. She said, "I accepted Jesus in my life this week and I knew the very moment He came in!"

The 2016 reports from **Vacation Bible School (VBS)** are beginning to pour in from around the state. While the numbers for 2016 are not complete, in 2015 there were 175 Indiana churches that reported having a VBS with a total of 13,149 people in attendance. We are seeing a downward trend in numbers of churches participating in VBS (16 fewer in 2015 than 2014) and this means fewer kids are hearing the Gospel. In 2015 there were 2,821 fewer people enrolled than 2014 and 5,401 fewer than in 2012. VBS is one of the most evangelistic outreaches that a church can be involved in. Don't let your church miss out on this incredible opportunity to reach kids and families for Christ.

Women's Missions and Ministry
Allison Kinion, Director

In August of 2015, associational missions leadership gathered at the State Convention office for their annual training. Leaders were trained on topics related to increasing Cooperative Program giving, helping churches know how to reach out to their community through meeting needs of people with PTSD, and how to resource church planters with churchwide missions discipleship resources. The leadership team spent time discussing the upcoming Mission Lifeline training event to be held at Gasburg Baptist Church in 2016. Crossroads Associational WMU Director Lana Shields reported about the **WMU FamilyFest** Mission Trip that was held in July. There were 139 volunteers from 15 states that served. Eleven churches or ministries in the Crossroads Association benefited by outreach efforts like backyard Bible clubs, sport camps, and painting / construction projects.

At the 2015 **Ultimate Sleepover**, teenage girls and their leaders gathered at Trinity Baptist Church in Indianapolis to be encouraged and challenged. The theme "Chosen" was based on 1 Peter 2:9. 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 collecting empty prescription medicine bottles to give to the Malawi Project ministry outreach. Plans to relocate the event to HLBC were announced at the conclusion of the weekend.

Three separate **Transformed: Heart, Soul, Mind & Mission** retreats were held across Indiana in the Spring of 2016. In March, Graceland Baptist Church in New Albany hosted the first event. In April women gathered at Northside Baptist Church in Indianapolis. The final group of ladies gathered in May at New Life Church in Osceola. The 2016 theme was "Astonished, Astounded & Amazed." With greater attendance than in 2015, heart and life changes took place over the course of the three months with women coming to know the Lord, restoring a damaged relationship with Him and committing to serve Christ as He leads in their lives. With a greater passion to reach women in Indiana, the ladies walked away inspired and spurred on, looking forward to bringing more women to be impacted next year. In the Spring of 2017 the theme will be "Thrive" with Psalm 1:1-3 as the scriptural focus. Transformed will once again hit the road to impact the women of Indiana for the gospel of Christ.

Worship Ministry
Steve Blanchard, Strategist

A **critical need** for all the churches in the state is worship leaders. I constantly receive calls from churches looking for someone who could help them lead the music portion of their services. There were several ways that I have sought to address this need.

In January, I was one of the breakout session leaders for the **Worship 424 Conference** held at Cedarville University in Ohio. This was jointly sponsored by the university and the State Convention of Baptists in Ohio. Several of our Indiana leaders were part of the over 600 participants in this event.

In April our state convention sponsored **Exalt Him Student Worship Retreat** at Highland Lakes Baptist Camp. At this retreat over 100 junior high and high school students and their leaders from 16 Indiana churches took part in worship led by *Holman*, a group of primarily Cedarville University graduates. Dr. Scott Connell from Boyce College in Kentucky was the speaker for the event as well a leader of several classes. Kirk Kirkland, a worship pastor and professional singer from Nashville, Tennessee, also assisted with some of the classes.

In July, we held our worship arts camps for two groups of younger church members and attendees. JAM Camp attracted older children in grades 4-6. **Super JAM** was targeted to students in grades 7-12. With camp and church leaders we had a joint attendance of over 170. We were most excited that at least three campers made decisions for Christ as a result of the camp! The Collective from Liberty University in Virginia led the worship for both camps and taught various classes. Camp pastors for the two camps included Micah Burkhardt, Matt Higgins and John Boggs. We provided all kinds of classes in the worship arts for these two age groups, including world drumming, stomp percussion, black light, photography, drama, vocal techniques, worship leading, praise band, and ballooning, to name just a few.

REGIONAL REPORTS

Central Region Steve Blanchard

Every day when I think about what God is doing through the churches in Indianapolis and the surrounding areas, I am amazed at how He is working. Yet, there are **tremendous needs** for developing the 90 plus churches of Crossroads Association. I have been able to assist in many and varied ways.

In leader development I have assisted with the **High Impact Leader Lab** by participating in the week where pastors develop their leadership skills and philosophy. I then coached several of those leaders in the following months.

Leader development is also a part of my work with **Crossroads Baptist Association**. This past year we began a Leader Lab for pastors and other church staff. I helped these pastoral leaders investigate various topics that relate to their churches in these monthly meetings. I also worked alongside other leaders in the association to address several areas of administration in church planting, leadership development and church health.

Working with individual churches has been a way to serve Indiana Baptists. This past year, a major effort was made with **Plainfield Baptist Church** after two of their long- serving pastoral leaders left. I served the church for nine months as their Interim Worship Pastor and also assisted them as they merged with Gasburg Baptist Church to start a formal re-vitalizing project.

North Region Doug Jividen

When I think of ministry in Indiana, I think of **team**. I see people striving to work together in many ways all over our state and that is a tremendous positive. One way we work together is a leadership journey of training that develops health in the church. I have been working with Journey Church in Plymouth (Pastor Tim Lee) and Syracuse Baptist (Pastor Brent Joy). We have worked with Living Faith and Pastor Yale Wall. Also, we have worked to develop individual church ministries with Pastor Lonnie Anderson at Mt. Pisgah Mis-

sionary Baptist Church in Kokomo, with training focused on Leadership and Sunday School development.

Each month powerful **Leader Labs** have touched on tremendous topics of Evangelism, Leadership, Strategy Development, Leadership Frustration, Encouraging Volunteers, Stress Management, Time Management, and more. The list goes on, but the point is that Leader Lab is peer to peer discussion of what we need to talk about in a time sensitive way. It provides pastors with a place to talk.

In **North Central Association** we have really found that place to share. Out of this we are now coming together to develop a new strategy to reach the metro region of Elkhart and South Bend of 500,000 people. Dr. Seagle has joined with us to develop this new strategy.

Our Leader Labs in **Miami Association** have been a tremendous support for those involved. We have had a great bonding together through these times.

Leader Labs in **East Central Association** have done the exact same thing in bringing pastors together. We have seen large churches, small churches, and even Assemblies of God pastors coming to join us. What a blessing when others want to know what we are doing.

Two pastors from the north region participated in HILL (**High Impact Leader Lab**) this past year. They are Jeremiah Kinney and Lonnie Anderson. Both experienced HILL as life changing. They have been implementing what they learned and desire to adjust in their lives. That is what it is all about: following the Lord's leading.

We have had some wonderful **coaching relationships** in this year. I have witnessed God work in powerful ways in the ministries of men who attended HILL and whom I coached for six months. God has done wonderful things in Bret Karanovich and Steve Johnson's ministries and it was a joy to be a part through coaching. It is a present joy to coach our planters, some for the first year and some going into the second year because they still have needs. Pray for our planters like Sweh Velilla in South Bend, and Cedric Anderson in Muncie, and Michel Lin in Muncie. Finally, I am coaching Aston Chambers, who is working towards planting and he needs your prayers as well.

West Region
Bob Weeks

I had been on staff with our State Convention for just a few days when I **got a call** from my friend, Michael Wren. He told me that he was leaving as Pastor of New Life Baptist Church in Greencastle. I was shocked and a bit saddened, but it is part of life with transitions.

When a pastor leaves it can be like a death in the family. It can also be the death of a church if Satan would have his way. I began to pray in earnest for New Life. I knew I could help, if only they would let me.

When Michael's announcement was made, I **reached out** to the Chairman of their Deacons. We prayed together and I made the offer to train their Pastor Search Team. A few short weeks later we walked together through topics like how to understand the ins and outs of getting appropriate resumes, of narrowing down the list of potential candidates, how to interview for success and calling the one God has chosen to be their new Pastor.

But that wasn't all. A day or two after the Search Team Training, the deacons of New Life asked if I could become their **Interim Pastor**. State staff are encouraged to do interim work as long as it does not interfere with our primary responsibilities. After a week or so of prayer, we worked up a Covenant Agreement so we all would know what was expected.

It was awesome. I served as the Interim Pastor of New Life Greencastle for seven months. We rejoiced in **what God had done** while Michael was there and then we gradually began to refocus on the great future God has in store for New Life. We cried. We celebrated. We looked ahead.

It is exciting to announce that **Dr. Scott Kallem** arrived in Greencastle to take the mantle of Senior Pastor of New Life Baptist Church. What a joy for the church!

Helping a church **in time of crisis** is just one of the things we do at SCBI. It is the intention of your State Convention staff to do whatever it takes to Exalt Jesus, Encourage Pastors and Equip Churches. But we can only help when we know there is a need. Call us. Email

us. Text us. If we can help - we will.

East Region
Bobby Cox

Greetings from the 57 churches and four church plants that comprise the **East region** of Indiana Baptists. The region is made up of 18 counties in Indiana and one county in Ohio. There are three associations (Eastern, South Central, and Whitewater) that attempt to evangelize and disciple the nearly 408,000 people that call the East region home. It is truly my honor to serve Indiana Baptists in the East region in the areas of Church/Leader Development Team. This report includes the health status of Men's Ministry and the Church Journey Renewal Weekend.

On August 22, 2015, we were able to engage the region in a **leadership training conference** hosted by Smyrna Baptist Church in New Trenton. The conference was led by Steve McNeil and some of the state team. It was very beneficial for those who attended one of the multiple breakouts offered. These included Children's Sunday School, Youth Sunday School, Deacon training, Evangelism in the Twenty-first Century, Coach/mentor training overview, and Sunday School and its Leaders. It was training that the attendees were able to take back to their churches to train their leadership. There were 30 conferees from the three associations attending. It was a fantastic opportunity for fellowship and growth.

The region also received training in the area of coaching/mentoring, including what it means to be a **coach and/or mentor** and the definitions of each. This workshop was hosted by Cornerstone Baptist Church in Greensburg. Steve McNeil and members of the Church/Leader Development team were able to lead 27 participants in the defined art of coaching and mentoring the Christian. One pastor said, "Bobby, this was fantastic training!" Of course, I agreed because Christians need to know how to coaching others.

South Central Baptist Association hosted a "**Wrestling with Life**" **Evangelism conference** in April with Ted Debiose (Million Dollar Man of Wrestling) at First Baptist Church, North Vernon. Though the attendance did not reach the levels we had hoped for, we did see positive results. Several made first-time decisions to follow Christ. Some decided to rededicate themselves to Christ. Others

confessed struggling with sin, anger or bitterness.

On February 8-9 the state team, along with several pastors, were able to attend **Long Term Intentional Interim Pastor Training** at Highland Lakes Baptist Camp. The training was invaluable because two churches in the East region have taken advantage of this ministry through the Church/Leader Development team. Mitch Whidden served Western Avenue Baptist Church in Connersville for the past twelve months. I was able to serve as Intentional Interim for the past sixteen months. During that time, Calvary Seymour was richly blessed as God brought healing and harmony to the body. There were thirteen saved and twelve baptized, who are now being disciplined. There were fifteen other additions to the church, as well. The average attendance sixteen months ago was 70-75. On the last Sunday of the Intentional Interim period the attendance was 144 in worship. The leadership team at Calvary Seymour would graciously share the importance of this vital ministry service. If you or anyone want to hear their thoughts, call or email the state office for names and contact information.

Two churches participated in two weekends of **Church Journey Renewal**. They were Calvario Hispanic Church in Seymour and North Park Baptist Church in Evansville.

In Men's Ministry, "Restoration" was the theme of the 2015 State **Men's Retreat**. There were around 200 in attendance. Men from all over the state came together for a time of restoration. Several decisions were made for God's glory. "Legacy" is the theme for the 2016 retreat with Dr. Greg Frizzell as speaker.

Thank you for allowing me to share this report from the East Region. And thank you for serving the Lord as part of the State Convention of Baptists in Indiana. We are Partners in the Harvest, 1 Corinthians 3:9.

Southwest Region

Dale Eakes

It is exciting to see how God is moving in Southwestern Indiana. With over 340,000 lost or unchurched people in our region, a lot of emphasis has been placed this year on **evangelism and ministry outreach**.

It has been exciting to see pastors of **established churches** taking part in the training at our Church Planting Center. Several pastors and laymen have participated solely to garnish the training that is offered and to come into contact with planters who are focused on evangelism.

I have had several opportunities to be in our churches and present training on **prayer** walking and the need for more concerted prayer in our local congregations. It is fascinating to see congregations who are seemingly dead in the water come to life when they begin to pray together.

It was my privilege this year to work with a church that was discouraged and didn't have much hope for their future. They had so many ideas of what they need to do that they were overwhelmed at what they saw ahead of them. Instead of tackling those issues, we worked together to focus on one priority and that was the establishment of prayer into their daily and congregational lives. The testimonies in only a few short weeks were significant. They were enthused to see that many things they saw as impossible now seemed achievable after spending time together in prayer. They also realized many of the needs they felt were lacking began to be met. All this because they renewed, and for some started, a **focused prayer life**.

We also offered training on how to **reach out to the Muslim community** in the name of Christ. Aslam Masih from the North American Mission Board joined us at Northwoods Church to lead us in understanding how to better minister and reach out to our Muslim neighbors. With a Mosque in Newburgh, this ministry was important to help us understand the best way to engage the Muslim people group. We had great attendance and we have had several churches that are beginning to form ministries with the purpose of reaching out to those of the Islamic faith.

It has been wonderful to see so many of our congregations **reaching out to their community** in a renewed effort for the purpose of evangelism. We have had churches work in ministries from construction, handing out water, block parties and a variety of other ministries. What is so blessed about these opportunities is that many times churches are cooperating together, not in a spirit of competition, but rather of support and charity.

We have had an increase in leaders, both pastors and others, who

desire to be **trained as coaches**. These leaders want to be trained for the purpose of ministering and helping other congregations.

One of the most exciting events that has taken place this year in Southwestern Indiana is the development of the **pastors' wives fellowship**. These ladies have set a goal to meet every other month for the sole purpose of fellowship and encouragement. They have also commissioned to pray for each other during the times of meeting. So many of the ladies desperately needed this ministry and we appreciate those who are taking part in it and hope to increase participation in the coming year.

We have a **goal** of establishing a Leader Lab in 2017, as well as offering more specified training events for the purpose of helping our congregations get even sharper. It has been exciting to see pastoral engagement and the desire for more training. So in 2017, we also hope to begin a stronger pastoral support and fellowship system, whereby pastors can interact with each other and lift each other up.

Overall, Southwestern Indiana has seen a great moving forward in 2016 of **leadership development and cooperation between our churches** for the purpose of sending out the Gospel of Christ to the nations. We are excited and even more expectant for the path God will lead us on in 2017.

Southeast Region **Mitch Whidden**

This has been a great year for the churches of the Southeast Region of Indiana. God has been at work and it has been exciting to be part of what God is doing here. **God is moving** across Southern Indiana in too many ways to report, so I will stick to the highlights.

Two of our pastors attended the **High Impact Leader Lab** at Highland Lakes Baptist Camp. These pastors came back from HILL encouraged and strengthened by the experience. We hope to send more pastors to the HILL in the future. It allows our pastors to take much needed time for personal growth and thoughtful planning for the future. Our pastors work hard at pouring their lives into others, so this is a great opportunity to give back to them.

We also have an exciting **new partnership** with the Greater Cleveland Baptist Association in North Carolina. They came together with several churches in July and brought around thirty people to serve our churches. In one weeks' time, they canvased eight neighborhoods, conducted three block parties, worked on two church buildings, and led five people to Christ! We are looking forward to a long and fruitful partnership with our friends from North Carolina. In the future we look forward to getting our churches together to do some mission work in their area as well. We are eager to see them again next year. Their love for Christ and how they shared Him everywhere they went was contagious and gave a big boost of encouragement to the churches they worked with.

This has been a pilot year for what we are calling "**Cluster Harvest Groups.**" By starting with one group of four churches, we were able to learn from the experience and improve it for future groups. A cluster harvest group is a group of three to five churches who get together for the purpose of evangelism and discipleship. Our first group has decided to commit to train their congregations together to be disciples who make disciples. They have been training using the Disciples Path material. This year of preparation will culminate in joint revival meetings this fall. Our first Cluster Harvest Groups are looking into the idea of following up this year with turning their attention to overseas missions. Pray with me for the establishment of two new Cluster Harvest Groups in the coming year.

As our churches recognize the need train and equip in the area of **evangelism**, I have conducted two evangelistic trainings this year. One of these was with Refuge Church plant in Sellersburg. The other was with Western Avenue Baptist Church in Connersville, where I have had the privilege to serve as interim pastor for the past year. My prayer is to conduct one more of these trainings this year and four more next year. We are excited to see all God is doing and looking forward to seeing all God will do in our area next year.

COMMUNICATIONS REPORT

Dr. Steve McNeil, Team leader

The purpose of the Communications Team is to **tell the SCBI story** throughout the year. It is to help churches see and hear about what other SCBI churches are doing and to help them network for the

betterment of the Kingdom.

The **Communications Team** is made up of Greg Cooper - Graphic Designer; Terah Adams - Administrative Assistant; Bev Olonoh - Managing Editor; and Dr. Steve McNeil - Team Leader and Editor.

To accomplish this task of telling the SCBI story, we utilize the quarterly *Indiana Baptist Magazine*, the website (www.scbi.org) and social media. It is **our goal** to communicate the stories that are happening around Indiana, to communicate where our churches can find relevant resources and tools to help them in their pursuit to grow His church, to strengthen existing churches and work toward all of SCBI churches participating in healthy church planting.

Our quarterly state magazine, the *Indiana Baptist Magazine*, can be read online at www.scbi.org/ib or as a printed version mailed to subscribers. This subscription is free and available upon requested to any SCBI church member. SCBI also utilizes Facebook, Twitter, and email to communicate with the SCBI churches. Our magazine has a current subscription list of 6,563. There are 142 people who currently get email notification when the magazine is posted online. Within 30 days of posting the magazine, there were 162 unique page views.

The **SCBI website** is the most current place to find information about events and resources that are available through SCBI. The website also links to Southern Baptist partners like the SBC Executive Committee, North American Mission Board, International Mission Board, LifeWay Christian Resources and WMU. We encourage you to place www.scbi.org on your favorite list in your browser and to visit often. You are also encouraged to follow SCBI on Facebook (facebook.com/IndianaBaptists) and Twitter (twitter.com/IndianaBaptists).