

East Balsam Beacon

Jan., Feb., Mar.
2023

Writer/Editor:
Joan Michaelson
Printer: Ruth Matson

Contributors:
Pastor Jonathon
John Larson
Kathy Thull
Carol Jean Gallagher
Cheryl Volgren

Thanks to John Larson &
Cheryl Volgren for the
pictures

Index

P. 1—Pastor's Corner
P. 2—Coming Up
P.3—Church Happenings
P7—Missions

**East Balsam Baptist
Church**
1816-108th St.
Balsam Lake, WI
54810
715-857-5411
www.eastbalsam.org

715-857-5411
www.eastbalsam.org

Pastor's Corner

Something that has been on my mind a lot in recent months (and you've probably heard me talking about it more often of late) is evangelism. Reaching the lost is a big part of what the church is called to do. Jesus said, "Go therefore and make disciples..." (Matthew 28:19). The first step in making disciples is conversion. We need to lead lost people to Christ so that they will believe and become his followers and be adopted into his family. And that doesn't happen without *evangelism*.

In Romans 10:14-15 Paul says, "How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, 'How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!'" Paul's point is simple. Unbelievers won't become followers of Jesus unless Christians do the work of evangelism.

What is evangelism? Simply put, it's sharing the good news of the gospel with those who do not believe. And that's exactly what we are called to do as the church. It is the mission that Jesus has given us to accomplish, and he fuels that mission through the power of the Holy Spirit. But sadly, many churches fall short in the area of evangelism, and I don't want our church to be guilty of neglecting such a huge and critical part of our mission from the Lord. That's why I'm making an effort to encourage our church in the area of evangelism.

So, for this issue of the "Pastor's Corner," I would like to share with you a blog post from churchanswers.com. This particular post is titled, "9 Reasons Churches Stop Evangelizing Well," and it's written by Dr. Chuck Lawless, Senior Professor of Evangelism and Missions at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary. As you read, ask yourself, "are any of these statements true of our church?" And "what can I do personally to help our church fulfill our mission to make disciples?"

The following is copied from <https://churchanswers.com/blog/9-reasons-churches-stop-evangelizing-well/>

In reviewing a church's history, it's much more likely to find them an evangelizing church during their early years than their later ones. Frankly, most churches lose the evangelistic passion that marked them in their beginning. Here are some reasons why:

1. **In their early days, reaching lost people is part of their vision – but that focus decreases as the church grows.** No longer are they driven to evangelize as much once the church reaches critical mass.
2. **As the church matures, leaders give their attention to internal matters.** Questions like what type of polity will we have, when will we build (if we do), what curriculum will we follow, and others divert attention from evangelism.
3. **Pastoral care requires more time as the church grows.** It’s really a simple formula: more people in the congregation = more needs to meet and more requests for care. It’s tough to meet those needs and evangelize, too.
4. **Leaders fail to equip others to help them do ministry.** Instead of delegating work so they can keep casting vision for evangelism, they wind up carrying all the responsibilities themselves. Evangelism almost always takes a back seat then.
5. **Fellowship—as great as it can be—becomes self-protective.** That is, the church loves to be together because it feels like a “safe place” from a messed-up and chaotic world. Churches in protection mode seldom invite outsiders to join them.
6. **Transfer growth takes their attention off evangelism.** The church might well be growing, but it’s growing by swapping sheep with other congregations. That growth—consistent though it may be—lulls the church to sleep evangelistically.
7. **The church plans so many activities that members have no time left to develop relationships with non-believers.** The growing church offers more activities, and they often quietly expect members to participate in everything. The result is busy members who don’t know non-believers.
8. **Nobody’s paying attention to conversion numbers.** They may have been burdened about those numbers during the early days of the church, but not so much anymore. Accountability decreases, and so does evangelism.
9. **Leaders don’t teach enough about the lostness of human beings.** I’m convinced many members believe good people are going to heaven apart from a relationship with Christ—and only consistent biblical teaching will change their perspective. Too little teaching on this topic leads to too little evangelism.

What would you add to this list?

Submitted by Pastor Jonathon

COMING UP

New Prayer Ministry

Do you need prayer? Of course you do! Everyone needs prayer. But if you would like someone to pray with you or for you, a new prayer ministry is getting started to do just that! Duane Lindh is heading it up and he is the person to talk to if you are in need of prayer, or if you are interested in being available to pray for others as needs arise. 715-472-2717 (home) 715-491-1861 (cell)

Renew, a Christian Women’s Retreat

Renew will be held at Oak Forest Retreat & Conference Center on January 27th-29th. Come away to a place where you can refresh your soul and share with other sisters in Christ. Soak up the Scriptures and sing from the depth of your soul in each session, enjoy time to relax surrounded by the beauty of God’s creation, and be encouraged as you share life with your sisters in Christ. Return home refreshed in your faith and renewed in your spirit. Go online at Oak Forest Retreat Frederic WI for more information.

Youth Events

FILL THE BLEACHERS is a program within our youth group to help foster relationships that will help a student feel supported and celebrated now and prayerfully help them persevere in their faith as they grow. To access the calendar of events you can visit the EBBC website, click on Ministries, Ignite Youth Group, then Fill the Bleachers.

CHURCH HAPPENINGS

Edith “Edie” Osborn

Edie passed away at her home on January 15th. A Memorial service was held at EBBC on January 21st. A spring burial will be held at Bunyan Union Cemetery.

John & Zech’s Trip to Guatemala



Roger Peterson leading in prayer for upcoming trip—
November 5-13

Larry Michaelson, Steve Volgren, Zech Fultz, Roger
Peterson, John Larson, Pastor Jonathon

Another eye-opening trip to Guatemala! My third trip, and I took Zech Fultz with me. Zech and I started our trip Saturday at 2:30 a.m. from Dresser. Upon arriving at the airport, we found out that our flight had been delayed due to weather in Chicago. We were supposed to catch a connecting flight to Panama City, Panama. We had to stand in line at customer service to get another flight out. While standing in this line we met a young woman who was on her way to Guatemala. She and her husband run an orphanage in a village not far from the village where we stay. We found out she knows Deryl Felp and Hope for Home Ministries. How God works even while standing in the middle of the Chicago airport. Finally getting to the agent to redirect our flight, we found we would be leaving at 6:00 a.m. Sunday morning and flying to Houston, TX for another connecting flight; this was about noon on Saturday. The airlines did put us up and took care of us.

The next morning it looked like everything was good. The gate agents showed up and were preparing all the paperwork for the flight. The crew showed up and boarded the plane. Then an announcement came saying there was a hole in the plane and we would have to switch planes which would take a few hours.

Back to the customer service line we went. Standing in line again for an hour or so it was our turn next. We handed our tickets to the customer service lady and she said the lady that she just helped was going to Guatemala as well. She said we would miss the first connecting flight but she would put us on standby for the later flight that

was full and that the lady before us got the last seat and we were 1 and 2 on the standby list. After reaching our new gate we found the lady that was in front of us and let her know that we too were going to Guatemala. After boarding this plane Zach and I sat right behind this lady and began to talk to her about what we were going down there for. Turns out that she and her husband were missionaries in the islands off of Tunisia Africa where they raised their children and decided to move back. Roxanne was now a photographer and she was headed to Guatemala to do a photo shoot in some village. After reaching Houston, a five hour wait began not knowing if we would even get on this plane. Then boarding time came. Roxanne asked if she could pray for us and of course we both said yes. After people had boarded the plane, we were still waiting to see if we would get on. And they did call us to board! When we got on the plane, we had a cheerleader—Roxanne clapping and cheering. Like I said before, God works even while we were standing in Houston, TX.

What a great feeling it was when we reached Guatemala City at about 9:00 p.m. Sunday night. Some of you know that is WAY past my bedtime.

Our Monday started like this. We went to the feeding program in the village of Asatuno, one of the darkest villages in Guatemala. 99% of the children are sexually, physically, and verbally abused. Drugs were right next to where we set up. Drugs, alcohol and sexual addiction runs through this place like wildfire. There are poverty-stricken people. If they try to leave, the Devil just sticks his claws in and pulls them back. So, you might be asking, “Why do they keep coming to this village three days a week?” They do this so that someday they may break the devil's schemes. By chance that they would chisel enough darkness away from their eyes so the Guatemalans may see the light—this light that Jesus shines in and through us. One of the saddest things is when after we are done feeding them and playing games with the kids and some of the adults, we get in this van and drive away leaving the kids and adults behind.

My first trip I had to prepare myself to go down there, now I have to prepare myself to leave and come home. I would love to share every detail with you so if you would like to know more or how you can help, please ask me. I want to thank everyone who was with us on this trip. Your prayers were most appreciated. My next trip is scheduled for March 18th through the 25th and it sounds like I will be going alone again.

John 1:5 The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.



2 Corinthians 4:6 For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.

Regardless of how bad things can get, there is always hope.

Submitted by John Larson

Zech with children in Guatemala



(Left) Zech and John with children



(Above) Scenery in Guatemala

A Christmas to Believe In—EBBC Christmas Program

On December 18th, about 60 children, youth and adults performed the play “A Christmas to Believe In.” It was a play about a young man who didn’t believe in the Birth of Jesus. As the story progressed, he started to realize that maybe it was real. By the end of the play, he was convinced the Birth of Jesus was true.

There was special music and congregational singing. The cast did a wonderful job of presenting the play. After the play, the cast left the service to retire their costumes until next year. They were all presented with a goodies bag, a book, and a Christmas ornament.

A special thanks to Donna Mabry and Ruth Matson for getting costumes together for the cast. They always do a great job! Thank you, Vicki Heichel, for playing the piano. Also, thank you to the teachers and parents for all your help and don’t forget the wonderful cookies that were brought in for snack. Submitted by Kathy Thull

Operation Christmas Child

**549 boxes
packed**



The total number is not yet available for shoeboxes packed nationally during the 2022 calendar year. The first shoeboxes were packed in 1993. The 200 millionth box was packed this year by a recipient of a shoebox years ago as an orphan in Ukraine. As she stated "There are so many children out there just like me who never have heard of Jesus or experienced His everlasting love, I know the impact a single shoebox can make". Please keep praying for each child to receive a box. God works through these boxes and touches not only the child but the family and community.

2022 OCC Ministry had its challenges, but God had a plan and showed us we could get this done by all pitching in and working together to bless 549 kids. Did we figure on having that many? NO! Our goal was 450, we did almost 100 more than we thought we would! That is God at work!

Many thanks to everyone ... the youth for folding boxes, (a task that seemed overwhelming) people giving of money and talents, The group that came in and helped sort and set up, (which seemed like another overwhelming task!) Everyone who came to help pack, organized chaos for an hour and half.

Looking forward to Packing 2023, has shopping started? YES! With Gods help we can make it to 600 boxes!! November 11th will be here before we know it!

God Bless

Amy, Jen, Cheryl

5,000 DROP-OFF LOCATIONS
100,000+ VOLUNTEERS
10.5 MILLION CHILDREN RECEIVED A SHOEBOX GIFT

Thousands of outreach events were held this year as millions of boys and girls received gift-filled shoeboxes packed in Jesus' Name. For many children, this was the first gift they received. The children heard the Gospel during the outreach events and learned about the Savior who loves them and created them to *"walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God"* (Colossians 1:10).



This year, your partnership helped us deliver 10.5 million shoeboxes to boys and girls in more than 140 countries. About 4 million children learned how to follow Jesus Christ and share their faith with others through our follow-up discipleship program, The Greatest Journey.

We are thankful to God for the thousands of volunteers who transported shoebox gifts from 5,000 drop-off locations to one of our eight processing centers across the country. More than 100,000 volunteers served in these processing centers and carefully inspected, packaged, and scanned the gifts to prepare them for international shipment.

We pray that your heart is encouraged and your faith is strengthened as you read this report of how God is using Operation Christmas Child® and The Greatest Journey® to further His Kingdom.

"Let the children come to me; do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of God." —Mark 10:14, ESV

Submitted by Cheryl Volgren



MISSIONS

Bruce & Candice Beatham—Wycliffe Bible Translators in Mexico

Candice reports that, “We had a great time with Benjamin, just hanging out, and visiting our missionary friends for Christmas in Mitla and having a huge lasagna dinner with our friends from the village in our Teco home. They LOVE lasagna but don’t tend to use ovens, so they only get it when I make it. Benjamin and Abby were a HUGE help, and it went off swimmingly—27 of us!

Now we are back at our “normal” schedule and are excited about what God has for all of us in 2023.

Your gifts and prayers do not go unnoticed by us or by God. Thank You.

John & Lori De Cleene—Mobilization Specialist, Deployment Advisor

John and Lori are praising the Lord for all He’s done in 2022 – 12 global workers were deployed to England, Japan, Indonesia, Poland, Thailand and Africa. Looking ahead, one will leave for Poland in January. There were setbacks as one appointee had life circumstances and needed to put his future mission on hold. There are more than 60 appointees building their partnership teams to serve where God has called them, more than 20 could deploy this year. We are even helping others headed overseas form our supporting churches who will serve with other organizations.

Personally we welcomed a new grandchild this past year, and will gain another next year. Hopefully next year we can get everyone together for a family picture. We praise the Lord for great health and are looking forward to 5 more years of full-time Kingdome service.

Praying for all God has planned for East Balsam Baptist this year!

Steve & Carol Jean Gallagher—Wycliffe Bible Translators-Florida

Steve is thankful that he will be going to PNG again from January 17th to February 3rd to check the Gospel of Mark in person with the Musim (MOO-sim) language team. **Pray for Steve as he returns to PNG, for health and safety, that he would help the Musim team improve their translation according to the Lord's desire, and that the Musim people would engage with the translated Scripture and be transformed.**

Carol Jean's mobilization colleagues spent four days on December 28-31 interacting with Urbana missions conference attendees at the Wycliffe exhibit, sharing how they can further engage with Wycliffe. They collected contact information from 263 people who wish to receive further information about Wycliffe. Those who are really interested will be invited to join a cohort, designed to allow them to explore deeper whether Wycliffe is the place for them. **Pray for the follow-up with these people, primarily college students, as they seek God's guidance in how to serve him in missions.**

Carol Jean will be involved in a piece of that follow up, as registrar of the next Pathways online course, to be held in March. Pathways introduces the global Bible translation movement and how to get involved. (Find out more about Pathways here: <https://www.wycliffe.org/events/pathways>. Perhaps you or someone you know would like to attend.) **Pray for many to attend Pathways, for God to speak through the course, and for the logistics involved.**

“Thank you, our East Balsam family, for being part of reaching the Bibleless people with God's Word through your prayers and giving.” — Steve & Carol Jean Gallagher

Gil & Norene Zinke—Training Leaders International (TLI)

An update written by Gil on January 8th has the title “You Prayed...and Wow!” Gil tells about six things he asked people to pray about and God answered each of them.

He left for Ethiopia again on January 9th and won't be home until January 28th. He and others on his team teach Ethiopian men how to be better pastors and teachers.

This note arrived just in time to included:

We deeply appreciate your continuing prayer and financial support of Gil's work with TLI, currently in Ethiopia. In 2022 he led 4 mentor trainings and 8 cohort trainings at 4 different sites. In October two of the groups graduated, completing their 3-year sequence of nine courses (which was stretched to 4 years by COVID), and new cohorts were launched in two cities, Bishoftu and Adama. Thank you for being partners in this ministry!

Gratefully Gil & Norene Zinke

East Balsam Baptist Church
1816 – 108th Street
Balsam Lake, WI 54810

Sunday Worship – 9:00 A.M.

9:30 A.M. – Children's Church

Tuesday – 9:00 A.M. - Women's Bible Study

Wednesday – 6:00-8:00 P.M. Youth Group

Saturday, 7:00 A.M. – Men's Bible Study

Other meetings and activities announced in the bulletin & on web site

www.eastbalsam.org

To get to livestreaming,

our YouTube address is [youtube.com/eastbalsambaptist](https://www.youtube.com/eastbalsambaptist)

OR

on the church website,

scroll down to SERVICES, move your cursor right and click on YouTube.

Send Prayer Chain requests to east.balsam.baptist.church@gmail.com,

or contact Val Rowe at 715-268-7424 or

Joan Michaelson at 715-405-4055