



"TIDINGS"



August 2011



MISSION TO VIETNAM ... Gary Hopkins

What a wonderful blessing to have been selected to do missionary work with 22 members from the Shawnee Valley District, West Ohio Conference, United Methodist Church.

Our mission of support to the growing Methodist Christian movement in Southeast Asia is bearing much fruit as new disciples are constantly being made for Christ. When I participated in my Emmaus walk, I had no idea of what God would have in store for me. Each day has been an ever increasing, eye opening discovery of Christ and His eternal kingdom. Not only have I been called into evangelism, but by many means that I could have never imagined.

This all started with my call to "go to prison." Being involved with Kairos Prison Ministries at three state prisons has led me to teaching music at a prison, leading worship services, and preaching there. I have also led worship services at the local county jail for men and women. Through these, God has been preparing me to preach the gospel and to become a pastor. His preparation has brought me to and through the Lay Ministry Academy of the WOCUMC as a certified lay minister. This has led me to the appointment of associate pastor to the Staunton and Sugar Grove United Methodist Churches in Fayette County, Ohio.

Our Lord continually prepares us as disciples and followers to do His ministry. He is always adding to our spiritual gifts, refining our old gifts, and qualifying us to be His hands and feet as we bring the lost to Him (and His life into theirs). As He proclaimed in John 3:17, "He came into this world not to condemn it, but that through Him, it might be saved".

My preparation to go to Vietnam was always prayer centered. Our Lord always answers our prayers and provides for us, often in ways we sometimes can't

understand. The Sugar Grove UMC congregation provided a cash Christmas gift and love offering to Suzanne and me that was totally unexpected. God moved my heart to purchase a travel guitar with this money, take it to Vietnam, and present it to the circuit riding Viet pastors as a gift from the Sugar Grove UMC. Through this gift, the Sugar Grove UMC has helped bring the word of God to a part of the Earth that is in most need. The countries of Laos and Vietnam will hear "the story" through song. Many people will hear this for the first time because of the Sugar Grove UMC's vision to make disciples for Christ.

After required immunizations, team meetings, packing two suitcases, selling my horses, and spending the night before leaving in a Columbus motel, we were ready to fly half way around the world to a different and unknown place. I knew that Suzanne and our home would be safe during my absence. God had provided a perfect new home for my horses, my employer had agreed to let me use my vacation time for this mission, and Suzanne had blessed this too. I had no worries at all (23rd Psalm). Thank you, Lord!

In many ways the flight time was the hardest part, especially the return trip to the USA as we were all pretty exhausted. I had no idea what to expect in Vietnam, nor had anyone that I knew who had not been there recently. Everything that others told me was all wrong. Only my relationship to Christ could have prepared me for the blessings that I was to receive.

We arrived in Hanoi around midnight. The first Vietnamese person I met, a policeman or government security guard at the Hanoi airport, allowed me to be photographed with him. What a surprise! Not only was he polite and professional, he was most friendly. I asked myself, is this radical hospitality? After spending the evening in a landmark hotel, I was amazed at just how industrious the Vietnamese people were as they started their work days well before daylight. I was equally amazed at how they conducted their city traffic. Am I going to be riding a motorcycle in this? (continued on page 7)



STAFF

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Organist

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Contemporary Music Director

Ron Current

Custodian

Tina Breaux



A LOOK AT AUGUST WORSHIP

8:00 a.m. - Adult Sunday School

8:00 a.m. - Chapel in the Woods

9:00 a.m. - Traditional Service - Sanctuary

10:00 a.m. - Adult, Youth and Children's Sunday School

11:00 a.m. - The Back Porch - Robison Hall

- August 7 -** Message: The Power of the Spirit: Jerusalem Council
Scripture: Acts 15:1-21
- August 14 -** Message: The Power of the Spirit: Vision of the
Macedonian Man
Scripture: Acts 16:6-10
- August 21 -** Message: The Power of the Spirit: Paul and Silas in Jail
Scripture: Acts 16:16-40
- August 28 -** Message: The Power of the Spirit: Paul's Benediction
Scripture: Acts 20:18-38

“THE WORDS OF AN OLD BACKWOODS PREACHER” . . . Pastor Derek

I have recently been reading through the autobiography of Peter Cartwright, an old backwoods preacher as he describes himself, who was also the Methodist Circuit rider that had a hand in starting our church by preaching in a cabin on Clear Creek in 1806. By that point, Peter Cartwright was in year three of a fifty three year career as a preacher, so he came to our area as a young man early in ministry. He reflects on what it was like in those days:

- When I started as a traveling preacher, a single preacher was allowed to receive eighty dollars per annum, if his circuit would give it to him; but single preachers in those days seldom received over thirty or forty dollars, and often much less; and had it not been for a few presents made for us by the benevolent friends of the Church, and a few dollars we made as marriage fees, we must have suffered much more than we did. But the Lord provided; and, strange as it may appear to the present generation, we got along without starving, or going naked. . . .
- I have traveled eleven circuits, and twelve districts; have received into the Methodist Episcopal Church 10,000; have baptized, of children, 8,000; of adults, 4,000. I have preached the funerals of 500; and now, after all I have done or can do, and although I know well what a Methodist preacher's suffering life is, and have known what it is to suffer hunger and poverty, and also what it is, in some small sense, to abound, I feel that I have been a very unprofitable servant. . . .
- For twenty years of my early ministry, I often preached twice a day, and sometimes three times. We seldom ever had, in those days, more than one day of rest a week; so that I feel safe in saying that I preached four hundred times a year. This would make, in twenty years, eight thousand sermons. (continued on next page).

CHURCH OFFICE

Monday - Thursday

8:00 am - 4:00 pm

Closed for Lunch

12:00 - 1:00

Friday

8:00 am - 12:00 pm

Phone

937-393-2981

Fax

937-393-0025

Web Sites

www.hillsboromethodist.org
www.hillsboroyouth.org



TIDINGS

Please submit articles to the church office by email or in person no later than the 20th of the month.

Jill Reffner, Editor
wjreffner@sbcglobal.net

BACKWOODS PREACHER - continued

It would be hard for any of us to call Peter Cartwright an “unprofitable servant” because of all he accomplished for the Kingdom of God with the scanty resources at his disposal. As he relates the story of his life, several things come through clearly about the pioneer Methodist movement in this area.

- When they gathered together, God showed up in power through the movement of the Holy Spirit. People were powerfully converted to Jesus Christ and received into the church. They met with God at what they called “the mourners bench.” They cried aloud for God to have mercy on them and to forgive their sins. They shouted when the Spirit witnessed in their spirit that they were saved. They were called “shouting Methodists,” and for good reason.
- Whenever God was moving through the Methodists, there was always opposition, sometimes in the form of violence. Opposition came from different quarters for different reasons. Some claimed no religion and mocked what they thought was superstition and unbridled emotion of the Methodists. Some tried to debate the message of the Methodists. Mormons said that the Methodists did not go far enough in their beliefs. Baptists derided Methodists for practicing infant baptism and insisted on full immersion as the only true form of baptism. Some mocked the Methodists for their structured methods (hence the name Methodist) as well as their practice of having pastors constantly on the move. In actuality, it was the moving around, what we call itineracy, that kept the movement fluid enough to meet the ever-changing and expanding frontier as the pioneers moved westward.
- There was a staggering amount of fruit. People came to know Christ and join the Methodist Episcopal Church in great numbers every year, many of whom joined the ranks as traveling preachers themselves. In the midst of material poverty, the church became rich in harvesting souls won to the Kingdom.

In light of the sacrifice, boldness, and success of our Methodist fathers and mothers, we are called to serve the same God with the same spiritual power fueling us, the power of the Holy Spirit. We have the same high calling of knowing Christ and making Him known, wading into the waves of opposition and persecution in order to rescue those who are perishing without the transformative life of Jesus in their lives. As John

Wesley encouraged his young preachers, we have nothing to do but to save souls. This is our heritage, not one to put in a museum to gather dust, but marching orders for the people called by the name of Methodist.

Look around you at the people you know and associate with. Do they know Christ as Savior and Lord? Are they connected to a fellowship of believers? If they are not, would you pray for them this month? Ask God to open a door to have a conversation with them. Ask Him for an opportunity to invite them to church. Many people start new patterns with the coming of fall. Pray in the month of August and be ready to invite people you know and love to come to church with you to hear a message of life, hope, and transformation. God started to work among people through the Methodists in this community over 200 years ago. He has never stopped wanting people in our community to know Him and love Him. He wants to use you to bring people closer to Him. Will you put yourself at His disposal and allow Him to use you that will result in fruit that will last?
Pastor Derek

OUR FRIENDS AT HOME

Sally Barrere	Mary Levo
Joan DeHaas	Paulette Martin
Jean Head	Janice Saunders
Mary Hiestand	Mary Wharton
Herbert Hottle	Katie Wilkin
Paul and Janie Johnson	Jean Wilson



OUR FRIENDS IN CARE FACILITIES

Heartland/Hillsboro - Wanda Bridges and Jim Hapner

Laurels/Hillsboro - Kathy Bowman, Jean Head,
John and JoAnne Walker

Crestwood/Hillsboro - Bill Conley

Xenia - Marjorie McCreight

West Union - Jean Sapp

OUR DEEPEST SYMPATHY

Our sympathy to Tom Horst and family. Tom’s brother in law, Jim Carey, who was also Marjorie Byrd’s nephew, recently passed away.

HIGHLAND HOUSE

The Highland House assisted living facility is looking for volunteers to lead Sunday devotionals through song, play instruments, etc. For more information contact Kimberly Graybeal at 393-8830 or 403-8123.



ACOLYTES

- 8/7 Ty Alexander
- 8/14 Steven Burton
- 8/21 Spencer Rudy
- 8/28 Faye Wooden



ALTAR FLOWERS

- 8/7 Adam and Haley Vance
- 8/14
- 8/21 Rebecca Pinney
- 8/28 Bill and Carleen Alexander



CARE & CONCERN

June Bowman: 393-1872



COFFEE/HOSPITALITY

- 8/7 The Pinney Family
- 8/14 Pat Meranda
- 8/21
- 8/28



COMMUNION - HOME

- 8/7 Mike and Mary Ellen McCarty
David and Marilyn Myers
Charlie Colliver, Suzanne Devore and
Gordon Yuellig

Communion Stewards: Emilie Dunnagan/Megan Gaines



GREETERS

- 8/7 Catherine Meade, Helen Hartman
- 8/14 Glenn and Opal Armstrong,
Helen Hartman
- 8/21 Earl and Sharon Burnett, Pat Roads
- 8/28 Catherine Meade, Helen Hartman



GREETERS - CHAPEL IN THE WOODS

- 8/7 Jeff and Maureen Wood
- 8/14 Don, Suanne and David Edwards
- 8/21 Duane and Irene Michael
- 8/28 Brent, Jill, Andrea and Wesley Kelch
- 9/4 Will, Linda and Faye Wooden



USHERS

Charles Griffith (Captain), Janet Griffith, Bob Armstrong, Charlie Shreve, Mary Ann Shreve



LITURGIST

- 8/7 Peggy Edwards
- 8/14 Amy Vance
- 8/21 Steve Vance
- 8/28 Martha Watkins



NURSERY HELPERS

- 8/7
- 8/14 Suzanne Devore
- 8/21 Michelle Beery
- 8/28



SCRIPTURE READING - 9:00 AM

- 8/7 Helen Hartman
- 8/14 Marilyn Myers
- 8/21 Nancy Burton
- 8/28 Rebecca Pinney



VIDEO TAPING - 9:00 AM

Don Edenfield and Steve Wilkin

SAMARITAN OUTREACH

Dish soap is the collection item for Samaritan Outreach for August. Collection boxes are in Hiestand Hall for all of our donation items.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Acolytes	Leslie Lerch	288-9808
Altar Flowers	Church Office	393-2981
Care and Concern	Suzanne Devore	288-2352
Greeters	Ruth West	764-1176
Greeters/Chapel Woods	Jolene Walker	393-4716
Home Communion	Donna Summers	393-9676
Hospitality - 9 am	Jill Reffner	927-2760
Hospitality - 11 am	Warren Bridges	575-8196
Liturgist	Jill Reffner	927-2760
Nursery	Barb Colthar	393-4194
Our Daily Bread	Anna Spilker	402-4543
Saturday Soup/Sand.	Anna Spilker	402-4543
Scripture Readers	Jill Reffner	927-2760
Ushers	Ruth West	764-1176
Website	Mike McCarty	393-1006

AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

- 8/1 Nina Jones
- 8/1 Nathan Kelch
- 8/3 Steven Burton
- 8/3 Ruth Georges
- 8/4 Lauren Grimes
- 8/9 Mary Ellen McCarty
- 8/10 Tiffany Wood
- 8/12 John Isaacs
- 8/14 Irene Michael
- 8/15 Janet Griffith
- 8/15 Ruth Meranda
- 8/15 Jarrod Thoroman
- 8/17 Jeffrey Wood
- 8/19 Donald McKenzie
- 8/20 Mindy Lee
- 8/23 Marc Evans
- 8/23 Rebecca Pinney
- 8/25 Ron Current
- 8/28 Brittany Ball
- 8/28 Christine Wagner
- 8/30 Pat Hakes
- 8/31 Julie Henry
- 8/31 Lisa Oglesby



THANK YOU

A big thank you to Ken Harless for trimming the hedges behind the kitchen and for doing this work so promptly. The hedges look great. Thanks Ken!

Deepest appreciation from the family of Dodie Garrett. Thank you for loving care and support these past weeks: prayers, cards, visits to Dodie, wonderful tributes and food. It has been a difficult journey and the support of our church family has sustained us. You are truly the Body of Christ. Helen and Ed Hiestand and family.

A huge thanks to everyone who helped in any way with Vacation Bible School. It would not have been possible without all the support from the congregation! Thanks again, Christy Wagner.

Wee Care wants to thank you for the support this year with the Kroger fundraiser gift cards. To date we have made \$2,406.66 to help support our preschool. We have been able to use the funds to make updates to the room and provide extra incentives to the students this year. Please continue to use your cards as we get 4% on each reload. We will also continue the program into the next school year and we have gift cards available for purchase for \$1. Please see Jill Barnett or Christy Wagner for more information.

AUGUST WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES

- 8/1 Chris and Kim Sexton
- 8/8 Adam and Haley Vance
- 8/8 Brent and Jill Kelch
- 8/12 David and Marilyn Myers
- 8/14 David and Michelle Edenfield



REMINDER

All information for Sunday's bulletin needs to be submitted to the church office by noon on Wednesday. Thank you.

FROM PASTOR DEREK

Thank you for all the expressions of support and care during this time of recovery for Linda. Prayers, meals, flowers, and gifts – all of these have communicated your love for us during this challenging season. Thank you for being such a warm and caring church family. The Russells

SIGNS FROM GOD

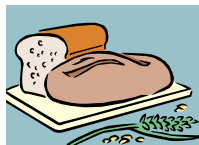
As seen on billboards, church lawn signs and bulletin boards nationwide.

YOU'RE INVITED TO A PARTY IN HEAVEN! PLEASE RSVP. - GOD

WHEN YOU REACH YOUR WIT'S END, YOU'LL FIND GOD WAITING THERE FOR YOU.

SIGN BROKEN. PLEASE COME INSIDE FOR MESSAGE.

COME IN FOR SOUL FOOD. "SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING. NO ACTUAL FOOD SERVED."



AUGUST 2 - TUESDAY OUR DAILY BREAD

The first Tuesday of every month is HFUMC day at Our Daily Bread. Each month we need eight to nine desserts. Please call Peggy Edwards if you would like to sign up to donate a dessert.



AUGUST 18 - THURSDAY 6:00 P.M. TO 7:00 P.M. WEE CARE PRESCHOOL OPEN HOUSE OPEN ENROLLMENT

Wee Care Preschool continues with open enrollment for the 2011/2012 school year. The school accepts children from 3-5 years old. We promote the Biblical values of honesty, respect for God and prepare students for kindergarten. Fall classes will be on Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.; and Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 12:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. For more information call the Church office at 393-2981.

WEE CARE IMPORTANT DATES

9/1 - Thursday - Parent Orientation Night - 7:00 p.m.
9/12 - Monday - First Day of Preschool

WEE CARE SCHOOL SUPPLIES

Wee Care Preschool is in need of the following school supplies for the 2011/2012 school year:

Glue sticks, Ziploc gallon size storage bags, Elmer's or any brand liquid glue, brown lunch bags, Kleenex and pencils. A donation box is located outside the preschool classroom. All donations are greatly appreciated.



AUGUST 31 - WEDNESDAY CHANCEL CHOIR RESUMES

The Chancel Choir will resume rehearsals on August 31st. We always welcome anyone who wants to share their talents, some fellowship and prayer time, and to praise our Lord at the 9:00 a.m. worship service. Starting time on Wednesday evenings is 7:15 p.m. in the choir room.

NATIONAL COLLECTION WEEK
FOR SHOE BOX GIFTS > NOVEMBER 14-21, 2011
SAMARITANSPURSE.ORG/OCC

AUGUST 27 - SATURDAY - 10:00 A.M. OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD SHOE BOX WRAPPING PARTY

Operation Christmas Child has one mission: To demonstrate God's love in a tangible way to needy children around the world, and together with the local church worldwide, to Share the Good News of Jesus Christ. Hillsboro First UMC is a vital part of this mission. Last year 269 shoe box gifts were packed and delivered to children who live in garbage dumps, war zones, famine areas, in the most desperate of conditions. Receiving a shoe box is a little beacon of hope, a ray of light that comes into their lives. Worldwide there were 8 million beacons of hope, opportunities to share the love of Jesus with a child. Shoe boxes are accumulating, and plans are underway for a year of growth in Gospel Opportunities. Our goal this year is 500 boxes, and you are encouraged to catch the excitement and plan to fill 2 or more shoe boxes to meet the goal.

The excitement will build as plans are finalized for a Shoe Box Wrapping Party on Saturday, August 27th, at 10:00 a.m. in Robison Hall, and a Countdown Event with special guests on Friday, September 30th. Mark the dates on your calendar and plan to be an integral part of Operation Christmas Child at Hillsboro First.



CONFUSION

A children's church leader stopped her class one morning right in the middle of a hymn they were singing. "What words did you just sing?" she asked. "Something doesn't sound quite right." A young girl, the group's loudest vocalist, shot her hand in the air. "We're singing, 'Oh, the constipated, cross-eyed bear!'" The leader shook her head and went to the whiteboard where she wrote the correct title of the song for her class: "Oh, the Consecrated Cross I Bear."

A group of Sunday school students were being tested on their Bible memory verses. A six year old boy stood to recite John 3:15. "I know this one," he assured the teacher. "Whosoever believeth in Jesus shall have ever laughing life?" The teacher gave him partial credit.

VIETNAM - (continued)

Having been riding since the mid 1960's, I thought that I could handle just about any traffic situation. I was to realize that this form of motor confusion was made possible only by the deep respect that the Vietnamese people have for those around them. Never was I more aware of life than I was while riding in Vietnam.



We toured the monument and tomb of Ho Che Minh. He is viewed and memorialized much as Americans do George Washington. We also made a visit to the home church of Pastor Yuam (pronounced Yom). He was described to me as Vietnam's apostle Paul. He has been jailed, beaten, falsely convicted of crimes against the state, etc. He is most convicted of his devotion to Christ. We were truly moved and inspired by this man of God and his commitment to serve Christ to his country. Given all this man had been through, he gladly and openly took the strangers (we Americans) into his life, home, and church. More radical hospitality.

Nothing could have prepared me for our stay in Hai Long. Even the street lights were in the shape and design of the hammer and sickle. My roommate for the mission, Paul Price, probably thought that I was a little crazy since I would get up at all hours of the night to go wandering through the empty city streets. I'm glad that I did, because I was blessed to have met many wonderful people who were not only friendly, but very eager to display a welcome to their city and country.

We toured Hai Long harbor and the bay. We met a people there who lived and worked on the water. They fished and sold their daily catch, along with vegetables grown at home, to the people frequenting their community. They were very glad to see us and to treat us to the same radical hospitality that I came to observe everywhere I went in this beautiful country. We toured caves on TiTop Island in the bay. God's artistry is breathtaking. After touring a craft factory where sewing and statue carving was in progress, we returned to Hanoi for a traditional Vietnamese meal with live music.

The following day found us touring the "Confucian College" which is the oldest school of its kind in the world. Here is something to be learned: The Vietnamese society is based on the principle of "face". You can save face, lose face, or give face. These Confucian principles govern the way that Vietnamese behave in their society. There is always the air of

respect for everything and everybody around you. They are more important than any feelings that you may have for yourself. Could this be a way to approach practicing the "Fruit of Radical Hospitality" ?

From there we flew to DaNang. This is a city modernizing at a rapid pace. While there we tried to locate and visit "Monkey Mountain" which was the naval station where one of our team members was based during his war tour. It was not accessible, as it had been taken over by the Viet Navy and is an active installation at this time.

Our next stop during the tour would be our bus trip to Quang Ngai. The word horrible can't even begin to do justice to the ride and trip. The bus was made for very small people. The entire bus ride was befouled by the stench of burning trash. We had driven during the night and this province chose to get rid of its garbage by the traditional method. We arrived at our hotel and were all ready to "hit the sack". I'm excited too because we are to get our bikes and meet our Viet pastor brothers tomorrow.

I was up very early and walked around town. A group of elderly women invited me to sit with them as they shared morning tea. I must have appeared very strange to them, being almost two feet taller with blue eyes and no hair! I immediately identified them as being much like my share group at home. Fellowship together in the morning is always a blessing. I was blessed to have been welcomed into their group this morning. What a great feeling, to be a welcomed stranger. Any fears that I had were vanishing as we tried to speak and smile.

After meeting our pastor brothers, praying over our bikes, and praying for each other, we began our bike ministry into the central highlands mountains. Thank you, Lord, for allowing me to visit this section of your Eden. This country is breathtakingly beautiful. Rev. Joseph Bishman was presented a hand made cross bow by the Montagnyar people who live there. They are one of the tribes living and working these mountains. This bow was made by the father of one of our pastor brothers. It is a very high honor and one of deep respect to receive this gift. Another very moving event happened today. One of our pastor brothers from Hue presented us with an American dogtag that he had found while tending his home garden. Our team members researched the name and serial number of the dogtag's owner. This American soldier was from New York, survived the war, and died in 2007. Our team member will try to locate this soldier's family and return the tag to them upon our return to the states. (cont. on page 8)



VIETNAM - (cont.)

We rode on to Kom Tum (about 20 miles from the Cambodian border) to spend the night.

The next day I remember thinking that I had never seen so many mosquitoes. Glad that I'm taking my doxycycline, and will be for twenty eight days after returning home. Today we tried to visit the largest and fastest growing Methodist church in Vietnam. The 600 member congregation is growing rapidly. Although we had national and regional permission to visit this church, the local government denied our visit for a number of reasons that made no sense to anyone. We spent most of the day fellowshiping with a Viet family at their market and place of business. What a beautiful and friendly family! More radical hospitality. Several of our group received haircuts from their daughter while we were waiting for the local politicians to sort out our being in this province. After what seemed like an eternity, we rode on to Pleiku.

My friend Rita Walker is the postmaster at Cuba, Ohio. Her husband Terry was killed here in 1967. Cindy, their daughter, had never met her father. I had promised them that I would go to Pleiku if possible and offer prayer for them and Terry. It was a blessing to be able to do this and bring back pictures of the military installation at Pleiku. Terry was a devout Christian. Rita and Cindy thanked me for the closure that this has brought to their lives. Knowing that Christ's presence is being felt in Vietnam has made them realize that Terry's sacrifice (and those of all the others) was not in vain. This evening we were to fellowship and worship with our Viet pastor brothers. This evening I presented the Martin Backpacker Guitar to Rev. Ut and Hien (Karen) Vo To as a gift from the Sugar Grove UMC. The excitement from this present was awesome. The Viet pastors sang praises and worshiped well past the evening's events. What a blessing to serve them too!

The pastors from the church that we were denied access came to visit us this morning. They presented Rev. Bishman with a gift of sweet water. We traveled to Buon Ma Thuot today and stayed there this evening. After our evening meal, we were blessed with worship alongside our Viet pastor brothers. During this service, Rev. Bishman anointed our hands with the sweet water. I have never experienced the feelings that blessed me in this manner. I was asked to provide the music during the service. It was very plain to see that all the others were receiving this same blessing. Praise God!

After supper and worship, we went night time sight seeing where I bought several gifts to take home for family and friends. I've been attempting to email SGUMC and congregants with the notebook provided. Wanda and I each have been frustrated when our notebooks won't respond to the local internet service.

The City Of Flowers is something to see. Amazing! Pictures just won't tell the entire story here. We stayed in DaLat. Getting here was quite a trial. Although we rode through miles of mountains and terrible, rough roads, we arrived safety. Again, thank you Lord! We have seen extreme poverty in the mountain villages, but have received priceless love and hospitality. Even though we were harassed by police during our ride, we visited two home churches. One extremely poor, and one very modest. We met pastor Ma Lin and her family. She is a truly amazing Christian woman who founded twelve churches in this province. I learned that she founded twelve churches because there are twelve different tribes living here. Her churches have rolled out their red carpet (as they know it) for us. All of the families have gone the extra mile to display once more the radical hospitality that seems to be such a valuable part of their society.

This morning we were able to sleep in. We rode to a local lake to relax. I watched Wanda and others ride an elephant. I didn't partake. I reasoned that my having ridden a wild quarter horse earlier in life was much more of a challenge than climbing on a slow moving, training pachyderm. Back in town, I visited a Viet barbershop. Part of the grooming was an ear cleaning and massage that accompanies a barbershop visit. While others attended a Viet dance class and doll factory, I went to an open air market. I really enjoy walking through these. Many Viets will never see an American, let alone a Christian. Wearing my vest that displays the Methodist cross and the words, United Methodist Church of Vietnam (written in Vietnamese) could possibly be the only Bible that some people ever read.

The next day we rode almost 200KM and arrived in the city of Phan Thiet. This is Vietnam's seaside resort, well built up and maintained. There were people from all over the world vacationing there. I was blessed to be able to swim in the South China with the assistant chief of police from Hanoi. This man was wearing a cross. I do believe that he was an awareness of Jesus Christ. Another blessing that I received was to watch fishermen casting and pulling in their nets to the shore as was done in Christ's time. What is being taught to me is that I am getting a good glimpse of "first century Christianity" during this mission. (continued on page 9).

VIETNAM - (cont.)

Home churches were the way that Christ's church started in the first century. Amidst all of this high tech development around me, I'm still finding the basics right here in front of me. Thank you again, Lord!

The traffic in Vietnam has been a wild ride! I've been told that I've never really ridden a bike until I've ridden in Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon). We rode today another 200km into Saigon. What a nightmare! Words again can't do this justice! It's 30 miles from the outskirts to the center of town. We rode into a lightening and thunder storm, after dark, in rush hour, through backed up and overflowing sewer. Not only that, we didn't know where we were going, the name of the hotel, or what would happen to us if we got lost. Praise God again. He got us through it safe and sound.

Never was a hot bath so good! We stayed at the Victory Hotel and had the chance to get our laundry cleaned. I also had my first hamburger, fries, and Pepsi since being in Vietnam. Boy, were they really good! I finally had the opportunity to reflect on an event that we experienced today. We had stopped at a roadside cafe to rest. The Viet pastors got out the little Martin guitar and we sang praise songs in English and Vietnamese. When we sang "How Great Thou Art" and "Amazing Grace" together, people from all around us came to hear and see the singing. What a blessing to "tell the story" among the nations. This blessing brought tears to my eyes and to the eyes of many others on our team. One prayer that I've prayed constantly during our trip is that God would heal and protect my bad back. I haven't slept in a bed for over three years due to old injuries. God has provided me with healing during this tour. Although my back hurts at times, He has given me rest.

I got up early the next morning. Today we are to visit the UMC Training Center. We worshiped and sang with our Viet brother pastors. We each got to share our feelings together today. I was blessed to tell them that I have never been so loved and felt so welcomed in my life as I have been here. I deeply thanked them. We used the little Martin guitar for worship and praise.

From here we went to visit the orphanage. This has been established in the home of pastor Niah. He is a most amazing man of faith and conviction. He and his wife have opened their small and modest home to these eleven "cast-off" children that nobody wanted. Not only are these children loved and provided for by this Christian couple, they are learning about a savior who will always love and never abandon them. Pastor Niah

has just been appointed to serve two churches far away from his home. He will serve churches in Hanoi, and return home to help his wife educate and raise these children. He is also trying to establish a bigger home for more orphaned children with the help of the Methodist church. We brought toys and gifts for these little ones, but received much more ourselves in return. I returned to the hotel along with the others. I just have to have another round of hamburgers, fries, and Pepsi before bed. Everybody else went to the Saigon Hard Rock Cafe for food.

Didn't sleep too well during the night, but got up early enough to visit the War Museum. This was a very deep and moving experience. I got to see many relics, but the real blessing was in meeting several vets that fought on both sides. I couldn't help but feel the emotions of those Viets around me, as I am an American. The war and it's presentation in the museum is certainly not slanted in the American favor, yet it's images are very strong and evoke many deep feelings from anyone who visits.

We are leaving today to attend the closing ceremony of our visit at the training center. We will turn the motorcycles over to the Viet pastors and pray with them. The Viet pastors have voted to use these to Christ's kingdom in a most profound way. They have voted to use this year's means in three areas. One third of their means will go to support the existing churches in Vietnam; one third will go to support the newly forming churches in Vietnam; and one third will go to helping establish churches in neighboring Laos. Wow, Christ in action! Sugar Grove's little guitar is going to go with them and tell the story too. Thank you, Lord Jesus. The blessings of riding over 1200km on a small motorcycle will remain with me forever.

We left the Saigon airport after a small wait. We had another, longer wait in Japan due to snow. Thanks be to God that we left there before the tsunami hit. Please keep this world and it's people in prayer. God's power and might can overcome all. Our trip back to the USA was pretty rough, but the memories of our mission are very sweet.



I got a glimpse of what first century Christians must have gone through, and I'm thankful that they did this for me. Thank you for your support of this continuing mission. One shovel, one basket, one cart at a time. God bless you. Gary Hopkins.



RIDING FOR COMPASSION

Corban University students are preparing to pedal more than 3,000 miles to provide clean water to impoverished children in Guatemala. A senior and graduate of Corban University in Salem, Oregon, have big plans this summer as they prepare to bike across the United States to raise thousands of dollars for children in poverty in Guatemala through Compassion International.

The goal of Jason Hardrath, who just graduated last month, and Travis Hilley, who will be a senior next year, is to raise \$10,000. The bulk of the funds will go to Compassion's Water of Life system, a portable, efficient and long lasting system that efficiently and inexpensively provides clean water to poor families who need it the most. The first \$2,000, however, will go to Compassion's child development center in Guatemala where Hilley's sponsored child, Ester, attends.

Travis, who was recently married, will also be accompanied by his wife Alissa on the trip. "Plenty of clean, potable water will be essential as the three of us do this bike ride across the U.S." said Travis Hilley. "While it's easy to get clean water here in the U.S., it's not so easy in many places around the world such as Guatemala. This bike ride is about raising an awareness to this basic need of clean water." In many parts of the developing world where Compassion serves, children die every day from preventable illnesses like diarrhea, which they get from drinking unclean water. In fact, nearly one in five child deaths, about 1.5 million each year, is due to diarrhea. It kills more young children than AIDS, malaria and measles combined. The group has already met their goal of \$2,000 for the child development center and have acquired funds for eight water systems. The water systems use the same concept as kidney dialysis. Weighing less than two pounds, the filters remove 99.99% of all bacteria from water poured into a bucket. The system costs \$55.

Starting in Ocean Shores, Washington, Hardrath and Hilley will ride over 3,400 miles through 12 states ending at Liberty Island, NY. They will also travel through and be stopping at various towns and cities in Idaho, Montana, North Dakota, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, and Pennsylvania. Some of their stops will include the homes of various advocates of Compassion International, sharing stories of their adventure. The trip will take 45 days as they plan to cover 70-90 miles per day.

While riding for Compassion International, they will

also be riding under the name Bike America Mission. Hardrath, the organization's president, developed the idea as a wonderful way to raise funds for a great cause while also working in some good exercise. "I get a lot of joy from pushing myself physically and playing hard," said Hardrath. "During a game of Ultimate Frisbee, I thought, 'Why not raise funds for a great cause while burning a serious amount of calories?' Bike America Mission was born." "Nearly one billion people go without drinkable water," said Mark Hanlon, senior vice president, USA, of Compassion International. "The dedication of Jason, Travis and Alissa is a wonderful example of the passion and spirit of the more than 700,000 Compassion sponsors across America. We wholeheartedly thank them for their commitment to releasing children from poverty around the world." Note: Compassion has been awarded ten consecutive, four star ratings by Charity Navigator, America's largest charity evaluator.

WELCOME NEW MEMBER

Charles (he prefers Charlie) Colliver transferred his membership at The Trinity United Methodist Church in Columbus to our congregation on July 17, 2011. Charlie was born in 1931 and raised on a Kentucky farm before he and his family moved to Brown County, Ohio, when he was 13 years of age. He attended school at Russellville and after graduation at 19 years of age he joined the United States Air Force. During his 23 years of active duty he traveled to many duty stations before retiring in 1973 with the rank of Master Sergeant. He is a Vietnam veteran. During his military years his studies enabled him to graduate with an Associate degree. After discharge he and his wife Joan moved to Columbus where he enrolled at Ohio State University. He graduated with a BS degree in business education along with a teaching certificate. He taught business education classes that included typing, accounting, business math, and law and economics at Hamilton Township School in Franklin County, Ohio. After his school retirement in 1995, and later his wife's death in 2009, he and his Jack Russell Terrier "Abby" moved to the Hillsboro area earlier this year where he lives near his daughter Kitty. Charlie has three other children; Michele (Micki), Randy and Rick.

Charlie loves to golf and has the unique hobby of wood carving. He is a great conservationist and while doing so can take a piece of bass wood and carve out a flower while talking. But God makes the best flowers, he points out. He has already offered his service to the church in two areas, visitation and assisting with communion. Welcome Charlie to our church family!

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Charles and Judy Durbin transferred their membership from The Pleasant Hill United Methodist Church in Todd County, Kentucky, to Hillsboro First on July 18, 2011. Judy was born and raised in Colorado and grew up in the Baptist church and has always had a closeness to Christ. She has had a varied work career but 15 of those years was working as the Manager of a 1,400 member High School cafeteria in Colorado Springs, Colorado. Charles was born in Kansas but at a young age the family moved to Oklahoma. Not finding work, an uncle encouraged him to move to Pueblo, Colorado, where he did janitorial work. Before long he met a young lady working in a coffee shop. Using his infectious smile and a bit of persistence they were soon dating, and on June 12, 1966, were married in Colorado Springs. To their marriage was born 3 children, 2 boys and a girl. Now they are blessed with 7 grandchildren.

Charles worked for 30 years in the dietary food service at Ft. Carson, the large army base at Colorado Springs, Colorado. They moved to Kentucky in 1999 to be closer to their children. In April 2011 they arrived in Hillsboro to live with their daughter Monica. Charles and Judy continue to appreciate their Kentucky church which is pastored by Brent Arn, the nephew of our own Don Edwards.

Charles admits to not having been very church minded, that is until he met Judy who he readily admits led him to Christ. Upon arriving in Hillsboro they quickly became active at Hillsboro First. Both are daily volunteers helping prepare, serve and assist in any of the work necessary for the Daily Bread program. They are members of the Faith Bible School class, Judy attends a weekly bible study, and Charles attends the Men's Saturday morning Bible study. Judy loves to read and Charles is facing a big challenge in attempting to make a bow and arrow. We welcome Charles and Judy to our church family.

FOR THE CHILDREN

By Lois Anne Williams - The Treasure Hunt, Part 8

Sara read the next treasure hunt clue to her mother and dad on the ride home from church. *Go to where you've been before. A picture of Jesus is on the door. Hurry now for I've been told you'll want to find the chest that's gold.*

"Do you know where you're to go?" Dad asked. "Well, I found the gold chest at the Christian Books and Gifts store so I'll go there again. Can we go after school

tomorrow?" Sara asked. Mother nodded. "We sure can. I need several greeting cards so I'll look for them while you hunt for the chest."

The next day Sara and her mother went to the door with the picture of Jesus with the children on it. Stepping inside they saw the friendly young man they had met on their first visit to the store. "Hello. Sara. I think you're here to hunt for the gold chest," the man said. "You're right, I am." "The chest is somewhere in sight. I'll let you look around and see if you can find it," the man told her. "Okay," Sara said as her eyes began to look about the store for the gold chest.

She looked along the shelves of books. She looked across the tables of Christian music CD's and movie DVD's but did not see the chest. As she looked about the study materials and the nice gifts her eyes looked high on a shelf to see the chest she had been hunting for. "There it is," she said with a happy giggle. "You found it. Good for you," the store clerk said as he reached high to get the chest and bring it down from the shelf. He opened it and let her peer inside. "You may have what you see there," he told Sara.

She reached in, lifted out a small cross. "Oh thank you," she said. "That is a special cross. Here, hold it up to this lamp, then place it back in the chest." Sara did as the clerk said. When he covered most of the opening in the chest and told Sara to look into it she saw the cross glowing in the darkness. "That's cool. Look, Mother." Sara's mother saw the glowing cross and agreed that it was very special. "This gift is to remind you to pray. When you turn the light off and the room is dark, you'll see the glowing cross as a special prayer reminder," the clerk explained. Sara's mother paid for the cards she had selected and she and Sara thanked the clerk again for the gift.

"I'll see it and say my prayers every night," Sara promised. "We always say a prayer of thanks at every mealtime and this cross will help me remember to always say my prayers before I go to sleep at night. I won't tell anyone in my Sunday School class what is in the chest for them." "Thank you, Sara. That will make it more fun for them to find out for themselves."

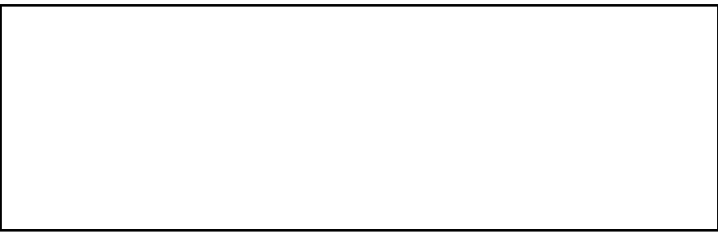
When Sara showed the cross to her dad and told him all about it she said, "I'm going to pray for the boys and girls we invited to our church. Mrs. Nye told us that we had done a good thing by inviting them and that someday they may join our class." "That's good, Sara. There may be ways to encourage them too. We'll see about it." Sara nodded as she turned to take her cross to her bedroom. (To be continued).



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SCHOOL BEGINS SOON!
A BUS DRIVER'S PRAYER



Please Lord, watch over me this day. Please help me remember to watch all five mirrors, two dozen windows, eight gauges, six warning lights, six dozen faces, three lanes of traffic, and to keep a third eye open for wobbling bicycles and daydreaming pedestrians, especially teenagers wearing headsets who are off in another world! Please Lord, help me to hear all train whistles, truck and automobile horns, police sirens and the two-way radio. Please Lord, give me a hand for the gear lever, the steering wheel, the route book, the radio microphone, and the turn signal lever. And Lord, please grant me the self control to keep my hands away from Johnny's neck! And one more thing, dear Lord, please don't let Mary be sick all over the bus. And finally Lord, please watch over us all so that we can do it all again next year. Amen.

EVERYTHING I NEED TO
KNOW, I LEARNED FROM
NOAH'S ARK



1. Don't miss the boat.
2. Remember that we are all in the same boat!
3. Plan ahead. It wasn't raining when Noah built the Ark.
4. Stay fit. When you're 60 years old, someone may ask you to do something really big.
5. Don't listen to critics; just get on with the job that needs to be done.
6. Build your future on high ground.
7. For safety's sake, travel in pairs.
8. Speed isn't always an advantage. The snails were on board with the cheetahs.
9. When you're stressed, float awhile.
10. Remember, the Ark was built by amateurs; the Titanic by professionals.
11. No matter the storm, when you are with God, there's always a rainbow waiting.