

YourBCC Story

A PUBLICATION OF BETHESDA CHRISTIAN CHURCH



Bethesda Gets to Work on 29-Year-Old Hallway!

By Heather Visger

During our *House & Home* series, Pastor Pat encouraged us to value and to embrace our individual roles here in our local church—a place we can call home and belong to a church family. We looked at the blessings, the responsibilities, even the challenges that come with God’s design for us to build friendships, share life’s moments, tithe, find an area of service, and participate in the thoughtful care of our building. The series concluded with a specific call to action, a challenge to take ownership of our facility by participating in a church-wide effort to update the hallway that leads from the Chapel to the Dining Rooms.

Directed by our Business Manager Todd Carley, a recent addition to the Bethesda staff, working closely of course with Brian Swarts, our Director of Building & Grounds, we joined a work group, put on our gloves, and began scrubbing the 29-year-old wallpaper glue off of our designated area of “The Great Hall.” There was something for anyone and everyone to do as we utilized the power of teamwork. Some contributed behind the scenes by donating work tools, paint, or food, some worked in the kitchen, and others worked on the finer details of the walls during the week between our Saturday work days.

Together we experienced the reality of the old saying *Many hands make light work*. From peeling to painting, in a few short weeks we saw our hallway transform. Never underestimate the impact of a large group of motivated volunteers! The impact was not, however, just on the walls. As all ages worked side-by-side on God’s house, we could not ignore the overwhelming anticipation, unity, and purpose we all felt as we got

to know each other better. If you participated in any way, you know that this was not just about wallpaper and paint. While Jesse Allen walked around saying, “It’s a beautiful day—smells like glue and sweat!” as he streamed the experience live on Facebook, we all laughed, but we agreed with him completely. It was a beautiful day to belong to the Body of Christ and to the family of Bethesda! Perhaps the truest statement combined with the biggest laugh came from Belinda Spencer: “If you really want to get involved and get to know the people you worship with, come on out and get to work with us! That lady with the luffa sponge who stepped in the bucket of water—her name is Cindy!”

Pastors Pat and Julie were thrilled with the amount of you who showed up and the enthusiasm you brought with you. They want to sincerely thank each of you, and they’ve expressed that this is just the beginning of many such church-wide projects!



“Thank you for all the help. This is awesome—and I don’t use that word lightly!”
— Pastor Pat

“This is the Body of Christ in action!”
— Pastor Julie



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This first issue of YourBCC Story was published in February of 2017. Look forward with us to the publication of our next issue in May! Questions? Contact Heather Visger: hvisger@yourbcc.org

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Writers and Photographers Needed!

To give our newspaper greater variety and detail, we would love help writing articles and taking pictures of all that goes on here at Bethesda. If you are interested in helping us with either of these things, contact Heather: hvisger@yourbcc.org

Submissions Welcome

Do you have exciting news you'd like to share with the church? Do you want to thank our congregation for their prayers and support during a tough time? Or do you have a recipe, a poem, a drawing, etc. that you would like considered for publication? Email your engagement announcements, wedding announcements, birth announcements, thank-you notes, and other submissions to Heather at hvisger@yourbcc.org. Pictures welcome.

FROM THE EDITOR

Many of you have noticed the absence of our monthly *Heartbeat of Bethesda* in the information racks since the beginning of the year. As a recent addition to the Bethesda Communications Team staff, it has been a significant change for me too. After helping with the editing of the *Heartbeat* this past summer and writing some of its articles starting this past fall, I felt like I was finally getting comfortable with the routine—until of course, everything changed! If you read the December 2016 *Heartbeat*, you read an article titled "Newsletter Change Coming in 2017!" which detailed the various upcoming changes in our publications.

I will admit, back in December I felt a bit overwhelmed that this series of changes included the compilation of a full newspaper, but as I looked back on the history of Bethesda publications, I saw the mark of change throughout the generations as we strove to best communicate with our congregation—and I got excited for what this new newspaper can do. I have found that

working under a forward thinker like Director Jason Bellinger has challenged me to embrace needed change and to do everything with a logically defined purpose. You've already seen the change to the Sunday bulletin, allowing you to have time-sensitive information always at your fingertips, and this is partly what allows this newspaper to focus less on pertinent dates and times and more on telling a story. The current plan is to publish this paper quarterly, giving me the opportunity to fully explore the different areas of our church and the people involved, and then to include a depth of content that a monthly publication may not afford. Meanwhile, we continue to utilize our social media sites and will be dedicating more focus to our multi-faceted website as this year progresses as well.

As I look through old boxes of publications, including *Latter Rain Evangel*, *America to Your Knees*, *The Primetime News*, and the *Heartbeat of Bethesda*, I can't help but hope there will be those of the future who will

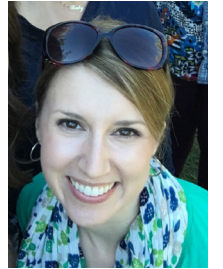
one day hold a copy of this first issue of *YourBCC Story* in their hands and feel like they're looking at a small but special piece of Bethesda's history. And Jason and I hope that you feel even just a little bit of that same wonder as you read through your copy. Know that ideas for upcoming issues are constantly evolving as we continue to prayerfully work through change.

Thank you for your support!

Heather



Jason Bellinger
Director & Designer



Heather Visger
Writer & Editor

ASK THE PASTOR

Pastor Pat or Pastor Julie answers your questions about God, the Bible, and living the Christian life to help you better *Know the Word, Live the Word, and Spread the Word!*

Dear Pastors,

You have preached much about the need to repent from sin and have even said we are born sinful. But aren't people born good and then turn toward evil?

The notion that man is intrinsically (essentially or inherently) good with the inclination toward evil is an unbiblical notion stemming from the philosophies of men. Many teachings throughout history attest to the fact that it pleases man to view himself as good. In our present day and age, these ideas are predominant in New Age occult teachings. These so-called "New Age" concepts are not new at all, but are a reskinning of Eastern mysticism, Hinduism, and the like.

These teachings, which deny the deity of Jesus Christ and reject the One God worldview of Christianity, go something like this:

God is all, and all is God (pantheism); therefore, man is god. Hence, man is intrinsically good, and can ultimately reach the level of god through good works, if not in this life, then the next. When man reaches the level of god, he is then "enlightened," has attained "nirvana," and will cease to be reincarnated. He will return to the "source" from which he emanated. Evil does not exist. Evil is merely the absence of god, and since man is god by doing good, evil then is the absence of good. So evil only exists because one does not exhibit enough love and good works. Since man is good, all religions that espouse good works are embraced, as they are ultimately espousing "god" works.

Gurus of the New Age confirm this. Here are a few of their incredibly blasphemous statements:

- M. Scott Peck, in *The Road Less Traveled*

"God wants us to become Himself (or Herself or Itself). We are growing toward godhood. God is the goal of evolution. It is God who is the source of the evolutionary force and God who is the destination. That is what we mean when we say that He is the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end."

- Dr. Wayne Dyer (a New Age guru)

"When you look at God and good, the only difference between them is one little zero. So, when you are saying you want to feel good, what you really are saying is you want to feel God: I want my thoughts to be the same as the source from which I emanated."

"Who you are is a piece of God - who you are is a piece of the source."

"You were once 'nowhere,' you are 'now here.' You are going back to the 'nowhere' from which you emanated. Your life is the space between 'nowhere' and 'now here.'"

- Sylvia Browne (a New Age psychic)

"Since the earliest times the Gnostics (from the Greek word gnosis - meaning knowledge) have espoused the primacy of intellect over faith. Novus follows that idea. Indeed, we find that you may directly experience God's wisdom. One such way is through Sylvia Browne, yet any person may also reach into the mind of God, thereby finding great truths. And never forget, every person is part of God. This means anyone can be an agent for the Divine, and reveal great wisdom from Him (and Her!)."

Contrary to the teachings of the New Age yogis and gurus, Scripture attests to the fact that man, by his nature, is totally and completely dead in sin. Apart from Jesus Christ, man can do no good whatsoever before God. A theologian might say man is "totally depraved," and the Bible confirms this:

In Genesis 8:21 we read of the Lord's promise after the Flood: "Never again will I curse the ground because of humans, even though every inclination of the human heart is evil from childhood."

Jeremiah 17:9 says, "The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it?" What then is the heart but inclined toward evil?



David confessed in Psalm 51:5, "Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me." He did not consider himself "good" at birth, but already depraved.

Romans 3:10-18 says, "As it is written: 'There is no one righteous, not even one; there is no one who understands; there is no one who seeks God. All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one. Their throats are open graves; their tongues practice deceit. The poison of vipers is on their lips. Their mouths are full of cursing and bitterness. Their feet are swift to shed blood; ruin and misery mark their ways, and the way of peace they do not know. There is no fear of God before their eyes.'"

And Paul, giving his testimony, says in Romans 7:18, "For I know that good itself does not dwell in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out."

Do these Old Testament scriptures, the confession of David, and the passages above by Paul leave one hopeless? No.

Paul concluded Romans 7 with these great words: "What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body that is subject to death? Thanks be to God, who delivers me through Jesus Christ our Lord!" (Romans 7:24-25). The rescue from evil is found in Jesus.

Apart from Christ there is no good, make no mistake about it.

- Pastor Pat

Do you have a question for our Pastors?

Email your Ask the Pastor questions to Heather: hvisger@yourbcc.org

WOMEN AT THE WELL WELCOMES HIBA MURAD FROM HOPE ARABIC CHURCH!



By Heather Visger

Last month at *Women at the Well*, our women were so incredibly blessed to hear from Hiba Murad of Hope Church in Sterling Heights, a church founded to bring the hope of Christ to the Arabic-speaking community of our local area. We first met Hiba when we opened up our building to Hope Church's *Live Free* conference last July, and as Pastor Julie puts it, we "formed an eternal bond" with the leadership of Hope Church and desire to continually support and pray for them. Hiba's testimony was done interview-style as Pastor Julie asked her questions about her upbringing in Iraq, her salvation, her relationship with God, her marriage to Pastor Avdal Boktor and the foundation of Hope Church, as well as her heart for evangelism.

After God sovereignly revealed Himself to both of Hiba's parents (each on separate occasions), and even though converting to Christianity was punishable by death in their Muslim community, Hiba learned of Jesus and the stories of the Bible as a young girl as her father learned to disciple his family in their home. When Hiba was 20 years old, her parents sat down with her and her siblings to challenge them to choose Christ for themselves rather than simply going along with their parents, while knowing what the cost of renouncing Islam could be. Hiba could not deny the Holy Spirit's presence in her home. She knew that truth was found in Christ and did not hesitate to tell her parents that she had chosen and would continue to choose Jesus. Her father and siblings' lives were threatened at gunpoint later, but God rescued them as they prayed that He would keep them alive if He had more for them to accomplish on earth.

Hiba spoke of how her relationship with God grew strongest during her years as a single woman. She would make an appointment with Jesus every night at 9:00pm to pray and worship, upset with herself if she was just five minutes late! She expressed to our women the importance of remaining in the Word daily: "If I miss one day, I will know the difference in myself. If I miss two days, my husband



"By living the Word of God, you get the courage to share the Word in a powerful way!"

will know. Any more than that and the whole world will know!"

After Hiba was engaged to Pastor Avdal, a Christian from Egypt, the couple faced many legal challenges and complications in getting married, but they both knew that God had brought them together and was able to protect and bless their marriage. When Hiba was pregnant with their son Adam, she and Avdal made a move to the United States and settled in metro Detroit—which brought with it many more testimonies of God's hand on their lives. The couple faced a time of discouragement and aimlessness, not knowing what purpose they had here. However, it was after a Jehovah's Witness arrived at their door that

they were challenged to do the same thing—but for the sake of the true gospel! After reaching out to the Arabic-speaking community by knocking on doors and sharing Christ in Warren, Sterling Heights, Madison Heights, and Dearborn, those they met began to make decisions for Christ and to request regular prayer. God began to show Avdal that this Arabic Christian community needed a church, and although the task of starting a church was never in Avdal's plans for himself, he was obedient to the Lord's call. He and his friend Marwan Sawasa, who had also moved here from the Middle East, founded Hope Church in 2014.

Hiba concluded by challenging our women to embrace opportunities

to evangelize rather than being afraid to. She reminded us that first we must develop our own relationship with Christ; only then are we able to truly love the people around us and to show them with our actions that we belong to God, and only then will we be able to effectively communicate the gospel with words: "Show them the true meaning of being a Christian—a follower, not just someone who goes to church. I encourage you to go back and pray for your husband, your brother and sister, mom and dad, your friends, and to find a way to reach out to them by your life, showing true love by your actions. Then you'll get to share the Word of God—By living the Word of God, you get the courage to share

the Word in a powerful way! So grab your Bible and do have an appointment every day with Jesus!"

Hiba is involved in many aspects of Hope Church's ministry, including the worship and the kids' ministry. The church moved to two services this past fall and recently received its 501(c)(3) tax exempt status! Visit hopeforarabs.com to learn more about their ministry. Bethesda looks forward to having the *Live Free* conference in our building again this summer!

Women, we are looking forward to seeing you at Women at the Well on Thursday, March 23 and Thursday, April 27 at 7:00pm in the Dining Room!

Pastor Pat on WMUZ 103.5FM!

Pastor Pat is featured for a few minutes each Sunday on WMUZ 103.5FM at different times throughout the day (at various tops of the hour), to speak a brief encouraging word and to invite people to Bethesda! This is one of last month's broadcasts:

Good day, this is Pastor Pat from Bethesda Christian Church. Would you like to know a secret? That usually gets our attention, doesn't it? Because we all want to know secrets. Deuteronomy 29 gives an account of God renewing his covenant with Moses. To paraphrase, God says, *Moses, you know the covenant, I have laid it out before you. The people know it. If they*



follow the covenant they will be blessed and "prosper in everything they do." But if the people do not follow the covenant they will be cursed, with a searing curse: "The whole land will become a burning waste of salt and sulfur." It seems

a straightforward and easy choice. Follow the covenant and prosper. Disregard the covenant and burn. That's a harsh distinction. Why so harsh?

We find a clue in the final curious verse, Deuteronomy 29:29: "The secret things belong to the Lord our God, but the things revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may follow all the words of this law." This verse points back to the fall of Lucifer and the fall of man. Lucifer had a desire to be God: *I will ascend to the heavens; I will make myself like the Most High*—that was his desire. And then Lucifer tempted man: *Your eyes will be opened*

Lucifer said, *and you will be like God, knowing good and evil*. And sin entered the world. A desire to know the secret things—that led to their demise.

Too often we have a desire to know the secret things instead of the revealed things of God. And Deuteronomy 29 is a reminder: This desire to be like God and know all His secrets—that is not the path to blessing. God had revealed his covenant to Moses, and He has revealed so much more to us. We have his revealed Word, the Old and New Testament. We live in the time where we can look back to see that Jesus Christ was the predicted Savior of the Old Testament. He gave His life so we could gain eternal life, and He poured out on mankind the gift of His Holy Spirit to fill those who believe.

At Bethesda we have a simple saying: *Know the Word, Live the Word, Spread the Word*. Instead of being distracted by seeking out secret esoteric things of God, we focus on knowing God's Word, the revealed things of God which belong to us and our children forever, then putting His Word into practice in our daily living, and then spreading the Good News of God's Word to others to advance the cause of Christ in the world.

In this life we know only in part, but in glory, then we'll know fully; the secrets will be revealed. Until then, focus on what has been revealed. *Know the Word, Live the Word, Spread the Word*. Until next time, I'm Pastor Pat.

MINISTRIES



What is an Arts Team Meeting?

About a year ago, the Arts Department decided to start a new thing—to provide an opportunity every couple of months to bring all our “creatives” together as a whole group for worship, community building, discussion, as well as an opportunity to grow in our gifts. Our music and tech volunteers are often so busy with their responsibilities of rehearsing our music and perfecting the behind-the-scenes details of our services that it can be difficult to get to know each other and to strengthen our unity as well as we’d like. That’s why we set aside this time to focus intentionally on doing that. We love this time to have fun together, to challenge each other, and to refocus ourselves on the purpose behind all we do.



At our most recent meeting back in January, after worship and team building, we were blessed by a testimony from Marni Kurtz. Years ago, God used Christian music on the radio to plant a seed in her heart, which led her to seek out a church and ultimately to accept Christ as her Savior. Marni encouraged us to remember that we never know how God is using us in someone else’s search for God; we should never underestimate the power of the example set by worshipers who know their God and are worshiping Him wholeheartedly. That’s a worship leader—and it doesn’t even require being on the stage! Thank you Marni for sharing your powerful story.

We’re looking forward to our next Team Meeting on **Sunday, March 12, 1:30-3:30pm** in Room 230. If you’re interested in getting involved, we’d love to see you there!



Rev. Terry Allen
Arts Department Director

CARE

If you are currently facing a difficult season of your life, you do not need to walk through it alone. Bethesda offers a variety of Care ministries to support you when you need it most. Visit yourbcc.org/care or pick up a Care brochure from our information racks to learn more about the Care Ministries we offer.

Communion Visits

Communion is available to Bethesda members who are homebound, in the hospital, or in nursing care. Contact me at the Church Office at least two weeks before the first Sunday of the month to be placed on the schedule. To be served, the recipient must be available on the first Sunday afternoon of the month, unless other arrangements are made with the church or the assigned elder or deacon. You can reach me at 586-264-2300 x114 or ballen@yourbcc.org. To read about how our shut-in members are doing, pick up our latest collection of Communion reports at the Church Office.



Rev. Barry Allen
Care & Outreach Director

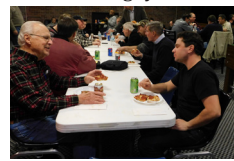
MEN



“Iron sharpens iron, and one man sharpens another” (Prov. 27:17 ESV). *Iron Sharpens Iron* is a ministry for men of all ages, backgrounds, and marital statuses. At our meetings we examine God’s Word through themed presentations and discussions, focusing on gaining a better understanding of a Christian man’s place in society, his church, and his family. Men, we are looking forward to seeing you for our upcoming meetings on **March 16 at 7:00pm** and **April 20 at 7:00pm** on the Family Center Mezzanine as we sharpen one another by the standard of God’s Word.

“I always look forward to a great worship time and an awesome word from Pastor Pat or Rev. Barry.”
– Jerry Saputo

“*Iron Sharpens Iron* not only encourages you to meet fellow guys, but also to engage with each other in the Word to better equip you and build you up—Pizza and pop is a plus!”
– Evan Eskridge



“It’s a good time to rub shoulders with other men of all generations from the church.”
– Jim Visger

“It’s Christian men coming together to listen, to share our experiences, our trials, and our triumphs—and to learn to apply God’s Word to our daily walk through life.”
– Michael Spencer

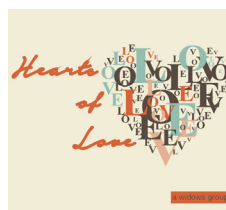


WOMEN



Stitch Chix is a needlework ministry for ladies who love to knit, crochet, and/or sew. Hand-made items are made for various outreaches to be given

away to those who need God’s comforting touch. They meet on the **first Tuesday of each month at 7:00pm** in Room 103. You are welcome to join at any time for an evening of stitching, discussion, and laughter! *Stitch Chix* are currently working on crafting some items for our Mexico City missions team to take with them this summer, which we will feature in more detail in our next issue of the newspaper!



Hearts of Love is a ministry for widows. Off-site outings are planned throughout the year. If you are a widow and would like to receive

information about outings, email info@yourbcc.org or call Pastor Julie at the Church Office. You’ll appreciate the relaxed atmosphere of *Hearts of Love* and the understanding of other women who can relate to your circumstances.



Hearts of Love enjoying a lunch together after Sunday service at House of Chan!

COUPLES



Our *Life Together* Connection Class for married couples is just the place to join other couples to learn, grow, and fellowship through a relevant biblical lesson and interactive group discussion. Lessons are coordinated with Kids’, Student, and Young Adult Ministries to inspire at-home discussions for those who have children. Pick up a *Connection Classes* brochure from the information racks today to learn more about our Sunday morning Connection Classes.



Engaged or contemplating engagement? *Growing Together* is an 11-week interactive pre-marital class that will give you insight into your relationship as husband and wife as well as give your marriage a foundation based on biblical truth. For more information/to enroll, contact Pastor Julie Visger.

Find us online:

yourbcc.org
or watch services online:
watchbcc.com

What Is DivorceCare?



John and Sharron

John and Sharron Rutt, along with the assistance of Carole Bergdahl, run our *DivorceCare* support group. There are thousands of *DivorceCare* groups around the world meeting weekly to encourage and strengthen those experiencing the pain, stress, and grief associated with separation and divorce. Visit divorcecare.org to learn more about this organization. We asked John and Sharron a little bit about their experience with leading this group at Bethesda to give our readers a better understanding of what *DivorceCare* is all about.

Briefly explain each of your testimonies that prepared you to facilitate *DivorceCare*.

Having experienced separation and divorce ourselves before meeting each other, we know firsthand the emotional and financial devastation that it brings into the lives of so many people. After serving as small group leaders for Adult Catechism and attending the *DivorceCare* leadership training course, we were given the opportunity to lead *DivorceCare* here at Bethesda.

What makes *DivorceCare* unique in terms of support groups?

This program is Christ-centered and biblically based, understanding that only through Jesus Christ can a person be truly healed. Each person receives a workbook outlining each of the 13 sessions that can be used to add your own personal notes. During the first 30–40 minutes of the meeting, a video is viewed, featuring top experts on divorce and recovery subjects. These videos are produced in an interesting-to-watch television magazine format featuring expert interviews, real-life case studies and on-location video. The video is then followed by a time of discussion on what was viewed as well as what is going on in each participant’s life.



What is your favorite thing about leading this ministry?

Every week we have an opportunity to extend Jesus’ love and compassion to the brokenhearted. It’s such a blessing when we see people who have stopped attending church get reconnected to Jesus Christ. We have seen that God can use the pain and brokenness they experienced in their divorce to draw them nearer to Him. We always enjoy hearing testimonies from people who have completed the *DivorceCare* sessions on how they have received healing and have acquired the tools and knowledge they need to manage life after divorce.

What do you find most challenging about leading this ministry?

We see broken, hurting people who have been emotionally devastated through their separation and divorce, resisting and not willing to apply the recommendations of the many experts that are in the *DivorceCare* videos. Fortunately this rarely happens, but when it does it really breaks our hearts.

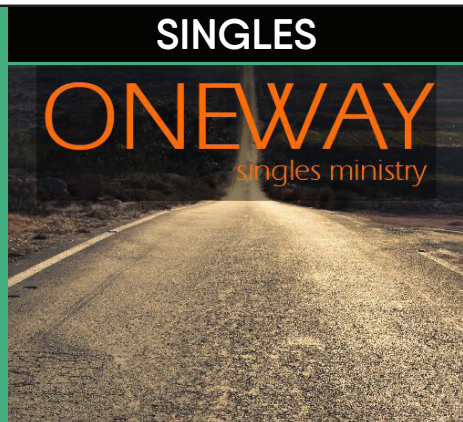
Is there anything you’d like to say to our readers who are currently facing separation or divorce?

Most people will tell you that separation and divorce are the most painful and stressful experiences they’ve ever faced. It’s a confusing, emotional time, when you feel isolated and have lots of questions about issues you’ve never faced before. We would recommend that you would attend at least one *DivorceCare* group meeting. After this session we hope you see the value of the material and want to continue. It will help you face the many challenges that separation and divorce brings into your daily life. Participants can relate to one another as well as pray, encourage, and support each other. Group members will often tell us they feel like their group has become a family. Weekly attendance to the *DivorceCare* support group will give you an opportunity to experience the hope, help and healing of your broken heart that can only be found in Jesus Christ.



YOUNG ADULTS

Route33 young adults ages 18-30 gather together each **Wednesday at 7:00pm** for worship in the Dining Room and then move to the Welcome Center for a message and small group discussion.



SINGLES

Singles ages 30 and up, join our *OneWay* Connection Class at **9:00am on Sunday mornings** in Room 111 for provoking biblical discussion on how to live as a Christian single in the world today.

Route33 vs OneWay Game Night!



SUPPORT OUR LOCAL MISSIONS



Thursday, March 30, 2017
Abigayle Ministries
Annual Banquet

You Are Invited

Abigayle Ministries Invites You to Attend
Our Annual Banquet
Thursday, March 30, 2017

Please join us for an elegant dinner, testimonies from women through the program, and exciting ministry updates.

Dinner is complimentary
The Palazzo Grande
54660 Van Dyke Ave.
Shelby Township, MI 48316

Registration begins at 6 p.m.
Dinner & Program 7-9 p.m.

Adults only please as seating is limited. Sunday attire.
Pre-registration required by March 15 to reserve your complimentary ticket. RSVP www.abigayleministries.org or 586.323.1411



Story:

The Redeemed, Authorized Version

An Evening With Abdu Murray
April 20, 6:30 PM

St Mary's Cultural Center
18100 Merriman Rd, Livonia

We look forward to seeing you at this year's Annual Life Challenge Gala Fund Raiser. Abdu Murray, the North American Director of Ravi Zacharias International Ministries, will be our keynote speaker.

You don't want to miss this! Be sure to invite your friends so we can share the story of how lives are being transformed from hopelessness to recovering reality through the gospel of Jesus Christ. We are praying for as many as possible to hear our message of hope.

\$50/Ticket

or \$45/ticket, early-bird registration through February

Register Online:

<http://lcmministries.org>

STUDENTS

TheWay meets on **Sunday mornings at 9:00am** (grades 7 & 8 in Room 215 and high school on the Mezzanine) and **Wednesday nights at 7:00pm** (grades 7-12) in Room 230, with *TheWay Café* open at 6:30! Parents, visit our Parent Resources web page at yourbcc.org/thewayparents to stay informed about our ministry, involved in our activities, and connected to additional resources that will support you while your raise your teens for Christ!

Donations Needed for Shares of Hope

Each year *TheWay* camp is a highlight of our summer, where students make life-changing decisions for the Lord as well as memories that will last a lifetime. This

year we look forward to returning to Michindoh Conference Center in Hillsdale, MI during the week of July 31-August 4. An important part of our camp preparation is giving our students opportunities to earn their way toward camp with various service projects in the spring through our Shares of Hope program. We had an amazing response last year and were even able to offer full scholarships to five families in need of financial assistance. We consider ourselves deeply blessed by your incredible generosity and dedication to the next generation of Bethesda!



To make a financial contribution to our Shares of Hope program, pick up a Shares of Hope envelope from the racks and drop your donation in an offering plate during service, or visit yourbcc.org and click on our Give page, where you have the option of choosing "Shares of Hope" as your Giving Type. Even if you've never been to camp itself, your support from a distance makes all the difference. Not only does our Shares of Hope program allow you to make the camp experience possible for our youth, but it also means giving *TheWay* students powerful opportunities to convey God's message of love, hope, and salvation through service.

Jesse Allen
Student Ministry Director



MILITARY

If you have an immediate family member in the military, we would like to show our support by praying and sending cards of encouragement! We need the following information: name, address, branch, rank, and status (active member or reservist). We would also like to collect a picture of each person we are covering in prayer. To submit information and photos and to loan us additional items for our display case, email Lorie at lswarts@yourbcc.org or stop by the Church Office.

Brian and Lorie Swarts
Military Ministry
Coordinators



KIDS

Excursion Hour Update

Parents, check in your Pre-K-6th grade children outside of Room 201 at **9:00am on Sundays** for Excursion Hour!

Every *Excursion Hour* includes an intentional teaching, each with a new list of questions and answers to be reinforced and memorized at home with parents/grandparents. This has two goals—to help the kids retain what they've learned and to give families the opportunity to hear and experience what their children are learning. There are exciting rewards and fun games planned throughout the year based on these questions and answers to motivate the kids while they learn. We are seeing great results from this effort to have fun while training our kids in the truths of scripture that will be with them for the years to come!



King's Island Newsflash

Pre-K-5th graders meet for King's Island on **Sundays at 10:00am** in Room 201 following Excursion Hour. (Sixth graders attend main service.)

King's Island Kids' Church brings our kids together in a large group setting for a time of energetic worship, interactive teaching, and live drama! Our recent unit on Moses and the Israelites included a makeshift Nile river (complete with baby Moses in a miniature basket!), visits from grown-up Moses, arranging our kids in groups to represent the 12 tribes, plus the usual visits from Skipper Bob, Tru-Dog, MilkyWay, and Grandpa Susan! Our focus during the month of February has been on the special topic of learning from God's grace.



Thank you to our Kids' Ministry staff and volunteers, who continue working hard to create experiences that make the events of the Bible memorable and relevant!



Happily forever after
this is not a fairy tale

Spring Musical Coming Soon!

On **Wednesdays at 7:00pm**, check in Pre-K-5th grade kids outside of Room 213. Our Wednesday night program currently combines weekly devotions with rehearsal for our spring concert!

Mark your calendars for our 10:00am Sunday morning service on **May 21**, featuring our annual K-6 spring musical, *Happily Forever After!* (This year, Pre-K will also be included in one very special song!) *Happily Forever After* is an exciting journey back to the age of castles, princesses, and terrible dragons—all while telling the story of Christ's love for us through song, dance, and drama! Auditions took place in January, and Wednesday night rehearsals are now well underway. This is the second time we have performed this musical (the first was 2011), but the truths are just as relevant as ever. Our annual Pasta Dinner and Bake Sale Auction in the Dining Rooms will follow the performance.

Min. Rob Susan
Kids' Ministry Director



Nurseries are available each Sunday and Wednesday for kids ages birth-4 during classes/services.

Alice C. Returns from Ministry in Asia

Dear Bethesda,

My ministry in Asia has drawn to a close. My original commitment to *Act Beyond* was for two years, but I went on to serve at the orphanage for over four years. The Lord made it increasingly clear over the past year that I was to finish my ministry in Asia by the end of 2016. This decision had been made before my recent health challenges, so I am thankful the process had already begun. It made the unexpected but necessary adjustments to the timetable easier. I was able to return with a friend to Asia for a couple weeks in November to wrap up and prepare for the move back to the states. It was difficult to say goodbye to the many friends I have there, especially the children. Yet it is also a joy to be back home and to discover what the Lord has in store. The contrasting sadness and joy are just one of the many paradoxes experienced by those who serve in this capacity.

The goal of *Act Beyond* is not only to share the Gospel, but to make disciples who make disciples, sharing the Gospel and multiplying within their families and communities. As a staff member of *Act Beyond*, I was on loan to a project for children with severe disabilities within a government-administered orphanage in a large Asian city (with a population of 8 million). As an occupational therapist, I provided therapeutic activities and adapted equipment for the children. For four years, I also assisted Sam, a 20-year-old with spina bifida, with his English mastery. Sam is now enrolled in a 3-year college and hopes to continue studying English. And Zhi Lei, a 9-year-old with fragile bones, has been learning English in preparation for adoption by an American family. It was such a delight to see Sam and Zhi Lei grow in their faith.

Another joy was the privilege of participating in retreats for families of children with disabilities. Although progress is being made in Asia, there are still few resources available and much discrimination toward individuals with disabilities. Families of the disabled are often very isolated and in need of encouragement as well as practical assistance. Family retreats provide education as well as the opportunity for questions and requests. Individual consultation sessions share with families that their children have value. Because our Father created them, their lives have purpose, regardless of their abilities. When a grandmother was asked about what she enjoyed most about the Family Retreat, she replied, "The people talked to God about my granddaughter. I didn't know there is a God. I didn't know he wants us to talk to Him. Now I talk to God every day about my granddaughter."

During my time with *Act Beyond*, I was able to witness a growing awareness that our God is real and different from all the ineffectual idols and gods worshipped in Asia. One caregiver realized, "My gods on the shelf at home have never helped me!" Although I lived in an area that required me to use creative ways of sharing the Gospel, I could always pray for people and about situations that came to my attention, provide reason for the hope that is within me, and create an atmosphere that encouraged spiritual questions and discussions. It was above all important for me to live my life as a testimony of God's love. I learned that my life must convincingly and consistently reflect God's love for all people, including those with disabilities. As a foreigner who looks different and talks differently with limited language ability, I was constantly under observation; blending in with the crowd was impossible! In addition, language classes (for me) required much time and effort, but with the help of excellent and patient teachers, they provided me with survival language skills. I also had local bilingual friends who assisted me when language beyond my ability was needed. Yet my actions certainly spoke more convincingly than my words.

Some of my tasks have reached their conclusion, but now my task is to pray. Although there are a large number of Christians in Asia, they are only a small percentage of the population. There are still children with disabilities who need loving and knowledgeable care. There are still families who need encouragement and hope. There are still millions who have never heard the Good News and have never even met a Christian. They have never experienced the hope that is ours through Jesus Christ. They have never been given the opportunity to accept Jesus as their Savior. "How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? And how can anyone preach unless they are sent? As it is written: 'How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news'" (Romans 10:14-15)!

How have you been a part of my ministry? You have prayed, provided transportation, invited me to stay in your homes, fed me, provided practical help, responded to specific needs, given financially, allowed me to speak of God's faithfulness and my experiences, and spoken words of encouragement. Thank you for continuing to pray for "my" people—the children at the orphanage, those who are a part of the ministry, those who will come alongside the present workers, and those who yet need the opportunity to experience God's love. Please also continue to pray for me as I navigate my transition.

It has been a blessing and an incredible opportunity to live in Asia and to serve with *Act Beyond* at the orphanage project. It is because of our loving and merciful God that I can say, "We are to go beyond what is reasonable, expected, comfortable and safe, not because of our own daring; but because of His leading."

With a grateful heart,
Alice C



Zhi Lei, thrilled to learn that the adoptive family he has prayed about for several years is waiting for him to become a member of their family

Qiu Hui and her mother after the Family Retreat



Sam volunteering at the orphanage



YOUTH LEADER SPOTLIGHT



Erin Worman

Erin serving youth at Camp Betel in Spain (summer 2016)

Erin Worman (22) is an incredibly faithful servant of Bethesda and specifically of TheWay Student Ministry. She has a huge heart for ministering to youth, both here and around the world. She has served on short-term trips to New Orleans (2007), Ecuador (2012), Mexico (2013), and most recently in Spain for eight weeks during the summer of 2016. She is currently home with us, serving as a youth leader in TheWay each Wednesday night. Director Jesse Allen expressed how blessed TheWay has been to have Erin as part of the team: "Erin's passion for students and their relationship with Jesus—and for walking with them through life—is outstanding."

We asked Erin to share some of her story with us—how she's grown both as a believer and as a servant of the Lord.

Briefly summarize your background and your salvation experience.

I have attended Bethesda Christian Church my whole life. I accepted Jesus as my Lord and Savior when I was six years old in the children's ministry on a Wednesday night. I grew up attending services on Sundays and Wednesdays throughout elementary and middle school, learning and understanding more and more about God throughout the years.

When and how did you start serving in our church?

When I was 11 years old, I began serving on the worship team in the youth group (which back then was called *Student Impact Ministries* or *SIM*) to use a God-given gift to serve Him. I continued serving on that worship team (which soon became *TheWay* worship team) and began singing and playing different instruments in numerous additional areas of the church as well (King's Island, Catechism, main service) through middle school and high school.

Describe how your relationship with God has grown since then.

During high school, I took my relationship with God more seriously than I had earlier in my life. I attended Sunday and Wednesday services, spent time daily in the Word and in prayer, and paid close attention in youth group to learn more about who the Lord is and how to live as a believer. Despite all of these efforts, it seemed like I was missing an aspect of my walk with God, namely the application of all I had learned in church—the day-to-day attitude and perspective change that comes with serving "with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters" (Colossians 3:23). In college, I started working at Gull Lake Ministries (a Christian family camp) during the summer months. The summers of 2013-2016 were my most challenging and life-changing as I learned how to put aside my own desires while serving others as unto the Lord.

"By loving students, my hope is that they will understand how important they each are to Christ and how deeply He loves each of them."

What has the Lord taught you through serving?

The Lord is awesome. The more we give to Him, the more we learn and the better it gets. The main lesson He has taught me is that He is truly the One who provides. He is the one who is able to give us the joy and energy and strength to keep going even when we're tired and cranky and want to give up. He has proven this to me again and again on numerous occasions. God gave me the energy to play soccer with the local kids after long days of manual labor in Ecuador, and prepared me to lead two girls to Him in Spain with the whole conversation carried out in Spanish! Now that I've learned to serve through His strength, it is such a pleasure and a joy to serve Him.

What has the Lord been doing in your life since your return from this past summer summer in Spain and at Gull Lake?

God has provided ways for me to continue with refining the Spanish-speaking ability even while I am in graduate school studying physical therapy. He has provided me with other serving opportunities at Bethesda outside of the worship team, namely as a youth leader in *TheWay* and as a nursery volunteer. God has also blessed me with a chance to serve as a volunteer youth leader for middle schoolers in Birmingham through Young Life, another Christian organization. He continues to provide the time and energy I need to keep serving Him and His people.

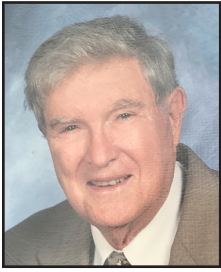
What do you enjoy most about serving in *TheWay*?

What I like most about serving in *TheWay* is the relationships I get to build with the students. Because I know how great God's love is for me and for each student in our group (*so great* that Jesus died for each of us!), I get to pour out the love of Christ by investing in their lives, extending and responding to the love I have received from the Lord. It's quite amazing! By loving students, my hope is that they will understand how important they each are to Christ and how deeply He loves each of them.

IN LOVING MEMORY

Douglas Alan Rich

May 19, 1931 – January 1, 2017



Douglas Alan Rich was born on May 19, 1931 to Harry and Kathryn Rich. His father was Jewish, and his mother was an Irish Catholic, so religion was a subject ignored during Doug's early years. His parents thought that both Doug and his sister Beverly could decide for themselves what to believe when they were of age. Growing up in Queens, New York City provided him many opportunities to learn about the world around him.

Doug graduated from Georgia Tech as a mechanical engineer in 1955. He immediately went into the army and served two years in Kentucky making military maps. It was here he learned to enjoy southern food—Doug always had a passion for food.

In 1960, Doug came to Michigan to visit an army buddy in Otsego. He was ready for a change of scenery, so he secured a job at Tranter Manufacturing in Lansing. While waiting for an apartment, Doug secured a room at the YMCA. A young lady named Lois was also looking for a change of scenery and had moved to Lansing to work at the Michigan Department of Agriculture. She too was staying at the Y while waiting for an apartment. Doug and Lois dated on and off for the next three years, but marriage did not seem a viable option. Lois wanted a Christian man, and Doug claimed his Jewish heritage.

Lois moved back to Detroit in 1963, and Doug set out on a trip around the world. He traveled through the US and to Central and South America for the next six months. He got as far as Columbia when he began to do some soul-searching and truly asked himself, "Why am I here?" He wanted to marry Lois, so he decided to do something about it. He came back to the states and moved to

Adam Christopher Ross

December 9, 1984 – January 7, 2017



Adam Ross was born on December 9, 1984 to Stephen and Rhonda Ross of our congregation. He was raised in the church, learned the ways of the Lord, was baptized as a believer, and grew

to call his faith his own—so much so that his dad Steve said that he learned some great lessons from Adam about how to live out the Christian life. Adam grew up with his older brother Stephen II, doing all the things boys do. He became a hardcore fan of Detroit sports—especially baseball and hockey, and for college, it was Green and White all the way. He was an intelligent, good-natured, kind-hearted soul.

Adam's friends in the TOPS club looked to him for technical help, and he was always willing to assist. He was also willing to step up and fill a spot to help run the meeting if anyone was absent. He was willing to serve, and he was a hard worker. He worked in patient transport, and his friends at work would say that Adam was the fastest. During his time off, Adam was often his dad's travel companion, enjoying the adventure of exploring new places; and if he wasn't traveling, he would be with his brother Stephen watching baseball or hockey—either attending the game together live or watching on television, even FaceTiming to discuss the game if they couldn't be together.

Adam lived a seemingly normal life until discovering that he had a physical condition that led to multiple health is-

New York City. Over the next five years, he and Lois maintained a long-distance relationship, but the matter of religion was still a major stumbling block. Lois finally told Doug he needed to be a Christian if they were to ever marry. He agreed to talk to Pastor James Beall, and together they went to see him. During that discussion, Doug gave his heart to the Lord and left the office a changed man. This was not simply a formality he went through so that he could marry Lois—Doug had truly acknowledged Jesus as his Savior. Doug and Lois were married in March of 1969. April of 1970 brought the arrival of their first son, Douglas, and in May of 1973 they were blessed with another son, Harry Scott.

Doug was always kind, gentle, and thoughtful. He loved his wife and sons. He loved his extended family. He loved the church and became a devoted member. He loved to talk and get to know people and to help wherever needed. He and Lois worked for over 17 years in the nurseries and served in the Catechism department as counselors. They also started a Sunday School class for special needs children.

Born with a Jewish heritage, it wasn't until Doug received Christ that he began to understand what it truly means to belong to the family of God: "A person is not a Jew who is one only outwardly, nor is circumcision merely outward and physical. No, a person is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is circumcision of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the written code. Such a person's praise is not from other people, but from God" (Romans 2:28-29). Like Nicodemus in John Chapter 3, Doug was never afraid to ask questions as he grew continually in his faith. He knew there was always more to learn about God's Word, and he knew that his life had been forever changed when he met Jesus—and not only his life on earth, but his life in eternity which he now receives, promised in John 3:16: "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."

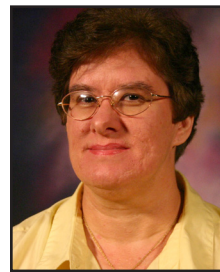
sues, surgeries, recoveries, and ongoing complications. This unexpected type of adversity is never what a young man in the prime of his life wants to or expects to encounter, but as scripture reminds us again and again, the men and women with the greatest faith often find themselves in storms and battles. God never guaranteed every day would be bright skies, warm breezes, and smooth sailing. During Adam's relatively few years, he experienced more storms than many of us experience in all our life. However, Adam knew the Lord Jesus, and during his trials, his focus on God increased. He availed himself to prayer in the church, praying at the altars, maintaining a good outlook and a great attitude. He knew that he was in God's hands. On New Years Eve 2016, Adam said, "I want people to know who have a disease like I do, that life is worth living."

On January 7, 2017, the Lord saw fit to call Adam out of this life, out of his suffering, out of the earthly shell of his body. And on that day, so many little details were lined up. He had a day filled with laughter, his family was with him, and his last words to his brother were "I love you bro" before he entered into heaven. Jesus, who had gone on before and had prepared that place in eternity for Adam, also left this earth at a young age, but not without giving his followers and friends an incredible hope for the future: "Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to myself; that where I am, there you may be also. And where I go you know, and the way you know" (John 14:1-4 NKJV).

This section features eulogies for those who were Bethesda members at the time of death and had a funeral by a Bethesda minister.

Mary Ann Wegner

January 26, 1951 – January 12, 2017



Mary Ann was born on January 26, 1951, in Almont, Michigan, to Nicholas and Doris Grosser. She was married to Loren Wegner on April 6, 1973, at the West Berlin Methodist Church. Together they raised

three children: Suzanne, Carl, and Shawn.

Mary Ann was a wonderfully talented individual and a humble servant. She was especially gifted when it came to all things of the home. She was a wonderful cook and loved to host family gatherings. She also loved arts and crafts—creating floral arrangements around the house and making anything and everything out of fabric or yarn. She used these creative gifts to serve so many people by making beautiful settings for countless events, including those of Bethesda's Women's Ministry. Mary Ann had a kind, gentle spirit and a great sense of humor.

At Mary Ann's funeral service on January 17, Pastor Pat encouraged family and friends to keep their heart (which he compared, in honor of Mary Ann's German heritage, to a *Shatzkammer*, the German word for treasure chamber) filled with memories of Mary Ann and to allow the moments of everyday life to bring those memories to surface:

When you see a lovely hand written note you might remember Mary Ann's beautiful penmanship and recall a note or a card she sent to you. Or if you see an old movie playing, or perhaps an intricate little outfit for

a doll, you might remember how she loved old movies, or that she was an artist with a needle in her hand who could knit, crochet, and even sew a difficult miniature doll outfit. When you hear a piano playing, perhaps an old hymn like Amazing Grace, or Great is thy Faithfulness, remember that Mary Ann taught herself to play the piano and advanced to serve as the pianist for the West Berlin Methodist Church. When you take in the aroma one of her favorite dishes cooking in the oven, remember how she loved to use those skills, especially around the holidays when she would most often be hosting family gatherings. Or maybe it will be the smell of fresh cut flowers – and in your mind's eye you'll see from the treasure chamber of your heart, Mary Ann creating a floral center piece extraordinaire. When you lift a cup and take a sip of tea, let the taste put a smile on your face as you think about how Mary Ann loved tea parties, how she took her granddaughters to the tea house in Rochester, or maybe a time you shared a cup of tea with her. When you feel a beam of sunlight warm your skin, perhaps it will retrieve from your heart Mary Ann and her love of sunshine. Or on a cold winter's day you might curl up in an afghan she crocheted just for you. Our hearts can be comforted by keeping the Shatzkammer of our hearts filled with memories that are treasures to us from Mary Ann's life.

Above all, Mary Ann was a strong woman of faith. She knew her Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, she was committed to Him, and she was not ashamed of the gospel. For that reason we know that on January 12, she entered her eternal home, directly into the arms of her Savior. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his faithful servants" (Psalm 116:15).

Lois Clodean Canady

July 29, 1933 – January 25, 2017



Lois Clodean Greer Canady was the oldest of three children born to Webster and Mary Greer in Cape Girardeau, Missouri on July 29, 1933. She enjoyed spending time in her younger days on her grandparents' farm and attending church, and she credited her grandparents with leading her to the Lord.

Due to the need for employment during the war, the family then relocated to California, where Lois graduated from Santa Monica High School in 1951. She was employed as a telephone switch operator. She enjoyed spending her free time attending local dances at the USO. One night she reluctantly attended a dance, where she was introduced to a sailor from Tennessee who was stationed in California during the Korean War. She instantly knew he was "the one," telling her friend that night that she was going to marry him. After just four short months, she married Herbert "Cecil" Canady on March 13, 1953. They had six children and remained married until his death in 1990.

Cecil and Lois were very active in several small churches in their surrounding neighborhood. They would often minister to the families living in the garbage dumps in Tiajuana, Mexico with Brother Bailey and his wife. Cecil moved his young family back to his home state of Tennessee; however, their house in California would not sell, so back to California they moved. They would often fellowship with their neighbors John and Inez Duncan. One night the Duncans wanted to introduce their friends to a visiting minister from Detroit, Pastor James Beall. During that meeting, Pastor Beall said to them, "You are moving to Detroit," and shortly after the house sold! So Cecil and Lois, seven months pregnant

with their fourth child, moved to Michigan in 1964 by the leading of the Holy Spirit, with no job or house to move into, to attend Bethesda Missionary Temple. Their remaining three children were then born in Michigan.

Once members of Bethesda, both Cecil and Lois served in various roles and departments, including working as ushers and altar workers, volunteering in the nursery, the kitchen, and Catechism, just to name a few. They attended every service available to them, making the drive from Livonia to Detroit multiple times a week and twice on Sundays. Following Cecil's death in 1990, Lois and her friend Ursula started Bethesda's first widows group, which she coordinated for several years.

Lois enjoyed spending time first with her Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and then with her family. Family was so important to her that vacations were spent traveling between Missouri, California, and Tennessee. Many fond times were had with Cecil, the six kids, and the family pets in the family station wagon, traveling for hundreds of miles while eating sandwiches from the cooler.

When asked what words one would use to describe her, it is said by her kids that she was patient, kindhearted, courageous, and giving. "You could push mom so far but when she said 'wait until Dad gets home,' you knew you had went over the edge." She always gave of herself to others, always opened her home to people. She never once said "poor me." Even during the darkest of days, when Cecil and Lois suddenly lost their youngest child Timothy at the age of 17, she remained faithful to Jesus Christ. After she lost her husband at the age of 59, she continued to remain faithful to the Lord. This is a testament to the character of Lois. This is the Lois that is rejoicing with her Savior now in heaven and why when she entered into His arms we know she heard the words, "Well done, good and faithful servant" (Matthew 25:21)!

Parkway Christian School



Interview with Lila Place, Head of School

How long have you been the Head of School?

I have been Head of School since the 2009/2010 school year, making this my 8th year.

What is Parkway's vision?

The vision of Parkway Christian School is to develop a Christian school that challenges students to reach their highest potential academically, presents the gospel in a way that promotes a biblical worldview, and identifies and develops individual gifts and talents. This is our intentional plan to make sure we are educating the whole child and helping children grow in the way the Lord intends for them.

What is your favorite thing about your job?

I would have to say it's the kids. I have a connection to so many children, and I love when they come and hug me and tell me their secrets. It's also incredible to watch them grow from preschoolers to seniors and to imagine all the things God has in store for them. Dr. Seuss put it well: "Oh, the places you'll go!" I love when they come back, because I get to see what they're doing, and they do come back! Once a Parkwanian, always a Parkwanian. We have alumni teaching, volunteering, coaching, and bringing their own children here for school, beginning the whole cycle all over again.

This past fall marked 10 years since Parkway began as a merge of Bethesda Christian and Zoe Christian. From your perspective, what have been the greatest highlights of the past decade?

This is a hard one to answer. So many things have occurred that have come together to help shape us into who we are today. I'll have to go back to the very first day of Parkway. On that day, God had a group of people who used to be rivals come together to create an amazing entity called Parkway Christian School. I think of the prayers that I participated in before this day and the prayers that have continued since. To me, these prayers are the greatest highlights of our school—the prayers to keep our athletes safe, the prayers to continually offer students a curriculum that would challenge but not overwhelm, the prayers to have God pour out His Spirit on all Parkway students, the prayers to help each staff member always seek His will and not our own. I could go on and on, but I think this is the key to Parkway. We pray so that God can have His way.

Of course, some other highlights include the years we dominated the class C and D Macomb County All-Academic Awards, and the years of steadily improving drama productions that have culminated into the exciting, professional productions we enjoy now. Or the beginning of our robotics program and the year our girls' team went to the equivalent of states, and the many years of domination at the Macomb County Law Day essay and art competition that continues to this day. Our athletic awards are too many to list, but the crown was last year when our baseball team determined to be "all in" and took us all the way to the state championship. It's all because God had a plan for Parkway, and everyone has committed this plan to prayer.

How would you summarize the changes in education in general since the beginning of your career?

Wow! That's a question. When I first started in education a little over 30 years ago, our whole culture was different. One of the current complaints about the educational system in the United States is that little has changed in the basic system, which has some truth. At the same time, there have been systemic changes that have benefitted students. One of the greatest is the shift from a "container" view of teaching to the differentiated, individualized model we now employ. Then, there was a certain curriculum package that was used for each grade and each subject, similar to the standards we use now. The difference now is we take these standards as a guideline and use different strategies to adjust our teaching to meet the learning styles of the individuals in each classroom. This methodology, while it may sound simple, is in reality very time consuming and laborious for the teacher. If you also include an understanding of development and apply this understanding to the individual students in the class, you have a formula that allows the teacher to help each child reach his or her full potential. This is how we approach teaching at Parkway. Stemming from the deeply held belief that each child is a unique creation created by God with differing ways and timelines for learning and development, we tailor our strategies to include ways to address these differences in every classroom.

What do you find most challenging about leadership in Christian education today?

I believe the biggest challenge facing leaders in Christian education is the lack of value placed on Christian education by the Christian community in certain areas of the country. For a lot of parents, no thought is given to the possibility of sending their children to a Christian school. In the world we live in, Christian education can give children a better understanding of true Christianity by immersing them in the biblical worldview that most of us desire for our children. However, this is not a widespread understanding. To help explain this reasoning, I've been writing a series of pamphlets based on my years of research that provides the philosophy behind Christian education.

Is there anything you'd like to share about Parkway alumni?

Parkway alumni are out in the world, many times successful and doing their part to spread the gospel of Jesus Christ wherever they are. We have several teaching or coaching here at Parkway. I know of several who are missionaries, and one who has opened an orphanage in Haiti. Some are youth pastors, and a few are evangelists going out to change the world. We have doctors, lawyers, mothers and fathers, and every career you can imagine. Someday I hope we can gather a database of alumni to keep our focus on praying for all of them. As of now, we have an alumni prayer focus every week. We pray for our students who graduated the previous year to help cover them in prayer.

Is there anything you would like to say to parents considering Parkway?

Parkway is not perfect. I don't think any entity can be, even Christian ones. However, our staff is committed to doing all they can to help every student identify and develop the gifts God has placed in them, allowing them to tap into the destiny God has created them for. At Parkway, we truly focus on *Challenging Minds, Capturing Hearts, and Cultivating Gifts*. This is not just a slogan. We have an intentional plan to make sure we are carrying out our vision, and we utilize many strategies to constantly assess our success. Call our office to schedule a tour and to see more about how your children can benefit from the Parkway advantage. Your children will be well loved and will know that they are important to their Heavenly Father.



PARKWAY CHRISTIAN'S THEATRE DEPARTMENT PROUDLY PRESENTS:

Disney
HIGH SCHOOL MUSICAL JR

March 17th | 10:00am
Tickets \$5, PCS students who purchase tickets get a free casual pass & free pancake breakfast after the show. Breakfast costs \$3 for everyone else.

March 17th | 7:00pm - Meet The Cast
Tickets \$8 presale & \$10 at the door

March 18th | 2:00pm - Meet the Cast
Tickets \$6 presale & \$8 at the door

March 18th | 6:00pm
Tickets \$8 presale & \$10 at the door

For tickets email Barb Hendricks:
barbaraj18@yahoo.com

14500 Metro Parkway, Entrance off of Schoenherr Road, Sterling Heights, MI 48312
ParkwayChristian.org/upcomingshows

PAST PRODUCTIONS



From top to bottom:
TJ Grau as Alladin
Guppi Bryant as Iago
MacKenzie Ings as Annie
Lauren Hendricks as
Miss Hannaigan

PARKWAY INTERNATIONAL FAMILY FUN FESTIVAL

FRI, MAY 5
4PM - 8PM
586.446.9900

14500 METRO PKWY
STERLING HEIGHTS, MI
PARKWAYCHRISTIAN.ORG/PIFFF

Join us at the Parkway International Family Fun Festival (PIFFF), our annual fundraiser featuring our "Taste of the World" food court, silent auction, inflatables, interactive games, and much more for the whole family!