

## Southview Hosts HCN 60<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting



Pastor Aaron Householder, his staff, and the members of Southview did a superb job of hosting the Heartland Church Network 60<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting. Karen DeJabet and her fellowship team coordinated a delicious dinner and after meeting dessert time. Myra Boden and their praise team brought us into God's presence during the worship times. A host of Southview members also served as greeters. **THANKS for all you did to make our evening in Lincoln special.**

HCN officially received two new churches into our ever growing fellowship: **First Baptist Church of Columbus** and **Vision Community Church of Lincoln**. A 2019 budget of \$501,110.00 was approved which reflects a \$5,000 decrease from 2018. Pastor Steve Holdaway extended a challenge to give as well as clarification on the use of the 2018 State Missions Offering. All the offering given by Nebraska churches will return to the state to support collegiate ministries on the UNL and UNK campuses. We experienced our bi-annual passing of the gavel as outgoing Moderator John Gibbs of Westside Church passed the mantle of leadership to Moderator Elect Ralph Lassiter of Mt. Moriah Missionary Baptist Church.

The highlight of the evening revolved around our theme: Each One Start One. Four different individuals involved in church planting shared their testimonies. North American Mission Board Church Planting Catalyst Dallas Powell led out as he gave an overview of what God has been doing in the church planting area. Planting Pastor Angel Morales of Camino a la Cruz in Omaha reflected on all that God has done in just over a year to help him plant a new Spanish language church. He contrasted it with his experience of starting a Spanish language mission inside a strong Anglo church in Springfield, MO, where there were only a handful of Latinos versus his experience in Omaha where there are tens of thousands of Spanish speakers. Planting Pastor Dong Hyun Cho of Lincoln Vision Community Church reflected on how God has led him through several challenging experiences in his life. He emphasized God's faithfulness as he started a Korean language church in Lincoln. Closing out the testimonies was Planting Pastor Ricky Rohrig of Crossroads Community Church in Red Oak. The previous new churches were only one or two years old, while Pastor Ricky has been working in Red Oak for over five years. He batted cleanup for a reason—to emphasize the reality that starting a new church in a small community takes considerably more time than planting one in an urban setting. *(continued on page 5)*



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Facebook – Heartland Church Network



## Calendar of Events

**JANUARY**  
12 HCN Christmas Fellowship at Millard Social Hall (11:30)  
14 Connect Work Group Meeting (10am)  
14 Support Work Group Meeting (Noon)

**FEBRUARY**  
Pastors' Wives Appreciation Month

**MARCH**  
3 Week of Prayer for Annie Armstrong Easter Offering  
8-9 Minister & Spouse Retreat at Lied Lodge  
22-23 KNCSB Worship Leader & Family Retreat  
29-31 KNCSB Eagle Retreat

**APRIL**  
6 KNCSB Power Up  
12-13 KNCSB Glow, WCC  
13 VBS Training Jumpstart, LifeSpring Church  
26-27 DR Show & Shine, Southview Baptist Church

The HCN Calendar can be found at the following link on the HCN webpage:  
<http://www.heartlandchurchnetwork.com/calendar.html>

"I know, Lord, that a man's way of life is not his own; no one who walks determines his own steps." –Jer. 10:23



**Mark Elliott, DoM**  
**Haley Lester, Admin Assistant**  
**/Bookkeeper**  
**Darrell Cumpton, Facilities Manager**

## Redeemer Church Calls New Pastor

After an extensive pastor search process, Redeemer Church is happy to announce they have called Pastor Brian Weygandt as their new senior pastor. Brian and his wife, Maeghan, were in Omaha the weekend of June 3<sup>rd</sup> and after Sunday morning services the church unanimously extended a call to Pastor Weygandt. Brian and Maeghan are originally from Missouri and have three children, Eden, Emery and Malachi. They are coming to Omaha from Newport News, Virginia where Brian served as pastor of Immanuel Baptist Church for the last 5 years.

Pastor Brian holds a Bachelors of Arts in Religious Education with a Minor in Philosophy from Southwest Baptist University in Bolivar, MO. He later received a Master of Arts in Theological Studies at the Nazarene Theological Seminary in Kansas City, MO. Brian previously served as Youth Pastor for First Baptist church of Shelbina, MO and Associate Pastor for Lakewood Way Community Church in Kansas City, MO.

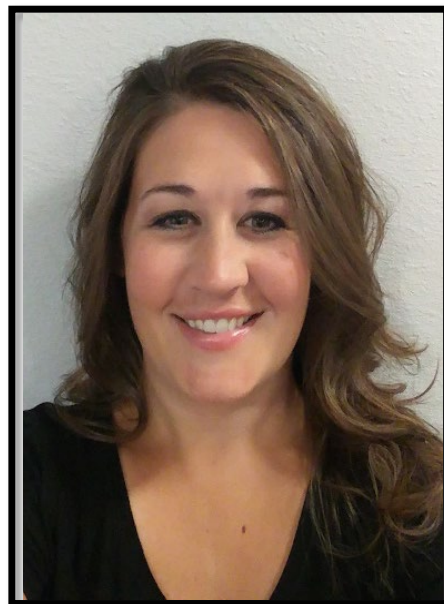
The Weygandt family relocated to Omaha in late June with Pastor Brian preaching his first official sermon at Redeemer Church on June 24. Brian's wife, Maeghan, is an experienced pre-school teacher with a passion for working with youth. Carl Bartenhagen, a member of the Redeemer Pastor Search Team stated, "We are very excited to see how God will use the Weygandts at Redeemer as we strive to help people encounter and follow Jesus."

Please join us in welcoming the Weygandt family back to the Midwest.

"...so we speak, not to please men, but rather God, who examines our hearts." – 1 Thess. 2:4b



## Haley Lester is the new HCN Admin Asst. / Bookkeeper



Haley Lester, whose husband is pastor of LifeSpring's Midtown campus, began serving as Heartland Church Network's part-time bookkeeper in August of 2018.

With the resignation of Angie Posey, HCN began prayerfully seeking a new office manager/administrative assistant. After seeking resumes and interviews, we asked Haley if she would consider increasing her hours and serving in both roles. She agreed! At that time we also agreed to look for someone who could work part-time in a secretary/support role.

Welcome Haley, as she stepped into the larger day-to-day role in the HCN office on October 10th.

## Heartland Center for Continuing Education

### Heartland Bible Institute

We continue to be blessed by the opportunity to provide variety in our continuing education ministry. Allison Miller has stepped into the big shoes of Dr. Larry Allen to teach the non-accredited 3-4 session classes that meet every-other Monday at the HCN office from 6:30-8:30.

\*\*The only cost for these classes is student's time and a small fee for the textbook.



### SPRING 2019 SCHEDULE

#### The Reason for God

January 7th

January 21st

February 4<sup>th</sup>

#### Ephesians

February 18th

March 4th

March 14th

### Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary

The two certificate courses that were completed this fall were Discipleship and Evangelism taught by Dr. Steve Hicks and Apologetics by PhD student Adam Johnson. These classes carry a one-time application fee to Midwestern of \$25, a small \$10 course fee, cost of textbook(s), and a lot more student time. The reward, is that up to 24 hours of the classes we teach can be transferred to Midwestern's Spurgeon College and applied to a BS degree.

### SPRING 2019 SCHEDULE

#### New Testament Survey I

**Teacher:** Dr. Jeff Medina

**Location:** Westside Church in Omaha

**Time/Date:** Monday's from 6-9 p.m. (Start Date- January 14<sup>th</sup>)

#### The Church

**Teacher(s):** Dr. Ralph Lassiter and Mark Elliott

**Location:** HCN Building

**Time/Date:** Tuesday's from 6-9 p.m. (Start Date- Tuesday January 8<sup>th</sup>)



\*\*Registration forms and class syllabi are available on the HCN website\*\*

## Celebrating Well

There are innumerable implications of the prosperity and pace of American life on the day-to-day activities of the local church. One of the more subtle ways church life has shifted is in the way we celebrate the immeasurable blessings that God has poured out on us. Too many churches experience a special outpouring of God's blessing or a unique historical event and immediately prepare for the next event—after all Sunday is coming! How many times do we see in the book of Acts a repetition of major blessings? For example Peter's encounter with Cornelius and Paul's conversion experience. Both events were memorable and worth celebrating again and again.

In recent months two HCN churches stepped up and did a great job of celebrating special historical events. Westside Church of Omaha observed its 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and LifeSpring Church celebrated their pastor's 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.

Westside is a unique church in many ways. One of special notes is that current Senior Pastor Dr. Curt Dodd is only its third pastor. The founding pastor was Dr. Calvin Miller who passed the baton to Dr. Tony Lambert. Westside is a shining example of what pastoral stability will do for a church. Dr. Dodd led the church to pull out all the stops, and they did a fantastic job of building energy and momentum towards an action packed weekend in mid-August commemorating their 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.

Former pastors and their families were invited, introduced, and included in the program. The weekend kicked off on Friday night, August 10<sup>th</sup>, with a flashback to Westside 2.0 with Tony Lambert's impassioned southern Mississippi message and Mitch Rayborn's powerful voice bringing special music. Barbara Miller (Calvin's wife) and the family were recognized as Calvin was "called home" a few years ago.

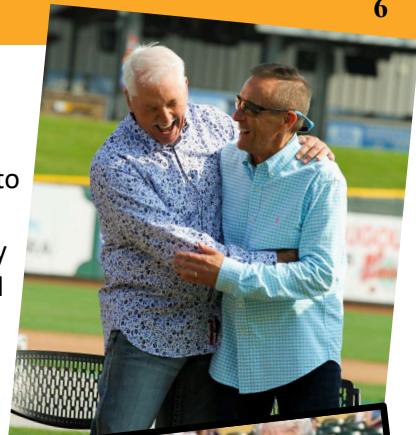
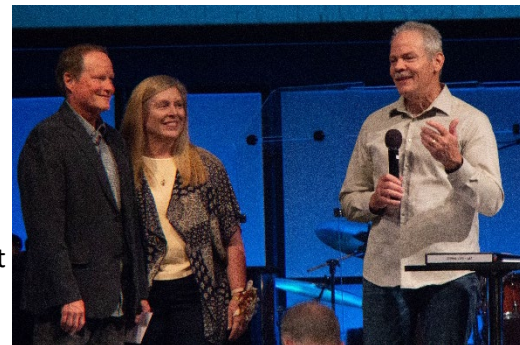
Symbolic of the changes that have taken place during the life-span of the church, Westside had special concerts by Sandi Patty (for the mature audience in Westside's sanctuary) and David Crowder (for the young at heart an outdoor concert at Werner Park). They also put together a special anniversary choir for the Friday and Saturday night services. In addition they did an outdoor worship service on Sunday morning at Werner Park that was followed by lunch. Wow! What a weekend to celebrate the past and a weekend to remember in the future!

One month later, on September 9<sup>th</sup> LifeSpring Church in Bellevue celebrated Senior Pastor Steve Holdaway's 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary at the church. The church did a great job of acknowledging the teamwork that Steve and Susan model as they recognized her contributions as well. During both morning worship services there were live and video reflections from long-time LifeSpring members, former ministry staff who had served with Steve, and NAMB President Kevin Ezell who recognized Steve's service on the NAMB Trustee Board.



However, the highlight of the day might have been the afternoon come-and-go reception. At the mid-point of the reception, time was taken by current staff to share their reflections of Steve and Susan's ministry. Then a surprise love offering was presented to the Holdaways that provided funds for both of them to be able to do a Holy Land Tour. Not very often can a church the size of LifeSpring keep a secret from a pastor and wife that are so engaged in the day-to-day activities of the church, but they did it! The Holdaway's were truly surprised and genuinely humbled by the gift and will be traveling to Israel in late January.

Take a few minutes to reflect on your own church. What has God done lately that you've just run past with a cursory "thanks"? What are some things in the church's history that are worthy of reflection and retelling on a regular basis? As we start a new year, maybe you can start anew by learning to celebrate well.



## Harrison Street Celebrates the Ministry of Roger & Deb Criser



Previous newsletter articles have talked about the unique approach that Harrison Street Baptist Church in LaVista took after long time Pastor Roger Criser announced his intention to retire. The church used an Intentional Transition process with Dr. Larry Allen and DoM Mark Elliott serving as consultants. This process proceeded while Roger still served as pastor. Such a process is usually limited to larger churches, but members of the Transition Team as well as those who served on the Pastor Search Team were unanimous in their affirmation that it can be effectively used even in a small church.

Having successfully completed the search process the church did a formal installation service for incoming Pastor Doug Hall on May 6<sup>th</sup>. Pastor Doug and Roger's ministry overlapped for four months. Then on August 12<sup>th</sup> the church held a retirement celebration service to acknowledge the almost 29 years that Roger served at Harrison Street. Pastor Roger retired after 45 years of service as a pastor. His first church was in Lexington, NE, his second in Chanute, KS, then he, Deb, and the girls returned to Nebraska where Roger served as pastor in Fremont before coming to pastor Harrison Street in LaVista.

The celebration opened with the hymn *God You're So Good* and the balance of the service was interspersed with Roger and Deb's favorite hymns and choruses—and even one where Roger played his guitar and led. The hymn was followed by comments from LaVista Mayor Doug Kindig (a long-time friend), Police Captain D. J. Barcal (Roger served as a police chaplain for years), and HCN DoM Mark Elliott. The church worked with Roger and Deb to find pictures and put together a PowerPoint in the form of a diary with notes God might have penned about Roger and Deb.

Three individuals were invited to reminisce about various aspects of the Criser's ministry beyond Harrison Street. Randy Shackleton, a member of their first church in Lexington, spoke of the early days. Sarah Halmes, HCN's Children's Camp Director, talked about her experiences with Roger and Deb (who have served in the association's summer camp for years). She has known the Crisers since her time as a young camper through serving as junior sponsor, camp staffer, and now as camp director. Rev. Peck Lindsay closed out the reflection time. Peck knew Roger when he was a teenager at Hillcrest Baptist Church in Omaha. All four churches Roger served were part of KNCSB where Peck has served as Executive Director and now part-time consultant.

Before retiring to Fellowship Hall for cake and punch, the church provided reflections and gifts. Barry Kimbrell who served on both the Transition and Search Team talked about the transition process and his reflections as a long-time member of the church. Betty Kent unpacked a travel bag describing various items that would be used as Roger and Deb would now have time for trips. Alia and Tim Zawistowski each presented unique mementoes. Alia presented a poster-board sized card on which members of the church had written notes of encouragement. Tim unveiled a painting he had done for Roger and Deb.

It was an exciting Sunday filled with times of worship, statements of appreciation, wonderful reflections, innumerable expressions of thanks, and a sweet time of fellowship. Since Deb served as the church's part-time secretary, pray for both Roger and Deb as they adjust to day-to-day life as retirees.



## How Does HCN Support Churches?

### OUR PURPOSE

*Heartland Church Network is here to Connect, Support, and Start churches passionate about changing the world.*

That's a nice catchy statement, but what does that look like on a day-to-day basis? This article will focus on the **supporting** role which has at its core assisting churches as they develop leaders.

\*The **Heartland Center for Continuing Education**, which is mentioned in a sister article in this edition of the newsletter, is a key area where HCN provides an opportunity for leadership development to members from all of our churches.

\*Another area that is available to all churches is assistance with funding "**Special Projects**." A project is anything that involves outreach, evangelism, or leadership development. HCN will assist a church so that it can do more than they could on their own. The catch is that the activity must be an event intended to reach out into the community for the purpose of sharing the gospel—servant evangelism projects included.

### Special Projects Form

- Describe the event or leadership conference.
- What's the date and location of the project or conference?
- Who is the main target group or attendance group?
- What resources will your church be able to provide?
- How will you use HCN funds and how much are you requesting?
- What is your follow-up plan?
- After the event or conference, we ask that you provide a report on its impact—an event isn't completed until you have evaluated its effectiveness. BTW: Approval of future requests for assistance will be contingent upon receipt of a follow-up report.

\*available on the HCN website

\* We also assist churches as they send their leaders to regional or national **training** events.

\* From time-to-time HCN provides **local conferences**. Often they are targeted events focusing on specific topics: discipleship, legal issues, developing a missional mindset, etc. At other times training is provided in multiple areas, like the Pivot Conference.

\* HCN is blessed with good pastors, staff, and lay leaders—many of whom have long tenures. Mark is often heard saying, "I definitely don't know it all, but I do know a lot of people who know how to do a lot of things very well." So another way HCN supports the local church is by **connecting** your specific need to people who have "been there, done that, wore the t-shirt, and wore it well!"

## How Does HCN Support Churches? continued

\* One area that DoM Mark Elliott particularly enjoys is **designing one-on-one consulting and conferencing**. The reality is that no two churches are alike; however, there are principles that transcend time and culture. Being able to look objectively at a church from the outside and then make specific application of those principles can be tremendously valuable to a local church. Complicating our world today is the reality that we live in an era of information overload. Pastors who are looking for information can find mega-tons of it. The question really becomes, in the midst of that glut of information, what is really relevant to my particular situation? Mark has assisted churches as they wrestle with questions about "the right next step." He has coordinated events such as team building, strategic planning, men's retreats, staff and leadership team retreats, equipping Sunday School/small group leaders, etc.

\*Another unique way that HCN supports leadership development is through **discussion summaries** that Mark writes. The reality is that most pastors don't have time to do a lot of reading beyond what they do for sermon prep. So several years ago, Mark began to expand his reading list looking for good books on the topics of spiritual development, leadership development, and organizational health. When he finds one he summarizes the principles, pulls excerpts from the book, and develops questions and activities that are pastor and church specific. The book summaries can be found on the HCN web page.

We are careful to remind ourselves that we are NOT the church! Heartland Church Network exists to connect, support, and start churches passionate about changing the world!

Consider if there are ways that you can better utilize our resources to build your churches, communities, and leaders, then contact us and...

**LET US KNOW HOW WE CAN HELP YOU!**

## Southview Hosts HCN 60<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting continued

That reality is true for a number of reasons. The obvious one is that there are simply fewer people to reach. Another is that there are fewer people whose lives are in transition—small communities tend to have a more stable population. A third reason is that people who enjoy life in small communities are usually less open to change in general. Last but definitely not least, is that many people in smaller communities have multi-generational ties to their community which means that their relational needs are being met. This also means that most residents have "family ties" to an established church of some kind—whether they attend or not, they have a "home church." Some might ask, "Then why should we bother to try planting in smaller communities?" Because there are people there who have never heard of Jesus and/or who have never heard a clear presentation of the gospel.

Our annual meeting themes were established when we approved our 2020 Vision in 2015. They are:

- 2016: Each One Reach One—emphasis on evangelism
- 2017: Each One Teach One—emphasis on discipleship
- 2018: Each One Start One—emphasis on starting something new
- 2019: Each One Brand One—emphasis on multiplication
- 2020: Each One Plant One—emphasis on planting new churches

Although these are our annual themes, in reality churches should be engaged in each of the above activities on a day-to-day basis. Remember we fulfill the Great Commandments and Great Commission in the greatest manner when we love our neighbors enough to go, and make disciples who glorify God through their transforming lives!