

THE CONNECTING|WIRE – June 17, 2011

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For the week of 06/19/11

THE CONNECTING WIRE
The Men's Ministry e-mail newsletter of
First Baptist Church Kettering
www.Histask.org

THE CONNECTING WIRE is the opt-in newsletter for the men of FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH KETTERING. It's a periodic service that helps connect you with God and with other men at FBK. If you'd like its delivery to your email address stopped, scroll down and follow the instructions at the end of this message. Also let me know if you change your email address and want to keep subscribing to THE CONNECTING WIRE.

“Our Lord Jesus Christ himself and God our Father loved us and through grace gave us eternal comfort and a good hope. May he encourage your hearts and give you strength in every good thing you do or say.” 2 Thessalonians 2:16-17 (CEB)

CONSIDER

“Only those who try to live near God and have formed the habit of faithfulness to Him in the small things of our daily life, can hope in times of need for that special light which shows us our path. To do as well as we can the job immediately before us, is the way to learn what we ought to do next.” Evelyn Underhill (1875-1941)

CHRISTIAN GOALKEEPER SHUTS DOWN CANUCKS IN GAME 7 OF STANLEY CUP FINALS

It can't be easy being your team's last line of defense against an onslaught of shots from the Vancouver Canucks' offense, especially with the pressure of knowing the Stanley Cup trophy is on the line. Boston Bruins goalkeeper Tim Thomas, though, has a little extra motivation when he takes his place on the ice: his faith.

“Our church family has really enjoyed Tim's success in hockey,” wrote Tony Thompson as part of an interview for The Christian Chronicle. Thompson is the preaching pastor for Thomas' church in Massachusetts, Burlington Church of Christ.

Thomas played an integral role in helping his team win the Stanley Cup this year, yet he was at the receiving end of some sharp criticism by opposing goalie Roberto Luongo earlier in the series.... Read this in full at

<http://www.christianpost.com/news/christian-goalkeeper-shuts-down-canucks-in-game-7-of-stanley-cup-finals-51239/>

ANTHONY WEINER AND SPIRITUAL SCHIZOPHRENIA

by Jim Denison

"Sexting" is just another symptom of the belief that our personal behavior can be held to a different standard than our public actions, but as Rep. Anthony Weiner's scandal proves, private sin never stays private.... Read this in full at

<http://www.abpnews.com/content/view/6481/9/>

Also see "Rep. Weiner Needs Jesus? Albert Mohler Explains Why"

<http://www.christianpost.com/news/rep-weiner-needs-jesus-albert-mohler-explains-why-51142/>

and

"Theology, Therapy, Twitter, and the Scandal of the Gospel"

<http://www.christianpost.com/news/theology-therapy-twitter-and-the-scandal-of-the-gospel-51155/>

COMPLETE COMMON ENGLISH BIBLE RELEASED DIGITALLY BEFORE PRINT

In a nod to the revolutionary changes occurring in publishing, the new complete Common English Bible (<http://twitter.com/CommonEngBible> & <http://twitter.com/VersesForToday>) is now debuting in 20 digital platforms, almost two months before print editions will be available in stores. It's currently online at <http://CommonEnglishBible.com> along with a search widget users can download to their blogs and websites

(<http://CommonEnglishBible.com/CEB/LookupWidget>).

The digital editions of the Common English Bible are Kindle, iPad, iPhone, Nook, Sony, Olivetree, Logos, BibleWorks, Accordance Software, ChristianBook, Kobo, OverDrive, Blio, Copia, Lightning Source, and YouVersion. The introductory suggested retail price of all electronic versions is \$5.95 and will increase to the regular suggested retail price of \$9.95 September 1. The new translation will also be searchable through Bible Gateway (<http://BibleGateway.com>), and Bible Study Tools (<http://BibleStudyTools.com>).

This is the first time the Common English Bible is available in its complete form including the Old Testament, and available with the Apocrypha. The New Testament was released August 2010.

"The Common English Bible is a brand-new, bold translation designed to meet the needs of people in all stages of their spiritual journey and study," says Paul Franklyn, associate publisher for the Common English Bible. "We're excited to make this translation available as soon as possible through the Internet and other digital resources."

The Common English Bible is unlike any other translation. It's uncommon in that it's the newest translation by the largest number of biblical scholars & church leaders in words 21st century readers use every day, aligning academic rigor with modern understandability, proven through extensive field-testing with, and acting on feedback from, hundreds of readers. The new Common English Bible is the only translation to combine and balance highly respected ecumenical biblical scholarship necessary for serious study with responsiveness to 21st century clear communication requirements for comprehensive clarity. It was approved in May by Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA, for official use in biblical studies courses.... Read this in full at

http://www.religionnews.com/index.php?/pressreleases/complete_common_english_bible_released_digitally_before_print/

Also see "New Common English Bible in 21st Century Language Available Digitally"

<http://www.christianpost.com/news/new-common-english-bible-in-21st-century-language-available-digitally-51257/>

SPIRITUAL GROWTH IS WORK

by Tullian Tchividjian

It may come as a shock to some that "let go and let God" is not biblical. The truth is that the Christian life is not effortless.... Read this in full at

<http://www.christianity.com/Home/Christian%20Living%20Features/11651707/>

BREAKING THE MOLD

by Jon Tyson

As a Christian leader, I am grieved by statistics indicating that believers and non-believers live almost identical lives: similar sexual ethics, spending patterns, and lifestyle choices. Despite spending millions of dollars on transformation campaigns, conferences, books, curricula, worship music, small groups, multimedia, Internet churches, and all forms of relevance and engagement, Christians are remarkably like the world.

This is compounded by real confusion about how to healthily engage the culture around us. So we end up, sadly, "of the world but not in it." Why do our best efforts seem to make so little difference? And how can we help our people grow into actual Christ-likeness?

I agree with James Wilhoit, author of *Spiritual Formation as if the Church Mattered*: "Spiritual formation is the task of the church. Period. Spiritual formation is at the heart of its whole purpose for existence. The church was formed to form. Our charge, given by Jesus himself, is to make disciples, baptize them, and teach these new disciples to obey his commands." Read this in full at

<http://www.christianitytoday.com/le/2011/spring/breakingmold.html>

LOVING LIFE VS. SEIZING LIFE

“Death holds the power of great fear over us, so it is paradoxical that Jesus used his own death to set men free from the one who had the power of death. Having given his own life for our freedom, he issues us a sacred invitation to die to all iniquity so we can enjoy the gifts of life he has reserved for us in his name.

“Loving life and seizing life are two very different operations. When Jesus asks a man to receive life God's way - that is, to embrace the death of his own crud and to bear his own cross in order to live - he is asking him to make a choice to live in relationship with God while giving up and giving back what he has seized for himself. This is the choice that marks the fork in the road for all men, a choice that leads a man into meaningful relationships with others or reinforces a forlorn determination to go it alone.

“The good news is [Jesus] cares supremely about relationships, including those with scoundrels, prostitutes, addicts, hypocrites, commoners, keepers of dark and hidden secrets, and cheats and losers of every stripe - even traitors who betray him with a kiss of friendship... What is extraordinary is that the death Jesus invites us to embrace somehow makes it possible to receive, quite literally, everything we need to actually be alive. Jesus guarantees he will make our hearts live. In fact, King David's prophetic description of the suffering liberator [see Psalm 22] transitions from the mockery of onlookers, the dividing of his garments, and the piercing of his hands and feet to a victorious canticle of praise that contains one of the greatest celebratory blessings ever written. That blessing, ‘May your hearts live forever!’ has become the frequent and favorite toast around our dinner table, and it is fitting around the table of the bread and the wine, as we remember Jesus and speak his name to our brothers.” Wes Yoder in *Bond of Brothers: Connecting with Other Men Beyond Work, Weather, and Sports*

K.J. CHOI IS A GOLF GOD WHO GIVES BACK

Golf is how K.J. Choi makes his money. Donations are how he likes to spend a lot of it. "I believe in sharing," says Choi, a pro golfer from South Korea who gave away over \$300,000 that he earned on this year's PGA Tour. "A lot of people make money but we all live in a society where we need to share."

He has pledged \$200,000 of the \$1.71 million that he won at last month's Players Championship in Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida to victims of the deadly tornadoes that recently struck the American South.

Choi has a reputation for being a devout Christian. He and his family are members of the Dallas Korean United Methodist Church in Texas.... Read this in full at

<http://religion.blogs.cnn.com/2011/06/17/k-j-choi-is-a-golf-god-who-gives-back/>

ARCHAEOLOGISTS DISCOVER FOR FIRST TIME ANCIENT CHURCH IN ACRE, ISRAEL

Archaeologists unearthed a 1,500-year-old structure, believed to be a church, in the northern city of Acre, Israel. It's the first time the Israel Antiquities Authority has found solid proof that the city of Acre played a role in early Christianity.

“This is an important discovery for the study of Acre,” said Nurit Page, head of the excavation, according to Israel’s Haaretz Daily Newspaper. Page noted that this discovery is particularly important because “no remnants from the Byzantine Period had been found other than living quarters near the [Mediterranean] Sea.” Read this in full at

<http://www.christianpost.com/news/archaeologists-discover-for-first-time-ancient-church-in-acre-israel-51130/>

REVIVING CHRISTIAN HISTORY

The magazine Christian History (<http://www.christianhistorymagazine.org/>), formerly owned by Christianity Today International, ceased publication in 2008 due to recessionary pressures. But Christian History is now being published again thanks in part to Chris Armstrong, Bethel Seminary St. Paul’s professor of church history.

Before arriving at Bethel in 2005, Armstrong served for several years as managing editor for the magazine. So when invited last fall by Christian History’s founding company, the Christian History Institute (<http://www.chitorch.org/>), to take the role once again, he jumped at the chance. By winter he had gathered a team of writers, editors, and designers, and in March the “re-inaugural” issue, celebrating the 400th anniversary of the King James Bible’s first printing, was rolling off the presses.

Armstrong is excited to be editing the magazine once again. “Writing and editing for a popular audience meshes well with teaching,” he explains. “Both involve scholarly research, and both require taking complex information and presenting it in a clear, compelling, exciting way.” Read this in full at

<http://www.bethel.edu/news-events/news/2011/june/reviving-christian-history>

SUPER NATURAL: JOSH HAMILTON'S COMEBACK

Rock bottom for baseball superstar Josh Hamilton came one night in the fall of 2005, when he woke up in a trailer surrounded by strangers. Confused, lost, and with nowhere to turn, he showed up at his grandmother's door at 2 a.m.

She didn't recognize him. Mary Holt's grandson had been a chiseled athlete, 6-foot-4, 230 pounds, who could hit the ball a mile and run like a gazelle. That night he was down to 180, cheeks sunken, eyes glazed over, his rail-thin body a complete mess.

Josh Hamilton was a junkie. He was bingeing on crack, downing a bottle of whisky every day, and burning through a \$4 million signing bonus. Add a few recent suicide attempts, and there really was no tomorrow. Holt began nursing her strung-out grandson back to health, but with an ultimatum: Quit the drugs or move out.

Hamilton, now an All-Star outfielder for the Texas Rangers, has been clean ever since (he must submit to urine tests three times a week), and is arguably the best player in professional baseball.

"It's amazing I'm still alive after all I've done to my body," Hamilton told Christianity Today. "My granny told me during those days that God had something special planned for me, otherwise I would have died." Read this in full at <http://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2011/june/supernatural.html>

“MY UTMOST FOR HIS HIGHEST”

by Doug Koop

Since the late 1920s, generations of Christians have been spiritually nourished by a collection of daily devotional readings by Oswald Chambers, a Scottish Bible teacher who died while serving as a chaplain to British Commonwealth troops in Egypt during World War I.

My Utmost for His Highest is the best known and loved of nearly 30 titles that bear the name of a man who died in 1917 at the age of 43. Today literally millions of people around the world read his work each day. And a decade ago, My Utmost placed in the top 10 on Christianity Today's list of the best religious books of the 20th century.

“It is a treasury of daily devotional readings that has fed the souls of millions of Christians in the twentieth century,” wrote Fuller Seminary president Richard Mouw at the time. “Future generations of Christians must continue to draw from this treasury.” Read this in full at <http://www.christianweek.org/blog.php?id=40>

STAYING AFLOAT AMID INFORMATION OVERLOAD

by Edie Gross

The flow of information never stops for the Rev. Dr. Todd Adams, the associate general minister and vice president in the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). He fields up to 150 emails a day. He spends afternoons trading text messages about the church's strategic plans. And he once tuned in to a conference call via cellphone while cutting the grass.

On a recent night, he and his wife had climbed into bed to watch TV when he heard the telltale ping of his cellphone from across the room. He hopped out of bed, retrieved an email, fired up his laptop, and went to work responding. It was past 9:30 p.m. “It's like an addiction,” Adams said. “I'm so driven by the customer service component of what our office is supposed to provide that I want them to have an immediate response. “I am a digital media boundary failure,” he added, with a laugh.

His experience isn't unique, and it raises questions for leaders of Christian institutions: Is it possible to serve the church's mission and still give your mind, body and soul a much-needed break from the seemingly unending flow of information? Read this in full at <http://faithandleadership.com/features/articles/staying-afloat-amid-information-overload>

REVIVING SISTER AIMEE

The radio program On Being takes a look back at the closest thing the early 20th century may have had to Oprah Winfrey. The flamboyant Pentecostal preacher Aimee Semple McPherson was a multimedia sensation and a powerful female religious leader long before most of Christianity considered such a thing. She also fed a million people in Depression-era Los Angeles. The contradictions and passions of her life are a window into the world of global Pentecostalism that touches as many as half a billion lives today.... Listen to this program in full at

<http://being.publicradio.org/programs/2011/reviving-sister-aimee/>

160 MILLION MISSING GIRLS

'Sex selection' is creating a new endangered species: women. A journalist investigates the countries with too many men.... Read this in full at

http://www.boston.com/bostonglobe/ideas/articles/2011/06/05/160_million_missing_girls/?page=full

POLL: MOST AMERICANS NO LONGER WANT GOVERNMENT PROMOTING 'TRADITIONAL VALUES'

A new CNN-Opinion Research poll finds that a majority of Americans think government should not promote "traditional values," the first time in the past two decades that support for promotion of traditional values has been below 50%. The June poll finds that more Americans now believe that the government should stay out of the values business.

Since 1993, Gallup, CNN, and USA Today have occasionally asked whether people think "the government should promote traditional values in our society" or "the government should not favor any particular set of values." Just three years ago, only four-in-ten polled said government should not support any one set of values. In this month's poll, 50% said this. For the first time, a minority (46%) wanted government to push traditional values.... Read this in full at

<http://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2011/juneweb-only/traditionalvalues.html>

VERSE TO PONDER

"Jesus said to everyone, 'All who want to come after me must say no to themselves, take up their cross daily, and follow me. All who want to save their lives will lose them. But all who lose their lives because of me will save them.'" Luke 9:23-24 (CEB)

CONSIDER

"To possess money is very well; it may be a most valuable servant. To be possessed by it is to be possessed by a devil, and one of the meanest and worst kinds of devils." Tryon Edwards

FINDING FAITH: WHEN JOURNALISTS COVER RELIGION

On the first day of Ari Goldman's "Covering Religion" class at the Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism, he likes to begin with a question. "How many of you have ever

been to a mosque?" About two of the 16 students typically raise their hands. "How many of you have been to a synagogue?" About half raise their hands. "To a church?" Almost all hands go up. "In the last 10 years?" Hands go down again.

Goldman's first goal is to bring his students up to a level of religious literacy. "Before I can teach (students) how to write about religion, I have to teach (them) some religion," Goldman said. "I'm not just training religion writers, I'm training reporters who can see a religion angle in a bigger story and not just dismiss it as superstition or fear." Read this in full at <http://www.deseretnews.com/article/700143216/Finding-faith-When-journalists-cover-religion.html>

HEIRS TO THE KING

“The devil will use intimidation, weariness, discouragement, and disappointment to stop our confession of what God has said. You can readily understand why the enemy tries to keep our focus on ourselves. As long as we are coming to God based on who we are in ourselves and what we have done, we will slink out of his presence, crawling out in shame and unworthiness. But when we grasp that our rights and privileges are in the name of the one who made covenant with God the Father on our behalf, we will come boldly and expectantly, speaking the name: ‘Jesus!’

“In Galatians 4:7, Paul said: ‘Therefore you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.’ Reading the New Testament is like reading the last will and testament of a wealthy benefactor, where the riches of his estate are enumerated. Here is what is bequeathed us. We are:

- heirs of eternal life (Matt. 19:29)
- heirs of salvation (Heb. 1:14)
- heirs of the promise (Heb. 6:17)
- heirs of the kingdom (James 2:5)
- heirs of the grace of life (1 Peter 3:7)
- heirs of the blessing (1 Peter 3:9)
- heirs of all things (Rev. 21:7)

“And that is the short list. Here is the full accounting of the assets:

- The estate of a king has been willed to us.
- We are heirs of all that belongs to the Father.
- By right of birth, every spiritual blessing is ours.

“Imagine that for a moment. Imagine having resources like that to draw upon. Now imagine how secure you would feel if you believed that. I mean, really believed that.” Excerpt from *The Birthright: Out of the Servants' Quarters, Into the Father's House*, by John Sheasby with Ken Gire

KING JAMES GOES TO THE MOVIES

by David Neff

If you like swashbucklers, Norman Stone's 90-minute KJB: The Book that Changed the World, new on DVD, may be the best way for you to observe the 400th anniversary of the publication of the 1611 Authorized Version of the Bible. There are plenty of men in tights, not to mention clerical robes. They whisper political intrigues, plans to (literally) undermine the government, ride horseback through muddy fields, clang swords, and meet in solemn assemblies. Veteran actor John Rhys-Davies (Raiders of the Lost Ark, Lord of the Rings) "presents" (in the British sense) the story with theatrical flair that teeters on the brink of self-parody.... Read this in full at <http://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/movies/commentaries/2011/kingjamesmovies.html>

AFTER CONTROVERSY, BAPTISTS AFFIRM BELIEF IN `ETERNAL, CONSCIOUS` HELL

Southern Baptists on June 14 called hell an "eternal, conscious punishment" for those who do not accept Jesus, rebutting a controversial book from Michigan pastor Rob Bell that questions traditional views of hell.

Citing Bell's book "Love Wins," the resolution urges Southern Baptists "to proclaim faithfully the depth and gravity of sin against a holy God, the reality of hell, and the salvation of sinners by God's grace alone, through faith alone, in Jesus Christ alone, to the glory of God alone."

Several leaders during the Baptists' 2-day meeting in Phoenix coupled warnings about hell with pleas for evangelism -- especially in areas where there are no churches or missionaries.... Read this in full at

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/06/16/baptist-belief-in-hell_n_877815.html

A FRIEND OF THE FAMILY

by Lucy Bryan Green

When last September's issue of Harper's landed on my coffee table, I hardly expected to find my past within its glossy pages -- least of all in an article about Uganda's persecution of homosexuals. But right there, in Jeff Sharlet's "Straight Man's Burden," was an indictment of the organization that had shaped my college years.

The article transported me to the beginning of my involvement with the Family, also called the Fellowship and sometimes the Christian Mafia (pejoratively by outsiders, playfully by insiders). This loose global network, based out of Washington, D.C., has no organizational structure, no formal leadership, and no mission statement. Its collective purpose is to "live by the principles of Jesus": servant leadership, reconciliation, commitment to a small group of brothers (or sisters), and obedience to God and authority.

I came to the Family the way everyone else does. I was chosen. Someone on the inside -- a former neighbor -- recommended me, and I was offered a summer internship on Capitol Hill.... Read this in full at

http://www.sojo.net/index.cfm?action=magazine.article&issue=soj1106&article=a-friend-of-the-family&cookies_enabled=false

LEADING FROM THE LIONS' DEN: LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLES FROM EVERY BOOK OF THE BIBLE

While most new leadership books proudly promote themselves as the antidote to previous thinking, *Leading from the Lions' Den* takes pride in drawing its wisdom from ideas that have been available for a very long time in the unchanging Word of God. Here, author Tom R. Harper expounds upon one surprising principle from each of the Bible's sixty-six books. Each concept goes toward explaining human nature, which, when understood, is the foundation of business success.

Among the lessons that will work for leaders regardless of culture, time, or place are: "Lead, Inspire and Motivate with Plain Facts" (Deuteronomy), "Defrag Your Organization by Discovering its Weak Forces" (1 Chronicles), "Fight Superior Force with Superior Character" (Nahum), "Purify Your PR by Avoiding the Spotlight" (Mark), "Help the Competition" (Romans), "Soak Your Shield Before Battle" (Ephesians), and "Obliterate Fear with a Single Weapon" (1 John).

<http://www.bhpublishinggroup.com/books/products.asp?p=9780805444421&cid=LeadingLion-CC120x120>

REFUGEES: CHRISTIANS TAKE FLIGHT

by Elizabeth Kendal

According to the angel, the birth of Jesus -- 'a Saviour who is Christ the Lord' -- was an event of 'good news of great joy that will be for all the people' (Luke 2:8-14). Despite this, it would not be long before 'an angel of the Lord' would appear to Joseph to warn him of the threat to the child's life, and instruct him to gather up his family and flee to Egypt (Matthew 2:13,14). And so Jesus became a refugee.

This Jesus, however, has become our great high priest, and '[not] a high priest who is unable to sympathise with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin'. And so the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews exhorts us, 'Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.' (Hebrews 4:14-16 ESV excerpts)

The number of Christians fleeing for their lives is skyrocketing. Those with financial means may emigrate or fly out and apply for refugee status in the West, an arduous enough process. However, poorer Christians must risk death traversing deserts, oceans and dangerous cities, while dodging bandits and people-traffickers just to seek refuge in a neighbouring state. Lately, finding refuge is becoming increasingly difficult.... Read this in full at <http://www.assistnews.net/Stories/2011/s11060065.htm>

AMERICANS SEE ROOM TO DISAGREE BUT REMAIN FAITHFUL TO RELIGION

Significant majorities of Americans say it's possible to disagree with their religion's teachings on abortion and homosexuality and still remain in good standing with their faith.

The findings, released June 9 in a detailed survey by Public Religion Research Institute, held true for major religious groups, including Catholics and white evangelical Protestants.

The findings reflect the complicated tasks faced by Catholic bishops to discipline politicians who stray from church teaching, or evangelical groups that try to toe a traditional line as cultural values shift around them.

In fact, the survey found that six in 10 Americans chafe at the idea of religious leaders publicly pressuring politicians on the issue of abortion, as has happened to several high-profile Catholic Democrats in recent years.

Overall, 72% of Americans say it's permissible to disagree with church teaching on abortion, and 63% say the same for homosexuality.... Read this in full at [http://www.religionnews.com/index.php?rnstext/americans see room to disagree but remain faithful to religion/](http://www.religionnews.com/index.php?rnstext/americans+see+room+to+disagree+but+remain+faithful+to+religion/)

THERAPISTS WHO HELP PEOPLE STAY IN THE CLOSET

Many people who are openly gay or straight and secular can't grasp how desperately evangelicals do not want to be gay or the lengths to which they will go to try to change.... Read this in full at

http://www.nytimes.com/2011/06/19/magazine/therapists-who-help-people-stay-in-the-closet.html?_r=2&pagewanted=1&hp

SOLVING THE MYSTERY OF WASHINGTON'S FAMOUS LETTER

It started as a mystery. During a lecture in England last December, Jonathan Sarna, America's foremost scholar of American Jewish history, said he did not know the whereabouts of one of American Jewry's most important documents: George Washington's letter to the Hebrew Congregation, in Newport, R.I.

Upon this yellowed piece of 18th-century rag paper is a short but powerful statement from the first president of the United States reassuring one of the original colonial congregations that his nascent government guaranteed religious liberty for all.... Read this in full at

<http://www.forward.com/articles/138689/>

CYBERMISSIONS: USING COMPUTER AND INTERNET TECHNOLOGIES TO IMPACT LIVES FOR CHRIST

by Mark Ellis

Imagine packing 500 hours of Bible college training on a \$13 chip that plays from a cell phone. Add speakers to the cell phone for only \$20 and a group of pastors can be trained in places far-removed or unreachable by conventional means.

“I don’t need a visa to get into these countries,” says John Edmiston, founder of Cybermissions. (www.cybermissions.org) “We tunnel in and then we blast away.”

Edmiston started Cybermissions in 2001 to serve the church in Southeast Asia, especially pastors who had no training. Now their reach is global, with more than a million people each year making use of training materials they provide.... Read this in full at <http://www.assistnews.net/Stories/2011/s11060078.htm>

RELIGIOUS FREEDOM ENVOY CONDEMNS RELIGIOUS INTOLERANCE

The Obama administration’s new envoy for international religious freedom told a UN commission on June 14 that government, political, religious and business leaders must stand ready to condemn hateful ideology.

Borrowing from recent headlines, Ambassador-at-Large Suzan Johnson Cook cited a Florida pastor who had been so “publicly reviled and rebuked” for threatening to burn a Quran that he has virtually no followers left.

The appearance before the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights was the first for Cook, a New York pastor who was recently sworn in after a long nomination battle during which critics questioned her credentials.

“Leaders who remain silent are contributing to the problem and should be held politically accountable,” Cook said at a forum on “Combating Intolerance and Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief.” Read this in full at <http://blog.beliefnet.com/news/2011/06/religious-freedom-envoy-condemns-religious-intolerance.php>

GLOBAL RESTRICTIONS ON RELIGION

For more than half a century, the United Nations and numerous international organizations have affirmed the principle of religious freedom.¹ For just as many decades, journalists and human rights groups have reported on persecution of minority faiths, outbreaks of sectarian violence and other pressures on religious individuals and communities in many countries. But until now, there has been no quantitative study that reviews an extensive number of sources to measure how governments and private actors infringe on religious beliefs and practices around the world.

Global Restrictions on Religion, a new study by the Pew Research Center's Forum on Religion & Public Life, finds that 64 nations - about one-third of the countries in the world - have high or very high restrictions on religion. But because some of the most restrictive countries are very populous, nearly 70% of the world's 6.8 billion people live in countries with high restrictions on religion, the brunt of which often falls on religious minorities.... Read this in full at <http://pewforum.org/Government/Global-Restrictions-on-Religion.aspx>

ONLY ONE IN 20 SWISS ATTENDS CHURCH BECAUSE OF FAITH

Most people go to church in Switzerland simply because it's something they have always done – only a few do so because they believe in God, a survey has found.

The poll, carried out by the research institute gfs-zürich for the Reformed Press weekly Protestant church newspaper, also reveals that around 1 in 5 younger members, aged 18 to 39, of Catholic and Protestant churches is considering leaving.

In all, 62% of those asked said they belonged to their church out of habit and had no special reason. The older the person, the higher the percentage.

Around 28% enjoy church services, but only 5% said that was because they believed in God. Seven percent said they were concerned about what would happen when they die.

http://www.swissinfo.ch/eng/swiss_news/Only_one_in_20_attends_church_because_of_faith.html?cid=30433668

CHURCHES IN COMMUNITIES RALLY TOGETHER FOR NATIONAL BACK TO CHURCH SUNDAY, SEPT. 18

Drawing whole communities into church -- that is the goal of many church leaders for National Back To Church Sunday, Sept. 18. In preparation, citywide coordinators will be working to get churches across denominational lines to join together to invite family, friends, neighbors and co-workers to the special Sunday.

This year, National Back To Church Sunday, the single largest community outreach in the nation, is expected to draw the participation of more than 10,000 churches. There are approximately 340,000 churches and about 155 million regular churchgoers across the country.

"The desired goal of National Back To Church citywide initiatives is that a citywide coordinator leads the movement in every community in America," said Eric Abel, vice president of marketing for Outreach, Inc., a Southern California-based marketing company supporting the event. More than 120 church leaders already have expressed interest in becoming citywide coordinators. (outr.ch/cityinitatives)

"This year, National Back To Church Sunday citywide initiatives are multiplying the event's effectiveness," said Philip Nation, ministry development director of LifeWay Research and spokesperson of the nationwide initiative. "Local churches are encouraged to partner with one another to increase the scope of their reach. We support these grassroots movements and anticipate the number of personal invitations will skyrocket." Read this in full at <http://www.christiannewswire.com/news/2569117185.html>

CONSIDER

“Could a mariner sit idle if he heard the drowning cry?

Could a doctor sit in comfort and just let his patients die?

Could a fireman sit idle, let men burn and give no hand?

Can you sit at ease in Zion with the world around you damned?” Leonard Ravenhill

VERSE TO PONDER

“While we were still weak, at the right moment, Christ died for ungodly people. It isn’t often that someone will die for a righteous person, though maybe someone might dare to die for a good person. But God shows his love for us, because while we were still sinners Christ died for us.” Romans 5:6-8 (CEB)

THIS WEEK'S HYMN: PENTECOSTAL POWER

Words & Music: Charles H. Gabriel, 1912

Lord, as of old, at Pentecost,
Thou didst Thy power display,
With cleansing, purifying flame,
Descend on us today.

Refrain

Lord, send the old-time power, the Pentecostal power!
Thy floodgates of blessing, on us throw open wide!
Lord, send the old-time power, the Pentecostal power!
That sinners be converted and Thy Name glorified!

For mighty works for Thee, prepare
And strengthen every heart;
Come, take possession of Thine own,
And never more depart.

Refrain

All self consume, all sin destroy!
With earnest zeal endue
Each waiting heart to work for Thee;
O Lord, our faith renew!

Refrain

Speak, Lord! before Thy throne we wait,
Thy promise we believe,
And will not let Thee go until
The blessing we receive.

Refrain

>from NetHymnal at

<http://nethymnal.org/htm/p/e/pentecop.htm>

ON PRAYER

“God, we pray for economic stability, health care for all, equal opportunities, and decent living wages. May you protect the workers amongst us and ensure they receive what they have earned. Amen.”

PRAY FOR PERSECUTED CHRISTIANS TODAY

<http://christiansin crisis.net/>

PRAY

- For our Church Staff and families
- For our Outreach Ministries
- For Pastor Dr. Keck and family.
- For FBK Unity, Healing, Growth, and Financial Stability
- For growth of the Intercessory Prayer Room Ministry
- Please pray about joining us in prayer every Sunday morning from 6:30 to 7:30. It's a great way to start the Lord's Day!
- Pray for God to put someone in your path to encourage and lead to a saving knowledge of Christ.
- Pray for God to strengthen and renew our marriages; to provide understanding and healing as we deal with daily attacks upon our relationships and families.
- Pray for the employment needs of our community
- Pray for all involved in Upward Sports

[As you travel on business or vacation, let me know if you'd like the church guys to pray for your safety and spiritual effectiveness. I'll add your name to the list for the time you'll be away.]

KETTERING 1ST BAPTIST MEN'S ACTIVITIES

MEN'S STUDIES

Saturday mornings at 6:30 to 8 AM. We have started the 7 week Johnny Hunt Men's Study "Taking Down Goliath" as of June 4, 2011. Room AE 4 in the adult wing.

http://www.sampsonresources.com/products/Johnny_Hunt_Video_Studies.htm

Wednesday nights starting May 25 at 6:30 PM. We have begun another series by Johnny Hunt called "Behind Closed Doors, For Men Only", it is a short 10 minute DVD followed by discussion questions. Jump in any time. This series has 11 sessions. Room AE 4

MEN'S FRATERNITY PROGRAM

We plan on starting the 2nd Men's Fraternity 16 session series "Winning at Home and Work" on Oct 8 2011.

<http://www.mensfraternity.com/>

SHARE YOUR FAVORITE WEBSITES

Tell us what sites you find enjoyable and why.

Take Pride in America

<http://www.takepride.gov/index.html>

National Park Service

<http://www.nps.gov/index.htm>

Roman Numeral Converter

http://www.novaroma.org/via_romana/numbers.html

All links to websites are provided as a service, and do not imply endorsement by our church.

My mechanic told me, "I couldn't repair your brakes, so I made your horn louder."

John Guillaum, Editor, johnguillaum@yahoo.com

THE CONNECTING WIRE is a periodic newsletter of announcements, news, recommendations, articles, and other information helpful to men in our spiritual growth. Thanks for welcoming THE CONNECTING WIRE into your in-box!

Who to contact:

Contact the following if you'd like to participate in a men's discipleship program.

John Guillaum, 937 427-2095, johnguillaum@yahoo.com

Dave Hendricks 427-7582 (H)

Kelly Malcolm 433-8184 (H)

The mission of FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH KETTERING is to honor God by equipping believers to reflect and communicate the love of Jesus in our community and beyond. The Men's Ministry Team offers a variety of activities for men to interact with other men on our journey of faith in Christ together. Large group, small group, and one-to-one events encourage relationship building and spiritual strengthening that result in maximizing the potential we all have in Christ.

The meeting place of FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH KETTERING
3939 Swigart Rd.
Dayton, OH 45440

Tel: 937 429-1671

To subscribe, send a message to johnguillaum@yahoo.com with "subscribe" in the subject line.

To unsubscribe, send a message to johnguillaum@yahoo.com with "unsubscribe" in the subject line.