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**FALL /WINTER 2007**

**WEEKLY HAPPENINGS**

**SUNDAY:**  
 9:30 am: Worship Service  
           Children's classes  
 11:00 am: Christian Education  
           ALife (fireside room)  
           Middle/ High School  
 7:00 pm: High School  
           Youth Group

**MONDAY:**  
 9:30 am: Women's Bible Study

**TUESDAY:**  
 9:15 am: Young Mom's Bible  
           Study  
 9:30 am: Moms R & R  
           (once monthly)  
 7:00 pm: Career & Couples group

**WEDNESDAY:**  
 6:30 am: Men's Bible Study  
 7:00 pm: Youth Small Groups

**THURSDAY:**  
 6:00 pm: aLife College Study  
           (once monthly)  
 7:00 pm: Women's Bible Study

**SATURDAY:**  
 Men's support group



**Living In The Light of the Gospel**  
*by Richard Roberts*

Wow! I cannot believe that it has been an entire year since my family arrived to serve with you at EBF. Katie and I want you all to know that we are continuously in awe of God's goodness to us in sending us to serve among such a wonderful community of believers. Katie often tears up coming into the church parking lot, in tremendous gratitude and joy for how magnificent you all are in our lives. So, we thank you.

As we look back together on this past year, and look forward to the years to come, my first plea at EBF still pierces the passion of my heart for all of us: We Would See Jesus. In our desire to glorify God and to grow in our knowledge of Him, there is a constant need to go to Him, seek Him in prayer together,

submit to His powerful word, and to continually beat into our heads His glorious gospel. It is in His presence, seeing the light of His glorious gospel of grace, we find the motivation and the inward transformation of our spirits that not merely enables us to live missionally, but actually motivates us to live in such a way.

So, for this next year we are going to learn to "think distinctively Christian" (or "gospelly") about everything and every worldview which we encounter in our lives. Rather than simply railing on the depravity and failures of our society, we will learn to distinguish what lies at the root of our culture's (and by our involvement in it, ours too) sin and how it differs, not

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**Keeping The "Fire" Burning** *by Kim Wenger & Stan Davis*

I recently read an article by John Ortberg that told the following story: "Years ago, while on vacation, I was going to fix something on the grill. I made a pile of charcoal, I poured a few gallons of lighter fluid over them, and I started my fire. My son was just fascinated by fire, as most young boys are. He asked what I was doing, and I told him.

There's something about the way these little briquettes are constructed that when you put them together, the fire glows and they get real hot. And if you isolate one it cools off quickly. It loses the fire. But when they stick together, there's fire, because they feed off each other. God designed them to work that way."

me of the purpose behind the Home Fellowship Groups at EBF. We need each other. Together, through encouragement, Bible study, prayer, sharing and loving one another, we keep the fire glowing. While each Home Group will have a certain dynamic, the regular meeting together builds friendships that can lead to significant relationship within the group.

Henri Nouwen encourages believers to become people, "who know and are known, who care and are cared for, who forgive and are forgiven, and who love and are loved." In the context of Home Fellowship Groups, these traits are the basis for authentic relationships.

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## Supplied That God Would Be Glorified

by Randy Gill / EBF elder

A few months ago Jamie and I received an email from a friend relating a story about her two granddaughters. “Kate and Anna only get to play in their front yard when their mother and father are outside. They ride their bikes two houses each way. A couple of weeks ago they were at house 3 and their father called them home. He asked what they were doing since they had been visiting with neighbors. They told him they were playing ‘Missionary’ and telling the neighbors about Paul. Both of their Sunday school classes had been talking about Paul. The really funny part about this story is that Kate, the quiet shy one, was doing the talking while her sister stood by her side.”

What I enjoy about this story is that the girls were just being a normal 3 year old and 5 year old. Doing what they enjoy doing, even what they have a passion for doing and what they were enjoying within was coming out in their ordinary, day to day conversation. They had not been told to go tell their neighbors about what they had learned in Sunday school. They were enamored with and enjoying the story of Paul and from their enjoyment and appreciation of his story they were living missionally.

The question I ask myself is am I living missionally? I want to, I even would say I have a deep desire to, and my tendency would be to reflect on my failures in this area of my life. However, what I have enjoyed so much from Richard’s recent sermon series is the call to look to Jesus. In the conclusion of one of Richard’s messages he said, “Therefore, let us together do all within our power and our means to find access into the presence of our great and glorious God and to discover at all costs who He truly is. Bask in His glory and let His great grace overwhelm you. He is great and greatly to be praised!” This is how I plan to live missionally. As I go about living my life as a husband, father, teacher, friend, etc. I want to do those things in the best way that I am able with God as the center of my life, and acutely I want to be filled with the enjoyment, appreciation, awareness and awe of who God is and what He’s done for me. As a result I trust that I will live missionally.

In Acts 1:8 Jesus says, “...and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, ...and to the ends of the earth.” Oswald Chambers points out that Jesus did not say – Go into Jerusalem..., but rather you will be my witnesses where I put you. I have been ‘put’ in the public school system as a classroom teacher. Daily I encounter a variety of personalities in the form of children, parents and coworkers. At times I feel at the top of my game, I’m energized and ready to meet every challenge. Other times I’m tired, and want a quiet life. But each day at school matches all the others – there are needs that I’m expected to meet and to do so pleasantly. This is where I stand in awe of God. He has compassion for the unlovely, the obnoxious, the insecure – for ME. He is everything I need to be for my students. He is everything I need when I fail. Each day I pray, thanking God for what He has done in Jesus Christ and asking Him for the supply to live so that He will be glorified. †

Living In The Light Of The Gospel continued from pg 1

from mere Judeo-Christian morality, but from the glorious gospel of God’s grace in Jesus Christ. You see, we need to learn that the primary builders of the Kingdom of God are not the pastors, elders, and “professional” ministers, but you. It is the lay person renewing and transforming the culture through living life within our culture in a distinctively Christian way. The gospel of Jesus must become the foundation of all that we do and say in this world. I don’t mean that we are preaching all the time, but rather that the truth of the gospel is underlying why we love, rejoice, forgive, and are so distinctively different than the world.

Look at the ways that the gospel of grace impacts the way that we live missionally (gospel-living):

- 1) When we are enamored with Jesus and His extravagant grace toward us, we are moved to testify to His goodness out of a love for Him and others, not out of guilt or of duty. Because the gospel of grace shows us that we are more desperately sinful than we can even imagine (Jesus had to die), so
- 2) we cannot look down on those who are living sinful lifestyles or who hurt us by their sinful words and actions, because the root sin that is in them is the same root sin that is within me. At the same time, we are more loved than we could ever dare to hope (Jesus DID die for us), so
- 3) we cannot be destroyed or thrown into despair when the world rejects us, attacks us, or even does us harm. Along with this,
- 4) we are hopeful for anyone, even the “hard cases”, because we were saved only by God’s grace, not because we were wise, or humble, or “likely” people to become Christians.
- 5) God has chosen you for His Kingdom and for His glory, so forgiveness and compassion to enemies flows out of the great truth of GRACE as we pray for our enemies. Living gosselly means that we are courteous and patient with people. We do not need to coerce or force decisions out of people, for it is only God’s grace that opens hearts, not our eloquence or persuasion.

My hope for this coming year, and in our study of Ephesians, is that we would see Jesus, and seeing Him we would become completely enamored with Him, proclaim His beautiful grace, and in doing so will glorify God.

*To the Praise of His Glorious Grace,  
Richard*

## The Cucumber and the Kingdom *by Rich Carroll*



On Sunday afternoon, October 25<sup>th</sup>, I stood and walked amidst our fall party for kids here at EBF. I was taken back by the number of kids and parents who took the time to come dressed in various animated costumes to play games, munch on candy, pet exotic looking animals, and listen intently to a cucumber named Larry tell them what the kingdom of God was all about. Larry, Bob the tomato and a Vegi Tales cast of many have a wonderful and creative way of telling stories about the life changing truths contained in the Bible. Over 50 kids from both church-ed and un-church-ed families heard about God's forgiveness offered through His Son. And, I recognized anew the fact that future generations of Bible-believing families and citizens, by the grace of God, will have their very beginning through the events of Fall Parties and what happens every week in the children's classrooms in bible-believing churches such as our own.

"Train up a child in the way they should go, and when they are old they will not depart from it." Proverbs 22:6. Impressionable minds and hearts will not soon forget the ways they have been brought up. While the bible makes no guarantee that kids raised in a Christian home or attend church will embrace Christ it does tell us that kids are effected for life by what they were raised on. It starts in the home. Parents and our churches' ministry to kids are absolutely crucial to their future lives as citizens and Christ-followers. Of the estimated 160 million Christians in America today 70% of them came to believe in Christ during their childhood years (Barna Research), and 8 out of every 10 of these kids come to Christ before the age of 14 through their training at home and in a local church. Their parents, grandparents or friends/neighbors took the time to tell them and bring them to church.

As a result of this early involvement the statistics tell us that those who attended church as a youngster still attend church regularly today (61%), while a large majority of those who were not church-goers as children are still absent from churches today (78%)." (Barna Research)

I was raised in a home where my dad, not my mom, took my brother, sister and I to church every week, coupled with some outside the home weekday spiritual training. Two of the three of us are active today in local churches and clinging to a firm faith in the Gospel.

It only takes one child whose heart is turned to Jesus Christ, to have a significant impact on multiple lives (family, friends, co-workers) for generations to come. This motivates me, and I hope you as well. I have two challenges for all of us here at EBF: First, that we become more missional in our approach to children. Teach our kids at home. Initiate opportunities to invite and transport kids (our own, our grandchildren, our neighbors, and friend's children) to Sunday morning church as well as other EBF children's ministry sponsored events (fall party, Christmas pageant, Easter party, VBS, Summer concerts etc.). Other kids will attract Other parents too. If you don't, who will?

And, secondly, become a part of our children's ministry team. Currently, we have a great preschool and grade school staff (Shelli & Joyce) and group of volunteers who serve our kids and make learning about Jesus fun and relevant to everyday life. We need more people praying, more teachers and helpers, more puppeteers, more event organizers and servers, more outreach ideas in order to attract and communicate the love of God to kids. God has given us here at EBF a vision of "impacting our community by making life-long follower of Jesus".

Like Larry the Cucumber, may we all be attractants and vessels of Truth to our kids in their life-long journey with the risen Savior, Jesus Christ. It really does begin with our kids.

## Missional Worship *by Neil Patton*



When I took my car to the dealership for some warranty work, the first thing the gentleman behind the counter said was, essentially, "Your regular mechanic stinks, we're the best, and why aren't you having us do your maintenance?" Now I've been with my excellent mechanic for 12 years, and it took all my strength to keep from walking out the door right then. It will be a long time before I return to that dealership if I can help it.

When I think about non-believers attending EBF for the first time, I hope and pray that I have not confused the needs of planning our corporate worship with the needs of running a business. People in our culture can smell a sales pitch a mile away. When they walk through those doors, will they see the Church (capital "C") doing what it was created to do? Or will they get a hard sell "invitation" to join an exclusive club that promises to fix all their problems? My non-Christian friends have shared that this has often been their experience when they visit a church.

The truth is, our surrounding culture doesn't want Shiny. They want Real. They want to know how their life story fits into the larger narrative of history. Does the worship they see offer this? Does the Gospel they hear present an alternative to the world's endless quest for power, money and sex?

I so easily forget that I am called to love the Lord with everything I am. This is also the call of the Church. This is worship. When the Church demonstrates its love for the person of Christ through worship, the world starts to see things happen. And the world is watching. Let them see not just celebration. Let them see what mourning is beneath the cover of Christ's grace and mercy. Let them see brokenness. Let them see hope in the middle of suffering. And, yes, let them see joy and peace as well. In essence, let them see us pursue not just the benefits of Christ, but Christ Himself!

In her book *A Royal Waste of Time*, Marva J. Dawn says it well: "Worship is idolatry unless it is a total waste of time in earthly terms, a total immersion in the eternity of God's infinite splendor for the sole purpose of honoring God. It is my prayer that the One whose splendor fills our corporate praise will draw us...to worship Him extravagantly and, as a result, to be His people more faithfully and to serve our neighbors more lavishly." Amen! Let's "waste" some time together this next Sunday!

Emerald Bible Fellowship  
1855 Cal Young Rd  
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### Keeping the "Fire" Burning *cont. from pg.1*

Knowing and being known means dismantling surface barriers as well as deeper defenses, such as, fear, shame, pride and laziness. To allow others to see deeply into our lives is the greatest gift we can give, because it is wrapped in trust. Julie Gorman, a Fuller Seminary professor and small group advocate writes: "True community is more than being together. A person does not develop trust in others simply by being in a group where members study together, pray together, and share a common leader. Trust involves relatedness. Relatedness is more than presence, although that is the beginning. To relate, one must know and to know, one must work at being open to trust."

Throughout Scripture, we are called to live with "one another" in fellowship. God uses the term "one another" 58 times in Scripture because many of the things God desires for us to do are best accomplished with one another. Home Fellowship Groups offer a great setting to put into practice the many "one anothers" of the Bible.

***Just from Romans alone we are commanded to: Greet one another 16:16, Love one another 13:8, Be devoted to one another 12:10, Honor one another above yourself 12:10, Accept one another as Christ accepts us 15:7.***

Home Fellowships Groups with authentic relationships are a wonderful venue for living with one another. We become reminders to one another that God has been gracious and Christ is at work in us. And sometimes the addition of our little flame is what keeps the fire glowing brightly. †

### Upcoming schedule of events

**December** ~ Kids Christmas Pageant  
Christmas Eve Service 4 &  
5:30

**January** ~ Women's Fellowship Night

**February** ~ Men's Retreat

**March** ~ Mexico Mission Trip

**March 23** ~ Easter Sunday

**April 15** ~ Mexico Report

**May 5-12** ~ Homeless Guest Week

If you have any questions about upcoming events, please call the office at 485-2301.

**Office Hours**  
Monday -Thursday 9:00-5:00