
WABASH INFO

December 2008

Volume 8

Christmas Greetings and Thank You

Marilyn and I are deeply grateful to the Wabash pastors and churches all across the Conference for your generous gifts to us at this Christmas season. Thank you. You are a blessing to us. We have so much to celebrate as we share together the Love of Christ with family, friends and neighbors.

It was a privilege for us to connect with the pastoral team at the Christmas Dinners held in Avon, IN and Harper, WV. I realize that not all could be present, but we had a great time. We have a wonderful pastoral team. Our prayer is that your homes will be bright with the love and joy of Jesus. Our hope is that your guests will experience Christ shining through your hospitality. Our desire is that in these difficult economic times you will find a deepening dependence on God's resources, and a growing simple lifestyle that honors the One who had no place to lay his head. Jesus truly is the hope of the world.

The angel told the shepherds "I bring you good news that will bring great joy to all people. The Savior – yes, the Messiah, the Lord – has been born today in Bethlehem, the city of David!" Luke 2:10-11. Yes, Let's Celebrate!

Thank You from the Colgans

Peggy and I want to thank the pastors and spouses for the wonderful gift we received at the Wabash Christmas party on December 5th! We shall use the "Garmin" in helping us to get to our destinations in the coming months! What a privilege it is to work with Supt. Joe and the whole Wabash team in helping our Camping Ministry to become "the best it can be" in the coming months! Peggy and I are praying that all of you will have a blessed holiday season!

Wabash Park Camp ... From the Director, Dave Colgan

Utility Upgrade Update!

The C & H/M Excavating Inc. crew has been working diligently at Wabash Park since early November in installing new sewer lines in the area of the camp north of the Pavilion. They have been making excellent progress, despite some inclement weather. Each week the work crew comes in on Monday morning and then stays at the camp through Thursday evening. They have been working long days, and then enjoying the three day weekends.

It is our goal to make contact with cabin owners where specific changes need to occur for the sewer hookup, so these can be completed in a timely manner. Caretaker Doug Lambert is coordinating these hookups with the owners.

Thank you for the positive feedback we have received regarding this upgrade, although we know it is costly and may be financially challenging for some during these difficult economic times. There are 166 Lot Lessees. Eight have paid their utility upgrade fee in full and three have made partial payments. Total received \$28,180. There are 27 pastors eligible for the Utility Upgrade Grant. Eleven pastors have made application at this time. We believe the utility upgrade will allow our camping ministry to flourish in the coming years, especially as we anticipate being able to promote the use of the camp and its facilities in a more aggressive manner.

Caretaker's Home

Over the summer our caretaker, Doug Lambert, fought a recurring battle with an unknown illness that was very debilitating, and extremely frustrating. When tests were taken late this summer, it was discovered that toxic levels of five different molds were present in the caretaker's home. Estimates revealed that the cost of the proposed remedies for the problem would be exorbitant, and gave us little assurance that the problem would be totally resolved. Because the health of our Caretaker is extremely important, our Camp Facilities Committee recommended that the home be torn down, and a modular home be placed at another location on the grounds, since timing was urgent. According to the Indiana state code, a home needs to be at least 300 feet away from the sewage treatment plant. The previous home was allowed to remain where it was under a grandfather clause.

We explored renting a home in Clay City on a temporary basis, but caretakers Doug and Marsha Lambert both decided it would be better to move into the dining hall since Doug needed to be onsite to assist with the utility upgrade. Doug's health has immediately improved on a daily basis. We are thankful

The Camp Board and Board of Administration approved the placing of a new modular home just northwest of the Maintenance Building in the western area of the Camp. A contract has been signed with Thorne Homes in Bedford for a 1740 square foot modular home plus a full basement with a target completion date of March 1, 2009. This additional cost of \$125,000 was totally unexpected, but we believe God will help us with this expense in the coming months and years, as we are sure that it was not a surprise to Him! Contributions to assist with this project may be sent to the conference office and labeled "Camp Parsonage"! Pray for good weather this winter so that the home can be completed as soon as possible!

Coming up in 2009 at Wabash Park!

Beginning in late April, we anticipate that activity will be buzzing throughout the year in 2009! The Emmaus Community will be returning to Wabash Park in April and May for their spring walks! The Wabash Annual Conference, Children's Lock-in, Kidz, Young Teen and Family Camp dates are also listed here.

April 18-19	Children's Lock-In
April 23-26	El Shaddai Men's Emmaus Walk
April 30 – May 3	El Shaddai Women's Emmaus Walk
June 19-20	125 th Wabash Annual Conference
June 22-27	Kidz Kamp I
June 29-July 4	Young Teen Camp I
July 6-11	Kidz Kamp II
July 13-18	Young Teen Camp II
July 20-26	Wabash Family Camp
July 30-Aug 2	Hispanic Family Camp

Think of the tremendous potential for these events in 2009! God wants to do a great work in transforming lives through Christian camping! Pray for these events, and for the whole team who will be working to develop our ministry at Wabash Park!

Wabash Park Ministry Plan

Over the next few months the Camp Board and the Board of Administration will be preparing a new Master Ministry Plan (including a business plan) for Wabash Park Camp. Ed McDowell, Executive Director of Warm Beach Camps and Conference Center has agreed to serve as our consultant. The Master Ministry Plan will focus on the mission, vision and goals for the future of Wabash Park Camp. We will establish the desired target audience and ministry focus based on biblical principles and the ministry heritage of the camp.

Our core values (the non-negotiables) will be clarified and our long-term goals will be determined, identified and prioritized. Short-term goals will then be developed to strengthen the financial viability of the camping ministry.

The Master Ministry Plan will be developed through the use of surveys, discussion at regional leadership meetings across the conference this spring, and a day-long Retreat involving the Camp Board and the Board of Administration. A follow-up Review Session of the two boards will be held in May to finalize a draft of the Master Ministry Plan for presentation to the Annual Conference next June. Pray for each of these steps in the development of a Ministry Plan that should guide our camping programs over the next decade!

Indianapolis First Chinese Free Methodist Church

Our congratulations to Pastor Michael and Maggie Li, Pastor John and Ann VanValin, and the Aldersgate Free Methodist Church, and many others, who have worked together to launch the Indianapolis First Chinese Free Methodist Church. The Lord has blessed the work of their hands.

On Sunday, January 4, 10:30 AM, at the Aldersgate Free Methodist Church, Founders Hall, this new congregation will be formally organized as the newest Wabash Free Methodist Church (Society). It is anticipated that there will be about 20 charter members joining at this time. We celebrate this milestone in the life of this new congregation. They covet your prayers for God's blessing upon this service and the expansion of the ministry of this church family.

Board of Administration actions

Churches face seasons of growth and decline, plenty and want. At times financial circumstances are beyond the control of a local church. At times financial challenges are not addressed in a timely manner, creating difficulty for the pastor, the church and the conference.

We have been prayerfully working with several churches this year to find solutions to financial challenges and to encourage accountability for commitments made. It is our desire that each church live within its means and keep current with its commitments and obligations to FMCNA Home Ministries, FM World Missions, Pastors pension, Pastors Health Insurance, and Wabash Conference "tithe".

The following are some updates of actions taken by the Board of Administration following consultations with these churches by the superintendent and/or conference director of finance and the local church pastor and/or church board/delegate/treasurer.

Neoga. This church has made a special effort to keep current in 2008 and to pay off one half of its past pension and health insurance commitments. Total in arrears was \$10,834.12. The church paid \$5,417.06 and the conference matched this effort paying the other half, \$5,417.06. They are now current

Griffith. This church was facing an "impossible" financial burden of past obligations when the new pastor arrived September 1, 2008. To church transitioned from a full time pastor to a bivocational pastor, and have been keeping current on commitments this fall. In turn, the conference forgave the church \$17,688 in past obligations.

Winona Lake. The church has been in a tight financial position in recent years and the conference forgave \$4,820 in past pension commitments from previous pastors tenure. This church has given generously to all other commitments.

Noblesville. The Noblesville Open Door FMC treasurer unknowingly made overpayments of \$10,044 toward their Wabash Conference tithe during 2006-2007. The Board approved to reduce their payments toward Conference commitments in 2008 by \$10,044 to correct the overpayment.

Fort Wayne. This church is being “re-planted” and to assist them they have been paying \$50 per month for Wabash Conference tithe in 2008. The Board approved this to be \$100 per month (not the full tithe) in 2009. Ft. Wayne had hoped to be well along in the building of the new church facility by now, but with neighboring property easement refusals, and utility issues, they are still waiting for needed permits. They will appreciate our prayers and a longer grace period before they step up to the full conference tithe.

Annual Reports Due January 31, 2009

Annual Report materials were recently sent to all pastors. Beginning January 1, all reports will be filed online, using the username and password provided in the materials sent out by the conference office. If you have not received your information or have any questions, please contact the conference office.

Wabash Conference Youth Ski Retreat Weekend

The Ski Retreat Weekend is January 23-25, 2009, with lodging at the Higher Ground Conference and Retreat Center, West Harrison, IN. Skiing will take place at Perfect North Slopes, Lawrenceburg, IN. Outdoor recreation options will include skiing, tubing and snowboarding. The cost is \$130 per person. Deadline for registration is January 12. Materials have been sent to each church. If you have any questions regarding this information, please contact Pastor Scott Salm at the Beford FMC (812) 275-5939 or ssalm@att.net.

Wabash Conference Office will be closed December 24 – 26 and December 31 – January 2.

Church News

- **Pastor Kurt Feneley** of the **Bradbury, IL FMC** reported that they had a wonderful revival recently held by Rev. Steven Hale. One person was saved, 10 were sanctified and the altar was filled every night with those seeking a deeper walk with the Lord. We praise God for what He is doing here at Bradbury and the surrounding area. And we are looking forward to what He will do in the future.
- **Pastor Lauren Eicher** of **Boswell, IN FMC** reported that the church sent \$125 to India, \$125 to Haiti, \$125 to Olive Branch Mission and also gave \$125 to a local food pantry. This was part of the tithe from our Praise Sunday.
- **Rev. Tom Brown**, elder in the Wabash Conference, was recently endorsed by the Free Methodist Church as a chaplain, and is serving with Southern Care Hospice in Lafayette, Indiana. We congratulate Tom Brown on his endorsement as a FM Chaplain, and pray God’s blessing upon his new appointment and ministry as chaplain.
- **Huntington, Living Water, WV FMC** celebrated the participation of about 230 neighbors from the community in a two night Halloween outreach. The theme was from darkness to light. Candy, cookies, hot chocolate, along with lots of fun and treats for the children provided a positive impact, and some new connections in the community.

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