

THE EVANGELISTS'

# PERSPECTIVE



# 12

*Susie  
Shellenberger*  
"Yes, Lord!"

An Inside Look  
at Rev. Susie  
Shellenberger's  
Call to  
Obedience

Website, schedule, and product  
information for your evangelists inside!



# From the Editor

## Ever Heard A Holy Hush?

Have you ever heard a holy hush? Perhaps that sounds like a trick question. However, there have been unique times in my life when I have experienced it.

This past Labor Day weekend, many of our Nazarene evangelists and song evangelists gathered together at Indian Lake Nazarene Camp in Vicksburg, Michigan for our seventh annual Evangelists' Homecoming Camp Meeting. Our practice of getting together each year began in the winter of 1982 with what we called "The Evangelists' Gathering." After several bad winters with evangelists stranded in airports, we decided to gather on Labor Day weekend.

We enjoyed a truly blessed time of fellowship, worship, and praise. Dr. Jim Diehl was the vessel through whom God ministered to our hearts. Shouts and praises rang out in more than one service. One visiting layman stated that it was a "throwback" kind of camp meeting. I guess even today we associate God's blessing with sound levels.

My wife, Beth, in sorting through some boxes, came across an issue of the Herald of Holiness my mother saved. It was dated March 15, 1988. The article that caught my attention was entitled "215 Attend Fifth Annual Evangelists' Gathering." This article gives an account of the gathering

thirty years ago. Our special speakers for this event were Dr. Bill Sullivan, Dr. John A. Knight, Dr. James Hamilton, and Dr. Dennis Kinlaw. In the 1988 publication, evangelist Dr. Albert Lown from England made the following observation:

In an anointed message, the loved president of Asbury College and Old Testament scholar unveiled a wealth of truth from Isaiah's portrait of the suffering Servant-King who became Calvary's Lamb. Truth in awesome measure offered freedom from the burden of materialistic Western culture, from self-pity and self-centeredness, and from the tyranny of success-strategy and 'image.' The holy quiet of soul-searching followed, led by the choicest, most devoted hearts. Sobbing and sharing, praying and praising, the vows of youthful and mature evangelists were renewed and many covenanted to live the 'bearing, giving, redeeming' life-ministry that Dr. Kinlaw portrayed from Isaiah's prophecy....

The words "holy quiet," used by Dr. Lown, transported me back to that blessed event which made a profound impact on me, my wife, and our ministry over these last forty plus years. I recognize when God does something special, we look for ways to duplicate it. God is certainly free to move any way He chooses; we must not dictate how He ought to "do it again."

Today, we have established worship as an art and have specialists to construct services to maintain



a certain flow. As Dr. Lown speaks of our cultural context, I believe it might translate into a fear of what we consider in the broadcasting field as "dead air." The timing is often so precise that someone or something has to be heard until the next item on the program begins. Rather than singing a song straight through, we need to be prepared for a spontaneous prayer or sermonette from the leader. Maybe once in a while we should just quietly hush ourselves and wait on the Lord to lead.

My lifelong friend Dr. John Seaman went to be with our Lord in March 2017. We grew up together as part of Emerald Avenue Church of the Nazarene in Chicago, Illinois. One Sunday morning, after the second bell, our junior high Sunday school class was dismissed so we could go from the basement to the sanctuary. If you knew John Seaman, you would know how he loved to laugh and have fun. We were poking one another and laughing as we were going up the stairs until we neared the sanctuary. We both stopped at the same time and looked at one another as if to say, "Something is happening." When we entered the sanctuary, we experienced that "holy hush." There was no music, no preaching, no invitation, no talking. There was just a holy hush. No one had to tell us to be quiet and sit down. Even with our limited level of understanding, we knew God had come in a very special way that Sunday morning. Just as there was a spontaneous altar service at the Gathering in 1987, our altars filled up that morning for a couple hours with no accompaniment except the soft weeping of the saints.

I must confess that when Brian Arner sings "Down from His Glory" or Mark Murphy sings a medley ending with "O What a Savior," I have to shout! I was so blessed at John Seaman's homegoing service that

I shouted on the last verse of "It is Well with My Soul." Opportunities for audible praise are needed, but we also need time to experience the holy hush His presence brings. In the lyrics of an extremely popular song, the questions are posed, "Surrounded by Your glory what will my heart feel? Will I dance for you Jesus or in awe of You be still? Will I stand in Your presence or to my knees will I fall? Will I sing hallelujah? Will I be able to speak at all? I can only imagine."<sup>2</sup> **EP**

1. "215 Attend Fifth Annual Evangelists' Gathering." *Herald of Holiness*, 15 March 1988, p. 28.

2. *MercyMe. "I Can Only Imagine." Almost There, Fair Trade Services, 2005.*



*Gary Bond*

Executive Editor, **Gary Bond**



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THE EVANGELISTS'  
**PERSPECTIVE**

**Executive Editor** Gary Bond  
**Managing Editor** Don Gessner  
**Copy Editor** Jeanne Millhuff  
**Graphic Designer** Eric Gessner  
**Production Director** Don Gessner  
**Design Coordinator** Eric Gessner

**Contributors**

Rev. Lane Loman                      Dr. Nelson Perdue  
 Janet Raeburn

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**Dr. Gustavo Crocker**  
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 Revivalism Ministries



**Rev. Larry Leckrone**  
 Tenured Evangelist  
 Committee On the Interests of the God  
 Called Evangelist



**Evangelist Gary Bond**  
 Revivalism Coordinator and editor of the  
 Evangelists' Perspective



**Dr. Norman Moore**  
 Tenured Evangelist  
 Committee On the Interests of the God  
 Called Evangelist



**Dr. Bob Broadbrooks**  
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**Dr. Lenny Wisehart**  
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 Called Evangelist



# PERDUE'S PEN



BY NELSON PERDUE

## Glory Follows Suffering *1 Peter 5:10-11*

The First Epistle of Peter could be summarized as a treatise on the subject of suffering. At least 15 times, the word “suffer” or its derivative is recorded in these five short chapters. It presents the suffering of Christ and the suffering of the Christian. The benediction of this Epistle is very comprehensive. It reminds us that God has not promised exemption from suffering for the Christian, but He has provided for our enablement amidst adversity. For He is the God of all grace. He reminds us that suffering is necessary to “perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you” (1 Peter 5:10).

The DYNAMIC of Suffering: Paul S. Rees said that “suffering is difficult to understand in the

context of the Christian faith. Suffering is never God’s will if by His will we mean His pleasure, but it is frequently His will if by His will we mean His permission.”

The Apostle Peter reminds us in the opening chapter that, “He which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation (living)” (1 Peter 1:15). This call to holiness is essential for spiritual steadfastness, since it frees us from a state of double-mindedness. Being now single-minded, having “sanctified the Lord God in y(our) hearts” (1 Peter 3:15), it is then that we not only recognize His sovereignty, but also His sanctity. We honor what we recognize by living a life pleasing to Him. We live knowing



that the Holy One is Sovereign and the Sovereign One is Holy. This sanctifying act involves only a moment of time. This becomes the basis for our establishment, but suffering is a process and involves the ongoing matter of time. Times of suffering are necessary to “make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you” (1 Peter 5:10).

This perfection is not speaking of being made perfect in love. That was done instantaneously by the baptism with fire, when the Holy Spirit cleanses the heart from all that is contrary to love. This suffering is necessary for the perfecting of our character following the initial act of sanctification. Joseph H. Smith, Methodist expositor wrote:

For a 'WHILE' we are kept busy binding our all upon the altar of consecration, and holding our own in the faith for cleansing and the abiding presence of the comforter. Construction now is well-nigh at a standstill until we know, like Nehemiah, how to work with a trowel and war with a sword at the same time. But now 'after a WHILE,' when the foundation is established and ever girded, we *“can build up ourselves on our most holy faith”* (Jude 1:20).

Paul tells us that “all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution” (2 Timothy 3:12). Suffering is not only consistent with a holy life, it is also beneficial. It is said that as Christ “learned obedience by the things which He suffered,” so we can learn no other way (Hebrews 5:8). When going through the furnace of affliction, we must guard against becoming bitter or resentful. We must remember that He is a refiner’s fire, and He knows when all the dross is removed and when best to withdraw the crucibles of life. Suffering is the chisel and mallet that the Holy Spirit uses to conform us to His image.

We must not become discouraged when after being saved and sanctified we encounter tremendous trials and suffering. If we will be faithful, our trials will be stepping-stones to stability and gateways to perfection, or, maturity. Satan comes as the “accuser of the brethren,” not to the sinner (Revelation 12:10). The unbeliever knows nothing of this kind of suffering. He will attack our faith, assault our conscience with incriminations, and try to dull our spiritual sensitivities. He will even use carnal individuals in his attacks, even though many will not even be aware they are being used of the devil (like Job’s comforters). The spiritual nature of the believer has sensibilities that are deeper and more acute than their physical being. The pangs of the soul are much greater than the pains of the body.

The DURATION of Suffering: “after that ye have suffered a while...” (1 Peter 5:10). Every long, dark tunnel has a light at the end. To the Apostle Paul, the call to holiness was no clearer than was the call to suffer. He wrote to the church of Philippi: “For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for His sake” (Philippians 1:29). Peter states equally the



same thing when in 1 Peter 3:15 we are called to “sanctify the Lord God in your hearts” and then in 2:21, “for even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow His steps.” Paul puts suffering in its proper context in relation to the time he said, “Our light affliction, which is but FOR A MOMENT...” It is the God of all grace, by the ministry and enablement of the Holy Spirit, who makes our sufferings seem “but for a moment...”.

The DIVIDENDS of Suffering: “The God of all grace hath called us unto His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye suffer a while...” (1 Peter 5:10). There is a relationship between our suffering here and our eternal glory hereafter. The Apostle Paul writes similarly the same thing in Romans 8:17, “If so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together.”

Jesus was always conscious that the only way back to glory was by the path of suffering. Following His resurrection, He appeared to the two on the road to Emmaus. Having witnessed the crucifixion in Jerusalem, they were grieved and discouraged when Jesus drew near and went with them. They did not immediately recognize that it was the risen Christ until Jesus refreshed their memories. He asked the question, “Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into His glory” (Luke 24:26)? He was revealing that the tragedy of His suffering, which

they witnessed, had now been transformed into the place of glory and grace. The cross of suffering and humiliation became the instrument of the glory of His exaltation. His prophetic statement of John 12:23 and 28 was now fulfilled: “the hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified.... Father, glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again.”

Here we see that there had to be death before there could be life. It’s an enigma indeed, death before life—suffering before glory. Paul knew that following his death, by way of a headsman’s axe, that he would receive a crown of righteousness. He said, “for our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory” (2 Corinthians 4:17). We cannot separate the cross from the crown or suffering from the throne. In this benediction, Peter unites our ephemeral suffering with eternal glory. Let us heed the admonition given in 1 Peter 4:1-2, “Forasmuch then as Christ has suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin; That he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God.” **EP**

All Scripture References are from the King James Version Unless Otherwise Noted

Dr. Nelson Perdue  
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# THE GOOD NEWS FOR ALL AGES



by Janet Raeburn



The gospel is for ALL ages. I'm sure you've heard that before. My husband and I have both said it many, many times, but it was certainly brought home in this instance.

A few years ago, our family was on the road doing our usual week-after-week of children's camps and Vacation Bible Schools. During the summer, we landed in the middle of the United States for a Vacation Bible School (VBS) at a small Nazarene church. If I remember correctly, there were around 35 children present that week. As usual, on the first night of VBS, Steve and I challenged the kids to bring a visitor the next night. We told them we thought it was so important for others to come, that we would give a piece of candy to them and to their visitor. The next night, two sisters came up at the end of the service and said they brought a visitor. It was the end of the week before we understood the whole story.

These two girls had gone home and invited their neighbor to come to church. She did. In fact, she was there every night afterward. Their neighbor was 60-years-old and had only been in church one time before that week. She came because these two girls had invited her. When

we saw her at VBS, we thought she was one of the church's adult helpers.

For the first time in her life, this 60-year-old woman heard the gospel story. When we gave the invitation to come to the altar, she stayed in her pew and cried. The pastor of the church noticed and went to talk with her. She accepted Christ as her Savior that very night!

It's an incredible story, but it doesn't end there! When we met up with the senior pastor again, he told us the rest of the story. The woman came regularly to church after that. Even though she didn't live long after that summer, she lived long enough to see her adult children's broken lives transformed by Jesus Christ. Praise God that those two sisters didn't think that VBS or the gospel was just for kids!

Is evangelism important? Is it worth it? Does anyone respond to it anymore? Yes, praise God it is eternally worth it—for all ages! **EP**

*Rev. Janet Raeburn, Big Blast Ministries  
Tenured Nazarene Evangelist*







# YES, LORD!



An Inside Look at Rev. Susie Shellenberger's Call to Obedience

*"I'm a nobody.  
But God and I and love will change our world.  
You wait. You watch. You'll see."*

Ann Kiemel spoke those words in 1970 while sitting on a stool in the Sunday evening service at Bethany First Church of the Nazarene in Bethany, Oklahoma.

Susie Shellenberger was mesmerized. The junior high girl sat on the edge of her seat. The only female speakers she remembered hearing were the occasional missionaries. Other than that, she had never seen a female grace the stage for an entire worship service—much less while sitting on a stool.

Ann Kiemel's message was simple: "Will you and God change your world with me? If you're willing to be a part of God's dream, stand up right now."

Susie was a Christian. She had asked Jesus into her heart during her fourth grade year. Her dad met her at the altar and led her in

prayer. She wasn't a stranger to prayer. Her dad had instituted "family altar" in the home. Often they would turn off the television and kneel in the den and pray together. She had also been taught to have a personal quiet time and enjoyed the children's devotional books she read at night before she prayed.

But Ann Kiemel was excited about following Jesus. And Susie felt the excitement.

During Ann's message, Susie began to realize that being a Christian was actually having a genuine relationship with the Creator of the universe—not simply asking to have her sins forgiven.

"I think what I had was 'fire insurance,'" Susie laughs. "I knew God lived in my heart, and I would go to heaven, but I had missed the personal aspect of an exciting relationship with Christ. Yes, I prayed . . . but I wasn't dynamic or excited or out to change my world."

What Ann was talking about resonated in Susie's heart. Wow, she thought. I'm walking with the Creator of the universe every single day! He knows my name. This is really personal. I want all He has to give me.

So Susie stood to her feet. From that night on, things were different.

## All or Nothing

The next morning, as she grabbed her books for school, Susie added her Reach Out: The Living New Testament to the stack. The paperback Bible had been a part of her exciting junior high youth group experience, and several scriptures were underlined. Susie knew that God was with her at school and that her commitment to a deeper relationship meant being Christlike to those around her.

"I don't simply want to present a message. I want to deliver with excellence."

She began speaking to her public school friends about the Lord, inviting them to church. As her boldness grew, so did her faith.

That same year, Susie began writing for her junior high school newspaper and submitted some things to our denominational teen magazine, Conquest (later, Bread). To her excitement, her writing was purchased and published.

She continued to grow spiritually in high school and was discipled by her new youth pastor, Hal Perkins. He emphasized the importance of spiritual growth and sharing her faith. Susie loved hearing Hal speak. He made Sunday school and Wednesday nights so exciting that you couldn't have paid her to miss! Hal was articulate. His heart was tender. He was a great communicator that immediately drew Susie into each message.



"Each of Hal's messages was filled with depth and boldness, but his words were laced with love and gentleness," Susie says. "I couldn't help but be impacted with his style of delivery, as well as by his content."

She continued to write, was totally involved in everything her youth group did—choir tours, retreats, mission trips, summer camp, and Bible studies—and grew deeper in her relationship with Christ.

## Changes

Though Hal Perkins served three years as senior high youth pastor at Bethany First Church of the Nazarene, Susie only had the privilege of being under his ministry for one year. He left to continue God's call on his life after her sophomore year in high school. But he had clearly made an impact upon her life.

The position for senior high youth pastor wasn't vacant for long. Gary Sivewright soon walked through the doors of the youth room and right into Susie's heart. He was creative, funny, and articulate. Again, Susie was under the ministry of another master communicator. His messages mesmerized her. "They were filled with humor and great story-telling, yet there was a depth that couldn't be ignored," Susie remembers. "He made Scripture

come to life." Once again, Susie was greatly impacted with his style of delivery.

There was no need—or even interest—to be swayed by drinking, smoking, or parties at school, because youth group was so fun. "The World's Largest Pie Fight," fifth-quarter parties, and rafting trips filled Susie's calendar, along with Bible studies, choir tours, and the youth's drama group. She had been discipled by Hal Perkins. She was blooming with Gary Sivewright.

## God's Audible Voice

The summer after high school graduation, Susie attended Nazarene World Youth Congress (now known as Nazarene Youth Conference- NYC) in Fiesch, Switzerland. Surrounded by the Swiss Alps, the group of high school Nazarenes from around the world gathered in a giant outdoor arena.

The first Sunday morning service featured General Superintendent, Dr. Edward Lawlor. Susie will never forget the words from his sermon. "They etched themselves within my heart," she says.

"Don't go home with only memories of a beautiful country. Go home mastered by God's vision for your life."

There was  
a yearning  
deep inside  
to be God's  
verbal and  
written voice.

Yes! That's what I want, God, Susie prayed Show me Your vision for me. What do You

want me to do?

Throughout the week she continued to seek God's will. Deep inside her heart—much deeper than she could articulate or even form into conscious thought—was the feeling that she wanted to be a communicator for Christ. Being from a church of 2,000 members with separate junior high and senior high youth groups, Susie had heard the best speakers, best musicians, and best evangelists. She had been influenced by quality messengers and godly servants.

There was a yearning deep inside to be a verbal and written voice for God. Yet it was a yearning that she dared not speak about—and dared not even truly consciously think about. She just knew it was there, deep inside and growing.

During the week, the small group studies were about being “foot-washers,” being servants, and learning fulfillment behind the scenes. “There was a battle inside of

Why couldn't I rid myself of this desire?”

Though the week featured a variety of excellent preachers, the final Sunday morning service ended with Dr. Edward Lawlor again. In his booming British brogue, he said, “You've had a week. Last Sunday morning you were challenged not to return home with simply wonderful memories of a beautiful country. You are to return with God's vision for your life! What is it?”

I don't understand, God! Susie prayed. I've asked You all week, and I've desperately sought Your will. I want Your vision. Why haven't You given it to me?

“As brightly as the sun shines on a summer day,” Susie says, “I heard God's voice. It was undeniable, authoritative, tender, sweet, audible... yet inside my mind.”

She continued to hear God say, “I've already given you my vision, Susie. You know what it is. I want you to communicate Me through speaking and writing.”

“His words etched themselves into my heart.”

me,” Susie says. “I couldn't reconcile being behind the scenes with the deep desire in my heart to grab a microphone and bring the story of Jesus to life. Surely being behind the scenes was what God wanted. Why did I want to walk on stage and start speaking?

“I couldn't believe it,” Susie says. “God would choose to give me what I wanted most?” So she immediately answered Him with: “Oh, Father! I could never be as compelling as Hal Perkins. Or as dynamic as Gary Sivewright. Or as mesmerizing as Ann



Kiemel. Or as articulate as Josh McDowell. Or as captivating as Glaphre Gilliland.”

And just as clearly, God answered: “I don’t need another Hal or Gary or Ann or Josh or Glaphre. I need Susie Shellenberger.”

Yes, Lord. Yes, Lord. Oh, YES, Lord! And Susie made that her commitment: “Yes, Lord. Anytime. Anything. Anywhere. Yes, Lord.”

## The Dream Takes Shape

Susie entered Bethany Nazarene College (now Southern Nazarene University) as a freshman speech major. She honed her writing skills with a double minor in English and creative writing. She participated in Student Mission Corps to the Dominican Republic during the summer between her sophomore and junior year, became the first female to be elected student body president, and continued to grow spiritually through college revivals and personal devotions.

“I was fortunate to hear Dr. Stephen Manley, Dr. Chuck Milhuff, and Dr. Paul Cunningham—people I consider great evangelists—in revival on our campus. They communicated with depth, enthusiasm, and succinctness.”

After graduation, Susie became the youth pastor at First Church of the Nazarene in Conway, Arkansas. The week her pastor resigned, she received a call to be youth

pastor in Longmont, Colorado.

When that pastor resigned, she received a call to be youth pastor at First Church of the Nazarene in San Antonio, Texas. Eventually, she was called to be senior high youth pastor in her home church, Bethany First Church.

During her time as youth pastor, Susie wrote her own Sunday school curriculum and was eventually asked to write that curriculum for the Church of the Nazarene. She also took on other writing assignments for the general church.

“I loved being a youth pastor,” Susie says. “Besides the great relationships with students, what I loved most was the speaking aspect. God was honing and directing my style and delivery.”

After being a youth pastor for eight years, Susie felt God’s direction to begin graduate work. “God impressed this on me in a major way,” she says. “It was so strong, that I knew I’d be out of His will if I didn’t pursue a master’s degree. I couldn’t figure it out! Why in the world did I need a master’s degree? But I obeyed and began a master’s in English with the emphasis on creative writing.”

Soon after she began this degree, Susie felt God’s nudge to resign her position as youth pastor. A few months later, she was asked by the local high school principal to take over for a teacher who had recently retired her position in teaching speech, English, drama, and creative writing. Susie took it,

and stayed for four-and-a-half years.

“God assured me I was still fulfilling His call on my life. I was still communicating about Him through speaking and writing. I saw myself as an undercover missionary in this public high school.”

Susie was speaking several weekends, and when she spoke anywhere near Oklahoma City, the principal allowed her to take a bus of students with her. “It was amazing,” she says. “I’d pass out a sign-up sheet in my classes for anyone who wanted to come with me on Friday and Saturday nights. And they could mark a special place if they wanted to sing or be in a skit. A few of these students were Christians; others weren’t. But some were saved during these special revivals I was doing at other churches. After the service, we’d go out for pizza then drive back to OKC. All the while, God was tightening my delivery, giving me new messages, and showing Himself to my students.”

## Major Change

Almost as soon as Susie had completed her master’s degree, she was invited by Focus on the Family to create a magazine for teen girls. “Now I understood why God had so strongly impressed on me to pursue that graduate degree in creative writing,” she says. “When they asked me to be editor, I explained that I had several weekend speaking engagements, and I really wanted to keep them. They said they liked the idea that I’d be speaking and thought it would be

good public relations. I was excited I didn’t have to cancel anything.”

Susie moved from Oklahoma to Pomona, California, where Focus on the Family was located. She created Brio magazine, and a year-and-a-half later, the ministry moved its headquarters to Colorado Springs, Colorado. “I was happy about the move, because it put me closer to Oklahoma and family. And I’d always loved Colorado,” she says.

While Susie served as editor of Brio at Focus on the Family, she launched Brio & Beyond—a spin-off magazine for older teen girls and developed mother/daughter cruises. She also continued speaking and writing books.

Focus began a weekly live talk-radio show for teens called Life on the Edge that aired around the nation and asked Susie to be a weekly co-host. “It was such a fun ministry,” she says. “Teens called asking questions about anything and everything, and I simply had to be ready to give a solid answer mixed with fun and depth. I constantly referred to my Bible and saw immediately how teaching improvisation came in handy!”

During her time at Focus, she became an ordained elder in the Church of the Nazarene, taught an adult Sunday school class, and served on the board at Colorado Springs First Church. Her pastor’s wife, Cheryl Stevens, poured into Susie’s life and helped her establish a beautiful accountability and

friendship that continues to this day.

In 2003, Susie spoke at Nazarene Youth Conference in Houston. She gave a message on holiness and watched as thousands of teens came forward for sanctification. Afterward, Dr. Chuck Milhuff asked her to speak at the annual Evangelists' Gathering. While she was there, Chuck asked her why she wasn't a registered evangelist.

"I've always admired Chuck," Susie says. "So I didn't take his question lightly. I guess the word evangelist simply hadn't entered my thinking. I knew I was in the center of God's will, because I was doing what He called me to do—communicate Him through speaking and writing—but Chuck had certainly given me something to think and pray about."

God showed her that as an ordained minister speaking about 20 weekends a year, she was already doing the things an evangelist would do. "Because I was regularly speaking in churches, I realized it only made sense to make it official and become accountable to the church as a whole by becoming a registered evangelist," she says.

"During my time at Focus, I put the money I received from speaking into missions. I started annual two-week mission trips through Brio magazine and helped scholarship students as well as subsidize some of the expenses of the trip. I also used that money to send myself to Third World countries and hold retreats for missionary kids. When I got a letter from a

Brio girl in another country, I'd ask her if she attended a Christian school for missionary kids. When she would respond that she did, I asked her to put me in contact with the school chaplain or principal. Then I'd volunteer to fly myself over and speak in chapel services, hold a retreat or youth revival, and interview several students and put them in the magazine. It helped give Brio a global outreach, and I was honored to meet so many amazing missionaries and their children."

## Just in Time

Within a few years, Susie became a tenured evangelist, and this turned out to be just in time. At the beginning of 2009, Focus on the Family experienced a financial drop due to the dip in the economy and had to discontinue several ministry areas. As a result, the youth staff was released.

"Three years prior to this," Susie says, "I had been praying about being a full-time evangelist. Chuck Milhuff had planted a seed in my heart at the Evangelists' Gathering, and I realized that what I loved more than anything was simply speaking about Jesus. I enjoy writing, but what truly fulfills me is simply opening the Word and bringing Scripture to life through the power of the Holy Spirit."

Now was the time. She was an ordained elder. She was now a commissioned evangelist. And she was ready.



"After I was released from Focus, I heard God say, 'Now's the season for full-time speaking.' But when I looked at my calendar I realized I only had five speaking engagements scheduled for the entire year! How in the world would I make it?"

Following God's direction, she created a full-color brochure and began mailing it to a variety of Nazarene churches around the nation. "God blessed," she says. "My calendar began to fill."

## Today

Susie now speaks 43 weeks/weekends a year and is still writing books. "I moved from Colorado Springs back to Bethany, Oklahoma," she says. "I knew I needed the emotional support of family, the prayers of friends I've had for a lifetime, and I just wanted to be home. My mom died several years ago, and my dad is now 94. I want to be home for his last season. It's so nice to be able to visit him in his assisted living apartment, read the Bible to him, pray for him, and kiss his precious forehead. I cherish these times with him."

In May of 2016, Susie received an honorary Doctorate of Divinity degree from Southern Nazarene University. She still runs the two-week annual missions trip to South America, which she began doing 17 years ago, and loves being in her home church when she's not on the road.

Susie lives with her two mini-Schnauzers,

"The churches who make time to have revival are the churches who are experiencing revival."

Obie and Amos. "Obie is short for Obadiah," she says. "I jokingly refer to them as my two Old Testament prophets."

## Is Revival Still Relevant?

In a day when many churches aren't scheduling revival, Susie still believes in the need. "The churches I see who are truly experiencing revival are the churches who are regularly scheduling revival," Susie says.

"I realize our culture has changed; people are busier now than ever before. But we need revival more now than ever. When I see God minister through His Word and people respond in search of a deeper, more intimate relationship with Him, I know He's still using revival as a method to reach people. I'm passionate about the message of holiness. I meet many people in the church who don't truly understand sanctification. I have a burden to help lead others into radical obedience to the Lordship of Jesus Christ. How can that ever get old? How could that ever be irrelevant? It's essential! That makes revival necessary. Again, the churches that make time to have revival are the churches that are experiencing revival."

## One Final Thing

Sometimes Susie is asked why she refers to herself as a speaker when she's ordained and is preaching in a church almost every

o have revival—are the churches  
encouraging revival.”

Sunday during the year. “Because I speak in so many different venues, I simply call myself a speaker,” she says.

“I realize when I’m speaking at a revival, spiritual renewal weekend, chapel services, and so on, I’m actually preaching,” she says, “but because I also mix teaching into my preaching, and because of my educational background in speech, I resonate with the term speaker. When God called me to communicate for Him through speaking and writing, I knew if I communicated effectively, preaching would happen naturally. There’s nothing more important than being saturated and empowered by the Holy Spirit. He is who really does the job! As a faithful steward of this gift, I need to place a high priority on the elements of quality speaking: vocal variety, body movement, facial expression, volume, pace, etc. I don’t simply want to present a message. I want to deliver with excellence. As I depend TOTALLY on His power and submit to Him, He uses the training provided to me as a speech major. I never want to put the qualities of dynamic speaking, modeled to me by great speakers I have known, on the back burner. I highly value what God has taught me about delivery, intention, and dependence on His Spirit.”

She goes on to say: “If I speak effectively, preaching happens. My goal, therefore, is to speak in a dynamic, enthusiastic, fast-paced

manner that allows me to dive deeply into Scripture and—through the Holy Spirit—lead people into intimacy with Christ.” **EP**

*To learn more about Susie Shellenberger's ministry, the Bible study series she has available for churches, and the books she has written, check out her website: [www.SusieShellenberger.com](http://www.SusieShellenberger.com) and sign up for her free weekly e-mail devotional.*



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# 2017 Annual Homecoming



**Dr. Bob Broadbrooks**



**Dr. Norman Moore**



**Dr. Jim Diehl**



**Dr. Ted Lee**



**Mark Murphy**



**Brian Arner**



**Burchfield Brothers**



**Rev. Rudy Cervantes**



**Dr. Stephan R. Murphy**



**Philip Phelps**



**Esther Crabtree**



**The Leckrones**



**Jimmy Dell**



**Rev. Mike Adams**



**Rev. Dale Freed**



# Evangelists' Camp Meeting

On Labor Day weekend September 1 -4, 2017, evangelists, song evangelists, and their spouses gathered at the Indian Lake Nazarene Camp grounds in Vicksburg, MI for the annual homecoming camp meeting. Each year all those attending leave the grounds saying , "This was the best one ever." The Lord truly blessed us again with anointed preaching by Dr. Jim Diehl and the awesome talent of our musicians and singers. We want to thank all of you who helped our evangelists and singers to attend these inspiring services and to enjoy the fellowship of the event. Our special thanks goes to the following district superintendents and their districts as well as Dr. Bowling and Olivet Nazarene University.

Alabama South	Dr. Mark Berry
Dallas	Dr. Keven Wentworth
East Ohio	Rev. Dave Lutz
East Tennessee	Dr. Ron McCormack
Georgia	Dr. Roy Rogers
Indianapolis	Dr. Ron Blake
Kansas City	Dr. Jeren Rowell
Los Angeles	Rev. Greg Garman
Louisiana	Rev. Chuck Fountain
Metro New York	Dr. Art Alexander
Michigan	Rev. Kevin Hardy
North Arkansas	Dr. Randy Berkner
North Carolina	Dr. Greg Mason
North Central Ohio	Rev. Stephen Ward
Northeastern Indiana	Dr. David G. Roland
Northeast Oklahoma	Dr. David McKellips
Northwestern Ohio	Dr. Geoff Kunselman
Olivet Nazarene U.	Dr. John Bowling
Oregon Pacific	Dr. Stan Reeder
Philadelphia	Rev. Newell Smith
Sacramento	Rev. Steve Scott
South Carolina	Dr. Eddie Estep
South Central Ohio	Rev. Trevor Johnston
Southern Florida	Dr. Brian Wilson
Southwestern Ohio	Dr. Bob Mahaffey
Southwest Indiana	Rev. Timothy Crump
Southwest Oklahoma	Dr. Jim Cooper
West Texas	Dr. David Downs
West Virginia South	Dr. Mervin Smith



# VETERANS DAY

IN THIS TIME OF  
SILENCE IN THE HEARTS OF THE PEOPLE  
FOR WHOM HE SAVED THE UNION  
THE MEMORY OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN  
IS ENSHRINED FOREVER

## November 11, 2018



*"To care for him who shall have borne the battle..."*

ABRAHAM LINCOLN



[www.va.gov](http://www.va.gov)





(T) Tenured Evangelist is recognized by the church as a lifetime assignment. See Manual 407.3

### ADAMS, DAVID AND CHARLENE



- Jan 7 New Castle, IN (First)
- Jan 14 Loganville, GA (Gracepointe)
- Jan 28 Islamorada, FL (Matecumbe United Methodist)
- Feb 4 Pensacola, FL (Ensley)
- Feb 10 Jacksonville, AR (First)
- Mar 2-4 Danville, IL (First)
- Apr 8 Garden City, KS
- Apr 15 Sterling, CO
- Jun 24 Farmington, MO
- Jun 25-30 Fredericktown, MO (Missouri District Family Camp)

### BOLICH, JEREMIAH



- Dec 31-Jan 3 Collinsville, OK

### BROOKS, TREY & CANDICE



- Jan 16-18 Orlando, FL (Children's Pastors' Conference)
- Jan 21 Vero Beach, FL (First)
- Feb 8-10 Adrian, GA (SPARK Conference: Southeast)
- Feb 15-17 Tishomingo, OK (SPARK Conference: South Central)
- Feb 22-24 Dickson, TN (Tell THE Story Training)
- Mar 1-3 Marion, IN (SPARK Conference)
- Mar 8-10 West Harrison, IN (SPARK Conference: Midwest)
- Mar 17 Perry, MI (Tri-District Team Day)
- Mar 18 Vicksburg, MI (Chapman Memorial)
- Mar 22-24 Eagle Rock, MO (SPARK Conference: Ozarks)
- Mar 29-31 Denison, TX (First)
- Apr 18-20 Houston, TX (South Texas District Assembly)
- Apr 26-28 Lake Jackson, TX (Tell THE Story Training)
- May 3-5 Prescott, AZ (SPARK Conference: Southwest)
- May 10-12 Oakland, OR (SPARK Conference: Pacific Northwest)
- May 17-19 Cascade, ID (SPARK Conference: Northwest)
- Jun 5-7 Nashville, TN (PALCON at Trevecca)
- Jun 11-15 Adrian, GA (Georgia District Children's Camp)
- Jun 20-22 Quincy, MA (PALCON at Eastern Nazarene College)

- Jun 25-29 Dickson, TN (MidSouth District Tween Camp (Garner Creek))

### BURKHALTER, PAT



- Jan 24-28 Post, TX
- May 2-6 Indianapolis, IN (Cornerstone)

### GALLIMORE, DAVID



- Jan 2-4 Olathe, KS (Ministry Alliance Gathering)
- Jan 7-10 Parkersburg, WV (Broadway)
- Jan 16-21 Brooksville, FL (Wesleyan Village Camp Meeting)
- Jan 26-27 Alexandria, LA (Louisiana District Men's Retreat)
- Jan 28 Crowley, LA (Ebenezer)
- Feb 18-21 Fortville, IN
- Feb 23-25 Gainesville, GA (First)
- Mar 11-14 Kalamazoo, MI (South Side)
- Mar 18-21 Lexington, SC (Shepherd)
- Apr 8-11 Waverly, OH (New Covenant CCCU)
- Apr 15-18 Fairmont, WV (First)
- Apr 22-25 Montrose, IA
- Apr 29-May 2 Leavittsburg, OH (First)
- May 6-9 Paden City, WV
- May 13-16 Moundsville, WV
- May 20-23 Bennettsville, SC (First)
- May 29-Jun 3 Dickson, TN (MidSouth District Camp (Garner Creek))
- Jun 5-10 Crowley, LA (Acadia Holiness Camp)
- Jun 20-24 Marion, IN (Northeast Indiana District Camp (Shiloh Park))

### GESSNER, DON & SHIRL



- Jan 16-21 Brooksville, FL (Wesleyan Village)
- Feb 1-28 Indianapolis, IN (Discipleship Focus)
- Mar 12-13 Bloomington, IN (Southern IN Wesleyan Pastors & Wives Retreat)
- Mar 16-18 Salem, VA (Living Well)
- Apr 1-30 Indianapolis, IN (Discipleship Focus)
- May 1-31 Indianapolis, IN (Discipleship Focus)
- June 1-30 Indianapolis, IN (Discipleship Focus)

### GREENWAY, KENNETH



- Jan 14-21 Seagrove, NC (Mt. Zion Wesleyan)
- Jan 28-31 Trinity, NC (Trindale Baptist)
- Mar 1-2 Georgetown, KY (Bluegrass Awakening)
- Mar 11-14 Concord, NC (Broadus Memorial)



Baptist)

- Mar 18-21 Hillsborough, NC (Wesleyan)
- Apr 22-25 Thomasville, NC (First)
- May 20-23 Eagle Springs, NC (Rock Hill Evangelical Friends Church)

## GRIFFIN, RONNIE

- Feb 18 Columbus, GA (Grace)



## LECKRONE, LARRY

- Jan 8-13 Jacksonville, FL (Reserved Dates)
- Jan 14 Jacksonville, FL (Revival Rally Day)
- Feb 13-14 Lakeland, FL (Florida Holiness Camp Chapel & Rally)
- Feb 21 Bradenton, FL (Revival Rally Day)
- Mar 24-28 Wrightsville, GA
- Mar 31-Apr 4 Woodbury, GA (Harmony)
- Apr 7-11 Cairo, GA (First)
- Apr 14-18 Spencer, WV
- Apr 24-26 Shipshewana, IN (Northeast Indiana Prime Time Retreat)
- Apr 28-May 2 Buchanan, MI
- May 6-9 Amelia, OH (Southwestern Ohio Zone Revival)
- May 13-16 Cridersville, OH
- May 20 Lima, OH (Northwestern Ohio Revival Rally Day)



## LOMAN, H. LANE

- Jan 7 Marksville, LA
- Jan 8-12 Alexandria, LA (Men's Retreat)
- Jan 14-18 Lakeland, FL (Wesleyan)
- Jan 19 Avon Park, FL (Avon Park Holiness Camp)
- Jan 21 Kissimmee, FL (Grace Fellowship of Four Corners)
- Jan 23-26 Orlando, FL (Synergize Billion Soul Conference)
- Jan 26-28 Deland, FL
- Feb 4-9 Rockledge, GA (Wilkes)
- Feb 11-14 Excel, AL (Enoch Johnson Memorial)
- Feb 18-21 East Dublin, GA (Graham Memorial)
- Feb 25-28 Terre Haute, IN (Faith Wesleyan)
- Mar 5-10 Louisville, IL (United Methodist)
- Mar 11 Mt. Vernon, IL (West Salem Trinity United Methodist)
- Mar 15-18 Eatonton, GA (Lakeshore Community)
- Mar 25-28 Springfield, IL (Trinity)



- Apr 8-11 Stockbridge, MI (Millville United Methodist)
- Apr 15-18 Bedford, IN (Valley Mission)
- Apr 21 Durham, NC (Meet Me at the Bridge Ministries)
- Apr 22-25 Greensboro, NC (Emmanuel Wesleyan)
- May 6-9 Jackson, OH
- May 20-23 Portland, IN (Noble Christian Church)
- Jun 3-6 Toxey, AL (Wimberly Methodist Protestant)
- Jun 7-8 Thomasville, AL (Alabama Conference of Methodist Protestant Church)
- Jun 17-19 Gainestown, AL (Jones Chapel Methodist Protestant Church)
- Jun 20-22 Collins, MS (Mississippi Conf. United Methodist Protestant)
- Jun 26-July 1 Buckingham, VA (VA District Camp (Nazarene Camp & Retreat Center))

## MANLEY, STEPHEN

- Jan 12-14 Lebanon, TN (Cross Style Conference)
- Feb 7-11 West Columbia, SC (Central)
- Feb 7-14 Columbia, SC (Grace)
- Feb 16-18 Lebanon, TN (India Conference)
- Mar 4-7 Anderson, IN (First)
- Apr 8-11 Waynesburg, PA
- May 16-20 New Cumberland, WV (Newell Glendale)
- Jun 11-17 Lebanon, TN (Cross Style Training)



## MITCHELL, ROYCE

- Jan 7 Wilder, ID (Homedale Mountain View)
- Jan 7 Nampa, ID (Karcher)
- Jan 12 Ripon, CA (Immanuel Christian Reformed)
- Jan 13 Paradise, CA (Alliance)
- Jan 14 Roseville, CA (Valley View Lincoln Hills)
- Jan 14 Los Altos Hills, CA (Bridges Community)
- Jan 19 Menlo Park, CA (Presbyterian)
- Jan 20 Fresno, CA (Northwest Church)
- Jan 21 Modesto, CA (Big Valley Grace Community)
- Jan 21 Lodi, CA (The Home Church)
- Jan 27 Hemet, CA (Cornerstone)
- Jan 28 Indian Wells, CA (Southwest)
- Jan 28 Quartzsite, AZ (Alliance)
- Jan 29 Indian Wells, CA (Southwest)





- Feb 2 Green Valley, AZ (Evangelical Free)
- Feb 3 Sierra Vista, AZ
- Feb 4 Green Valley, AZ (United Methodist)
- Feb 9 Lake Havasu City, AZ
- Feb 10 Maricopa, AZ (Community)
- Feb 11 Surprise, AZ (Grand Community Baptist)
- Feb 11 Mesa, AZ (Good Life RV Resort)
- Feb 18-19 Phoenix, AZ (Southwest Gospel Music Festival)
- Feb 23 Sahuarita, AZ (Grace Church)
- Feb 24 Apache Junction, AZ (Bonita Vista Resort)
- Feb 25 Sun City, AZ (Grace Bible)
- Mar 2 Mesa, AZ (Towerpoint Resort)
- Mar 3 Prescott Valley, AZ (Fountain of Life Community)
- Mar 4 Sun City, AZ (American Lutheran)
- Mar 8 Apache Junction, AZ (First Baptist)
- Mar 9 Sun City, AZ
- Mar 10 Tucson, AZ (Cactus Community)
- Mar 11 Casa Grande, AZ (New Beginnings)
- Mar 11 Oro Valley, AZ
- Mar 12 Mesa, AZ (New Life Assembly of God)
- Mar 16 Cottonwood, AZ (Verde Valley)
- Mar 18 Yuma, AZ (Country Roads RV Park)
- Mar 18 Yuma, AZ (First Christian Church)
- Apr 6 Colorado Springs, CO (Friendship Assembly of God)
- Apr 8 Longmont, CO
- Apr 8 Northglenn, CO (Crossroads Church)
- Apr 13 Chester, CA (Wesleyan)
- Apr 14 Escalon, CA (First Baptist)
- Apr 15 Vacaville, CA (Trinity Baptist)
- Apr 15 Chico, CA (Butte Bible Fellowship)
- Apr 20 Grass Valley, OR (First Baptist)
- Apr 21 Beaver Creek, OR (Grand View Baptist)
- Apr 22 Vancouver, WA (Evergreen Bible)
- Apr 27 Abbotsford, BC (Sevenoaks Alliance)
- Apr 28 Lynden, WA (Faith Community)
- Apr 29 Oak Harbor, WA
- May 2-7 Visalia, CA (Great Western Fan Festival)
- May 6 Reno, NV (South Reno Baptist)
- May 18 American Falls, ID (Christian Fellowship)
- May 19 Kimberly, ID (Crossroads United Methodist)
- May 20 Nampa, ID (First)
- May 20 Jerome, ID (Free Will Baptist)
- Jun 1 Kamiah, ID (Freedom Bible Fellowship)

- Jun 3 Post Falls, ID (Peace Lutheran)
- Jun 3 Lewiston, ID (Blessed Hope Assembly of God)
- Jun 22 Gerber, CA (Gerber Bible Fellowship)
- Jun 23 Sacramento, CA (Real Life Church)
- Jun 24 Sacramento, CA (First)

**SHAVER, CHIC**

- Jan 13-14 Shawnee, KS (The Ridge Community)
- Jan 21 Shawnee, KS (The Ridge Community)
- Mar 2-4 Fulton, MO (Church of God Holiness (Harmony Hill Camp))
- Apr 13-15 Wellington, KS
- Jun 3-8 Cleburne, TX (West Texas District Family Camp (Arrowhead Camp))

**SHELLENBERGER, SUSIE**

- Jan 5-7 Olathe, KS (Westside)
- Jan 26-28 Oakland, OR (Oregon District Women in Ministry Retreat)
- Feb 2-4 Pueblo, CO (First)
- Feb 9-11 Elkhart, IN (Northside)
- Feb 16-18 Aurora, CO (Aurora Tower Community Fellowship)
- Feb 25-28 Big Spring, TX (First)
- Mar 2-4 West Columbia, SC (First)
- Mar 9-11 Oklahoma City, OK (Western Oaks)
- Mar 16-18 Venice, FL
- Mar 23-25 Anderson, MO (Goodman Banner)
- Apr 6-8 Gladewater, TX
- Apr 13-15 Cincinnati, OH (Montana Avenue)
- Apr 20-22 Orlando, FL (Salvation Army Women's Conference)
- Apr 27-29 El Reno, OK (First)
- May 4-7 Wooster, OH
- May 10-13 Sumter, SC (Calvary)
- May 18-20 Saginaw, MI (Saginaw Valley)
- May 25-27 Georgetown, TX (First)
- Jun 2-3 Decatur, IL (First)
- Jun 3-8 Louisville, TN (East TN District Family Camp (Foothills Camp))
- Jun 18-25 Camby, IN (Indianapolis District Family Camp (Camp Camby))

**ULMET, BILL**

- Jan 5-7 Woodbury, GA (Harmony)
- Mar 14-18 Carmi, IL
- May 6-9 Berkeley Springs, WV
- May 10-13 Harrisonville, PA (Pleasant Ridge)
- Jun 17-20 Tallahassee, FL (First)



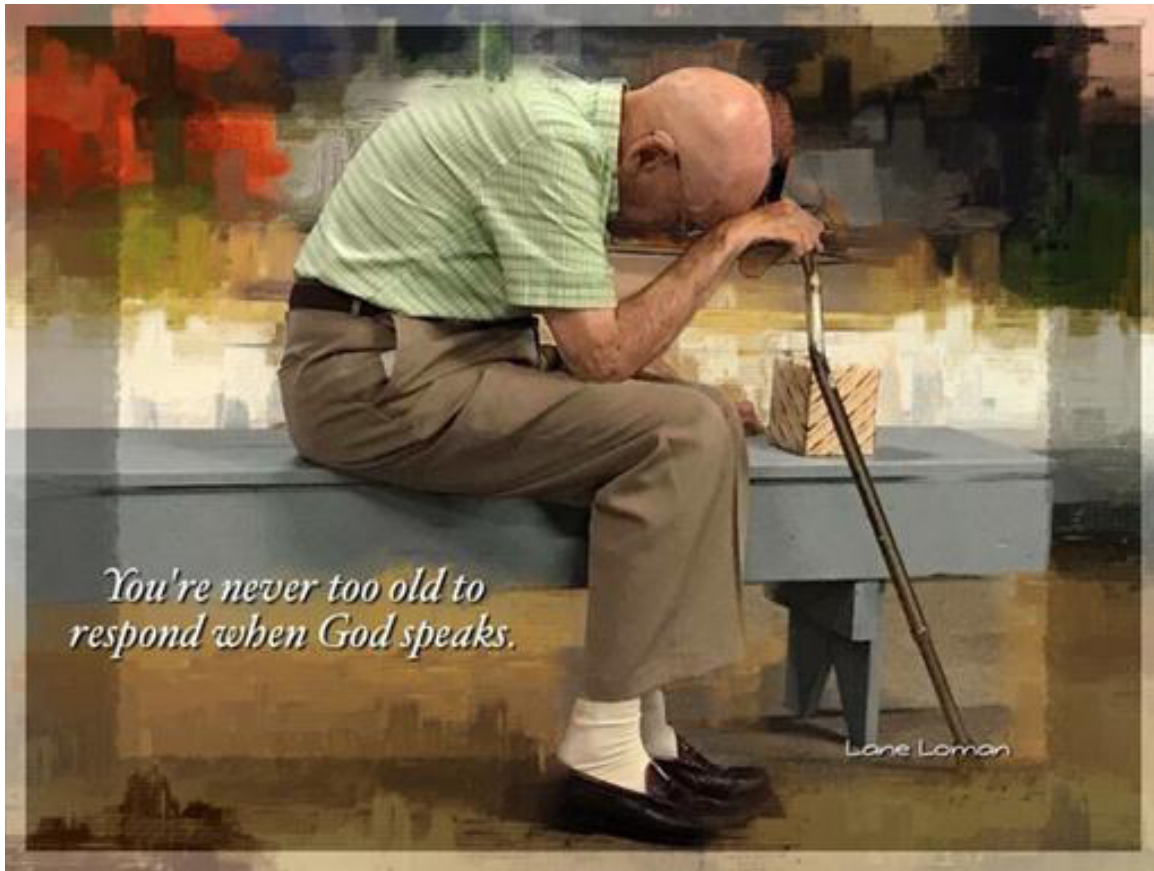


Photo Editing by Mark Murphy

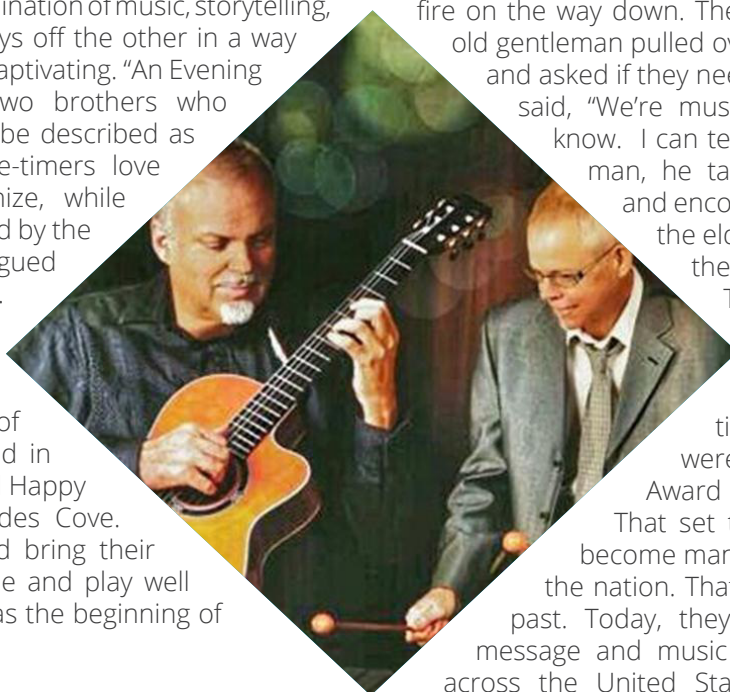
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*Altar response at Sebring  
Holiness Camp Meeting 2017  
with Evangelists Lane Loman  
and Dr. John Juneman*



**Jon and Ben Burchfield** make music that inspires the soul. Classical guitar, midi-marimba, Irish whistles and recorders make these two artists sound like an entire ensemble! The stylistic diversity of Appalachian, classical, jazz, Renaissance, praise, worship, and gospel has attributed to the stunning arrangements that have put this Dove-nominated duo in demand.

Their concerts are a combination of music, storytelling, and comedy as each plays off the other in a way that is entertaining and captivating. "An Evening with the Burchfields (two brothers who play nice together)" can be described as reaching all ages. Prime-timers love the music they recognize, while young people are inspired by the arrangements and intrigued with the instrumentation. "It all started with our musical parents while growing up in the Smoky Mountains of east Tennessee. We lived in a small community called Happy Valley, not far from Cades Cove. Many of the folks would bring their instruments to our home and play well into the evening. That was the beginning of our musical influence."



That musical influence would expand when their parents moved their young sons to a little town called Bourbonnais, Illinois, just south of Chicago. Suddenly, the Burchfield boys were exposed to a completely new world of music. "Being well grounded in gospel, spirituals, and mountain music, we soon found ourselves embracing classical, Latin, and jazz, along with many other styles."

At eighteen, Jon took a job with a touring group called the Spurrflows. The Spurrflows were the backup band for Roy Clark. From the book, *Between the Strings: The Secret Lives of Guitars*, Jon writes, "... the next few months proved to be a whirlwind of concerts and traveling." (Schroeter, 308) He further recalls, "On Saturdays, we'd play softball with the Fifth Dimension,

B.B. King's band, and others, making the weeks there an intoxicating blend of celebrities and dazzling nightlife" (309). Rigorous touring took its toll, and for a time, left Jon in poor health. However, his recovery proved to be a time of healing and reflection. It was during that time he realized the wealth of influence he gained from some of the world's greatest guitarists.

Returning home to Illinois, Jon found that his younger brothers -- Mark (bass guitar) and Ben (drums, marimba) -- were already accomplished musicians. They decided to relocate to their home state of Tennessee and get involved in the music community of Nashville. Just as they arrived on the outskirts of Nashville, they pulled their car over, because it had been badly damaged by fire on the way down. They were shocked when an old gentleman pulled over, stepped out of his car, and asked if they needed help. The Burchfields said, "We're musicians, sir." He replied, "I know. I can tell by your car." A very kind man, he talked with these brothers and encouraged them. It turned out the elderly "good Samaritan" was the most famous musician in Tennessee, Roy Acuff!

Just as the brothers were considering a full-time touring schedule, they were nominated for a Dove Award for best instrumental CD. That set the stage for what would become many years of concerts across the nation. That was miles ago and years past. Today, they continue to bring their message and music to thousands of people across the United States and the world. Ben is involved with the Nashville First Church of the Nazarene orchestra (including the role of director of the recorder ensemble). The Burchfield Brothers are developing their repertoire, which will include leading worship (mainly hymns).

In the Smoky Mountain Memories liner notes, Jon writes, "From time to time, we felt that gentle tug to revisit our roots. Reaching deep into our souls, we again discovered the paths that brought us here." **EP**

**Contact Information:**

BenBurchfield@comcast.net / (615) 557-8129

**Work Cited:**

Schroeter, John August. *Between the Strings: The Secret Lives of Guitars*. John August Music, 2004.

# the Wittenberg Congress 2017

## Celebrating The 500th Anniversary of the Protestant Reformation

By **Lane Loman**,  
Tenured Nazarene Evangelist

In 2014, Dr. Leonard Sweet, in conversation with Dr. James O. Davis, proposed the idea of celebrating the 500th anniversary of The Protestant Reformation. The Protestant Reformation was set into motion when Martin Luther, a Catholic monk, posted his "95 Theses" on the door of the Castle Church in Wittenberg, Germany. Luther's summary statement, "the just shall live by faith", would shake the foundation of the church of which he was a part. Germany declared a national holiday, and celebrated the 500th anniversary of this historic event on October 31, 2017.

Dr. James O. Davis, an Assembly of God evangelist, and the late Dr. Bill Bright, founder of Campus Crusade for Christ, created the Global Church Network for the purpose of reaching a billion unsaved people with the gospel by the year 2030. The Wittenberg Congress was organized and scheduled to provide an opportunity for church leaders and other Christians to gather from around the world to acknowledge the impact Luther's actions had upon church history. The Wittenberg Congress was held in Berlin, Germany, on October 30-November 1, 2017, and concluded with approximately 500 Congress attendees participating in a worship celebration inside the Castle Church in Wittenberg, Germany. It was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, and I am thankful

I was privileged to experience this historic and spiritual event.

Featured speakers for The Wittenberg Congress included Dr. Gustavo Crocker, General Superintendent of The Church of the Nazarene; Dr. Doug Beacham, Presiding Bishop of The Pentecostal Holiness Church; Dr. Timothy Hill, General Overseer of The Church of God; Dr. Leonard Sweet, Professor of Evangelism at Drew University; Dr. Jo Anne Lyon, General Superintendent Emerita of The Wesleyan Church; and Dr. James O. Davis, Assembly of God evangelist and co-founder of Global Church Network.

The theme and challenge from each speaker pointed to one mission and goal: reaching every people group and language with the gospel by 2030. The following highlights are from messages shared during the sessions.

Dr. Leonard Sweet used Martin Luther's own words in the opening session, "The Bible is the manger in which Christ was laid. The scriptures are alive, they speak to me. The scriptures have feet, they run after me. The scriptures have hands, they lay hold on me."

Dr. Gustavo Crocker reminded us, "Your church must strengthen its identity, identify its mission,





and fulfill its purpose." Dr. Crocker affirmed that collaboration works. In his home country of Guatemala, 40% of the population are Christian because Nazarenes, Presbyterians, Baptists, and Quakers worked together to spread the gospel.

Dr. Doug Beacham spoke of "convergent synergy." He said Luther, impacted the political, social, and religious segments of his day. He heard the Bible anew, finding his answer regarding righteousness and peace. He used the technology offered (the Gutenberg Press) to promote his beliefs. He influenced educators and succeeded in winning over the entire faculty of Wittenberg University. He believed in transformational relationships, looking to Africans in Ethiopia to help trace the roots of Christianity.

Suliasi Kurolo, pastor of the largest church in the Fiji Islands, challenged us by saying that the kind of planting we can do that will last beyond our lifetimes is church planting. He also reminded us that, "Prayer is not a spiritual gift, it is a discipline, and fasting brings power to that discipline."

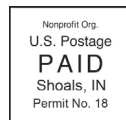
At the Castle Church in Wittenberg, in his concluding address, Dr. James O. Davis shared an interview he had with Sir Edmund Hillary in 2007.

Hillary was the first person to successfully climb Mount Everest. Dr. Davis asked Hillary for any words of wisdom he might have. In responding, Hillary said, "Don't just do what others have done. You will only end up feeling what others have felt. Do what no one else has done, and you experience what no one else ever has." Dr. Davis proposed that our Mount Everest is the Great Commission found in Matthew 28:16-20. Our task is to fulfill that commission, to accomplish that which no one else has ever done.

I gained so much from my time at The Wittenberg Congress. Of the many messages and people I heard and met, one reality became crystal clear: We are not alone in our desire to complete Jesus' mandate to make disciples globally. Regardless of background, church affiliation, ethnicity, or education, people from all walks of life are interested in the souls of those who have not heard the gospel. Working together, we can do this! Dr. Leonard Sweet in his concluding remarks at The Castle Church said, "Luther proclaimed, 'Here I stand.' We must embrace a new position: 'There we go!'" **EP**



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