

Evangelistically Speaking

Volume 16 Issue 12

December 2007

*Please join us in prayer
for the following items:*

- Pray that God will send forth workers to help in the harvest
- Praise God for His bountiful blessings in this day and age
- Ask God to bless those in the mission field with strength, good health, wisdom, and opportunity
- Pray for the church plant team in Vilonia and ask that God will bless their efforts according to His will

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From Ted's Pen

This month brings to a close another year that God has blessed us with and marks the beginning of the 17th year of full-time evangelism and mission work for Barbara and me. We look back upon the past 16 years with great humility and gratitude for God's abundant blessings for allowing us to work in this manner of ministering to people all over the U.S. and in other parts of the world, as well.

We are keenly aware of the fact that this would not have been possible without the prayers, encouragement and financial support of so many of you. We just very humbly and gratefully say, "Thank you." May God bless you for partnering with us in these endeavors to spread the

gospel to as many as possible. We pledge to God and to you our continued commitment to be zealous in our efforts to tell others the Good News.

Our work in November was very productive and pleasant. It is rare, indeed, when we have a circumstance that it is not pleasant and productive. Following my return home from Romania on October 30 I knew that I would need a few days to rest before taking another long trip. So, I arranged to preach for the brethren that meet here in Conway at Harrison and Willow Streets. I have been associated with these brethren for more than 30 years and have watched the church grow in many ways. Through the years some won-



derful Christians have gone on to their rest, but the church has grown and continued to reach out to the community with the gospel. Brother John Phillips is the preacher and has done a very good work. On November 11 it was a pleasure to be with the Colony congregation near Bee Branch, Arkansas for a special day of emphasis on the work that they are assisting us to do.

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On December 2, I will begin my 33rd year as a resident of the Vilonia area. We moved here in 1975 when Dad began working with the Liberty congregation as pulpit minister.

"Back in the day" the little town of Vilonia was a very different place from what it is today. The population sign read 462. We only had one general store, located in an ancient tin-sided structure long since gone.

Marty's Thoughts

The school had one principal for grades K-12—ironically, he is still the high school principal for my younger daughter! There was no restaurant, drug store, or hardware store. You could have stood in the middle of Highway 64 for minutes at a time without fearing for your life. Try that now and face a quick demise!

Today, there are some 3,000 souls calling Vilonia home—six times larger than my first days! The school is one of the largest in Arkansas. A 4-lane bypass will soon replace old Highway 64's path through town.

Until last month, one thing had been constant—there was not a church of Christ in Vilonia. There were congregations meeting near Vilonia, but not in the city.

With assistance from others and a great deal of research, I first compiled a plan to establish a congregation in Vilonia in 2001. I discussed this with a number of brethren at that time, some of whom were encouraging; but, for a number of reasons, those brethren decided that the time was not right.

In September of this year, a number of families re-visited that plan and after a great deal of prayerful consideration, decided that the time was right.

Our first objective was to ensure that our efforts were fully known by those same faithful congregations in the area, all of which are some 5 to 7 miles from Vilonia.

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From Ted's Pen (Continued)

The church at Colony is small and in the last couple of years they have lost several families who have moved to other locations. However, they continue to be faithful and are involved in helping to spread the gospel to many places throughout the world.

Among those who have moved away are Brother and Sister Joe Spaulding who moved to Romance, Arkansas and are helping to build the church there. Brother Carl Thomason, Jr. is now the preacher at Colony. We thank God for these fine brethren.

On the third Sunday of November for many years we have visited with two fine congregations and it has been a great joy to do so. On Sunday morning November 18 we were with the fine congregation at Cave City, Arkansas. Here is another church that is growing! They are presently appointing one additional elder and adding to the number of deacons, as well.

Brother Dean Fugett has served as the preacher and also one of the elders for many years and continues to do a great work. Brother Barry Wilkes is also working with Brother Fugett in sharing the pulpit and other areas of service.

On Sunday evening we were blessed to be with the Southside

church in Batesville, Arkansas. Brother Bob Harris has preached at Southside since Noah built the Ark and he and wife Shirley have done and continue to do a wonderful work. They broadcast their Sunday morning services on the local television station and Bob also preaches some on "Speaking The Truth In Love" television program at Jonesboro, Arkansas.

We closed the month of work with the church at Black Oak, Arkansas, a place that I remember visiting as a very young boy. Congregations in the northeast Arkansas area had monthly Sunday afternoon singings and my father always tried to attend and he would take me along with him. I remember those singings very well.

I have also preached in many gospel meetings at Black Oak, which is just a few miles from where My Lady was born. We are thankful for the church at Black Oak and the support and encouragement that they provide for our work.

ROMANIA REPORT

We are just thrilled with the way our work is going in Cluj, Romania. Brother Claudiu Murtaza arrived in Cluj while I was there and in October and we had some great conversations regarding the future of the church there.

I tell you, Claudiu hit the ground running and the work is going well. They have started a Bible class each Friday evening and it is going very well. Claudiu has been visiting with some members of the church who had stopped attending services over the years. They have mailed letters to 77 people who are students in our Bible Correspondence Program and have gotten some response from those letters.

One man called asking for the location of the meeting place and he was in services on November 18. Claudiu is having studies with an older man who had been a student in the Bible Course work and a young lady in her 20's who has been visiting the services, as well. Please pray for Ion Goia and Magdalina as they study with Claudiu.

We are publishing a newsletter each week for those who are present at services and it is mailed to those who are not present on Sunday for Bible study and worship. This provides us with a way to stay connected to the brethren there during those times we are not able to be there with them. Claudiu had helped me with a

similar program at Craiova in the past. We ask for your continued prayers for the entire congregation at Cluj and for Claudiu as he continues to preach and teach the gospel.

We have also been asked to solicit your prayers on behalf of some who are having health problems in the church at Cluj. Please lift Elena Grigorovici, Robert Szatmari, Isabela Bodi, and Mircea Bularda before God as they are certainly worthy of your prayers.

SUPPORT FOR CLUJ

We have about half of the needed support for Claudiu raised and we really need to get additional support for this work very soon. We need about \$300 per month more for him. I can assure you that he is earning his support and is rendering an invaluable service to the Lord's work in Cluj. If you as an individual or a congregation can assist us with this need, we would love to hear from you.

HOLIDAY GREETINGS

The Knight family wishes for you a very happy holiday season and a wonderful new year! May God bless every one of you.

- Ted

LEVY MISSION EVANGELISM GIFTS OF HONOR / MEMORIAL

Please make my contribution:

In Memory of _____

In Honor of _____

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YES! I want to help spread the news of Jesus Christ through this work.

- Contribution intended for Ted
 Contribution intended for Marty

RETURN TO: Levy Mission Evangelism, P.O. Box 1297, Conway, AR 72033

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TELEPHONE: _____

E-MAIL: _____

Marty's Thoughts (Continued)

On November 11, a group of ten families met on a Sunday evening and the Vilonia church worshipped together for the first time with 19 in attendance!

I can't tell you how proud I am of these ten families. They are a very talented group of Christians. Five of the men have served the church as deacons in the past—some at multiple congregations. There are outstanding Bible class teachers from nursery to adults. Most of the group has served in the mission fields in Mexico, Guyana, Romania, and domestic points within the U.S. (North Dakota).

Demographics are of a wide range: babies in their first year, faithful teenagers, college students, young professionals, empty-nesters, and retirees. The talents of this group are as diverse as their ages.

There is, however, one thing that brings all 25 of these souls together and that is the "fire in their bones" for evangelism!

Words fail me when I try to share the excitement that comes from seeing a group so passionate about sharing the message of Jesus with their neighbors and fellow students in Vilonia. I implore you to keep this team in your prayers in the coming days and weeks. I will provide you occasional updates as things progress.

Unfortunately, the idea of "church planting" is one that churches of Christ have nearly abandoned. Many of you have read statistics that I've published here before. According to the Faith Communities Today study done by the Lilly Endowment in 2000, over 50% of the churches of Christ in existence today were established during a 40-year window beginning in 1940. I'm not sure what happened in or around 1980 that convinced us that this was a bad practice, but the trend needs to be reversed!

I don't believe that it is coincidental that the decline in rapid growth enjoyed by churches of Christ in the 1950's and 1960's happened at the same time we stopped planting

healthy, productive, faithful congregations of the Lord's body. It is one of the most scriptural practices in the New Testament—one found throughout the book of Acts.

As exciting as this process has been, it has not been without challenges. Many team members had doubts and fears, primarily due to the lack of experience in this activity. Other congregations have been challenged to re-think the practice as a new church is planted by Christians from within their own walls. As I mentioned earlier, we have made every effort to ensure that this endeavor was undertaken in fellowship with our brethren, but it's still a challenge to tell the people with whom you've worshipped for years that you will no longer be there on a regular basis.

However, all of those fears and challenges pale in comparison to one thing—the lost need us to share the Gospel with them!

Remember the purpose of the church found in Ephesians 3:8-12.

Remember the commission given to those apostles by Christ in Matthew 28:19-20.

Remember that we aren't members of the Lord's body in order to "get something." Our commission is to "take" and "give."

Please keep us in your prayers as we continue this journey. More information, including a list of the families, can be found on the church website:

www.viloniachurch.com

Additionally, I hope that you have marked your calendars and are making plans to attend the 2008 Romania-Albania Missions Conference on January 11-13. It will be held at the Levy church in North Little Rock, Arkansas.

May God bless you and thank you for the support that you show in so many different ways!

- Marty

2008

Romania ♦ Albania Missions Conference

"Standing Watch for the Lord"

JANUARY 11-13, 2008

Levy Church of Christ
North Little Rock, Arkansas

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

"I Will Stand My Watch"

TED KNIGHT—Friday, January 11

"Standing Steadfast for the Truth"

DAVID RILEY—Saturday, January 12

"Standing in the Gap—Preparing the Next Generation"

MARTY KNIGHT—Saturday, January 12

BREAKOUT SESSIONS

World English Institute—Bob Towell, Tom Langley

Bible Academy of Romania—Larry Little

Mission Opportunities for Women—Ellen Walker

International Bible Institute of Albania—Steve Stamatis/Art Henley

Being Effective as a Sending Congregation—Phil Jackson

Sharing the Gospel Through the Printed Word—Robert Swain

MISSION REPORTS

A panel comprised of missionaries from each respective country will provide reports. Dick Ady will facilitate the group from Albania and Tom Langley will facilitate the Romanian panel.

www.romaniaalbaniaconference.com

Schedules

Ted and Barbara

DECEMBER 3-7

San Antonio, Texas

DECEMBER 9

Jerusalem, Arkansas (AM)

Overcup, Morrilton, Arkansas (PM)

DECEMBER 16

Bellefonte, Arkansas

DECEMBER 23

Plumerville, Arkansas (AM)

Liberty, Conway, Arkansas (PM)

DECEMBER 30

Mars Hill, Vilonia, Arkansas

Marty

JANUARY 11-13

Romania-Albania Missions Conference
Levy—North Little Rock, Arkansas

JANUARY 18-28

Cluj, Romania

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Visit our website at
<http://www.evangelisticallyspeaking.net>

GIFTS OF MEMORIAL AND HONOR

In Memory of
ELTON BLAKE
Jim and Floy Sutterfield

In Memory of
JIM JACKSON
Joyce Jackson

In Memory of
JAMES KNIGHT
Steve and Kim Knight

In Memory of
GEORGE GUNTER
Marty Knight

In Honor of
TED AND BARBARA KNIGHT
David and Kathy Hall