

THE MOST EVANGELISTIC KENTUCKY BAPTIST  
CHURCHES IN EASTERN KENTUCKY

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## **ABSTRACT**

### **THE MOST EVANGELISTIC SOUTHERN BAPTIST CHURCHES IN EASTERN KENTUCKY**

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The purpose of this project is to acknowledge the value and role of the smaller church in Eastern Kentucky as it relates to reaching people for Christ. According to Gary England, Richland Southern Baptist Church in Peoria, Illinois, the average size of a Southern Baptist Church is around one hundred active members. This means that the majority of Southern Baptists are being reached for the kingdom of God by the smaller church. Almost all of the churches in Eastern Kentucky fall into this small church classification. Therefore, this project will attempt to deal with the smaller work, and will seek to gain insights from pastors and leaders from these small churches as to what represents effective evangelism. It should also be noted that, this project does not focus on church growth, but rather evangelistic growth.

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## **Problem Statement**

A common concern among pastors and denominational leaders in today's church economy is evangelistic growth. Evangelistic growth represents the number of conversions, and subsequent baptisms within a given church setting. It is very common to find scores of books on church growth in general, but there are few books in number that devote content exclusively to conversion growth.

The problem with conversion growth is not something new. Some years ago Junior Hill, a Southern Baptist evangelist, preached a sermon entitled "God's Cure for Barren Churches." In his sermon Dr. Hill made the following introductory statement,

In 1993, in the Southern Baptist Convention, 6,191 churches did not baptize one single convert to faith in Christ. My first impression upon reading that startling statistic was to assume that these were tiny churches located in remote areas with virtually no evangelistic opportunities. However, according to C.B. Hogue, executive director of the California Southern Baptist Convention, that was not the case. Many of them were fairly large congregations, situated in densely populated urban areas. And yet, all of them spent an entire year of preaching, teaching, singing, and working, and still could not lead one solitary

person to receive Christ as Savior and follow Him in baptism.<sup>1</sup>

Today, according to Dr. Ken Hemphill, National Strategist for Empowering Kingdom Growth in the Southern Baptist Convention, the total number of churches in the Southern Baptist Convention that did not baptize a single convert has now reached ten thousand plus churches. W.A. Criswell once said,

There are literally thousands of churches who do not have any burden for the lost. There are other thousands who would do the work of evangelism if they knew how to implement the effective methods of reaching lost souls.<sup>2</sup>

This dissertation will focus on effective methods, insights and experiences of pastors and churches in the realm of evangelism not from across the entire Southern Baptist Convention, but from churches and pastors within the region of Eastern Kentucky. Eastern Kentucky, defined for the purposes of this paper, will not include any churches in excess of twenty five miles north of Interstate 64, and will not include any churches west of Interstate 75.

The problem this project will attempt to solve is, what can be done to stop the steady decline of baptisms

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<sup>1</sup>Jack R. Smith, 50 Great Soul-Winning Motivational Sermons, (Atlanta: Home Mission Board, 1994), 95.

<sup>2</sup>Thom Rainer, Effective Evangelistic Churches, (Nashville: Broadman & Nolman, 1996), xv.

throughout the East Kentucky region? In an effort to solve the problem, this study will seek insights on evangelistic growth from ten leading churches from within the designated area. Baptismal numbers reported during the 2007 calendar year will be used, since 2008 numbers have not been reported as to date.

### The Diagnostic Process

This project will devote itself exclusively to evangelistic growth, and will take the position that evangelism is a biblical priority. Therefore, the following insights will become the tale of ten churches. The size of these churches is not that divergent. The reason for the similarity in the size of the churches is primarily due to the area itself. In Eastern Kentucky the vast majority of churches average under one thousand in worship attendance. This is basically due to the lack of population density.

The following categories were used while gathering insights for this project:

1. Preaching. What were the preaching types and styles?
2. Biblical translations. Did the pastor use a modern translation of God's Word?
3. Worship style. What was the preferred worship style in seeking to win the lost to Christ?

4. Theological beliefs. What were the theological beliefs of the pastor? What were the theological beliefs of the congregation?
5. Other helpful information such as the importance of called staff, the spiritual gifts of the pastor, the importance of Sunday School, the importance of deacon ministry, the importance of weekday ministries, the importance of event evangelism, and the list continues with some eighty four questions in total.

There is one recognized problem at the onset of this dissertation, and that is, churches were selected from one year's data only. It should be clear that a church may not be evangelistically effective based on one year's reporting alone. Therefore, this study is not one that will consider consistent evangelistic growth over a period of several years.

It is the feeling, however, that God is at work in all ten of the churches that participated in the study. It should also be mentioned that it was a privilege to listen to those who serve these East Kentucky Baptist churches. It is evident that all these leaders and churches have an evangelistic spirit that was truly contagious.

#### Evangelistic Methodology

Lloyd M. Perry and John R. Strubhar, in their book Evangelistic Preaching, made the following statement,

The church needs evangelism to save herself from sterility of a merely cultural religion. The life of

the church and her hope for the future lie in her reproductive power, which is evangelism. The church must evangelize or die.<sup>3</sup>

### Preaching

The question was asked of all ten churches, "How would you rate the importance of preaching in your church as it relates to evangelism?" Of the ten churches in the study, eight churches responded by saying, "preaching is very important as it relates to reaching people for Christ." Of the two remaining churches in the study, they said, "preaching is somewhat important in reaching people for Christ." This means, eighty percent of the pastors surveyed said, preaching is very important when it comes to effective evangelistic growth. The other twenty percent did not say preaching was unimportant, but rather "preaching is somewhat important as it relates to evangelism." Rick Warren made the following statement directed toward preaching and evangelism,

Preaching seems to go in and out of fashion in many denominations. In our high-tech world, it is often criticized as being an outdated and uninteresting mode of communication . . . however, nothing else can take the place of spirit-anointed preaching.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>Lloyd M. Perry and John R. Strubhar, Evangelistic Preaching, (Eugene, OR: Wysf and Stock Publishers, 2000), 7.

<sup>4</sup>Rick Warren, The Purpose Driven Church, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1995), 306.

What was discovered in this study was, preaching of the written word is still very powerful: When these pastors were asked about evangelistic methodologies, preaching received the highest response.

### Sunday School

Another program-based methodology discussed with the leaders of the ten churches in this study was that of Sunday School. The following question was posed to the leadership participating in the study, "Do you believe that Sunday School is an evangelistic dinosaur?" The word "dinosaur" was used in the context of being extinct. In other words, some may believe Sunday School used to be important to a church's evangelistic effectiveness, but is not that important anymore.

Of the ten churches within the survey only three churches responded "yes, Sunday School has become an evangelistic dinosaur." It should be understood however, that of the three churches who responded "yes" none of them saw Sunday School as unimportant. These three churches merely believed it was not important as it relates to reaching others for Christ.

This means thirty percent of those responding to the survey are no longer using Sunday School evangelistically.

However, it also means that seventy percent of the churches still see Sunday School as the evangelistic arm of the church. As an example of how important Sunday School is to the work of evangelism consider the following verse of Scripture,

For everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. How can they call on Him who they have not believed? And **how can they believe without hearing about Him?** And how can they hear without a preacher? (Romans 10:13-14).<sup>5</sup>

Ken Hemphill and Bill Taylor, in their book Ten Best Practices, had the following to say about evangelism and Sunday School,

Salvation is God's work of grace in response to the faith of the individual (Eph. 2:8-9). That being true, we do not actually "win" a person to Christ, but we can engage in actions wherein the good news is declared and people are brought into a life changing encounter with God in Christ. That is what we are about in Sunday School.<sup>6</sup>

It is believed that all of the pastors in the survey viewed Sunday School as important evangelistically, in the sense that it brought unchurched people into a place where they encountered God. It was simply the opinion of some, that if Sunday School is to become effective evangeli-

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<sup>5</sup>Holman Christian Standard Translation "The Holman Christian Standard will be used consistently throughout this paper."

<sup>6</sup>Ken Hemphill and Bill Taylor, Ten Best Practices, (Nashville: Lifeway Press, 2001), 133.

stically it is going to require some changes in methodology.

### Music

Another conclusion drawn from the study is that music can be an effective evangelistic tool. Of the ten participating churches, eight responded that music is seen as very important as it relates to evangelistic effectiveness. Only one church had a different view of music, but even they admitted that music was "somewhat important" in reaching people for Christ. The bottom line is that ninety percent of those surveyed consider music an important element in overall evangelistic effectiveness.

It makes perfect sense to see the importance of music in Central Appalachia. The major highway that runs through the center of the area has been named "Country Music Highway." Along this highway have emerged some of country music's brightest stars. Performers like Billy Ray Cyrus, Naomi and Wynonna Judd, Ricky Scaggs, Loretta Lynn, Crystal Gale and Patty Loveless just to mention a few. It should not take a "rocket-scientist" to see the value placed on music in the Eastern Kentucky culture.

John R. Bisagno, retired pastor from First Baptist Church Huston, said,

Across the centuries the church has loved to worship. The word worship is an Anglo-Saxon word, worth-ship, meaning the manner in which we express the worth or value of a person or an object. The word "worship" has grandeur about it - a majesty that moves the soul.<sup>7</sup>

In this light, it has been concluded that music is an important element in reaching souls for Christ in the Central Appalachian Region of Eastern Kentucky.

### Prayer

This question was posed to the ten churches, "Do you believe that all evangelistic churches are praying churches?" Nine of the ten churches responded, "yes, we believe all evangelistic churches are praying churches."

In the interviews it was evident that pastors and leaders of these evangelistic churches see prayer as inevitably tied to winning souls to Christ Jesus. Paul W. Powell, on praying for the lost, had this to say,

Virtually anyone will tell you that prayer is essential to building an evangelistic church. Great and growing churches pray cooperately and individually in their Sunday services, mid-week prayer meetings, or all night vigils. They have prayer retreats and prayer chains. They pray for the sick, for one another, for their national leaders.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup>John R. Bisagno, Letters to Timothy, (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2001), 193.

<sup>8</sup>Paul W. Powell, Building An Evangelistic Church, (Dallas: Annuity Board, 1991), 73.

Powell went on to say,

Real evangelism . . . begins not by talking to people about God, but talking to God about people, crying to God about sending workers to the harvest. If you know people who are lost in sin, pray that God gives you courage to witness to them. If a loved one is lost, pray that God will usher a Christian into his life and for that Christian to witness effectively to your loved one.<sup>9</sup>

### Revivals

When the question was asked, "Do you still have revivals in your church?" - Eight of the ten churches responded, "yes". Three of the churches said they have one revival per year, three other churches said they have two revivals per year, one church said they are not held to a set number of revivals annually, and two churches said they do not have revivals at all anymore. This means eighty percent of the churches surveyed, said they still use revivals.

Of the eighty percent of churches that said they still use revivals, only thirty three percent saw these revivals as being "very effective." Forty four percent of the churches saw revivals as "somewhat effective," and twenty two percent did not see revivals as being effective at all. The bottom line is, feelings are mixed when it came to using revivals in an overall evangelistic program or plan.

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<sup>9</sup>Ibid., 80.

Bob Russell, retired pastor of Southeast Christian Church in Louisville, Kentucky, made the following statement,

Every culture is different. What works in winning people to Christ in America may not work in Zimbabwe or Ireland or India. What works in Louisville, Kentucky, may not work in Indianapolis or New York or Los Angeles or Horse Cave, Kentucky.<sup>10</sup>

The idea is, when it comes to evangelistic effectiveness, church leaders will have to use their God given spiritual insights. By some this is called discernment, but by others, holy imagination. Paul Powell writes,

Napoleon declared, "Men of imagination rule the world." The power of imagination, the ability to formulate mental images, is one of God's greatest gifts to man. When a man can conceive and believe, he can achieve. So it is that our imaginations provide inspiration for success: We must constantly imagine, dream dreams and visualize things we ought to do - then do them.<sup>11</sup>

The conclusion is this, if revivals still work in a given culture - use revivals. If revivals do not work in a given culture - use God given imagination. In essence, we must ask what else could be done to reach people for Christ in our setting. When it has been determined what else could be done to advance the Kingdom - do it!

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<sup>10</sup>Bob Russell, When God Builds a Church, (West Monroe, LA: Harvard Publishing, 2000), 258.

<sup>11</sup>Powell, 30.

## Student Ministry

Of the churches surveyed, only four of the ten churches said that the emphasis of their youth ministry is on youth evangelism. Three of the churches said the emphasis of their youth ministry is upon programs, and one church responded by saying that their ministry would be best described as biblical.

Thom Rainer of Lifeway Christian Resources once said,

Emphasis on youth evangelism is high in churches of all sizes. However, larger churches generally place a higher value on this method of evangelism than smaller churches. They are more likely to have a staff member who devotes a significant amount of time to the evangelization of the youth.<sup>12</sup>

It has generally been acknowledged that the vast number of people who give their life to Christ do so prior to age eighteen. One pastor was quoted as saying, "It's time to get busy in the business of evangelism that works." He went on to say, "We need quality youth pastors! We have dropped the ball too long." He was referencing the fact that even though most people are saved in their youth, evangelistic effectiveness has been declining with young people in the majority of churches.

At the First Baptist Church of Pikeville, one of the churches used in this study, youth between the ages of

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<sup>12</sup>Rainer, 21.

twelve and seventeen only represent four percent of the church's total number of baptisms. It is interesting to compare this number with individuals who are sixty years of age and older who were also baptized at First Baptist. This group of sixty year olds and older, also represents four percent of the church's total number of baptisms. (See copy of graft in appendix.) If most people are saved prior to their eighteenth birthday, then it would only be right to expect the percentage to be far higher in that twelve to seventeen year old age group.

When the pastors/leaders of these various churches were asked, "Do you train youth workers to share their faith with students?" only two churches responded with a "no," meaning we do not train youth workers to share their faith with students. Ken Hemphill said, "Any plan (for evangelism) must first incorporate a strategy for training people to share their faith, sending them . . . to engage lost people on their turf."<sup>13</sup>

It should be recognized that the student years represent a critical time in life, especially as it relates to evangelistic effectiveness. It is a time frame when a large segment of population will receive Christ as personal

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<sup>13</sup>Ken Hemphill, ETERNAL IMPACT, (Nashville: B & H Publishing Group, 2003), 106.

Lord and Savior. It is also believed that beyond these years resistance to the gospel will only increase.

#### Children's Ministry

Churches being studied for this project were asked, "Do you believe your church emphasis is on children's programs or on child evangelism?" All but one church responded by saying their church emphasis is on child evangelism rather than on programs for children. This means that ninety percent of the churches in the study concentrate on leading children to Christ versus having them involved in some program established by the church.

Child Evangelism Fellowship of Kentucky had the following tips on leading a child to Christ:

- The Gospel must be presented to have a basis to give an invitation
- The Gospel must be received so the Holy Spirit can use you to ask the child to respond to His calling
- The Gospel must be established. The decision the child has made will be established in his heart as you use the Word of God with him.
- God loves you (say child's name). John 3:16
- But you have sinned. Romans 3:23
- Christ died for you and came alive again.  
1 Corinthians 15:3-4
- You must receive Him by faith. John 1:12
- You can be assured you are saved. 1 John 5:13<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>14</sup>Jim and Joyce Hatfield, Loving a Child with Discipline, (Elizabethtown, KY: CEF, 1998), 5.

At First Baptist Church of Pikeville, Kentucky children ages six through eleven years represent thirty eight percent of all the church baptisms. Charles Haddon Spurgeon was once quoted as having said, "Children need to be saved, children may be saved, children should be saved while they are children." From what has been determined in this project, churches need to learn how to evangelize to this age segment. Therefore, courses in evangelism and church growth should be taught to every Sunday School teacher who is responsible for teaching children within the confines of the church setting.

#### Event Evangelism

When churches in the study were asked, "Do you use event evangelism?" all but two churches responded, "yes". Of these eight churches responding "yes," all claim that event evangelism is "very effective" in reaching individuals with the gospel.

Thom Ranier once stated,

Only seven percent of the churches use event evangelism as a significant tool for reaching people. In these churches a special media presentation or a well-known speaker or singer is used to attract the unchurched. Typically the gospel is presented in a low-key fashion; sometimes decision cards are used. But most evangelistic churches gave negative responses about event evangelism.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>15</sup>Rainer, 25.

First Baptist Church of Pikeville, Kentucky

orchestrated an area wide Crusade in Eastern Kentucky. The Crusade organizers invited guests of the likes of Larnelle Harris, Ricky Scaggs, and a few former members of the Power Team. The event went on for three nights. The night Larnelle Harris was the feature soloist, there were thirty first-time decisions for Christ. The night Ricky Scaggs and his band performed, there were twenty six first-time decisions for Christ, and the night the former Power Team members performed, there were ninety four first-time decisions for Christ. The number totaled one hundred and fifty first-time decisions for the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Crusade budget was approximately one hundred thousand dollars. The time to organize the Crusade took approximately six months. There were a total of seventy churches that participated in the event. The conclusion is this - event evangelism can be effective in reaching people for Christ.

There were other benefits for having the evangelistic event in Pikeville other than first-time decisions. During the course of the event over three hundred believers were trained to share their faith in Christ. Also, the average attendance was over four thousand per night, meaning,

although every unbeliever who came through the door did not make a public decision, every unbeliever who came through the door received a gospel witness.

#### Bus Ministry

All ten churches were asked the question, "Does your church have a bus ministry?" Of the ten churches that were asked this question six said "yes," and four of the churches responded with a "no". Of the churches that said "yes, we have a bus ministry," only one church considers bus ministry as "very effective" in their efforts for reaching others with the gospel. One church said of bus ministry, "it is somewhat effective in reaching people for Christ," and two churches said, "bus ministry is not very effective."

The conclusion is that bus ministry is not being used in churches as in days gone by. However, it should be concluded that of the top evangelistic churches in the region, over half are still using some form of bus ministry.

It might be noted that the one pastor that stated, "bus ministry is very effective when it comes to reaching people for Christ," said of his church, "we have thirty plus professions for Christ per year as a direct result of

our bus ministry." Perhaps the reason others are not using bus ministry effectively could be linked to the prospect that they have no plan to make bus ministry evangelistically effective.

Gene Mims, in his book The Kingdom Focused Church, made the following statement,

If you look at the increase in the U.S. population over the last twenty-five years and compare it to the decline of evangelical churches over the same period, the strategies of churches and denominations are painfully clear. There aren't any. We have no strategy to reach lost persons, no vision, and no real actions. We have seminars on church growth. We have classes on witnessing and reaching unbelievers, but we have few actions. We have articles in magazines, chapters in books, and denominational budgets for evangelism, but not much evangelism. In fact if you look closely, churches across America have abandoned a passion for winning the lost to Christ. We have become afraid of being offensive, fearful of coming across as insensitive, and doubtful of whether evangelism really works today.<sup>16</sup>

The study left the feeling that with some work and with some action, bus ministry can still become an effective tool for reaching people with the gospel. The First Baptist Church of Pikeville, Kentucky uses a bus ministry in the East Kentucky region. At the main campus, bus ministry is used to bring members, who would be stranded otherwise, to the worship service. However, just outside of town the church has a mission church, and in

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<sup>16</sup>Gene Mims, The Kingdom Focused Church, (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2003), 102.

this mission church, bus ministry is the chief method for reaching others with the gospel. The conclusion – bus ministry can be effective if the church is willing to make a sacrifice of much time and effort.

#### Target Groups

In today's church environment there are more than a few church growth experts who believe that if groups of people are going to be reached with the gospel, then those groups must be targeted specifically. They operate by the principle, since a given church cannot reach everyone, then the church must decide the groups of people they are going to reach.

The ten churches included in this study were all asked the question, "Is there a specific group of people that your church targets in its efforts to reach people for Christ?" In other words, is there an effort to reach blue collar workers, white collar professionals, young families, children, students, or senior adults? Of the ten churches surveyed all responded unanimously, "no specific groups of people are targeted." They each responded emphatically, "our church attempts to reach everyone with the gospel of Christ."

In this study, one hundred percent of the churches interviewed see no value in targeting any one specific group for the gospel message. It appears that during the interviewing process, pastors viewed targeting as theologically objectionable. All of the churches in the survey believe that the gospel is good news for all people. Pastors would often recite the great commission, "Go, therefore and make disciples of all nations" (Matthew 23:19).

Norman Geisler, in his book Chosen But Free, says, "God desires all to be saved."<sup>17</sup> He made this statement in reference to the plain meaning of 2 Peter 3:9, "The Lord does not delay His promise, as some understand delay, but is patient with you, not wanting any to perish, but all come to repentance." Geisler went on to say,

"God is love . . . He 'wants' all men to be saved and come to a knowledge of the truth (1 Timothy 2:4) . . . and when 'any,' 'all men,' and the 'whole world' . . . are taken to mean only 'some' . . . then language has lost its meaning."<sup>18</sup>

#### Weekday Ministries

All ten churches studied were asked, "Do you have a weekday ministry in your church?" A weekday ministry might

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<sup>17</sup>Norman Geisler, Chosen But Free, (Minneapolis: Bethany House Publishers, 2001), 207.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid., 207.

be a day care, a preschool ministry, a Christian school, a senior adult day care or some other ministry conducted by the church during weekdays. Of the ten churches surveyed, only five of the churches said, "yes, our church has a weekday ministry." Three of the churches see these ministries as "very important," and two of the churches see these ministries as "somewhat important," in their overall efforts in reaching people with the gospel.

It is somewhat surprising to find a lack of enthusiasm for weekday ministries when it relates to evangelism. Thom Rainer, in his study of five hundred and seventy six churches, had the following to say concerning weekday ministries,

Only 11 percent of the churches responded that weekday ministries were a contributing factor or a significant factor in their evangelistic success. Even the mega churches, with an abundance of weekday ministries, saw little evangelistic value in the ministries (17 to 18 percent responded positively).<sup>19</sup>

Although these ministries are not considered great ways of directly leading people to faith in Christ, these ministries are considered valuable in reaching out to people who live in the community. These weekday ministries tend to bring people to the church that might not otherwise ever "darken the doors."

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<sup>19</sup>Rainer, 24.

It is important to remember that weekday ministries are not just for church members. These ministries can be offered to all who live in the community. Group Publishing offered the following list of weekday ministry ideas:

- MOPS (Mothers of Preschoolers)
- AA (Alcoholics Anonymous), or Al-Anon for those who have family members struggling with alcohol dependency or abuse
- Parenting groups
- Premarriage/marriage counseling groups
- Toastmasters (for people who want to speak more effectively)
- Drug - dependency groups
- Addiction - recovery groups
- Grief - recovery groups
- Groups addressing homosexuality issues (parent support, HIV/Aids counseling)
- Job-seeker groups (to assist people with résumés, finding jobs, and other networking)
- Anger management and other emotional problems
- Domestic abuse
- Stepfamilies and blended families
- Divorce recovery
- Alzheimer's patients and caregivers<sup>20</sup>

#### Ministerial Staff

The ten churches participating in this project were also asked, "Are you a multi-staffed church?" Of the ten churches, eight churches responded "yes", indicating they are multi-staffed, while two churches responded "no"; meaning they are not multi-staffed. It is quiet obvious,

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<sup>20</sup>Pastorial Ministry in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, (Loveland, Colorado: Group Publishing, 2006), 207.

the larger the church, the larger the budget, and the larger the budget, the larger the staff. However, it is interesting to note that the smaller churches indicated that they have key lay leadership that is able to fill the gap for the lack of a full-time staff member.

Pastors and church leaders were next asked the question, "How effective is your staff in reaching people for Christ?" Of the eight that said they were a multi-staffed church, three churches responded by saying, "very effective", four churches responded by saying, "somewhat effective", and one church responded that staff members could become effective with some "TLC".

Pastor John Bisagno had the following comments concerning staff,

Imagine trying to lead two million persons across a desert with no map and no food or water. Moses had an administrative nightmare not only in leading the ISRALEITES and providing for their needs, but in judging them in matters of personal and national decisions. His was an impossible task . . . Moses' father-in-law, Jethro, helped him get organized. The people were divided into groups, assistants were named, and the work was done more efficiently. Our Lord, of course, referred to himself when he said, "Upon this rock I will build my church" (Matt. 16:18). Yet he poured his life into developing twelve leaders who would be the human instruments through which he would carry on his awesome responsibility. The pastor of a growing and vibrant church must learn that he cannot be a jack of all trades, make all the decisions, and do everything himself. He must have help.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>21</sup>Bisagno, 303.

W.A. Criswell had the following to say about the pastor and his staff,

Let the pastor take that dedicated group into his confidence. They will help achieve his every goal and work with him to bring his every dream to realization. This means planning sessions throughout the year. An annual staff meeting of at least two days . . . a weekly staff meeting . . . pray together . . . play together . . . share happy moments . . . be together in heart, mind, and spirit.<sup>22</sup>

#### Weeknight Visitation

A modern day argument is that the weeknight visitation program is on the decline as an effective church growth instrument. Thom Rainer says,

"The arguments are well-known. People resent their homes and privacy being invaded by religious fanatics. You cannot motivate church members to gather every week to go visiting and share the gospel; cold-call visitation is dead."<sup>23</sup>

Of the ten churches in this study, seven of the churches said "yes, we have a weekly visitation program in our church," and only three churches said, "no, we do not have a weekly visitation program in our church." One of the churches said they use the G.R.O.W. Program exclusively; three churches said they are using F.A.I.T.H. and G.R.O.W. in combination; one church said they use a

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<sup>22</sup>W.A. Criswell, Criswell's Guidebook for Pastors, (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1980), 89.

<sup>23</sup>Rainer, 18.

variety of approaches: sharing Jesus without fear; the four spiritual laws; C.W.T.; and marked New Testament were all mentioned. One church said they use a program they designed themselves.

Six of the churches surveyed said their pastor leads out in the weekly visitation program. One church said their pastor leads out once per quarter. Five of the churches claimed to have twenty or more participating in their weekly programs, while two of the churches claimed to have ten weekly, and one church said they only have around five coming out to visit weekly.

When asked how important the weekly visitation is to the evangelistic effectiveness of the church, five of the churches responded by saying, "somewhat important", and two of the churches that did not have weeknight visitation said, "not very important." The bottom line is, eighty percent of the churches in the study still see value in a weekly visitation effort.

Evangelist Rick Gage once said, "You can't spell the word gospel without the word "go." Thom Rainer said,

The Great Commission is a mandate to go . . . while developing relationships with the lost is critically important, the church is still mandated to leave the comfort of their homes and places of work to seek the

lost. Relationship building alone is not sufficient to evangelize in the spirit of the NEW TESTAMENT church.<sup>24</sup>

When the question was asked, "Do you require staff to participate in your weekly visitation program?", six of the churches responded positively. They said, "yes, we require staff to participate." Only two of the churches said, "no, we do not require our called staff to participate in our weekly visitation program." When asked if they require deacons to participate in weekly visitation, three of the churches said "yes", while five of the churches said "no", and the remaining two churches did not have a weekly visitation effort.

The next question, relating to a weekly visitation program asked, "Which of the following ministries net more decisions for Christ: The preaching ministry? Sunday School? weekly visitation? or deacon ministry?" Only two of the churches responded by saying, "the weekly visitation program produces the most decisions for Christ."

It seems to be the general consensus that preaching produces the most decisions for Christ in these churches, more than do Sunday School, weekly visitation, and the deacon ministry.

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<sup>24</sup>Ibid., 19.

Elmer Towns, in his book The Complete Book of Church Growth, says,

The first purpose of the church is to spread the gospel and evangelize all who will accept Christ as Lord and Savior. It seems impossible to miss this clear directive of the Scriptures. Christ's command of Matthew 28:19, 20 is in essence emphasized again in Luke 14:47,48, Mark 16:15, Acts 1:8. Also, in John 20:21 Christ sends his disciples into the world as the Father had sent him. The Apostle Paul, referring to all believers, states that Christ "gave us the ministry of reconciliation" (2 Cor. 5:18, NASB). He confirms on the basis of Christ's finished work that "He has committed to us the work of reconciliation. Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were entreating us; we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God" (2 Cor. 5:19, 20 NASB).<sup>25</sup>

#### CONCLUSION

There is much more to consider when discussing the topic of evangelistically effective Eastern Kentucky Baptist churches. The ten churches interviewed for this project are considered leaders in evangelistic effectiveness within the area, and this first chapter has simply attempted to expose the significance of the top thirteen methodologies used in reaching people for Christ: preaching, Sunday School, music, prayer, revivals, student ministry, children's ministry, event evangelism, bus ministry, target groups, weekday ministries, ministerial

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<sup>25</sup>Elmer Towns, John N. Vaughan, David J. Seifert, The Complete Book of Church Growth, (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House, 1989), 248.

staff, and weeknight visitation. As this project unfolds, other issues facing evangelistic effectiveness will be opened for discussion.

### **The Goal of the Project**

According to a recent study conducted by Lifeway Research, pastors who make progress in small churches evaluate church ministries, organize to reach goals, and plan for the future. Pastors and churches that make progress evangelistically in Eastern Kentucky are no less different than the pastors who make progress in small churches. These churches evaluate what they are doing, they set goals, and they have a vision of what God could do through them in the future.

Mark Kelly, in an article written for Lifeway Research, made the following comments:

Only twenty-nine percent of pastors of small churches strongly agree that they have a clear plan to accomplish the things that God has called their church to do. Forty-four percent agreed (somewhat or strongly) that they often don't understand why things they try don't work, thirty percent agreed that they are confused about where they should invest their own time and effort.<sup>26</sup>

The goal of this project is to offer insight to pastors and church leaders in Eastern Kentucky as to what

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<sup>26</sup>Mark Kelly, Facts and Trends, (Nashville: Lifeway Biblical Solutions), 7.

will or will not work in the area of evangelistic effectiveness. This project seeks to direct pastors in the region toward the best use of limited time, talents and treasures.

The churches that participated in the project will be examined alphabetically. Therefore, discussion will begin with the Central Baptist Church of Winchester, Kentucky, and will continue alphabetically until finally concluding with Northside Baptist Church of Mt. Vernon, Kentucky.

Central Baptist Church  
Winchester, Kentucky

In 2007 Central Baptist Church had 1,556 resident members, and reported 47 baptisms. These baptisms represented a 30.98 per capita ratio between members and numbers of individuals baptized. This means at Central Baptist, in the year 2007, it took 30.98 members to reach one soul for Christ.

Art Beasley has been pastor at Central Baptist for the past ten years. Some of Pastor Beasley's personal attributes are as follows:

- He has the spiritual gifts of exhortation, evangelism, and pastor-shepherding
- He is very passionate when he preaches
- He preaches mainly expository sermons
- He preaches in a suit and tie on Sundays AM, but is much more casual Sundays PM

- He preaches from The New American Standard translation of the Bible
- He preaches three times a week, with the average length of the sermon around 40 minutes
- He is a theological conservative
- He is a seminary graduate
- He has served at Central Baptist for the past 10 years
- The people in the congregation address him as Brother Art
- Art's leadership style could best be described as coordination and delegation

Since the goal of this project is to understand pastors and leaders in Eastern Kentucky, a discussion of some of the above attributes should naturally follow. Consider Pastor Art's number one spiritual gift – exhortation. Larry Gilbert, of the Church Growth Institute, describes the exhorter as follows:

A "how to" man. Everything he teaches revolves around telling people "how to do it". Although the gift of exhortation has a different motivation than the gift of teaching, it should still be thought of as a teaching gift.<sup>27</sup>

Pastor Art Beasley says he is very passionate when he preaches and teaches. It is safe to conclude, therefore, that Brother Art passionately preaches and teaches in his church on the "how to" aspects of becoming a Christian. "How to" be born again. "How to" become a Christian.

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<sup>27</sup>Larry Gilbert, How to Find Meaning and Fulfillment through understanding the Spiritual Gift Within You, (Lynchburg, VA: Church Growth Institute, 1992), 93.

"How" you can know with assurance that your sins are forgiven and you are on your way to heaven.

Pastor Beasley sees this pulpit ministry as crucial to reaching others for Christ. When asked the question, "How would you rate the importance of preaching as it relates to evangelistic effectiveness?" He responded by saying, "Preaching is very important in the area of being effective evangelistically."

There are a lot of great men who would agree with Art about the importance of preaching, especially as it relates to being evangelistically effective. For example, Dr. Bill Whittaker, a Southern Baptist preacher and former President of Clear Creek Baptist College, had the following to say about the importance of evangelistic preaching:

The evangelistic sermon has as its main objective bringing the unsaved to Jesus Christ and the unchurched into a fellowship of faith. Through evangelistic preaching we fulfill Jesus' command, "Follow me, and I will make you become fishers of men" (Mark 1:17). Unsaved people who hear you preach will need to know how to be born again.<sup>28</sup>

Brother Art uses his primary gift of exhortation to explain to others "how to be born again". The passionate style that he employs appeals to the Eastern Kentucky culture. Perhaps this is what J.M. Smith meant when he

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<sup>28</sup>Bill D. Whittaker, Preparing to Preach, (Franklin, TN: Providence House Publishers, 1999), 143.

stated, "our culture cries out for representatives of the gospel".<sup>29</sup>

Pastor Beasley said that he mainly preaches expository messages. In order to understand what is meant by expository preaching, the following definition will be used:

Expository preaching is the contemporization of a biblical text that is derived from proper methods of interpretation and declared through effective means of communication to inform minds, instruct hearts, and influence behavior toward godliness.<sup>30</sup>

Contemporization simply means, to take a text written centuries ago and fit it for a present day audience. The expositor does not try to "upgrade" the Bible, but he makes God's claims clear to a modern audience. Richards, in his book, declared "The Preacher faces two basic realities, the biblical text of the early century and his context of present century."<sup>31</sup>

This is exactly what Art Beasley attempts to accomplish. He takes the Word of God, "Thus says the Lord", and delivers it to his culture in Eastern Kentucky.

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<sup>29</sup>Jonathan Falwell, Innovate Church, (Nashville: B & H, 2008), 240.

<sup>30</sup>Ramesh Richard, Preaching Expository Sermons, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2001), 19.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid.

Bill Barker, Director of Appalachian Regional Ministry North American Mission Board, stated on a Southern Baptist Theological Seminary website, "Topical preaching has been the mainstay in rural mountain churches (Eastern Kentucky churches), however, do not be afraid of expository preaching." Richard says,

Expository preaching will impact your life. It can help you grow personally in knowledge and obedience by your disciplined exposure to God's word; conserve time and energy used in choosing a sermon for each week . . . Expository preaching will impact your congregation, because it helps you.<sup>32</sup>

Richard went on to say, "The Bible is what God has made. Sermons are what we make with what God has made."<sup>33</sup> Art Beasley believes expository preaching helps him to deliver effectively the good news of the gospel in the hills of East Kentucky.

It should also be noted that Art preaches from a modern translation of the Bible. It needs to be mentioned because for years there has been a bias towards the King James version of the Bible. The region has long needed a version that people are able to read and understand. According to Loyal Jones of Berea College, in Eastern Kentucky, the King James version of scripture requires a

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<sup>32</sup>Ibid., 17.

<sup>33</sup>Ibid.

12<sup>th</sup> grade plus reading level. This high reading level would exclude 50% of the adult population, who would not be able to read with any understanding God's Holy Word.

Art was asked, "How do you typically dress for the Sunday morning sermon?" Art said, "a suit and tie for Sunday AM, but a relaxed suit and tie for Sunday PM service." Dress is an important topic since 21<sup>st</sup> century culture tends to dress down, becoming more casual. However, people in Eastern Kentucky still have an appreciation for the pastor who dresses to look like the pastor.

W.A. Criswell said,

Dress beautifully and well, the church will pay for it (gladly and happily will they support a pastor who looks the part). Dress beautifully and then, as you stand before the people, forget about how you look. Before you go out before the people, take a good, earnest look at yourself in the mirror, then dismiss your appearance from your mind. Dress so that people are not looking at what you have on, but at you.<sup>34</sup>

Art uses his spiritual gift of exhortation to preach the gospel. He preaches passionate expository messages. He preaches in suit and tie, and he preaches from a modern translation of God's word. He preaches three times a week, with the average length of sermons at forty minutes. The

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<sup>34</sup>W.A. Criswell, Criswell's Guidebook for Pastors, (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1980), 39.

length of the sermon is important in Eastern Kentucky. Bill Barker, of the North American Mission Board in the seminar, "Ten Guiding Principles for Pastoring in the Mountains" said, "Remember K.I.S.S., keep it short and simple."

Art is a theological conservative, and he is a seminary graduate. Almost all of the pastors surveyed in the region, who were evangelistically effective, considered themselves theologically conservative. However, not all of these same pastors were seminary graduates. Bill Barker, in his seminar, "Ten Things to Remember When Pastoring in the Mountains" stated, "Remember! People (in the mountains) do not care how much you know until they know how much you care!" Michael Spencer, in the same seminar, had the following comments:

My preaching career in area churches during my 16 years at the ministry where I serve has taught me that as a seminary graduate, it is almost impossible for me to get down as far as I need to go to really communicate with mountain people. It's a daunting calling (Michael Spencer – March 2008).

Art has found it is okay to be an educated preacher in the hills of Eastern Kentucky – some churches even require it. However, it is not okay to have an attitude of "I am smarter than you". Bill Barker said, "It is best to leave

the Greek and Hebrew in the study, and out of the pulpit. It is best to leave unsaid, the Greek says".

Some of the key techniques employed by Pastor Art and Central Baptist are as follows:

- Central Baptist still uses Sunday School
- They still use weekly outreach visitation
- They emphasize evangelism in their youth and children's programs
- Their music is described as "high energy and high congregational involvement"
- They still use revivals
- The congregation and the staff pray for the lost
- The church has a prison ministry

One of the questions posed to pastor Art was, "Do you believe Sunday school to be an evangelistic dinosaur?"

Brother Art's response was interesting. He said, "Sunday school has become an evangelistic dinosaur in the older classes"; however, he did not believe that the newer classes could be described as such. Perhaps it was for this reason that Pastor Beasley went on to say, "Sunday school at Central Baptist is both very important, and, at the same time, somewhat important."

Central age grades their Sunday school, and they see all of the purposes of the church, evangelism, discipleship, fellowship, ministry, worship, and prayer carried out in these small groups.

Ken Hemphill and Bill Taylor in the book, Ten Best Practices to Make Your Sunday School Work said, "Win the lost."<sup>35</sup> Central Baptist still uses Sunday school in order to "win the lost". Hemphill and Taylor went on to say, "That is what [Sunday school is] about . . . [engaging] in evangelistic actions that result in winning the lost to Christ."<sup>36</sup>

Central still employs weekly visitation outreach. When asked the question, "How important to your evangelistic efforts is weekly visitation outreach?" The pastor responded by stating, "weekly outreach visitation is very important."

Central has about ten members who go visiting weekly. The pastor does not require his staff to attend, and none of his eighteen deacons are required to attend. The visitation model that they are currently using is "G·R·O·W". "G·R·O·W" is an acrostic that stands for, "God Rewards Our Work". When churches use this model, church members are assigned one visitation outreach per month. In the case of Central, approximately ten members come for "G" night, which represents the first visitation of the month.

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<sup>35</sup>Ken Hemphill & Bill Taylor, Ten Best Practices to Make Your Sunday School Work, (Nashville: Lifeway Press, 2001), 133.

<sup>36</sup>Ibid.

Next, there is an "R" night, then an "O" night, and finally a "W" night. This means when ten attend weekly, Central has nearly forty plus members participating monthly in the visitation outreach efforts of the church.

The church's visitation program is visible evidence that an effort is being made to reach Winchester, Kentucky, which is Central's Jerusalem for Christ. Nate Adams said,

God calls Christians to establish a lasting Christ like influence in their local communities. Churches in a Jerusalem mission field have leaders from local churches – who recognize the lostness around them. These leaders must also challenge their churches to do more than maintain or grow themselves in order to reach everyone who needs Christ. Mission – mined Christians from all walks of life must invest themselves beyond their own church walls to reach their Jerusalem mission field.<sup>37</sup>

Central Baptist makes a noticeable effort to reach youth and children for Christ, and according to Bill Barker of the North American Mission Board, a strong sense of family is very important to the culture in Eastern Kentucky. Eastern Kentucky places a high value on pastors and churches who will reach out to their children. Since Central does this, it perhaps explains some of their evangelistic effectiveness.

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<sup>37</sup>Nate Adams, The Acts 1:8 Challenge, (Nashville: Lifeway Press, 2006), 114.

Music is another tool that Central is using evangelistically. The pastor said the worship services musically can best be described as blended. They employ a full-time minister of music, and the style that he injects is described as, "high energy, and high congregational involvement."

When the pastor was asked, "How important do you see music evangelistically?" He responded by saying, "The music is very important when it comes to reaching others with the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ."

Next, when the pastor was asked, "Does the church still have revivals?" He responded with a resounding, "Yes." He continues by stating, "The church has only one revival per year." Then the question was asked, "How effective do you see revival evangelism?" The pastor answered by saying, "Revival evangelism, for Central Baptist, continues to be very effective in reaching others for Jesus Christ."

In the area of prayer, Pastor Art said, "The church prays regularly for the lost." He was next asked, "As pastor, do you meet regularly with your staff for the purpose of praying for the lost?" He answered, "Yes, we meet regularly and pray for lost people associated with our church family."

Bailey Smith, on the importance of praying for the lost, wrote about a fellow by the name of John Hyde.

Bailey writes,

John Hyde, known mainly as "Praying Hyde" the last several years of his missionary ministry, averaged leading four souls a day to Christ. His daily prayer was, "Father, give me souls or I die."<sup>38</sup>

Central Baptist understands the importance of prayer. Pastor Beasley believes that all evangelistic churches are praying churches, and because he believes this, he attempts to model a heart of prayer before his staff and congregation. God said, "My house will be called a house of prayer for all nations (meaning the lost)" (Isaiah 56:7).

Finally, the pastor was asked, "Does Central Baptist participate in any social ministries?" His answer was Yes, Central has a prison ministry.

The prison ministry is very important to our evangelistic effectiveness. The prison ministry allows the congregation to move beyond the four walls of the church in order to share their faith with others who desperately need to know the Lord as Savior.

Central Baptist is a church which is more than 100 years old. The current pastor Art Beasley, as previously noted, has been there 10 plus years. However, the church

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<sup>38</sup>Bailey E. Smith, Real Evangelism, (Nashville: Word Publishing, 1999), 173.

still sees the primary mission of the work as the kingdom of God and not self-preservation. When the pastor was asked, "Is there anything else that you would like to add when it comes to reaching others for Christ?" His response was "yes . . . I love it!" Perhaps the words of Spurgeon would best sum up the work of Art Beasley and Central Baptist Church, "soul winning is the chief business of the Christian minister."<sup>39</sup>

Fairview Baptist Church  
2040 Main Street  
Ashland, Kentucky

Fairview Baptist Church ranked 42<sup>nd</sup> among Kentucky Baptist Churches in total number baptisms. However, Fairview ranked 9<sup>th</sup> within the bounds of this study in Eastern Kentucky. Fairview has 961 resident members, giving them a per capita baptism ratio of 22.88. This means, that at Fairview Baptist it took nearly 23 members to reach one new believer for Christ Jesus in the year of 2007.

The Pastor of Fairview Baptist is Michael Rice. Some of Michael's personal attributes are as follows:

- Michael has the spiritual gifts of exhortation, service, and teaching

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<sup>39</sup>Charles Haddon Spurgeon, The Soul Winner, (Grand Rapids: Erdmans, 1964), 15.

- Michael preaches a combination of expository, topical, and narrative sermons
- Michael preaches with a great deal of passion
- On Sundays Michael preaches in sport coat and tie
- Michael preaches from the New King James translation of scripture
- Michael preaches four times per week with the average length of his sermons at thirty minutes
- Michael attempts to model a heart of prayer before his congregation
- Michael views himself as an evangelical conservative
- Michael believes the primary mission of the church is the Kingdom of God and not self-preservation
- Michael is a seminary graduate
- Michael considers himself to be a happy leader
- Michael's leadership style could best be described as persuasive

There are some interesting observations that relate to Brother Michael's personal attributes. First, he has the primary spiritual gift of exhortation. Dr. Charles Stanley makes the following comments concerning the gift of exhortation:

Are you vitally concerned about correcting error wherever and whenever you find it? Do you care deeply that those who are about to make mistakes avoid them, and that those who have made mistakes repent of their ways and return to a walk of righteousness before God? You may be a person who has been given the motivational gift of exhortation.<sup>40</sup>

Dr. Stanley went on to point out that exhortation was at the heart of the ministry of the apostle Paul. Stanley quoted the apostle Paul as follows:

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<sup>40</sup>Charles Stanley, Ministering Through Spiritual Gifts, (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1999), 54.

We proclaim Him, warning (exhorting) and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone mature in Christ. I labor for this, striving with His strength that works powerfully in me (Colossians 1:27-28).

Larry Gilbert stated, in a pamphlet produced by Ephesians Four Ministries, that "Exhorters are very practical teachers. They encourage others by giving practical steps to help them resolve their problems."<sup>41</sup>

It should be noted that six out of the ten pastors interviewed for this project stated that God had given them the spiritual gift of exhortation. The question is how does this relate to evangelistic effectiveness? The answer is that the exhorter has the gift of teaching others "how to" become a Christian. They have the ability to teach others "how to" be born again. Robert Russell, former pastor of Southeast Christian Church in Louisville, Kentucky, said, "our primary call is to preach the gospel and bring people to salvation in Jesus."<sup>42</sup> The exhorter is gifted beautifully for evangelistic effectiveness - bringing people to salvation in the Lord Jesus.

Next, Brother Michael uses three styles of proclaiming the gospel. He preaches topical, expository, and narrative

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<sup>41</sup>Larry Gilbert, God's Special Gifts for Me, (Elkton, MD: Ephesians Four Ministries, 2003), 6.

<sup>42</sup>Russell, 251.

sermons. Seven out of the ten pastors interviewed for this project said they use a combination of these same three styles. This means, of the churches most effective in reaching people for Christ in Eastern Kentucky during the year 2007, the majority uses a combination of expository, topical, and narrative sermon styles.

Next, is the attribute of Brother Michael that fits best into the Eastern Kentucky culture, this according to Bill Barker Director of Regional Ministry North American Mission Board, is the passionate preaching of the gospel. According to Bill Barker, people in the mountains of Eastern Kentucky like emotional preaching. People in Central Appalachia simply want to see your heart.

The attribute that would be somewhat anti-cultural would be the preaching from a modern translation of the scripture. However, there appears to be a gradual change in this regard, since only two out of the ten most effective pastors in Eastern Kentucky still preach from the King James translation of the Holy Bible.

It is also interesting to note how the remaining attributes compare with the other evangelistically effective pastors in the study. Please note the following:

- The average sermon length for Brother Michael was around 30 minutes, while the average of all of the other churches was around 36 minutes

- Brother Michael considers himself to be an evangelical conservative. Nine out of the ten pastors surveyed also claimed to be evangelical conservatives, one a fundamentalist, and no moderates
- Michael is a seminary graduate. Only five of ten pastors said they were seminary graduates.

A note as it relates to seminary preparation, John Bisagno appropriately points out,

A call to preach is a call to preparation. A call to serve is a call to prepare . . . good preparation does not ensure usability. But the chances of great usability are severely limited when formal education is lacking.<sup>43</sup>

Next, some of the practices that pastor Michael feels are very important to being evangelistically effective are as follows:

- He sees preaching as "very important"
- He sees outreach visitation as "very important"
- He sees music as "very important"
- He sees intentionality in evangelism as "very important"
- He sees social ministries as "very important"
- He sees women's ministry as "very important"

Some of the ministries that Brother Michael sees as very effective, as it relates to evangelistic effectiveness, are as follows:

- He sees revivals as "very effective"
- He sees the use of a called staff as "very effective"
- He sees event evangelism as "very effective"

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<sup>43</sup>Bisagno, 39.

The practices that Brother Michael points out that are either "very important" or "very effective" actually come as no surprise. For example, as it relates to the importance of preaching – eight out of the ten pastors interviewed said they viewed preaching as "very important" when it comes to being evangelistically effective. Thom Rainer made the following statement,

There can be little doubt that the pastors of churches that reach the unchurched are excited and passionate about preaching. A Nevada pastor told us, "Nothing in ministry gets me more fired up than preaching. Quite frankly, I have trouble getting motivated for a lot of the pastoral ministry stuff. I determined several years ago that I had to be an 'Acts 6 pastor'".<sup>44</sup>

Brother Michael also sees intentionality in evangelism as very important. Nine out of the ten churches in the survey said intentionality in sharing the gospel is very important to being evangelistically effective. This comes as no surprise, yet it should be highlighted in this project. In the classic work done by W. Oscar Thompson, Jr., Concentric Circles of Concern, he writes,

Your responsibility is to bear witness of the Christ who lives in you, to tell about your faith in him. The Holy Spirit is the one with the responsibility of bringing conviction of sin. He is the one who convinces people of the truth of the gospel. When people yield their lives to Christ, you

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<sup>44</sup>Thom S. Rainer, Surprising Insights from the Unchurched, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001), 212.

will be able to rejoice with the angels in heaven. You will experience the joy of being used by God to see a miracle happen in a changing life.<sup>45</sup>

It was also insightful to see that Brother Michael views revival evangelism as still "very effective". Only three churches in the survey agreed with Brother Michael, while four said that revivals are "somewhat effective", one said revival evangelism is "not very effective", and one said, "they no longer use revivals because they have ceased being effective".

It appears that the churches who said, "revival evangelism is still very effective", placed a greater value on the task of selecting an evangelist and worked harder at the revival preparation process. In the course of conducting this survey, there were some inspiring testimonies of how God moved powerfully in some well planned revival meetings. There were some reports of how God changed lives and saved souls in some well orchestrated revival effort. It seemed that revival evangelism still works if the church and pastor are willing to work.

In the area of prayer, Fairview Baptist has a weekly service that is just dedicated to prayer. There were five

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<sup>45</sup>W. Oscar Thompson with Carolyn Thompson Ritzmann, revised and updated by Claude King, Concentric Circles of Concern, (Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 1999), 178.

other churches in the survey that said they too have a service that is dedicated to prayer only. There were four churches who said they do not have a service that is dedicated to prayer alone.

John Franklin says,

By and large American Christians have abandoned fervent, united, corporate prayer. The apostles, Jesus, the pattern of Scripture, history, and God's current working today bear witness that until we return to this practice we should expect to see continuing decline in societal morals and an increase in powerless churches.<sup>46</sup>

Franklin went on to say,

If you are a leader of the people of God, you must make your ministry of mobilizing the people of God to pray together an equal priority with preaching and teaching the Word of God.<sup>47</sup>

Some other insights from Brother Michael and Fairview Baptist Church are as follows:

- He and the church see Sunday school as "somewhat important" to evangelistic effectiveness
- He and the church see event evangelism as important – using a car show, and gospel singing concerts to reach people for Christ
- He and the church believe offering multiple worship opportunities on Sunday mornings adds to evangelistic effectiveness
- He and the church believe a blended worship style offers the best opportunity to be evangelistically effective
- Brother Michael and the church believe the Kingdom of God is the primary mission – not self-preservation

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<sup>46</sup>John Franklin, And the Place was Shaken, (Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 2005), 21.

<sup>47</sup>Ibid.

One of the lessons learned in this survey is that there is no "cookie-cutter" formula. All of the churches surveyed are unique. However, one thing is understood – people in Eastern Kentucky need the Lord. Jesus said, "The harvest is abundant but the workers are few. Therefore, pray to the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into His harvest" (Matthew 9:37-38). Eastern Kentucky churches, like Fairview, must respond. They must become effective evangelistically.

First Baptist Church  
Pikeville, Kentucky

In the year 2007 First Baptist Church of Pikeville, Kentucky was ranked 15<sup>th</sup> overall in baptisms in the state of Kentucky, and they were ranked 3<sup>rd</sup> in baptisms within the confines of this study. Pikeville First has 940 resident members with a total of 63 baptisms, which means they had a 14.92 per capita baptismal ratio. Simply stated, it required nearly 15 resident members at First Baptist Pikeville to reach one new convert for Christ Jesus.

Paul Badgett is the Pastor of First Baptist Pikeville and is completing his 10th year of service at the church. Members at First Baptist Church refer to him as either

Brother Paul, "B.P.", or simply "preacher". For the sake of this study he will be referred to as "B.P."

Some of "B.P.'s" personal attributes are as follows:

- "B.P." has the primary spiritual gift of pastor/shepherd
- "B.P." is somewhat animated and passionate when preaching the gospel
- "B.P." preaches mainly expository type sermons, however will preach an occasional topical message
- "B.P." primarily preaches in a suit and tie
- "B.P." preaches from a variety of modern translations
- "B.P." typically preaches 30 minute sermons
- "B.P." considers himself to be an evangelical conservative
- "B.P." believes the Kingdom of God to be the primary mission of the church, not self-preservation
- "B.P." is a seminary graduate
- "B.P." describes himself as a happy leader

It will serve well to comment on a few of the personal attributes of "B.P.". First, he has the primary spiritual gift of pastor/shepherd. As a result of God gifting him in this manner, he is seen by others as people-centered, very expressive, and for the most part believed to have a pleasing personality.

If this gift renders some special needs, it would be that "B.P." fails to involve others to the extent that they need to be involved. He tends to try to do ministry tasks by himself.

Gilbert says of the pastor-shepherd,

[He] leads and feeds, guards and protects, and oversees his flock. He is the coach or leader

of the "team." The main thing on his mind is the welfare of those in his care. They are his sheep and he is their Shepherd . . . The shepherd/pastor teacher is not a "jack of all and master of none," but a "jack of all and master of one."<sup>48</sup>

"B.P." typically preaches for 30 minutes, and then offers a 10 minute invitation. This needs to be noted, not for sermon length, but rather length of invitation. When it comes to being evangelistically effective, the invitation is of utmost importance. R. Alan Street had the following to say about the invitation, "The public invitation is an important tool which can aid in leading people to Christ at the end of a gospel sermon."<sup>49</sup>

When serving as President of the Southern Baptist Convention, Bobby Welch encouraged pastors at Executive Committee meetings in Nashville, Tennessee, "Preach the gospel, and give an invitation." Churches that are going to be effective in reaching others with the gospel of Christ will need to learn how to offer effective invitations.

"B.P." also considers himself to be an evangelical conservative. All but one pastor in the study considered themselves to be conservative. The one pastor who did not

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<sup>48</sup>Gilbert, 99.

<sup>49</sup>R. Alan Street, The Effective Invitation, (Grand Rapids, MI: Kragel, 1984), 17.

consider himself to be conservative, saw himself as a fundamentalist. The point being, to be evangelistically effective there needs to be a firm belief that the Bible is God's Word. Jesus said to Martha,

I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me, even if he dies, will live. Everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die – ever. Do you believe this?  
(John 11:25-26)

The evangelistically effective pastor must respond to Jesus' question with a hardy, "Yes, I believe you, Jesus."

"B.P." was asked, "what do you believe about God?"

The options were as follows: a). He is Creator, but does not intervene today; b). God rarely acts in the world today; c). God is constantly at work in the world; d). God is the world, is potentially in every person, thing and event. "B.P." responded, "c). God is constantly at work in the world." All 10 pastors surveyed for this project agreed that, "God is constantly at work in the world." Henry Blackaby would say, God is at work in the world, and invites the evangelistically effective pastor to join him in that work.

Next, "B.P." sees the Kingdom of God as the primary mission of the church, not self-preservation. "B.P." stated, "Missions do not take away from the church budget; starting new churches does hurt the mother church; new

churches will not hurt other churches in the area; the community never has too many churches; and young adults will give to missions." What should be noted is all 10 evangelistically effective churches interviewed for this project were in agreement with "B.P."

Church planter Dave Early had the following comments about an evangelistically effective pastor, "I assume that [a pastor] already [has a] heart broken by the billions of unreached people on our planet, both inside and outside our borders."<sup>50</sup> The pastor who is effective evangelistically has a strong desire to advance the Kingdom of God.

There is a truth that emerges, and it is this - evangelistically effective churches are churches that plant other churches. Pikeville First Baptist is a church planting congregation. Meta Baptist Church and Immanuel Baptist Church, both of Pikeville, were at one time Missions of the First Baptist Pikeville.

Currently, First Baptist Pikeville is planting a church at nearby Island Creek in Pike County, Kentucky. The mission church was running about 12 in attendance a decade ago, but recently, at Christmas, the church enjoyed a high attendance of 166. There are plans, that have already been approved by First Baptist, to construct a new

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<sup>50</sup>Falwell, 151.

sanctuary at Island Creek that will seat in excess of 200 worshipers.

It appears that church planting is going to be essential in reaching individuals with the gospel. Dave Early offered the following table for consideration:

- 1920 27 churches existed for every 10,000 Americans
- 1950 17 churches existed for every 10,000 Americans
- 1996 11 churches existed for every 10,000 Americans<sup>51</sup>

It is plain to see that North America is fast becoming a post-Christian nation, which is doubly true of the Appalachian Mountains of Eastern Kentucky. Pastors and churches must begin to think beyond the local congregation in order to see the region as a mission field for the gospel.

The website [www.sbc.net/cp](http://www.sbc.net/cp) for the cooperative program of the Southern Baptist Convention states, "7,200 people die very hour . . . most without the gospel." If the mountains are going to be reached for Christ, with First Baptist Pikeville as a model, there are churches that are going to have to plant other churches. Church planting strategist, missionary Gary Smith recently stated for "On Mission Magazine," "The Key to reaching lost places is not

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<sup>51</sup>Ibid., 153.

my strategy or your strategy – it's the Lord of the Harvest's strategy." The question is what has the Lord of the harvest given to the Kingdom? The answer is, he has given churches, and churches ought to be planting other churches in order that men, women, boys and girls might be reached with the gospel.

The areas that "B.P." considered "very important" are as follows:

- He sees preaching as "very important"
- He sees a weekly outreach program as "very important"
- He sees the music program of the church as "very important"
- He sees intentionality in evangelism as "very important"
- He sees the work of Sunday school as "very important"

Consider first of all, the fact that "B.P." sees preaching the message as "very important." Why should preaching the gospel be considered "very important?"

Perhaps Mark Dever offers a good explanation in his new book, Nine Marks of a Healthy Church, he states,

The word is so central and so instrumental because the word of the Lord holds out the object of our faith to us. It presents to us – from all kinds of individual promises (throughout the Bible) all the way to the promise, the great hope, the great object of our faith, Christ Himself. The word presents that which we are to believe.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>52</sup>Mark Dever, Nine Marks of a Healthy Church, (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2004), 29.

All of the churches in this study, except two, saw preaching the Word as "very important" to evangelistic effectiveness. The two churches who did not say, "preaching is very important," said, "preaching is somewhat important" in being evangelistically effective.

"B.P." also believes that a weekly outreach program is "very important" in reaching the lost with the gospel. The special 2009 "On Mission" pastor's edition magazine made this statement, "There are 255 million people living without Christ in the United States and Canada; that's three out of every four people." When the church goes beyond the four walls of the church, this is where they will encounter lostness – 3 out of every four people.

Remember, reaching people for Christ is compared to fishing by Jesus. Jesus told fisherman Simon Peter, "Don't be afraid . . . from now on you will be catching people!" (Luke 5:10). Someone said, "The lesson to be learned from fishing is: sometimes you will catch them; sometimes you do not catch them; but you will never catch them unless you go fishing!" Going out on weeknight visitation, for "B.P.", is like going fishing – not fishing for fish, but fishing for men.

"B.P." also sees the music in the church as being "very important". Greg Cagle is the Minister of Music at

the church, and incorporates a blended style of worship. The worship experience at First Baptist Pikeville could be described as "high energy and high congregational involvement." The congregation stands to sing hymns and choruses while the words are displayed on a screen directly behind the pulpit in the front of the church.

The church is currently putting together a praise band that will be used at certain times during the worship experience. The goal of the praise band is not to have something everyone will enjoy, but the focus will be on reaching the lost for Christ. "B.P." believes that the church should not be concerned with music that tickles the ears of the redeemed, but that the music of the church should be able to touch the hearts of those who do not know Christ as Savior.

When Thom Rainer did research on what factors caused unchurched people to choose a particular church, the following is what he found,

- 90% Pastor and the preaching
- 88% Doctrines of the church
- 49% Friendliness of members
- 42% Other issues
- 41% Someone from the church witnessed to them
- 38% Family member attended
- 37% Sensed God's presence
- 25% Relationship other than family member
- 25% Sunday School class
- 25% Children's/youth ministry

- 12% Other groups/ministries
- 11% Worship style/music
- 7% Location<sup>53</sup>

Notice music is only responsible for attracting 11 percent of the total number of unchurched individuals who attend a given worship service. Although music is not the number one reason people choose to attend a particular church, "B.P.", still believes it is a reason people select a church. Therefore, for "B.P.", and First Baptist Pikeville, music is seen as being "very important".

Next, "B.P." sees Sunday School as being "very important" when it comes to reaching others with the gospel. "B.P." relates this to the seven stages of making a disciple as given in W. Oscar Thompson, Jr.'s book, Concentric Circles of Concern, these seven stages are as follows:

- Stage 1: Get right with God, self, and others
- Stage 2: Survey your relationships with people who are lost
- Stage 3: Work with God through prayer – praying for the lost
- Stage 4: Build relationship bridges to people who are unchurched
- Stage 5: Show love by meeting needs
- Stage 6: Make disciples by confronting them with the claims of Christ
- Stage 7: Help new Christians learn how to make new disciples<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>53</sup>Rainer, Surprising Insights from the Unchurched, 21.

"B.P." believes all of these steps can be taken effectively in Sunday School.

Since the Sunday School at First Baptist Pikeville is between 400-799, this places the church in the large church category. According to a recent breakdown of churches in the United States, 95% of all churches would be smaller in size when compared to First Baptist Church of Pikeville.

In writing about a strategy for church growth in the larger church, Gary L. McIntosh offers the following,

- Growth Strategy 1, renew the vision (Do not drift aimlessly)
- Growth Strategy 2, design an assimilation plan (Do not let people drift out of the church)
- Growth Strategy 3, streamline procedures (cut the bureaucracy)
- Growth Strategy 4, offer need-based events (develop ministries to meet needs)
- Growth Strategy 5, adjust leadership roles (the senior pastor must exercise directive leadership)
- Growth Strategy 6, increase the number of small groups. (Grow larger by growing smaller)<sup>55</sup>

Although First Baptist Church of Pikeville is seen as a larger church, the people nor the pastor see themselves as only interested in numbers. The church and pastor claim they are there for the following reasons:

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<sup>54</sup>Thompson, Concentric Circles of Concern, (with emphasis) 30.

<sup>55</sup>Gary L. McIntosh, (Grand Rapids, MI: Revell, 1999), 155 ff.

- To exalt Christ through worship
- To equip Saints through small groups
- To experience Christ through ministry

The First Baptist Church  
Richmond, Kentucky

Bill Fort is the Pastor at First Baptist Church in Richmond, Kentucky. First Baptist has 1900 resident members, and in 2007 the church had 51 baptisms. This suggests the per capita baptismal ratio was 37.25, meaning it took 37.25 resident members to lead one person to saving faith in Christ Jesus.

Some of the personal attributes of Pastor Fort are as follows:

- He has the primary spiritual gift of mercy
- He is a passionate preacher
- He preaches in shirt and tie only – no coat
- He preaches from the New International Version of the Scriptures
- He preaches four times per week on average
- The length of Pastor Fort's sermons are around thirty minutes
- He tries to model a heart of prayer before his congregation
- He considers himself to be an evangelical conservative
- He is a seminary graduate
- He is described as a happy leader
- His leadership style could best be described as delegation

Some of the issues the leadership of the church considers as "very important" in reaching people for Christ are as follows:

- The leadership considers music as "very important"
- The leadership considers intentionality in evangelism as "very important"
- The leadership considers women's ministry as "very important"

Some of the issues that leadership sees as "very effective" in reaching people for Christ are as follows:

- They see event evangelism as being "very effective"
- They see called staff as being "very effective"

In the area of a called staff, there were a total of four churches in the study who saw staff members as being "very effective" when it comes to reaching others with the gospel. There were four churches in the study who see church staff as "somewhat effective", and there were two churches who did not have called staff.

Leonard Sweet was quoted as saying, "Jesus invested everything he had in a team. The Bible knows nothing of a solo ministry." It was Gary McIntosh who stated,

Gone are the days when a pastor could focus on a simple homogenous family church and offer a ministry package of one worship service, men's and women's programs, youth and children's programs, a foreign missions group, and Sunday School. Today's heterogeneous mix, consisting of blended families, married couples, singles, and formerly married couples, as well as ethnic diversity – with everyone wanting her preference in programming, worship style, and preaching approach – demonstrates the growing complexity of ministry.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>56</sup>Gary L. McIntosh, Staff Your Church For Growth, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2000), 14.

Then as ministry increases in complexity, it makes it almost impossible for a single pastor to deal with all of the issues and needs. As the secular world moves more toward specialization, so must the church respond. This means that the church must look to specialized called staff members. These staff members, when trained appropriately, can become extremely effective in reaching people with the gospel of God.

First Baptist Church of Richmond, Kentucky, being a little larger than some of the other churches in the survey, is also somewhat more organized. Perhaps this is the reason the church still uses Sunday School to reach others with the gospel. As a matter of fact, the church sees Sunday School as being "very effective" when it comes to reaching others for Christ.

First Baptist uses "G·R·O·W" as the church's outreach visitation program. The staff participates, the church's eighteen deacons participate, but the pastor himself does not participate in outreach visitation. Most all of the churches in this study were effective in reaching others for Christ in part due to outreach visitation. It seems there is real power in a visit from the church along with an invitation to attend. Thom and Sam Rainer had this to say about the power of an invitation to attend church:

In an earlier research project, our team interviewed more than three hundred unchurched persons across North America. One of the questions we asked them was simply, "If a Christian friend or family member invited you to a church function now, how likely would you be to attend?" Look at these amazing responses:

Very Likely	31%
Somewhat likely	51%
Not likely at all	18% <sup>57</sup>

Thom and Sam Rainer went on to make this conclusion about the power of this type of invitation,

We realize that what people say they might do and what they will actually do may not be the same. But what if the numbers above are accurate by one half? That would mean that four out of ten unchurched will attend church if invited.<sup>58</sup>

Mickey Ballard, one of the staff members at First Baptist Richmond, was asked some questions about prayer, Mickey made the following comments:

- First Baptist Richmond has an attitude of fervency in prayer for the lost
- The church's evangelistic growth can best be described as ongoing answered prayer
- Committed prayer is an essential in evangelistic outreach

All of the participants in this study see prayer as absolutely essential in reaching others with the gospel. Dr. Gregory Frizzell agrees, and had the following to say about prayer and reaching others with the gospel,

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<sup>57</sup>Thom S. Rainer and Sam Rainer, III, essential church, (Nashville: B & H Publishing, 2008), 226.

<sup>58</sup>Ibid., 226.

It truly seems God is setting the stage for the final element that must precede a sweeping move of revival and evangelism. And what is this key element of revival and spiritual awakening? According to Scripture, it is nothing less than a massive return to deep repentance, fervent prayer and through cleansing before Holy God (2 Chronicles 7:14). Without profound spiritual cleansing, even the most brilliant strategies are powerless to bring massive awakening to our sin-hardened nation. Even elaborate prayer strategies will have very limited power without an accompanying move of profound repentance. According to Scripture, only cleansed hearts might have mighty power with God (Hosea 10:12; Psalm 66:18; James 5:16).<sup>59</sup>

Ed Stetzer and Mike Dodson in their book Comeback Churches, made the following comment concerning prayer:

The Bible teaches a central truth about prayer: prayer changes things, including us, our churches, and our communities. In 1 Thessalonians 5:17, the Bible exhorts us, "Pray constantly." John Ortberg says, "Prayer is learned behavior. Nobody is born an expert at it. No one ever masters prayer." An increased emphasis on prayer was a major factor of importance to these comeback churches.<sup>60</sup>

A comeback church is a church that made a turnaround in their efforts to reach others with the gospel. According to Stetzer and Dodson, a large part of the reason these churches were able to turn around had to do with prayer. The authors of the book continue by saying, "Comeback leaders lead their churches to pray for things that

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<sup>59</sup>Gregory R. Frizzell, Returning to Holiness, (Memphis: Betany Press, 2000), 41.

<sup>60</sup>Ed Stetzer and Mike Dodson, Comeback Churches, (Nashville: B & H Publishing, 2007), 69.

matter.”<sup>61</sup> It was said of Pastor Fort that he modeled a heart of prayer before his congregation in Richmond.

A matter for the record, comeback churches were asked to identify the top three factors that led to the revitalization of their church. The top three responses were prayer at 44.7 percent, evangelism at 37.2 percent, and preaching 25.0 percent.<sup>62</sup> It is amazing, but effective churches in Eastern Kentucky seem to be saying exactly the same thing!

When First Baptist Richmond was asked, after completing the survey, is there anything else that you would like to add – things you are doing to reach your world for Jesus. They gave the following list:

- Website technology
- A TV ministry
- A radio ministry
- Working with Baptist Campus Ministries on Eastern Kentucky University campus

First Baptist Richmond is a great church – over one thousand in worship attendance weekly. It is a congregation that does not see itself as interested in numbers only, but a congregation that is truly interested in the spiritual needs of others.

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<sup>61</sup>Ibid., 69.

<sup>62</sup>Ibid., 200.

First Baptist Church  
Russell, Kentucky

First Baptist Church of Russell, Kentucky, has 1064 resident members, and in 2007 baptized 76 individuals into the membership of the church. This gave First Baptist a 14.00 per capita baptismal ratio. This means it took 14 members at First Baptist Russell, to reach one new convert for Christ Jesus.

Kenneth Gowin is the Pastor at First Baptist Russell, and he has pastored there for the past 10 years. Some of the personal attributes of Brother Gowin are as follows:

- Evangelism is his number one spiritual gift
- He is very passionate when preaching
- He preaches mainly expository sermons
- He preaches from the New American Standard Translation of the Bible
- He preaches four times per week
- His sermons are typically forty minutes in length
- He leads out in the church's "F.A.I.T.H" outreach visitation program
- He considers himself to be a Fundamentalist theologically

Some of the things that Brother Gowin considers "very important" when it comes to being evangelistically effective are as follows:

- He sees preaching as "very important"
- He sees weekly outreach visitation as "very important"
- He sees music as "very important"

When questions were asked about the church family at First Baptist Russell, Pastor Gowin described them as follows:

- "The attitude of the church is very positive"
- "The church loves lost people"
- "The church can be described as being very accepting"

In comparing First Russell with the other churches in the study, all of the other churches stated exactly the same thing,

- The attitude of the church is positive
- The church loves lost people
- The church can be described as being accepting

In the book Comeback Churches, Ed Stetzer and Mike Dodson talk about "Becoming a church of open arms."<sup>63</sup> When a church has the proper attitude, a love for lost people, and a posture of acceptance – they are quickly becoming a church of open arms. Stetzer and Dodson say there are three types of individuals in a church of open arms, there are the, "pray-ers, bring-ers, and tell-ers".<sup>64</sup>

Stetzer and Dodson stated that, "people are good at working within the church . . . [but] the goal is to get outside the church."<sup>65</sup> First Baptist Russell makes every

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<sup>63</sup>Stetzer and Dodson, 102.

<sup>64</sup>Ibid., 108.

<sup>65</sup>Ibid.

effort to get outside the four walls of the church in order to reach their church field for Christ Jesus. The method used is a weekly visitation program. First Russell visits in the homes of the unchurched.

Tom Rainer, President and CEO of Lifeway Christian Resources, and Sam Rainer, III, Senior Pastor, President and CEO of Rainer Research, in their joint book essential church, make the following statement, "Essential churches are multiplying churches. They seek to reach those who are not currently in church."<sup>66</sup>

In modern culture the unchurched in America is growing. It has been discovered that the younger the individual the greater likelihood they do not go to church. Notice who attends church in modern America:

<u>Generation</u>	<u>Birth Years</u>	<u>Percentage Attending Church</u>
Builders	before 1946	51%
Boomers	1946 to 1964	41%
Busters	1965 to 1976	34%
Bridgers	1977 to 1994	29% <sup>67</sup>

Gary McIntosh in his book One Size Doesn't Fit All says,

A lot has happened since I learned about the growth patterns of different size churches. I have focused more on helping my church members

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<sup>66</sup>Rainer and Rainer, 231.

<sup>67</sup>Ibid.

attract their friends and family to Christ by extending their love outside the church family.<sup>68</sup>

Each week First Baptist Russell has twenty or more church members who extend their love outside the church family by going visiting.

Although the church is very interested in reaching the unchurched, the pastor says, "The church is not just interested in numbers." They see their job as making disciples not just adding numbers. The church takes the commands of Jesus seriously when the Lord said,

All authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth. Go, therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe everything I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age (Matthew 28:18-20).

First Baptist Russell focuses on the words of the Master as follows, "For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save the lost" (Luke 19:10). The church believes if they simply do what Jesus would do – church growth will be a by-product.

It is very plain to see that reaching lost people does not happen by accident. Almost all of the churches surveyed in this study said evangelism must be intentional.

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<sup>68</sup>McIntosh, 124.

Unchurched people are not just going to show up for church without someone encouraging them to come. Ed Stetzer in his book Planting Missional Churches said, "The church planter must be intentional about developing an evangelism strategy, figuring out how to reach the lost instead of just rearranging church members in a given community."<sup>69</sup> Bottom-line, First Baptist Russell is very intentional in their approach to reaching others for Christ.

Some of the ministries currently being used by First Russell are as follows:

- A weekly service completely dedicated to prayer
- An age graded Sunday School
- Members trained in the "F.A.I.T.H" process of evangelism
- A music program that has high energy and high congregation involvement
- A mom's day out program
- Gospel singing concerts
- A bus ministry
- Multiple worship opportunities
- Prison ministry
- A women's ministry

It is so important that the church learn the importance of sharing the good news of the gospel. It is the church's responsibility to make Him known to every creature created in His image. It appears that the message

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<sup>69</sup>Ed Stetzer, Planting Missional Churches, (Nashville: B & H Publishers, 2006), 183.

of the gospel has captured the hearts of the members of First Russell. Their hearts are full of the love of Christ. Jesus said, "For the mouth speaks from the overflow of the heart" (Matthew 12:34).

Fitzpatrick Baptist Church  
Prestonsburg, Kentucky

Fitzpatrick Baptist Church in Prestonsburg, Kentucky had a total number of 35 baptisms during the year 2007. This number ranked Fitzpatrick 61<sup>st</sup> in total number of baptisms within the State of Kentucky. The church's per capita baptismal ratio is slightly higher coming in at 56<sup>th</sup> within the State of Kentucky. Therefore, based on these statistics, Fitzpatrick Baptist Church required a mere 6.11 members to reach one new convert for Jesus Christ.

Tommy Reed is the Pastor of this 214 resident member church located in the hills of Floyd County, Kentucky just outside the City of Prestonsburg. Some of Brother Tommy's personal attributes are as follows:

- His primary spiritual gift is that of pastor shepherd
- He is very passionate when preaching the gospel
- He preaches a combination of expository, topical and narrative messages
- He dresses casually when preaching
- He preaches from the New King James translation of the Bible
- His sermons are typically 30 minutes in duration
- He tries to model a heart of prayer before his congregation

- He considers himself to be an evangelical conservative theologically
- He is not a seminary graduate
- He sees himself as being a happy leader
- People in the mountains refer to him as preacher

Some of the things that Pastor Tommy sees as very important to being evangelistically effective are as follows:

- He sees passionate preaching as "very important"
- He sees Sunday School as "very important"
- He sees music as "very important"
- He sees intentionality as being "very important"
- He sees social ministries as being "very important"

Perhaps a comment concerning each of the areas of ministry that Brother Tommy sees as "very important" would be helpful in understanding the work at Fitzpatrick. First, Tommy talks about the importance of passionate preaching, which is very significant to the culture of Central Appalachia. At a recent Sunday School conference in Woodstock, Georgia, Pastor Johnny Hunt talked about the importance of passion in preaching. Pastor Johnny said,

Knowledge is increasing at an unprecedented rate. We have access to information from an array of venues at our disposal. The capability to network with others from around the world is only a few clicks away on the computer. The problem in our churches today is not information. We can learn the correct mechanics, techniques, procedures, and systems and still not arrive at our God-given potential. There is something else that is surely missing today, something that could project the church

to another level, and that something is passion!<sup>70</sup>

Pastor Johnny told a story during the same Sunday School conference that explains exactly what Tommy Reed meant by "passionate preaching." The story is as follows:

An old Mississippi country preacher mounted the pulpit one Sunday morning and prayed:  
 "Okay Lord, give thy servant this mornin' the eyes of the eagle and the wisdom of the owl. Illuminate my brow with the Sun of Heaven. Possess my mind with the love for the people. Turpentine my imagination, grease my lips, electrify my brain with lightnin' of the word. Fill me plum full of the dynamite of thy glory; anoint me all over with the kerosene of salvation, and set me on fire. Amen."<sup>71</sup>

Tommy Reed believes that passion makes the deciding difference. He believes that passion has more influence than does his good personality. The Apostle Paul wrote the church at Corinth and said,

Now concerning the ministry to the saints, it is necessary for me to write to you. For I know your eagerness, and I brag about you to the Macedonians. Achia has been prepared since last year, and your zeal has stirred up most of the them (2 Corinthians 9:1-2).

Brother Tommy simply believes if the people are going to be "stirred up" it is going to take a little "zeal"

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<sup>70</sup>Johnny Hunt, "Sunday School in HD," (Woodstock, GA, 2009), 1.

<sup>71</sup>Ibid., 2.

(passion) in the pulpit to get the job done. In this regard, Johnny Hunt writes,

Time is short and we can no longer accept apathy, inconveniences, or petty desires to keep us from reaching our God-given potential. We need to develop a church of hot-hearted Christians who are determined to obey God, exalt Jesus, reach our community, and have a ministry upon which the sun would never set.<sup>72</sup>

John Rainer writes,

Church growth methodologies offer a certain fascination and temptation. With the right tools, programs, and ministries, the argument goes, growth is certain to come. But our research shows that absolutely nothing is of greater importance to evangelistic growth than the preaching of the word. Such preaching presumes trust in the Scriptures, intentionality in evangelism, and power that comes from God through the intercessory prayer of others.<sup>73</sup>

Next, Pastor Tommy Reed sees Sunday School as being "very important" to his overall evangelistic effectiveness. Thom Rainer agrees, and says, "Sunday School is an effective evangelistic tool in most churches, regardless of size."<sup>74</sup>

Tommy Reed sees Sunday School as a way to train all age groups in the Scriptures and provide outreach with a built-in method of accountability. Rainer, in his research

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<sup>72</sup>Ibid., 1.

<sup>73</sup>Thom Rainer, Effective Evangelistic Churches, 63.

<sup>74</sup>Ibid., 89.

for the book Effective Evangelistic Churches, noted that for churches running less than 3000 in attendance, Sunday School was the main factor in the church's evangelistic effectiveness. He writes, "our survey and interviews revealed that leaders believe a Sunday School becomes ineffective only because it does not receive the attention it must have."<sup>75</sup> Tommy Reed believes in giving Sunday School all of the attention it needs in order to be evangelistically effective. Johnny Hunt explains as follows:

Sunday School . . . (represents) the church's evangelistic thrust, discipleship strategy, and ministry . . . (Sunday School) has not lost her effectiveness; she has lost her workers! When we labor in the Sunday School fields, we will once again see Sunday School as prominent in her future as her past.<sup>76</sup>

Some findings from Thom Rainer's book, High Expectations, give evidence to the conviction of Tommy Reed. Rainer writes,

- The new Christians who immediately become active in the Sunday School were five times more likely to remain in the church five years later
- Those churches that were emphasizing evangelism through the Sunday School were most naturally seeing new Christians become involved immediately in the Sunday School

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<sup>75</sup>Rainer, Effective Evangelistic Churches, 97.

<sup>76</sup>Johnny Hunt, "Sunday School in HD", 2009 National Sunday School Conference.

- We have known that Sunday School is a vital component of the past for American churches. Its history is almost as old as our nation itself. But more and more the research indicated that Sunday School is not only our past, it is our future as well. And we who are leaders in the church will ignore this reality to our churches' peril<sup>77</sup>

In surveying the ten most effective evangelistic churches in Eastern Kentucky, it was found that six of churches see Sunday School as "somewhat effective" evangelistically, one church sees Sunday School as something that could be effective with some "TLC", and only one church sees Sunday School as "an evangelistic dinosaur." The one church that believed that Sunday School was an "evangelistic dinosaur" has a strong Sunday School, but the Pastor has decided not to try to use it to reach others for Christ. It seems this one church sees Sunday School as a place for the redeemed, and not for those who need to have a life-changing relationship with Jesus Christ. However, this is merely one church, nine out of ten evangelistically effective churches in Eastern Kentucky said – Sunday School is effective in reaching the lost with the life-changing good news of the gospel.

Next, Pastor Tommy Reed sees music as "very important" when it comes to being evangelistically effective. Ruth

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<sup>77</sup>Thom Rainer, High Expectations, (Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 1999), 45-47.

Graham once said, during a television interview, "music stocks the pond for Billy to go fishing." Ruth was simply saying, when people come to hear the music, then her famous evangelist husband Billy Graham would have an opportunity to stand before the people and share the gospel.

Thom Rainer nor George Barna see music as primary when it comes to being evangelistically effective. Rainer writes in his Surprising Insights from the Unchurched, the following:

Note the issues that were not deemed important by Barna's group. Less than 20 percent of the respondents indicated that the following were extremely important in choosing a church home: variety of ministries and programs, convenience of worship times, music/worship style, quality of music, location of church, amount of music in service, comfort of sanctuary or auditorium, length of sermons, small groups, emphasis on fundraising and money, friends in the church, easy access to parking, and the type of people who attend.<sup>78</sup>

Although music has been proven statistically by Rainer and Barna not to be the primary element that draws people to worship – it is perceived to be primary in Eastern Kentucky mountain culture. Tommy Reed says, "Music is 'very important' when it comes to reaching others for Christ."

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<sup>78</sup>Rainer, Surprising Insights from the Unchurched, 72.

At Fitzpatrick the church uses a blended style of worship. They do not have a fulltime minister of music on staff, and Pastor Tommy describes the music as "low energy with high congregational involvement." Tommy means the music is led with a low energy level, but the congregation is involved with the singing.

Jim Cymbala in one of his books, talked about a certain girl in his church that had a troubling past. She came to church on a Sunday night in July in order to give her testimony. She said, "The Lord has given me freedom from my past, and I'm thankful!"<sup>79</sup> The tears began to flow as she sang the solo part for the choir, in a song written by Carol Cymbala; the lyrics are as follows:

When all the strength you have is gone and  
friends that you've depended on can't hear  
the cry you try to hide or feel the pain  
you keep inside, all, all you really need  
is Jesus.

When clouds arise and light grows dim, He  
calls on you to look to him. Your simple  
prayer will reach his heart, His perfect  
peace he will impart. All, all you really  
need is Jesus.

Chorus: All that you really need is Jesus,  
all that you need is God. Cast your every  
care on him who answers prayer. All that  
you need is God.<sup>80</sup>

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<sup>79</sup>Jim Cymbala, Fresh Power, (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 2001), 167.

<sup>80</sup>Ibid.

This song, sang from the heart, would be very effective in Eastern Kentucky in central Appalachian culture. Nehemiah said, "Do not grieve, because your strength [comes from] rejoicing in the Lord" (Nehemiah 8:10b). In the mountains "rejoicing in the Lord" through song is seen as vital. The people are people of the "heart", and they respond well to singing that appeals to one's soul (heart).

The next area of ministry Pastor Tommy Reed sees as "very important" to becoming evangelistically effective is intentionality. In other words, Pastor Reed believes the church must be intentional when it comes to reaching others with the gospel. Ed Stetzer, in his book, Comeback Churches, writes,

Comeback churches think and live evangelism. But how can a church develop a comprehensive and effective evangelistic strategy? Realize that it is possible and churches are doing it every day. It's simple to understand but not easy to implement. Developing an effective evangelistic strategy requires a good plan and people who are willing to go "fishing" with more than one type of lure. A multipronged approach acknowledges that there is no "silver bullet" when it comes to reaching people with the gospel of Jesus Christ. The days of "Lone Ranger" evangelism are a thing of the past. Developing an effective evangelistic strategy requires stages, helping people move from ranks of the inactive and unreached to being active followers of Jesus Christ.<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>81</sup>Stetzer and Dodson, Comeback Churches, 99.

At Fitzpatrick Baptist Church, Pastor Tommy Reed has led the congregation to be a part of what he calls "market place" evangelism. He has the church identify their neighbors and associates. These would include,

neighbors	coworkers	supervisors
vendors	clients	subordinates
classmates	teachers	fellow club members
students	teammates	union members

After these names are collected, along with proper addresses, they are given to an evangelistic ministry team. The ministry team then begins to look for opportunities to share the gospel with these individuals. Tommy would be the first to admit that it is not a perfect plan, but it is an intentional one.

The last item on Pastor Tommy's list is social ministry. The social ministries that he participates in are as follows:

- Prison ministry
- Backyard Bible Clubs
- Retirement Home ministries

This study reveals that 40 percent of the evangelistically effective churches surveyed in Eastern Kentucky see social ministries as "very effective", 40 percent see these ministries as "somewhat effective", and 20 percent see them as "not very effective".

Dr. Elmer Towns speaks of "evangelism and saturation". Towns says, "[use] every available means to reach every available person at every available time."<sup>82</sup> Fitzpatrick Baptist Church uses social ministries as an "available means" to reach men and women with the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Garner Missionary Baptist Church  
Rush, Kentucky

Garner Missionary Baptist Church ranked 27<sup>th</sup> in the State of Kentucky in overall total number of baptisms. The baptismal per capita ratio for Garner was 10.98. This simply means that it took 10.98 members at Garner Missionary Baptist to reach one new convert for Christ Jesus.

Garner has a membership of 527 baptized believers. They were formerly a mission of the Rose Hill Missionary Baptist Church in Ashland, Kentucky, then constituted as an independent Southern Baptist church some 15 years ago.

Gary Arrington has been the Pastor of the church since its founding. Some of the personal attributes of Brother Gary Arrington are as follows:

- His primary spiritual gift is that of pastor

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<sup>82</sup>Towns, Vaughan, and Seifert, The Complete Book of Church Growth, 309.

shepherd

- He is a very passionate preacher
- He preaches either expository or topical messages
- He preaches in a suit and tie
- He preaches from the King James Version of the Bible
- His sermons last an average of 25 minutes
- He considers himself to be an evangelical conservative
- He believes the advancement of the Kingdom of God to be his primary mission
- He is not a seminary graduate
- He considers himself to be a happy leader

Some of the areas of ministry that Gary sees as very important are as follows:

- He sees music as "very important"
- He sees intentionality in evangelism as "very important"
- He sees social ministries as "very important"

The two areas of ministry that Gary sees as "very effective" in reaching others are as follows:

- He sees event evangelism as "very effective"
- He sees his church staff as "very effective"

Many of the items listed above have been discussed while writing about the ministries of Central Baptist Church in Winchester, Kentucky; Fairview Baptist Church in Ashland, Kentucky; First Baptist Church in Pikeville, Kentucky; First Baptist Church in Russell, Kentucky; and the Fitzpatrick Baptist Church in Prestonsburg, Kentucky. When discussing Garner Missionary Baptist there needs to be a focus on the deep love for the lost that this church has. Garner Missionary Baptist has illustrated, over the past 15

years of ministry, a deep love for those who do not know the Lord. They show this through an intentional prayer life, and a persistent effort to reach the lost in the surrounding church field.

First, consider an intentional prayer life within the church. When the word intentional is used it is a reference to the fact that lost people ought to be prayed for intentionally. This is what Gary Arrington does – he makes every effort to model a heart of prayer for lost people before the congregation he serves at Garner.

In researching Scripture this is exactly where the early church found the power source. Note the record as follows:

When they had prayed, the place where they were assembled was shaken, and they were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak God's message with boldness (Acts 4:31).

The Apostle Paul had the following comments as it relates to evangelistic effectiveness and prayer,

With every prayer and request, pray at all times in the Spirit, and stay alert in this, with all perseverance and intercession for all the saints. Pray also for me, that the message may be given to me when I open my mouth to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel. For this I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I might be bold enough in Him to speak as I should (Ephesians 6:18-20).

In his book, The Art of Pastoring, David Sorenson writes about the importance of prayer and being evangelistically effective. Sorenson states:

There are endless needs people have of which a pastor can and ought to intercede in prayer. There are loved ones who are not saved. Wives have unsaved husbands . . . They need prayer . . . [the pastor] ought to pray for them.<sup>83</sup>

Ed Stetzer and Mike Dodson say, "It is not just cliché – prayer is where it starts."<sup>84</sup> Gary Arrington believes prayer is where it starts as well. Pastor Arrington made this comment during the interview session, [I believe]all evangelistic churches are praying churches." Gary also said, "prayer is an essential element in evangelistic outreach." He went on to say, "evangelistic growth can best be described as ongoing answered prayer."

The Kentucky Baptist Convention produced a small booklet that was referred to as "10 Proven Principles for Turnaround Growth." The following comments concerning prayer are found:

Nothing will bring about conflict in a church faster than change. Two things are always the enemy of the devil; prayer and needed change. Our enemy will battle us for both.

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<sup>83</sup>David Henry Sorenson, The Act of Pastoring, (Kearney, NE: Morris Publishing, 1998), 171.

<sup>84</sup>Stetzer and Dodson, Comeback Churches, 111.

Jesus' opinion is the one that matters most, so when people of the church begin to talk about change, they must spend time in prayer to find His heart about what is needed. If the leaders of our congregations are not spending significant and consistent time in seeking God's direction through prayer, Bible study, meditation, and fasting, . . . it will be impossible for meaningful change to take place without conflict. Our prayer must never be that God would bless our efforts to change, but He would show us what change needs to take place and how to accomplish it (in prayer).<sup>85</sup>

Perhaps the change that is needed in churches that desire to be evangelistically effective in Eastern Kentucky is – they must intentionally pray for lost people. They should not pray for the sick only, but they should pray that God would move upon the church, and save the souls of those that are nearing eternity. At Garner Missionary Baptist Church the church intentionally prays for the lost.

Garner not only has an intentional prayer life, but the church also makes a persistent effort to reach the lost on the church field. The church is currently involved in efforts to reach the unsaved through the following methods:

- Weekly visitation
- Gary's preaching on Sundays (Garner sees the Sunday morning worship service as their evangelistic service)
- Sunday School
- The use of called staff

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<sup>85</sup>This is taken from "10 Proven Principles for Turnaround Growth" by The Kentucky Baptist Convention Church Development Team.

- Children's and youth programs
- Music ministry
- A wild game dinner
- Revivals
- Prayer ministry
- Warm, exciting, and loving attitudes within the church
- A Prison ministry
- Bible clubs in the local school

Of all the ministries listed above, the one the Pastor was most excited about was the "wild game dinner". The wild game dinner is just that – the menu for dinner is wild game! The men of the church hand out free tickets to come to the dinner. Prizes are offered, things like a new shotgun or new fishing rod, etc. After a time of good eating and giving out of prizes – a special guest is invited to come to present the gospel. Wild game dinners can be very effective, because this type of fellowship attracts lost people. The unsaved are not threatened when someone asks them to attend such an event.

Gary Arrington and Garner Missionary Baptist Church are also good at jail ministry. They go into the local jails, share the gospel, and see men and women pray to receive Jesus as their personal Lord and Savior. Jesus said,

For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat; I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink; I was a stranger and you took me in; I was naked and you clothed

me; I was sick and you took care of me; I was in prison and you visited me (Matthew 25:35-36).

Gary Arrington says that their church is not about numbers, they are more focused on the spiritual needs of people. They want to advance the Kingdom, and see souls saved for the Master.

Hill Top Baptist Church  
Pine Knott, Kentucky

Hill Top Baptist Church is located in a rural economically depressed area. It is an area where the church provides clothing, food, and finances in order to reach individuals for Christ Jesus.

The church has 500 resident members, and was ranked 25<sup>th</sup> in the State of Kentucky in total number of baptisms in 2007. The church's per capita baptismal ratio was 10.00, meaning it took ten of their members to reach one new convert for the Lord Jesus Christ.

When comparing baptisms with the other nine churches selected for this study, Hill Top ranked 6<sup>th</sup> in total number of baptisms in 2007. David Troxel is the Pastor at Hill Top Baptist Church and when asked what he is doing to reach others for Christ Jesus, Troxel responded, "Showing them the love of Christ through benevolence."

Some of Brother David's personal attributes are as follows:

- David has the primary spiritual gift of evangelism
- He is very passionate when preaching the gospel
- He uses a combination of expository, topical, and narrative sermon styles
- He uses the King James Version of the Bible in the pulpit
- His sermons are 60 minutes in length
- He considers himself to be an evangelical conservative
- He has been at the church for the past 25 years

Some the things that Pastor Troxel does not do are,

- He does not preach a series of sermons
- He does not have a service specifically dedicated to prayer
- He does not have weekly visitation
- He does not have staff to help him
- He does not have a weekday ministry within the church
- He does not have crusades, gospel singing concerts, or wild game dinners
- He does not have multiple worship opportunities

A couple of important methods used by Pastor Troxel are as follows:

- He has two revivals per year
- He meets the needs of the people

When you examine the ministry of David Troxel it could best be summed up as follows: He loves the people; he helps the people; and he preaches to the people. As a matter of fact, the eyes of Pine Knott, Kentucky are focused directly on David. Thom S. Rainer and Sam Rainer,

III, point this out in their new book, essential church?.

Note the following quote from the book,

The leaders of the church are one of the most visual aspects of the local body. And the pastor of the church the most visible of all leaders in the local body. And the time in which he is most visible is during the sermon. While lay leaders and other staff persons hold critical roles in the church, it is the lead pastor to which most people look. He is the main man. All eyes are on him.<sup>86</sup>

First, consider the fact that David Troxel has taught the Hill Top Baptist Church to love people. This is really the best place to begin when it comes to reaching others with the gospel – to love them. The Apostle Paul called it the “better way” (1 Corinthians 12:31). The church at Corinth had tried reaching others by using their spiritual gifts, but Paul said, “If . . . [you] do not love [you are] nothing” (1 Corinthians 13:2).

Paul even talked about the gift of prophecy (preaching). He basically pointed out that we could be the best preachers coming down the pike, but if we do not love – our preaching amounts to nothing. The Bible says,

If I speak the languages of men and of angels, but do not have love, I am a sounding gong or a clanging cymbal. If I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so that I can move mountains, but

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<sup>86</sup>Rainer and Rainer, essential church?, 114.

do not have love, I am nothing. And if I donate all my goods to feed the poor, and if I give my body to be burned, but do not have love, I gain nothing (1Corinthians 13:1-3).<sup>87</sup>

Next, David Troxel has taught Hill Top Baptist to help the people. When a pastor and a church help the people – the Pastor pastors the people. As he pastors the people, the church and pastor meet the needs of the people. It was Abraham Maslow who established an important psychological theory called “Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs.” Maslow suggested that there are layers of needs, and if basic needs are not met, men will ignore the higher ones. In the ministry of Hill Top Baptist Church the people of the area have certain basic human needs: food; shelter, and clothing. The church tries to meet these basic human needs so that their higher spiritual needs will not be ignored.

When the church introduces one who is in need to Christ Jesus, then the church disciplines them to know that Jesus wants to meet all their needs(Philippians 4:19).

Please note the teaching of Jesus:

This is why I tell you: Don’t worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Isn’t life more than food and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the sky; they don’t sow or reap or gather in barns, yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Aren’t you worth more

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<sup>87</sup>Sorenson, 42.

then they? (Matthew 6:25-26).

Jesus also said,

For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat; I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink; I was a stranger and you took me in; I was naked and you clothed me; I was sick and you took care of me; I was in prison and you visited me (Matthew 25:35-36).

Pastor Troxel not only loves the people and helps the people, he also preaches to the people. Paul wrote to Preacher Timothy and said, "Preach the Word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching (2 Timothy 4:2 NKVJ).<sup>88</sup>

When Pastor Troxel preaches to the people he meets another basic human need. As the preacher diagnoses physical needs, he must also diagnose spiritual needs. As he discovers spiritual needs, he then proceeds to address those needs through preaching. Sorenson noted the following:

A wise pastor will seek to diagnose the spiritual needs of his people. He then will go to the pharmacy of the Word of God and present the appropriate spiritual medicine as the occasion requires. It may be the balm of Gilead. It may be the waters of Marah. It may be the milk of the Word. It may be the stimulate of hope. But whichever it is, God's Word has the answer. The job of the pastor

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<sup>88</sup>New King James Version of the Holy Bible Scriptures, (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982).

is to sense the pulse of the congregation, perceive their spiritual temperature, and appropriately deliver what is required each Lord's day.<sup>89</sup>

In this study 80 percent of the evangelistically effective churches stated that preaching was "very important" when it comes to being effective in reaching others with the gospel. The other 20 percent said preaching was "somewhat important" in being effective evangelistically. When the question was asked, "which ministries net more decisions for Christ?" the response was clear, 80 percent said preaching nets more decisions for Christ than any other ministry, 10 percent said weekly visitation nets more decisions, and only 10 percent said Sunday School nets more decisions for Christ than any other ministry of the church.

Northside Baptist Church  
Mount Vernon, Kentucky

Northside Baptist Church is located in Mount Vernon, Kentucky. In 2007 Northside was listed in the Kentucky Baptist Convention's top 100 baptisms. Northside baptized a total of 91 new converts to Christ Jesus in 2007. The church's per capita baptismal ratio was 9.00, meaning it took 9 members at Northside to lead one new believer to

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<sup>89</sup>Sorenson, 96.

faith in Christ Jesus during that same year. The Pastor of the church is Chad Burdett. Chad has been Pastor there for the past 8 years. Some of Pastor Burdett's personal traits are as follows:

- His number one spiritual gift is that of evangelism
- He preaches with a great deal of passion
- He uses a combination of expository, topical, and narrative sermon styles
- He preaches from the New King James Version of the Bible
- His sermons are typically 30 minutes in length
- He leads out in the visitation program in the church
- He believes the advancement of the Kingdom of God to be his primary mission
- He is a seminary graduate

Some of the areas of ministry that Pastor Chad deems as "very important" are as follows:

- He views preaching as "very important"
- He views weekly outreach as "very important"
- He views music as being "very important"
- He views intentionality as "very important"
- He views social ministries as being "very important"

Some of the areas of ministry that Chad believes are "very effective" are as follows:

- He sees event evangelism as being "very effective"
- He sees bus ministry as being "very effective"

Some interesting quotes from Pastor Chad are as follows:

- "Any church can grow if they are willing to put up with what comes with it"

- "Northside is in the top 100 baptisms in the Kentucky Baptist Convention due to the way invitations are conducted"
- "Bus ministry nets 30 professions of faith per year"

Perhaps a good way to discuss the work at Northside Baptist would be to focus on the quotes listed above. First, Chad says, "Any church can grow if they are willing to put up with what comes with it." Then, if a church is going to "put up with what comes with [growth]," it is going to require leadership. It is interesting, because all 10 of the churches in this study made some sort of comment about church leadership. All of the churches see leadership as a key element in being evangelistically effective.

The church needs leaders if it is going to be effective in casting a vision for reaching the lost. Calvin Miller said, "The church today hungers for visionary leaders whose dreams are tempered with a genuine understanding of the way things really are."<sup>90</sup> Miller went on to say the following about leadership and the casting of a vision:

The greatness of personal vision is important to any group. The more electric and driving a vision is, the more it will inspire greatness in all those who hold it. Visions, by giving a picture of our place in the future confer upon

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<sup>90</sup>Calvin Miller, The Empowered Leader, (Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 1995), 63.

us a sense of dignity. This dignity demands that there be a place in our organization for our dreams. When our dreams match those of the organization, an important loyalty is born. This group faith allows the organization to move forward with zeal and meaning, both for the leader and those he or she has rallied to the dream.<sup>91</sup>

Pastor Chad Burdett casts a vision at Northside Baptist Church in the area of evangelism. His desire is to see the church evangelistically effective. It is important to note that even the bus ministry which many say is dead in other areas of Eastern Kentucky, rallied to the dream the Pastor cast for reaching souls for the Master. Chad said, "We have 30 plus professions per year as a result of the bus ministry." Why is this true for Northside church, but not true for other East Kentucky churches? The answer is clear – leadership.

Leaders cast a vision. A vision offers a focus. To help illustrate this consider the book, The Leadership Secrets of Billy Graham. Harold Myra and Marshall Shelly made the following comments about the ministry and mission of Evangelist Billy Graham:

To understand Billy's focus, we need to grasp his passion. In his address to the ten thousand international evangelist he brought to Amsterdam in 2000 – he said, "The older I get, the more I am asked who will succeed me. Well, the fact is

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<sup>91</sup>Ibid., 73.

that I am just one of many thousands who have been called to be an evangelist. I don't need a successor, only willing hands to accept the torch I have been carrying.<sup>92</sup>

Notice the focus of Billy Graham – it is evangelism! Also, notice the vision, “I don't need a successor.” Billy says, “Only willing hands to accept the torch that I have been carrying.” Chad Burdett's vision is to advance God's Kingdom through conversion faith, and his called staff of four have rallied to the dream.

Chad says, “Northside is in the top 100 baptisms in the Kentucky Baptist Convention due to the way invitations are conducted.” It was former president of the Southern Baptist Convention, Bobby Welch, who challenged the Convention on several occasions by saying, “Preach the gospel and then give the invitation.” According to John R.W. Stott, former rector of All Souls Church in London, England, Bobby Welch has the order correct – preach the gospel then give the invitation.

R. Allen Street quotes John R.W. Stott as follows:

Evangelistic preaching has too often consisted of a prolonged appeal for decision when the congregation has been given no substance upon which the decision is to be made. But the gospel is not fundamentally an invitation to men to do

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<sup>92</sup>Harold Myra and Marshall Shelly, The Leadership Secrets of Billy Graham, (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2005), 66.

anything. It is a clear declaration of what God has done in Christ on the cross for their salvation. The invitation cannot properly be given before the declaration has been made. Men must grasp truth before they are asked to respond to it.<sup>93</sup>

Street quotes other famous people in his book as well, for example, John Wesley was quoted as saying, "You have only one business, and that is the salvation of souls." He quotes G. Campbell Morgan as saying,

No church ought to be allowed to exist that has not added to its membership by confession of faith. If a church is existing only by letters of transfer, it is time the doors were closed, and "Ichabod, the glory of the Lord has departed" inscribed across them.<sup>94</sup>

Every church needs to do the work of evangelism. Chad Burdett and Northside Baptist Church in Mount Vernon, Kentucky, do just that – they do the work of the evangelist. The gospel is preached, and then the congregation is told that they need to respond positively to the message. There is a call for repentance that goes out. The Bible says, "The Lord . . . is patient with you, not wanting any to perish, but all to come to repentance" (2 Peter 2:9). Again, the Bible says, "For by grace you are saved through faith, and this is not from yourselves;

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<sup>93</sup>Street, 21.

<sup>94</sup>Ibid., 36.

it is God's gift – not from works, so that no one can boast" (Ephesians 2:8-9).

## Conclusions Derived From Effective Churches

### Evangelism

Thom Rainer in his book Effective Evangelistic Churches offers the following quote from Michael Green:

If there is one God, Creator, Redeemer, Judge, as the early church passionately asserted, then those who have been brought back from their rebellion against him into fellowship with him cannot but pass on the knowledge of that rescue to others; the new life cries out to be shared.<sup>95</sup>

In this section, we will take a look at how the churches in Eastern Kentucky share faith in Christ. Churches in Eastern Kentucky use many of the same methods that other churches across the country use, but they understand that when it comes to sharing Christ there is no "cookie cutter" solution. As someone anonymously said, "Methods are many, principles are few, methods change, principles never do." So, what are some of the methods being employed by the ten most evangelistically effective churches in Eastern Kentucky?

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<sup>95</sup>Rainer, Effective Evangelistic Churches, 11.

## Preaching

When these evangelistically effective preachers in Eastern Kentucky were asked, "which ministry, in the church, nets more decisions for Christ?" the response was overwhelmingly, "the preaching ministry." In the interviews preachers and church leaders, said over and over again, "the most effective means for reaching people for Christ is the preaching of the Word of God."

Is it any wonder that "The twelve summoned the whole company of disciples and said, it would not be right for us to give up preaching about God to wait on tables" (Acts 6:2). As a result, deacons were selected to focus on the waiting of tables, while the disciples would focus on the preaching of truth. The Bible says, "The preaching about God flourished, the number of disciples in Jerusalem multiplied greatly, and a large number of priests became obedient to the faith" (Acts 6:7).

When it comes to delivery of preaching the gospel, 100 percent of the pastors interviewed stated that the Word of God must be communicated with passion. A layman once told a mountain preacher, "preacher, show me your heart." It is as if one can hear the words of the Apostle Paul as he instructed young Pastor Timothy, "preach the word!" (2

Timothy 4:2a).<sup>96</sup> Dr. David Jeremiah asks the following questions:

If someone looked at your life, what would they see? An attitude of hope, enthusiasm and energy, or your chin perpetually on your chest in a posture of resignation and defeat? Are you the kind of person who spells "life" p-a-s-s-i-o-n or the one who, when asked to define "apathy" says, "I don't know and I don't care."<sup>97</sup>

In effective evangelistic churches in Eastern Kentucky, pastors say there can never be an "I do not know and I do not care" attitude. According to the evangelistically effective churches in this study, the church in Central Appalachia that is going to be effective in sharing the gospel must do so with passion.

Effective evangelistic pastors in Eastern Kentucky also claimed to preach expository sermons. John R. Bisagno on this subject stated,

And remember that all Scripture is given by inspiration of God. So we have a living book, with a living message, a living author, and a living and vital message for modern man. The source of our material is obviously God's Word. Preach the Word.<sup>98</sup>

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<sup>96</sup>New King James Translation.

<sup>97</sup>David Jeremiah, "From Accomplishment to Zeal," Western Recorder, 183 (2009), 4.

<sup>98</sup>Bisagno, 155.

As these preachers preach the word, they do so evangelistically. They preach with the objective of bringing the unsaved into a fellowship of faith with Christ Jesus.

Bill Whittaker says,

Through evangelistic preaching we fulfill Jesus' command, "Follow me, and I will make you become fishers of men" (Mark 1:17). Unsaved people who hear you preach will need to know how to be born again. Evangelism includes presenting the good news of Jesus, asking people to trust Him as the only way of salvation and to follow Him obediently in baptism, uniting with a new testament church for nurture and growth.<sup>99</sup>

Lloyd M. Perry and John R. Strubhar, had the following to say:

The church needs evangelism to save herself from sterility of merely cultural religion. The life of the church and her hope for the future lie in her reproductive power which is evangelism.

Bottom line, effective evangelistic churches in Eastern Kentucky said the number one way evangelism is to be conducted is through preaching. These churches believe that the man of God must burn with passion for God's Word, and declare to a lost world, "For the son of man has come to seek and save the lost" (Luke 19:10).

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<sup>99</sup>Whittaker, 143.

Another interesting insight from the study is, the majority of the pastors preach from a modern translation of God's Word. Please note the following:

- Fifty percent of the preachers used the New King James Version of the Bible
- Twenty percent of the preachers used the New American Standard Version of the Bible
- Ten percent of the preachers used the New International Version of the Bible
- Ten percent of the preachers used the King James Version of the Bible

This means that ninety percent of the preaching is done, in those effective churches, from a modern translation of the Word of God.

It is also noted that 60 percent of preachers do not preach a set number of sermons in a series. They may preach messages in a series, but they do not set a number in advance. In the words of one preacher, "I just preach until I'm done".

Other insights as it relates to effective preaching are as follows:

- Eighty percent of effective evangelistic preachers claimed to have the spiritual gifts of evangelism
- Ninety percent of these preachers said they preach three or more times per week
- The average length of the sermon is thirty minutes in length

The lessons learned are, the church must put major emphasis on evangelism in the pulpit. The preacher must

take every opportunity to proclaim the gospel message, and when he preaches, 30 minutes is long enough. One older preacher, offering advice to a younger preacher, said, "stand up, speak up, shut up, sit down." Pretty good advice for the mountain preacher who desires to be effective evangelistically.

### Sunday School

This study found that 50percent of evangelistically effective churches still use Sunday School as a tool to reach others with the gospel. Someone said, "It is not that Sunday School doesn't work any longer, it is just we do not work Sunday School any longer."

When interviewing Mickey Ballard, staff member at First Baptist Richmond, Kentucky, Mickey said, "When comparing the preaching ministry, the weekly visitation program, deacon ministry, and Sunday School – First Baptist Richmond reaches more people for Christ through Sunday School than any other ministry within the church.

It is interesting to see the response to the question, "which of the purposes of the church take place in your Sunday School?" Their response was as follows:

- Ten out of ten churches said, "evangelism takes place"
- Ten out of ten churches said, "discipleship takes place"

- Nine out of ten churches said, "fellowship takes place"
- Ten out of ten churches said, "ministry takes place"
- Five out ten churches said, "worship takes place"
- Ten out of ten churches said, "prayer takes place"

It is intriguing to see that, although only one half of all the churches in the study use Sunday School as an evangelistic tool, one hundred percent of the churches believe evangelism takes place within their Sunday School. Elmer Towns calls Sunday School "Side Door Evangelism". When a person comes to church for the first time he typically comes through the front door of the church, which is for worship. However, when a person comes to Sunday School, that person comes through the side door of the church "Sunday School". How do they come? The answer is by invitation from a friend. Elmer Towns asks, "What leads to salvation?" Then he offers the following:

- Two percent - advertisement
- Six percent - pastoral influence
- Six percent - organized outreach
- Eighty-six percent - friends and relatives<sup>100</sup>

The Bible says, "Gather the people - men, women, children, and foreigners living within your gates - so they may listen and learn to fear the Lord your God and be careful to follow all the words of this law" (Deuteronomy

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<sup>100</sup>Taken from Elmer Towns, "What Sunday School has to do to be ground on the rock, yet meet the needs of a contemporary modern society", 3.

31:12). This verse speaks of reaching, teaching, winning, and nurturing. The many churches in Eastern Kentucky reach and win people to Jesus is through the Sunday School.

#### G·R·O·W

In this study, it was discovered that 60 percent of the evangelistically effective churches had a weekly outreach program. Of that same group, 40 percent of them used the program G·R·O·W. G·R·O·W is an acrostic that stands for, "God Rewards our Work". The program was developed by Dr. Jerry N. Tidwell, Pastor of Ellendale Baptist Church in Bartlett, Tennessee. G·R·O·W is an outreach strategy that Bartlett says, "Is designed to take the most timid individuals and train them to carry out the Great Commission of Jesus Christ."<sup>101</sup>

When a believer participates in G·R·O·W, that person reports for outreach once a month. When the Christian arrives to do outreach a choice is offered, he can take a visitation assignment, he can take a letter writing assignment, or he can make phone calls. What is important, as found in this study, is that a church needs a visitation program. It was discovered that unless the church has an

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<sup>101</sup>Jerry N. Tidwell, Teams that Win, (Nashville: Lifeway and Adult Publishing, 2004), 2.

active weekly visitation program, the people will not do the work of evangelism.

When interviewing the called staff of First Baptist Church, Pikeville, Kentucky, they were asked, "Which ministries in the church nets more decisions for Christ?" The answer the First Baptist Church staff gave was, "weekly visitation".

This was the same response given by Gary Arrington, Pastor of the Garner Missionary Baptist Church in Rush, Kentucky. Gary stated that more decisions for Christ result from weekly visitation than any other ministry – including preaching, Sunday School, and deacon ministries. Effective evangelistic churches still use, for the most part, a weekly visitation program.

#### Called Staff

It was discovered in this study that churches rely heavily upon called staff to do the work of evangelism. Almost all of the churches, 70 percent, require the called staff to participate in the weekly outreach visitation program.

It was also discovered that fewer churches rely upon deacons to do evangelistic outreach. Only 40 percent of

the churches interviewed stated that they require deacons to participate in weekly soul winning outreach.

This is important information because 90 percent of the baptisms that were reported came from outside the church family. This means, only 10 percent of baptisms came out of the families already associated with the church.

It is easy to conclude that if a church is going to be effective evangelistically, someone must be trained to go out. In most churches, those trained to go out are the called staff members. Gary McIntosh, in his book, Staff Your Church for Growth, quoted an unknown author as follows:

If you are planting for a year, grow rice.  
If you are planting for twenty years, grow trees.  
If you are planting for centuries, grow leaders<sup>102</sup>

The churches in Eastern Kentucky that are being evangelistically effective are learning to grow leaders. They are looking to the called staff to learn how to reach others with the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

### Prayer

In Rainer's book, Effective Evangelistic Churches, he makes the following comment:

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<sup>102</sup>McIntosh, 35.

C. Peter Wagner estimates that 5 percent of churches in America have a dynamic prayer ministry. Among the 576 evangelistic churches in this study, over three-fourths had a church wide prayer ministry. Though not all could be called "dynamic", our impressions were that most were truly vibrant and made a difference in the life of the church. If Wagner's assessment is correct, and if our numbers are valid, the contrast between praying and non-praying churches is stark. Wagner's estimate of only 5 percent is dramatically below our measure of approximately 75 percent – therefore, we conclude, with conviction, that most evangelistically growing churches are also praying churches.<sup>103</sup>

The same tends to be true of Eastern Kentucky churches. The churches that tend to be the most effective in reaching others with the gospel are praying churches. Of the effective Eastern Kentucky churches, 60 percent have a single service dedicated to prayer, and of that same number, the churches call lost individuals out by name.

Some of the aspects these Eastern Kentucky churches believe concerning prayer are as follow:

- They believe in fervency of prayer
- They believe evangelistic growth is a direct result of prayer
- They believe that in order to be effective evangelistically, a church must first learn to pray

Rainer continued writing about evangelistic churches being praying churches by stating,

Prayer was mentioned as the second most important methodology for reaching people

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<sup>103</sup>Rainer, Effective Evangelistic Churches, 71.

for Christ in these evangelistic churches. But even that statistic may be misunderstood. In every methodology, preaching, Sunday School, ministries, etc. – prayer was the underlying strength to the methodology. If, as Wagner believes, a great movement began in churches in the early 1970's, the twenty-first century may see fruit of that prayer as millions accept Christ through the ministry of local churches.<sup>104</sup>

### Worship Styles

When interviewing churches in Eastern Kentucky about evangelistic effectiveness, it was falsely believed that when it comes to music there would be a sense of divisiveness. However, there was no sense of that at all. Most churches are very comfortable with the style of music they are currently using. As a matter of fact, 100 percent of the churches interviewed stated that they use a blended style of worship.

A blended style simply means that the music is a blend of the traditional, contemporary, southern gospel, Christian rock, and country gospel. It was learned that Eastern Kentucky churches love music. Someone said, "Shake a tree in Eastern Kentucky and a musician will fall out."

The churches interviewed for this project all believe music is important to them evangelistically. Notice how music was described - eighty percent of them described the

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<sup>104</sup>Ibid., 79.

music in their church as "high energy and high congregational." This means that there is life in the service and the congregation participates in the singing.

All of the leaders surveyed want a worship experience that is first warm, then exciting, and finally loving. Secondly, they wanted a worship experience that is vibrant, hopeful, and worshipful. In the words of Thom Rainer, "These [churches] seek to create worship services that intentionally demonstrate the love and hope that can only be found in the person of Jesus Christ."<sup>105</sup>

### Beliefs

It is very heartening to discover that 100 percent of the pastors in these evangelistically effective churches in Eastern Kentucky believe that the Bible is the actual Word of God. They believe that, "All Scripture is inspired by God and is profitable for teaching, for rebuking, for correcting for training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work"(2 Timothy 3:16-17).

The good work for which these Bible believing pastors are equipped is preaching God's Word with authority. They can, with confidence, tell lost sinners that God loves

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<sup>105</sup>Ibid., 116.

them. D. James Kennedy and Jerry Newcombe in the book, What If The Bible Had Never Been Written, states,

The well-known children hymn declares, "Jesus loves me, this I know, for the Bible tells me so." But with all the doubts cast on the Word of God by critics of the Bible in the last two centuries or so, we might sing, "Jesus loves me? I don't know. I wish someone could tell me so!" Well, God Himself has told us so in a multitude of ways . . . [and one of the ways is the] Christian Scriptures.<sup>106</sup>

It is not a surprise, therefore, to learn that 90 percent of these pastors consider themselves to be evangelical conservatives. One pastor did not see himself as being an evangelical conservative, but saw himself as being a fundamentalist which means that this Pastor believes the following:

- Verbal inspiration and inerrancy of Scripture
- The virgin birth
- The deity of Christ
- The substitutionary atonement
- The bodily resurrection
- The physical return
- The existence of a literal heaven and hell<sup>107</sup>

It appears, therefore, that the key to being evangelistically effective is to first believe the Word of

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<sup>106</sup>D. James Kennedy and Jerry Newcombe, What if the Bible had never been written? (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, Inc., 1998), 209.

<sup>107</sup>The King James Study Bible (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, Inc., 1981), 1920.

God. Believe that there is a literal hell, and sinners do not need to go there. An evangelistically effective church believes the bible when Jesus says,

For God so loved the world in this way:  
He gave His one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him will not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world that that He might condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through Him. Anyone who believes in Him is not condemned, but anyone who does not believe is already condemned, because he has not believed in the name of the one and only Son of God (John 3:26-18).

It is refreshing to discover that 90 percent of effective pastors evangelistically consider themselves to be conservative, 10 percent considered themselves to be fundamentalist, but zero considered themselves to be moderate or liberal in their theological views. All of these pastors believe God, believe that He is at work in the world, and want to find a way to join Him in the work that He is doing.

### Community

Thom Rainer said, "The myth exists and persists: A church must choose to be either a community – or social – ministry church or an evangelistic church – it cannot be

both."<sup>108</sup> The study of Eastern Kentucky churches reveals that effective evangelistic churches are simultaneously evangelistic and community minded. Note the following community ministries effective churches in this study were involved in:

- Day School ministries
- Mom's day out programs
- Preschool ministries
- Christian schools
- Senior adult daycare
- Prison ministries
- Retirement home ministries
- Spanish speaking ministries
- Benevolent ministries of every sort

The ten churches in the study not only used these ministries evangelistically; a large percentage sees them as being "very effective". One church, First Baptist Pikeville, has a preschool ministry that meets weekdays. It is a preschool preparation for young students and their families. The church and the pastor see this ministry as "side door evangelism". Families are brought into the side door of the church, perhaps for the first time, as a result of a preschool ministry activity.

Rainer says,

Evangelistic churches are involved in ministries for their communities. They demonstrate the love and concern of Christ. Not all of their ministries

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<sup>108</sup>Ranier, Effective Evangelistic Churches, 135.

are explicitly evangelistic, but most of their ministries are born out of hearts of love and concern. The love of Christ compels the people of these churches to share the gospel and minister to the least of these.<sup>109</sup>

### Missions

All the churches interviewed in this study agree with the following statements:

- Missions do not take away from the church budget
- Starting a new church does not hurt the mother church
- Starting a new church will not hurt other churches in the area

It is plain to see that evangelistically effective Eastern Kentucky churches are also missions minded. These churches tend to understand that if a lost world is going to be reached for Christ – these churches cannot do it alone. Bob Reccord, once of the North American Mission Board, said,

I am thankful for the more than 40,000 Southern Baptist congregations across North America, but to impact North America

powerfully for Christ, we are convinced that by the year 2020 we will need a total of 100,000 Southern Baptist congregations. This means exponential growth will be required to penetrate our vast and varied continent. The task cannot be accomplished with seminary – trained people alone. It will require a simultaneous and energetic movement of churches planted by committed and called lay people who are tentmakers

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<sup>109</sup>Ibid., 168.

just like the Apostle Paul – earning their incomes in the marketplace and giving themselves away in ministry.<sup>110</sup>

One church in this study has planted a mission church outside its town. The people who live in the area surrounding the mission will not easily attend the downtown church mainly because of socio-economic boundaries. Three years ago seven to eight people attended the mission on a weekly basis, but today nearly one hundred attend the new church start. Due to this growth plans are underway to construct a new six thousand square foot church building at the mission site. The building should be under roof by early June 2009. As Bob Reccord says, "Today, Southern Baptists from all walks of life are planting churches. It begins with a calling from God."<sup>111</sup> Many evangelistically minded churches in Eastern Kentucky are hearing the call of God to plant new churches.

### Conclusion

In conclusion, what does an evangelistically effective church look like in Eastern Kentucky? On the bases of this study please note the following:

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<sup>110</sup>Richard Harris, Reaching a Nation through Church planting, (Alpharetta, GA: North American Mission Board, 2003), 1.

<sup>111</sup>Ibid., 2.

- An evangelistically effective church in Eastern Kentucky will have a pastor who passionately preaches the Word of God
- An evangelistically effective church in Eastern Kentucky will have a pastor who preaches from a modern translation of God's word – preferably the New King James Version
- An evangelistically effective church in Eastern Kentucky will often have a pastor who has the spiritual gift of evangelism
- An evangelistically effective church in Eastern Kentucky will have a pastor who preaches the gospel at least three times weekly
- An evangelistically effective church in Eastern Kentucky will have a pastor who does not preach, more nor less, than 30 minutes in duration
- An evangelistically effective church in Eastern Kentucky will have a Sunday School that believes in reaching their friends and teaching them the Word of God
- An evangelistically effective church in Eastern Kentucky will have a weekly outreach visitation program. A good program to consider is G·R·O·W
- An evangelistically effective church in Eastern Kentucky will have a called staff equipped to share the gospel
- An evangelistically effective church in Eastern Kentucky will be a "house of prayer."
- An evangelistically effective church in Eastern Kentucky will have a blended music worship style
- An evangelistically effective church in Eastern Kentucky will believe the fundamentals of the faith: verbal inspiration; virgin birth; deity of Christ; the substitutionary atonement; the bodily resurrection; the physical return; and the existence of a literal heaven and hell
- An evangelistically effective church in Eastern Kentucky will be community minded
- An evangelistically effective church in Eastern Kentucky will be missions minded

It should always be remembered that the church has a mission, and perhaps this mission has best been described

by the famed pastor from Bellevue Baptist Church, now home  
with the Lord, Dr. R.G. Lee, who writes:

Give us a watchword for the hour,  
A thrilling word, a word of power,  
A battle cry, a flaming breath,  
A call to conquest or to death,  
A word to rouse the church from rest,  
To heed the Master's high behest  
The call is given, ye hosts arise,  
The watchword is evangelize!  
To fallen men, a dying race,  
Make know the gift of gospel grace.  
The world that now in darkness lies,  
O church of Christ, EVANGELIZE!

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**APPENDIX**

## EFFECTIVE EVANGELISTIC CHURCHES IN EASTERN KENTUCKY

1). Please rate your top 3 spiritual “team” gifts, one being the greatest and three representing the least, from the following:

- Exhortation \_\_\_\_\_
- Evangelism \_\_\_\_\_
- Teaching \_\_\_\_\_
- Prophecy \_\_\_\_\_
- Pastor Shepherd \_\_\_\_\_
- Administration \_\_\_\_\_
- Mercy \_\_\_\_\_
- Giving \_\_\_\_\_
- Service \_\_\_\_\_

2). How would you rate the importance of preaching in your church as it relates to evangelistic effectiveness?

- Very important \_\_\_\_\_
- Somewhat important \_\_\_\_\_
- Not very important \_\_\_\_\_

3). How would you rate the passion with which you preach?

- I am very passionate when I preach \_\_\_\_\_
- I am somewhat passionate when I preach \_\_\_\_\_
- I am not very passionate when I preach \_\_\_\_\_

3). What types of sermons do you typically preach?

- I mainly preach expository sermons \_\_\_\_\_
- I mainly preach topical sermons \_\_\_\_\_
- I mainly preach narrative sermons \_\_\_\_\_
- I use a combination of all three \_\_\_\_\_
- I use a combination of expository and topical sermons \_\_\_\_\_
- I preach expository messages, but on holidays I will preach a topical message \_\_\_\_\_

4). Do you preach sermons in a series? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

5). How long is your sermon series typically?

- Seven or more sermon series \_\_\_\_\_
- Four, but less than seven sermon series \_\_\_\_\_
- Two sermons, but less than four \_\_\_\_\_

- There is not a set number of sermons \_\_\_\_\_

6). What is your preferred Bible translation?

- KJV \_\_\_\_\_
- NKJV \_\_\_\_\_
- NIV \_\_\_\_\_
- NASB \_\_\_\_\_
- HCSB \_\_\_\_\_
- ESV \_\_\_\_\_
- NLT \_\_\_\_\_
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

7). Which of the above translations do you use in the pulpit? \_\_\_\_\_.

8). How many times do you preach during the course of a week?

- Four times \_\_\_\_\_
- Three times \_\_\_\_\_
- Two times \_\_\_\_\_
- One time \_\_\_\_\_
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

9). What is the average length of your sermons?

- One hour \_\_\_\_\_
- 40 minutes \_\_\_\_\_
- 30 minutes \_\_\_\_\_
- 25 minutes \_\_\_\_\_
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

10). Which service, in your church, would be considered the evangelistic service?

- Sunday a.m. \_\_\_\_\_
- Sunday p.m. \_\_\_\_\_
- Wednesday p.m. \_\_\_\_\_
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

11). Do you have a service dedicated specifically to prayer? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No  
\_\_\_\_\_

12). If the answer to number 11 is yes, do you call lost people out in prayer by name? Yes  
\_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

13). Do you believe that Sunday school is an evangelistic dinosaur? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

14). If your answer to question 13 is no, then how important is Sunday school to your evangelistic effectiveness?

- Sunday School is very important to evangelistic effectiveness \_\_\_\_\_
- Sunday School is somewhat important to evangelistic effectiveness \_\_\_\_\_
- Sunday School is not very important to evangelistic effectiveness \_\_\_\_\_
- With some TLC Sunday School could become important to evangelistic effectiveness \_\_\_\_\_

15). Do you age grade your Sunday school? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

16) Which of the following purposes of the church actually take place in your Sunday school?

- Evangelism \_\_\_\_\_
- Fellowship \_\_\_\_\_
- Ministry \_\_\_\_\_
- Worship \_\_\_\_\_
- Prayer \_\_\_\_\_

17). Do you have a weekly outreach visitation program in your church? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

18). If the answer to 17 is yes, do you use any of the following programs?

- F.A.I.T.H. \_\_\_\_\_
- G.R.O.W. \_\_\_\_\_
- Sharing Jesus without fear? \_\_\_\_\_
- The 4-Spiritual Laws \_\_\_\_\_
- A marked New Testament \_\_\_\_\_
- E.E. \_\_\_\_\_
- C.W.T. \_\_\_\_\_
- Gospel tracts \_\_\_\_\_
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

19). If the answer to 17 is yes, do you as pastor lead out in the visitation program? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_.

20). If the answer to 17 is yes, how many people typically attend your weekly visitation program?

- 20 or more \_\_\_\_\_

- 15, or less than 20 \_\_\_\_\_
- 10, or less than 15 \_\_\_\_\_
- 5, or less than 10 \_\_\_\_\_
- Less than 5 \_\_\_\_\_

21). How important, to your evangelistic effectiveness is your weekly outreach?

- Very important \_\_\_\_\_
- Somewhat important \_\_\_\_\_
- Not very important \_\_\_\_\_

21). Are you a multi-staffed church? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

22). If the answer to 21 is yes, how many called staff members, besides yourself, do you have?

- 4 or more \_\_\_\_\_
- 3 \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 \_\_\_\_\_
- 1 \_\_\_\_\_

23). Do you require called staff to participate in your weekly visitation program? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

24). How many deacons do you have in your church?

- 18 or more \_\_\_\_\_
- 15, or less than 18 \_\_\_\_\_
- 10, or less than 15 \_\_\_\_\_
- 7, or less than 10 \_\_\_\_\_
- I have fewer than 7 deacons in my church \_\_\_\_\_

25). Do you require deacons to participate in your weekly visitation program? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

26). If deacons are required to participate in your weekly visitation program, how often are they required to do so?

- 4 times monthly \_\_\_\_\_
- 3 times monthly \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 times monthly \_\_\_\_\_
- 1 times monthly \_\_\_\_\_
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

27). Which ministries mentioned thus far net more decisions for Christ?

- The preaching ministry \_\_\_\_\_
- The Sunday School ministry \_\_\_\_\_
- Weekly visitation ministry \_\_\_\_\_
- The deacon ministry \_\_\_\_\_

28). Does your church target special groups of people?

- The blue collar worker \_\_\_\_\_
- The white collar professional \_\_\_\_\_
- Young families \_\_\_\_\_
- Youth \_\_\_\_\_
- Children \_\_\_\_\_
- Seniors \_\_\_\_\_
- We really do not target any specific group of people \_\_\_\_\_

29). Do you believe that your church emphasis is on youth programs or youth evangelism? \_\_\_\_\_

30). Do you train youth workers to share their faith with students? Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

31). Do you believe your church emphasis is on children's programs or child evangelism? \_\_\_\_\_

32). Do you train your children's workers to share their faith with children? Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

33). What type of music do you use in your worship services?

- Traditional \_\_\_\_\_
- Blended \_\_\_\_\_
- Contemporary \_\_\_\_\_
- Southern Gospel \_\_\_\_\_
- Christian rock \_\_\_\_\_
- Country gospel \_\_\_\_\_
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

34). Is your minister of music employed fulltime? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

35). How important do you see music in your overall evangelistic effectiveness?

- Music is very important \_\_\_\_\_
- Music is somewhat important \_\_\_\_\_
- Music is not very important \_\_\_\_\_

- Music could be important with some changes \_\_\_\_\_

36). How would you best describe the music program in your church?

- High energy low congregational involvement
- High energy high congregational involvement
- Low energy low congregational involvement
- Low energy high congregational involvement

37). Do you have a weekday ministry in your church?

- A day care \_\_\_\_\_
- A mom's day out program \_\_\_\_\_
- A preschool ministry \_\_\_\_\_
- A Christian school \_\_\_\_\_
- A senior adult day care \_\_\_\_\_
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

38). If your answer to 37 is yes, then how effective do you see your weekday ministry as it relates to evangelism?

- It is very important \_\_\_\_\_
- It is somewhat important \_\_\_\_\_
- It is not very important \_\_\_\_\_
- With some work it could become important \_\_\_\_\_

39). Do you use event evangelism? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

40). If yes, what types of event evangelism do you use?

- Area wide crusades \_\_\_\_\_
- Gospel singing concerts \_\_\_\_\_
- Wild game dinners \_\_\_\_\_
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

41). How effective do you believe event evangelism to be?

- As very effective
- Somewhat effective
- Not very effective
- With some work it could become effective

42). Does your church have a bus ministry? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

43). If yes to answer 42, how effective do you believe your bus ministry go be in you overall efforts to reach people for Christ?

- Very effective \_\_\_\_\_
- Somewhat effective \_\_\_\_\_
- Not very effective \_\_\_\_\_
- With some work it could become effective \_\_\_\_\_

44). Do you still have revivals in your church? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

45). How effective do you believe revival evangelism to be?

- I see it as very effective \_\_\_\_\_
- I see it as somewhat effective \_\_\_\_\_
- I do not see it as effective at all \_\_\_\_\_
- It could become effective with some work \_\_\_\_\_

46). How many revivals do you have in your church per year?

- Two \_\_\_\_\_
- One \_\_\_\_\_
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

47). Are you a multi-staffed church? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

48). What types of staff do you employ?

- Custodial \_\_\_\_\_
- Secretarial \_\_\_\_\_
- Music \_\_\_\_\_
- Youth \_\_\_\_\_
- Children \_\_\_\_\_
- Administrative \_\_\_\_\_
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

49). How effective is your staff in reaching people for Christ?

- They are very effective \_\_\_\_\_
- They are somewhat effective \_\_\_\_\_
- They are not very effective \_\_\_\_\_
- With some TLC they could become effective \_\_\_\_\_

50). How old is your church?

- 100 plus years

- Less than 100, but more than 75
- Less than 75, but more than 50
- Less than 50, but more than 25
- Less than 25, but more than 15
- Less than 15, but more than 5

51). Do you have multiple worship opportunities on Sunday mornings?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

52). What is your congregation's view of the Bible?

- The Bible is a matter of individual interpretation \_\_\_\_\_
- The Bible is the inspired Word of God, but it contains errors \_\_\_\_\_
- The Bible is the actual Word of God, completely and literally true \_\_\_\_\_

53). True or false:

- We have an attitude of fervency of prayer in our church T \_\_\_\_ F \_\_\_\_
- Corporate prayer explains our church's evangelistic effectiveness T \_\_\_\_ F \_\_\_\_
- Our growth in conversions is a result of prayer T \_\_\_\_ F \_\_\_\_
- Our evangelistic growth can best be described as ongoing answered prayer T \_\_\_\_ F \_\_\_\_
- Committed prayer is an essential element in evangelistic outreach T \_\_\_\_ F \_\_\_\_

54). As pastor, do you attempt to model a heart of prayer for your congregation? Yes \_\_\_\_  
No \_\_\_\_

55). As pastor, do you meet regularly with your staff in order to pray for the lost? Yes \_\_\_\_  
No \_\_\_\_

56). Do you believe that all evangelistic churches are praying churches? Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_

57). Please rank the following keys to effective evangelistic Sunday Schools in their order of importance in your view:

- Leadership \_\_\_\_
- Accountability \_\_\_\_
- Organization Quality \_\_\_\_
- Evangelistic intentionality \_\_\_\_
- Methodology \_\_\_\_

58). In your opinion what worship style works best in a church's efforts to connect people to Jesus Christ?

- Liturgical \_\_\_\_

- Traditional \_\_\_\_\_
- Revivalist \_\_\_\_\_
- Contemporary \_\_\_\_\_
- Seeker \_\_\_\_\_
- Blended \_\_\_\_\_
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

59). What is your current worship attendance?

- 100-200 \_\_\_\_\_
- 300-499 \_\_\_\_\_
- 500-699 \_\_\_\_\_
- 700-799 \_\_\_\_\_
- 1000-1499 \_\_\_\_\_
- 1500 + \_\_\_\_\_

60). Attitude is vital, rank the following as to importance, as it relates to reaching people for Christ:

- Warm, exciting, loving \_\_\_\_\_
- Vibrant, hopeful, worshipful \_\_\_\_\_

61). How important is intentionality, as it relates to evangelistic effectiveness?

- Very important \_\_\_\_\_
- Somewhat important \_\_\_\_\_
- Not very important \_\_\_\_\_

62). What do you believe about God?

- God is creator, but not intervene today \_\_\_\_\_
- God is constantly at work in the world today \_\_\_\_\_
- God is the world, in every person, thing, and event \_\_\_\_\_

63). Do you believe men are sinful and need to ask God for forgiveness? Yes \_\_\_\_ No  
\_\_\_\_

64). Do you consider yourself a Conservative, Fundamentalist, or Moderate? \_\_\_\_\_

65). Does your church participate in any social ministries?

- Prison ministry \_\_\_\_\_
- Backyard Bible clubs \_\_\_\_\_
- Retirement homes \_\_\_\_\_
- Spanish speaking \_\_\_\_\_

- Other \_\_\_\_\_

66). How important, in the area of evangelism, do you see these social ministries?

- Very important \_\_\_\_\_
- Somewhat important \_\_\_\_\_
- Not very important \_\_\_\_\_
- Could be important with some work \_\_\_\_\_

67). Does your church have a women's ministry? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

68). How important is your women's ministry in the overall area of evangelism?

- Very important \_\_\_\_\_
- Somewhat important \_\_\_\_\_
- Not very important \_\_\_\_\_
- With a little TLC, it could become very important \_\_\_\_\_

69). Do you use family or counseling ministries in your church? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

70). Do you agree with this statement, "All ministries in our church should be evangelistic?" Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

71). True or false:

- The attitude in our church could be described as positive T \_\_\_ F \_\_\_
- Our church loves lost people as Jesus did T \_\_\_ F \_\_\_
- We attempt to embody the gospel in our church T \_\_\_ F \_\_\_
- Our church could be described as being very accepting T \_\_\_ F \_\_\_

72). Does your church participate in short term missions projects? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

73). Do you believe the Kingdom of God is your primary mission, not self-preservation?  
Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

74). True or false:

- Missions takes away from the church budget T \_\_\_ F \_\_\_
- Starting new churches hurts the mother church T \_\_\_ F \_\_\_
- A new church will hurt other churches in the area T \_\_\_ F \_\_\_
- Our community has too many churches T \_\_\_ F \_\_\_
- Young adults will not give to missions T \_\_\_ F \_\_\_

75). What are your assimilation methodologies?

- Sunday School
- New Members class \_\_\_\_
- One on one discipleship \_\_\_\_
- Ministry discovery classes \_\_\_\_
- Other \_\_\_\_

76). Are you a seminary graduate? Yes \_\_ No \_\_

77). Would you describe your baptisms as “inner” [children of members], or “outer” [people from outside the church]? \_\_\_\_\_

78). Do you consider yourself a happy leader? Yes \_\_ No \_\_\_\_

79). How long have you been at your church? \_\_\_\_\_

80). How does the congregation typically address you?

- Preacher
- Pastor
- Rev.
- Dr.
- First name
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

81). Do you believe your church is only interested in numbers? Yes \_\_ No \_\_\_\_

82). Do you believe that your church is interested in spiritual needs? Yes \_\_ No \_\_\_\_

83). Which best describes your leadership style?

- Directive
- Persuasive
- Coordination
- Delegation

84). Is there anything that we have not discussed that has contributed to the success of your church in the area of reaching people for Christ?

Name:

Church:

City:

State:

E-mail address:

Phone number:

Church's website:

## VITA

Paul R. Badgett

## PERSONAL

Born: January 18, 1949.

Married: Regina R. Elkins, November 24, 1972.

Children: Angela M. Badgett, born January 15, 1975.

## EDUCATIONAL

M.A.R., Liberty University, 1994.

M. Div., Luther Rice Seminary, 2003.

## MINISTERIAL

License: February 18, 1990, Rose Hill Missionary Baptist Church, Ashland, Kentucky.

Ordination to ministry, February 17, 1991, Rose Hill Missionary Baptist Church, Ashland, Kentucky.

Interim Pastor, Fellowship Baptist Church, South Shore, Kentucky, 1990-1993.

Pastor, Oakland Avenue Baptist Church, Catlettsburg, Kentucky, 1993-1999.

Pastor, First Baptist Pikeville, Pikeville, Kentucky, 1999-.