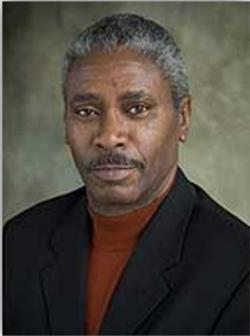




central conference of the evangelical covenant church

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From the Superintendent: WE HARVEST WHAT WE PLANT



The Apostle Paul addresses this issue in his letter to the Galatians (Gal. 6:7-10). God has established a law of identical harvest. It is the same law by which He governs the universe and it cannot be evaded. *The Interpreter's Bible* refers to this section of Scripture as Paul's call for Christians to engage in "the agriculture of the Spirit." This is a suggestive thought which aptly describes what Paul is talking about. The law of the harvest is relevant to our spiritual development and describes our destiny. He says, "Don't be misled--you cannot mock the justice of God. You will always harvest what you plant." We cannot hoodwink God. His judgment is as inevitable as His love is redemptive. Don't let anyone deceive you or trick you into believing that God is not holding every person accountable for their actions. Or that there is no heaven or hell, so there is no reward or punishment. Or that a

simple confession after each sinful act will save you. Or that some superstitious supposition

that certain rituals will set everything straight at last, no matter how we live our lives. Those who sneer at God by treating lightly the counsel He give us must suffer the consequences of doing so. This principle is as true in the realm of spiritual things and of social relationship as in the natural world. That things will reproduce after their kind, is an inflexible law. (Gen. 1:12) Accordingly, a person who sows "wild oats" cannot expect an abundant "wheat harvest." You can't plant pumpkin seeds and expect a harvest of corn.

Life on this earth is life in the making. It involves constant choice and constant conflict--conflict between the different facets of our nature that struggle for dominance; conflict between the causes that vie for our allegiance; conflict between a false suggestion from our exterior world and a true intuition of the inner self; conflict between self-dominance and self-surrender. Through the continuous making of resolute decisions we pattern our lives and we mold our character.

Paul does not describe the process, but he is clear about the fact: "*He who sows to his flesh will... reap corruption,... he who sows to the Spirit will... reap everlasting life.*" Paul refers to those who do not attempt to check their carnal desires and inclinations. Only as a person resists evil can they expect to be free from its influence and results. For example, if you are unfaithful to your spouse, you can't expect to have a happy marriage. If you plant to please your own desires, you will harvest a crop of sorrow and evil.

In contrast, if you plant to please God, you will reap a harvest of joy, peace and everlasting life. Good sowing will bring good reaping. What are some of the spiritual seeds we can sow? We can sow seeds of faith and obedience to God. We can sow seeds of love, truth, justice, kindness, and forbearance to others. We can sow our own seeds of self-control of fleshly appetites and purity.

In the midst of living life itself, Paul encourages us "not to get tired of doing what is good. Because at just the right time we will reap a harvest of blessing if we don't give up. Therefore, whenever we have the opportunity, we should do good to everyone--especially to those in the family of faith. I know that it is hard sometimes to continue to do right and never receive any thanks or see any tangible results. Remember that the law of harvest works.

By: Rev. Jerome Nelson



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Church Planting Updates



In September, Rev. David Washington gathered his launch team at Covenant Offices for an all-day training. Although the team is still a year away from weekly worship services, they are going deep in building community and creating the healthy systems and culture that Kingdom Covenant Church will need when they begin ministry in the Roseland

neighborhood of Chicago. Part of their training involved identifying all of the gifts and resources that each member of the team brings to this new church for the good of their neighbors.

Also in September, Andrew Morrell (back left, light blue shirt) attended the Church Planter Training Intensive in Minneapolis with other ECC planters from as far away as Hawaii and New York City. Andrew will be planting in Marion, IN. Recently the local school district sold this just-beginning church plant an empty elementary school for \$10.00!



By: Rev. David Swanson

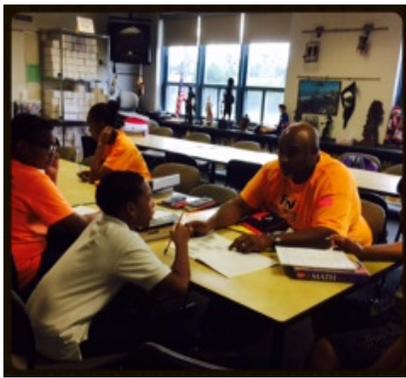


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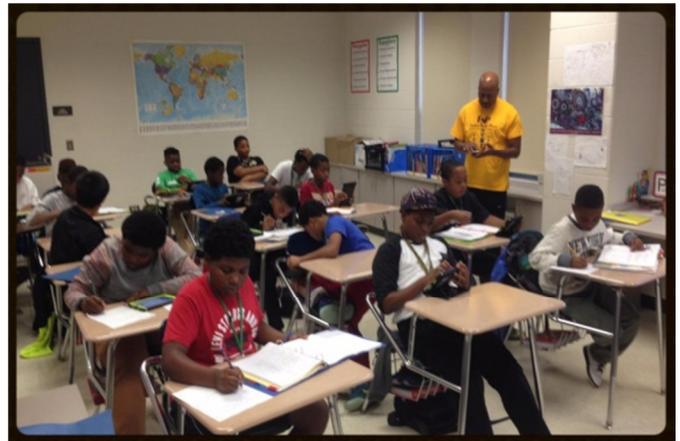
Fellowship Relay Mentor Tutor Program

Fellowship Christian Church in collaboration with Oak Park District 97, The Multicultural Department, Youth Education Mentoring Basketball Association (Y.E.M.B.A.), the Community Mental Health Board and Fellowship Community Services launched its new ministry to the middle school youth at Julian and Brooks Middle School in Oak Park "Mentoring and Tutoring."



We are offering mentor tutoring services at Julian Middle School on Fridays from 3:30 to 5:00 and at Fellowship Christian Church on Tuesdays 4:00 to 5:30. Since inception in July, we have had over 45 students involved in the program, some are now coming twice a week. In January 2016 we will target 7th Graders for Mentoring and 8th Graders in April. Students are receiving help with math, Spanish, homework help and also learning about Respect, Drug Abuse and Attitude and participate in group and "one on one" mentoring.

One parent of an 8th grader shared that her son needs help in every subject she has tried everything to get him motivated about school, maybe studying with other students will help him! Last week one student brought in a math test he took that day and he got 20/20 because of the help he received from Mr. Charles, he was so excited! Also, several teachers have walked students to the Mentor/Tutor room and insisted that the student get signed up for the tutor program.



This ministry is blessed to continue because of a generous grant from Covenant Children's Ministry, The Compassion Mercy and Justice Commission, Fellowship Christian Church and collaborations with the schools, Community Mental Health Board, Fellowship Community Services and Y.E.M.B.A.

Rev. Debbie Griffith Samuels



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Musing on Acts: Part 2

Times of transition are difficult. William Bridges, in his book on transitions, states, "It's not changes that do you in. It's the transitions."

Acts 1: Jesus has left the scene. Several years of this adventure, hanging out with Jesus, walking with Jesus, being taught by Jesus, observing Jesus, walking on water with Jesus, sick people healed by Jesus, challenging religious authority with Jesus, eating with Jesus, feeding thousands with Jesus and now what? Two men dressed in white appear as the disciples fix their gaze up into the clouds. "Hey you guys... whatcha lookin at?" Time to get on with it. Get on with what?

Whatever it was Jesus told us. "Wait in Jerusalem until the Holy Spirit shows up." Whatever that looks like?

We read the stories, matter of fact. But can we sense the emotional field behind the story? This is the world of transitions. We aren't quite sure what's next. We're embarking on an adventure but we don't have the roadmap. We're only supposed to trust. Bridges identified three stations in the transition process, the ending, the neutral zone, and the new beginning. Each requires unique attention. Engaging vitality requires dealing well in each of these areas.

Our churches are facing a world in transitions these days. Congregations, themselves, are in transition. What's the pathway? We aren't quite sure. But Jesus is asking us to have faith in Him, to trust that God will show what we are to do. Come Holy Spirit. Lead in your own special way. How is your congregation experiencing transition these days?

Peace.

By: Rev. Peter Sjoblom