

**CCSBA Focus on the BSU**

I want you to know how significant it is that we have a physical presence at Three Rivers College. Just this week a student came to me absolutely brokenhearted by school and family issues. He said that when he walked out of his dorm that morning he didn't even know where he was going, but he saw the BSU building and remembered that there was a pastor there he could talk to. After a long talk in my office, he left with renewed strength and connected to other Christian students. Your support of this ministry and your prayers for these students make moments like this possible. Praise God for these opportunities!

**Calendar for September & October**

*Rheubin L South Missouri Missions Offering  
Prayer for Missouri Baptists and Missions*

**Sept 3 CCSBA Office Closed for Labor Day**

**Sept 11 CCSBA Executive Board Meeting**

**7:00 PM Temple Baptist Church, Poplar Bluff**

**Sept 14-15 DR Training at Green Valley,  
St. Joseph, MO**

**Oct 1 CCSBA Annual Meeting Memorial Baptist  
Church, Poplar Bluff**

**Oct 4 Lunch with NAMB Missionary**

**Oct 11 Lunch with Messianic Jewish Missionary**

**Oct 13 WMU Regional Training Conference**

**Disaster Relief Training**

Oct. 12-13

Contact Bob Stark at 573-300-3192

[www.mobaptist.org/dr](http://www.mobaptist.org/dr) [disasterrelief@mobaptist.org](mailto:disasterrelief@mobaptist.org)

**BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES**

**SEPT 3 RHONDA FLANIGAN**  
**SEPT 4 STEPHANIE GILBERT**  
**SEPT 23 DONNA PAGE**  
**SEPT 24 BRO. RALPH MAYES**

**CCSBA CHURCH PRAYER FOCUS**

East Carter Grace



Keith Boyer, Pastor

Temple



Steve Patterson, Pastor

Twin Oaks



Billy Herren, Pastor

Stringtown



Garry Vester, Pastor

**PRAY FOR THESE PASTOR-LESS CHURCHES**

**Northside Bernie**

**Harviell FBC**

**Center Hill**

**New Hope**

**Emmanuel**

*Check out our web site for up-to-date  
announcements and opportunities.*

CCSBA Office Hours

8:00 am – 4:00 pm, Monday – Thursday

8:00 am – 12:00 pm, Friday

Web: [www.ccsba.com](http://www.ccsba.com)

Facebook: @CaneCreekStoddardBaptistAssociation

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Poplar Bluff, MO 63901

Phone: 573-686-1115 Fax: 573-686-1116

Ministry Team

Jim Gentry, DOM (ph: 870-219-2355)

Sandy Arnold, Office Assistant

Daniel Bray, BSU Director

**CCSBA Financial Status**

Sept. '17 – Aug '18

Budget to date	<b>Contributions received</b>
\$ 116,000.00	<b>\$ 116,657.21</b>

**CCSBA Focus on Church Growth**

Thom Rainer has an interesting and highly insightful book titled Autopsy of a Deceased Church. It was published in 2014 and is just one of his 25+ works on the church and church growth. I really recommend it for every pastor and church member who wants to see their church thrive. Yes, it is about churches which have died, but it has great insights for churches which want to live, influence, and impact their communities for God's glory. In this short space I don't want to focus on what leads churches to death, but on the insights I gained from this book about the characteristics of healthy churches.

All churches started with a vision. **Healthy churches evaluate and re-establish their vision regularly to stay on course with where God is leading them.** Because they take the Great Commission seriously, it is at the center of their vision and all the different aspects of church life are molded around it. So their regular evaluation is to make sure they are carrying out that vision, and to make changes if not.

**Healthy churches work hard to balance their inner and outer focus.** They work hard to care for the needs of their members, but they equally work hard to connect with, engage evangelistically, and reach their community for Christ.

**Healthy churches refuse to get comfortable or complacent with the way things are going.** They know decline can easily set in if they get comfortable and complacent. Therefore, healthy churches keep pressing forward, toward the future, with a willingness to sacrifice all things for the glory of God. They believe God's best of them lies not in the past, but in the future. Although there is joy over all that has been accomplished for the kingdom, the healthy church keeps their eye on the unfinished task and goal ahead.

**Healthy churches cultivate a sense of urgency in prayer, ministry, outreach, and connection with their community.** Because healthy churches mold all their activities and efforts around a gospel centered purpose and are continually looking to press forward, it is natural that they take great initiative and operate with such a sense of urgency. For example, in corporate prayer they focus greatly on the needs of their community and reaching the lost, as well as the needs of their membership. This leads to meaningful times of fervent, intense, and passionate prayer.

**Healthy churches also cultivate deep Christ-likeness within their membership.** They teach and model "being like Jesus" in all things. Servanthood, selflessness, sacrificial, and yieldedness are all qualities of Jesus which characterize obedient members of a healthy church.

**Healthy churches use their funds, buildings, and manpower for fulfilling the Great Commission.** They know God has blessed them with resources for carrying out Jesus' vision. Whatever they've got, they use it for His glory.

**Healthy churches have Spirit filled members who build trusting relationships with their pastor, staff, and each other which helps them to work together in fulfilling God's vision for their church.** They know fulfillment will only happen when they work together.

Finally, **healthy churches are strategic and make necessary changes which add life and focus to their church.** They don't fear change, but use it to reposition themselves so they can best be used by God for His purposes.

"May God give us the courage to make the changes necessary to give new life to our churches."

Thom Rainer