

Hart Beat

(An E-update for CNYBA Pastors and Key Leaders)

7 July 2013

➡ Hart to Heart

- ✚ While on a long all-day drive this past week I had plenty of time to think and pray. I was thinking and praying about a potential course I may get to teach at Davis College on Discipleship. I began to think about what I would want to teach students about the characteristics we cannot do without if we are going to be a genuine disciple of Christ – besides the normal practice of prayer and Bible study. Since I believe that discipleship is caught at least as much as taught, up there on my list is integrity. About the only thing we really own is our name and the reputation that goes with it. I'm sure I'm not as sophisticated as I should be for the amount of education I have and I'm pretty sure I'm politically incorrect a lot, but when I get to the end of life, or as a friend of ours used to say, "when I press that dying pillow", I hope I will be remembered, among other things, as a man of integrity. Our world needs to see people who practice what they preach – in good times and in bad, when it's beneficial to them and when it's not, when people are looking and when they are not. We can't represent Christ without integrity.
- ✚ Lyn and I worshipped today with the good folks at Berean Baptist Church in New Berlin. Although this congregation is not in our association – yet, I preached at the invitation and in the absence of Pastor Aamir Din, one of my former students at Davis College. I drove down from Whitesboro (where I've been working in Disaster Relief) and Lyn drove up from home. Of course, they had a fellowship meal afterwards, which I always enjoy.
- ✚ On Monday past I attended, what I hope will be, one of the last BCNY Strategic Implementation Team meetings. This team, whom I appointed as part of my responsibilities as President of the Convention, has been working faithfully and feverishly at turning gleanings from last year's Listening Tour into actionable recommendations to be presented to BCNY in annual session in September. Change is always difficult - but necessary. Nothing, except God, ever stays the same forever – nor should it. If we could accept change as growth, it would be much more palatable.
- ✚ On the 4th of July I hooked up the 5th wheel and headed to Crosspoint Church, Whitesboro, where the BCNY Disaster Relief effort in the Herkimer area is headquartered.

- ✚ On Friday I went down to Edison, NJ and fetched the Hudson Baptist Association's Disaster Relief Shower Trailer, brought it back to Crosspoint Church, and helped get it all hooked up and ready for use.
- ✚ On Saturday I worked with Ron Puff (from Frontier Baptist Association) and a group of volunteers from Crosspoint Church in removing "stuff" and mud from the basements of flood victims. I'll be leading volunteer teams in this effort most of this coming week.
- ✚ While I've been meeting myself coming back all week, Lyn has been dealing with Holly's illness. Our beloved puppy that we've had for almost 10 years is extremely sick – maybe even unto death. She spent a couple of days in the hospital this week and is on multiple medications. At this writing she is showing some signs of improvement, although not quite "out of the woods" yet.

➡ **News From the Churches**

- ✚ **Summit, Cazenovia** plans VBS for July 22-26 ending with a family BBQ on Friday July 26th from 5:30 - 7:00 PM, which will include activities such as music, crafts, games, bounce house, pony rides, and refreshments. The refreshments will be cold drinks, cotton candy, popcorn, and grilled hot dogs and hamburgers.
- ✚ **Emory Chapel, Waverly** plans a late 4th of July Church Picnic on July 6th. July 7th is Communion Sunday and July 14th, services and a fellowship meal will be held at Round Top Park, where I'll be preaching in the absence of Pastor Gary Culver.
- ✚ **Clyde BC** Plans a celebration Pastor Roger and Mary's 70th wedding anniversary on August 3, 2013 @ the church from 2 to 6. They are looking for pictures to use on a picture memory board for them. If you have any pictures of the Knaptons you would be willing to loan them, contact Doug King @ doogerdad@yahoo.com. Also, their Wayne County-wide revival is scheduled for August 15-18. Approximately 16 churches & organizations are working together for four days of spreading the gospel. The first two days, August 15 & 16 (Thursday & Friday), will be held at Clyde. Saturday, August 17, will be in Williamson, Sunday, August 18, will be in Newark.

➡ **1st Sunday – Missionary Story**

Victor and Candice Thomas landed in Vancouver, British Columbia, promising they'd never stay. Five years later, they're still in town. The South African

entrepreneurs arrived in 2007, allowing Victor Thomas to start a four-month stint as a researcher at Simon Fraser University, an adventure he called an extended honeymoon for the newlyweds. His study focused on environmental science and poverty, but the couple found a new calling in Burnaby, a quick train-ride from downtown Vancouver. Three weeks before they were to return to Cape Town, Thomas walked the Burnaby campus of Simon Fraser, his eyes seeming to open for the first time. "I saw these students with blank looks on their faces, and I started to tear up. For a South African male that's not cool," Thomas said. "It was as if God was saying, 'Isn't this the poverty I've called you to?'" From a family with seven generations of pastors, Thomas told his friends he'd never follow suit. And indeed he'd stayed true to his proclamation for more than two decades, though he always served the poor alongside his dad. He also started a company consulting on construction projects in environmentally sensitive areas. "Life was good back in Africa," Thomas said. "I'd just hired a friend and we had several big contracts. We'd never intended to stay in Canada." As God began to draw the Thomases to the work of The Point Church, a long conversation with then-planter of The Point, Kelly Manire, sealed the decision. "He told us he was moving on," Thomas said, "and that he wanted me and Candice to take over." The Point, a Canadian National Baptist Convention church, had started years earlier, but had dwindled to a small Bible study. Taking over The Point would amount to re-launching the church. As Thomas saw it, this also meant launching additional campuses in suburban Coquitlam and downtown Vancouver. Victor Thomas is just one of several church planters serving in the greater Vancouver area.

➡ **Have You Heard This One?**

The Pastor was doing the "Children's Sermon" during the worship service just before the "Adult Sermon".

He told the children about sheep, that they weren't smart and needed lots of guidance, and that a shepherd's job was to stay close to the sheep, protect them from wild animals and keep them from wandering off and doing dumb things that would get them hurt or killed.

He pointed to the children in the room and said that they were the sheep and needed lots of guidance.

Then the Pastor put his hands out to the side, palms up in a dramatic gesture, and with raised eyebrows said to the children, "If you are the sheep, then who is the shepherd?" He was pretty obviously indicating himself.

A silence followed of a few seconds. Then a young visitor said, " Jesus, Jesus is the shepherd."

The young Pastor, obviously caught by surprise, said to the boy, "Well, then, who am I?"

The little boy frowned thoughtfully and then said with a shrug, "I guess you must be a sheep dog."