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Being the heart and hands of Jesus Christ for our valley Vol. XI Issue VIII August 2011

REV. BOB SHEPARD, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



THE CHURCH: GOD'S INSTRUMENT FOR TRANSFORMING THE WORLD

...on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven." Matthew 16:18-19

Later this month we will be celebrating our 10th year of ministry at Serve Wenatchee Valley. It was in June of 2001 when the Board of Directors consisting of pastors Greg McPherson, John Clark, Myron Vierra, Dave Cole and myself circled hands on the heliport atop the Hilton Hotel in Burbank. We had just concluded our visit to the Dream Center in Hollywood to glean ideas about the kind of ministry God was calling us to in Wenatchee. We were not sure what direction He was going to take us, but we were sure that God was up to something big and we did not want to miss it.

Much has been accomplished over the ten years. The constant denominator has been our effort to resource churches as we collaboratively carry out the ministry of God's Kingdom here in the valley. We believe that God has established the church to be the instrument He will use to transform the world.

As you celebrate with us (you are an important part of the Serve Wenatchee Valley movement in our valley) let me list a few reasons why the church is such an important tool in the hands of our Creator.

The church deals with the ultimate issues of life. Topics such as life, death, eternity, judgment and forgiveness are not glossed over or avoided, but addresses by questions such as "Where will I spend the rest of eternity?" or "How will I please a holy God?". Not everyone agrees with the message of the church, but nevertheless we call people to not dodge these important questions.

The church provides the proper perspective about the dignity of humans. Psalm 8 gives us a fascinating insight when it states, "Man is a little lower than angels." Our culture believes that man is a little higher than animals. There is a wide gap between these two thoughts. The church has the message that every person is an unrepeatable miracle of God's design, deserving respect and dignity.

The church provides a moral and ethical compass in the midst of relativism. That is why the Christians are called to live their lives as salt and light to the world- to live a life that is markedly different than the world and demonstrates a joy and peace that comes only by aligning their actions and thoughts by the principles of God's will.

The church is called to not only address the eternal dimensions of life, but also the needs on earth as well. It is the compassion of Christ that has led the church to provide the most lasting, valuable and selfless efforts of mankind- creating schools, colleges, hospitals, orphanages and much more. Prompted by God's holy justice, efforts to change the world has resulted in the abolition of slavery and child labor and the elevation of women's rights. That is why I find it so amusing when people suggest a complete separation of church and state. Where would our society be without the influence and impact of the church?

Continued on Page 2, Rev. Bob Shepard

UPCOMING EVENTS

• - Mark these dates on your calendar - •



All Valley Worship

(Celebration of Serve Wenatchee Valley's 10th Anniversary)

Sunday August 28, 2011

at Eastmont Baptist Church 400 S. Kentucky

2 Friends Tour

Amy Grant & Michael W. Smith

September 15th, 2011 at 7pm

Tickets available at www.towntoyotacenter.com

Continued from Page 1, Rev. Bob Shepard

The church offers true community, healing and love. What makes the fellowship so valuable is sensing the different types of backgrounds we all have with no logical reason we should be together save the Spirit of God working in our lives. Grace and unconditional love is not found in our society very often, but in the church it abounds.

These are just a few reasons why the church is so important. If space permitted, there are other thoughts that could be added to the list. I am sure we could all agree that being a part of a church is not some quaint thing that people do as they hang on to ancient traditions. Being a part of the church is so important that it caused our Savior to say of her, "the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" Aren't you delighted to be a part of something that is world-changing...that has lasted for two thousand years..that has and continues to make a difference? ... and that together we are the Body of Christ here for our valley.?

2011 Back To School Clothing Giveaway

Nearly 900 children served

Over 300 haircuts

Thousands of cookies

New Shoes

New clothes

Balloons

Crafts

Prayers

Bibles

Knit caps

...and tons of fun for all



Did you know that the food boxes we distribute are intended to provide families with three days worth of meals?

We have five churches that are hosts to our collaborative food pantries- Brethren Baptist (W), Calvary Bible (W), Cornerstone (W), Columbia Grove(EW) and New Song (EW).

Due to the 40% increase of requests for food this year, our food pantries are being depleted on a weekly basis. **The most needed items are cereal, canned fruit, pasta/pasta sauce, tuna, peanut butter and jelly.** Also the funds we use to purchase the perishable food to supplement our food boxes are depleted. Donations made to our food ministry is kept in a separate account and used to keep this ministry operational.

If your church or small group is looking for a project to help our ministry, please consider a food drive to help fill our pantry shelves.

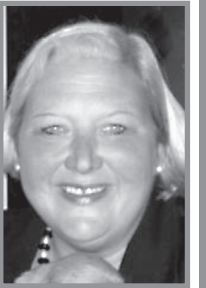
Thank you for your efforts and prayers for this vital ministry in our valley.

Serve Wenatchee Valley Support Update

We continue to feel the pinch of the economic times we live in. We see the signs of the times on the faces of so many who visit our office. Thank you for your prayer and financial support to help us meet the needs of families throughout our valley during these difficult times. Together we have made a difference in the lives of over 6000 families.

	July 2011	Year to Date
Income	\$10,147	\$87,880
Expenses	\$12,952	\$101,807

Gretchen's Prayer Corner



"Let us touch the dying, the poor, the lonely and the unwanted according to the graces we have received and let us not be ashamed or slow to do the humble work." ~Mother Teresa

Recently in Wenatchee while doing a particularly mundane task, a precious, made-in-the-Image of God individual, began speaking to me of the true difficulties (actually, way beyond difficulties) that she is currently facing. Although my "answer bucket" was empty, I do believe that what she actually craved was the bear-hug that I could easily give, and the ear to listen. Love truly covers much. I used to think that love is extremely costly. I still do, because it is! To make the meal and then to serve it with great joy when one longs to sit; to care for all three children under the age of four when one needs to sleep; to support the family, serving, working seemingly night and day, all of the while experiencing chronic disease and pain - these are all evidences of costly love indeed. But, what if **NOT loving** is actually more costly than **loving**??? It is obvious to us that in not loving it is costly for the one not receiving the necessary love. But, may I submit that perhaps the one most desperate, the one perhaps bearing the most cost is the one who **needs to love**, but chooses to withhold, opting for the more "comfortable path". Yes, I do believe that to hold - back when able or Graced to give love, **is the most costly approach for and of all.**

A very long time ago I caught just one segment of a news clip where Mother Teresa was being interviewed by a reporter. With Lebanon bombed out, Mother Teresa was being filmed carrying a three, perhaps four year old little boy - actually a child with hydrocephaly; a little boy with an extraordinarily enlarged head - out of rubble that had been an orphanage. The woman reporter interviewing Mother Teresa, herself dressed impeccably contrasting the rubble-piles, was desperate to seek an interview with the petite woman. As Mother Teresa looks only at the child in her arms, with palpable, piercing, penetrating love, she quietly answers only one question that the interviewer asks. The question: "Mother Teresa, **HOW do you do this????** You are amazing..... etc. etc...." With eyes riveted only on the beautiful human in her arms, the small woman quietly answers: **"ANYONE CAN DO THIS."**

Impacting. Life Altering. Truly, anyone can love.

But, then aren't these our Lord's words, eternal words of life found in the Gospel of Matthew 10:39?: *'He that finds his life shall lose it: and he that loses his life for my sake shall find it.'*

As you are reading these words, my husband and I are actually 10,000 or so miles away in Africa. (I promised my friends at Serve Wenatchee Valley that this article would be done before getting on the plane!!) The plans for Africa that we were told about prior to leaving include seeing 1,500 people per day in Medical Camps outside of two large slums in Nairobi, being a part of the feeding programs, working with the DANSO Widows - (short for: Dandora Aids Neighborhood Support Organization), and seeing and praying with each of the young men and boys of the Shikusa Boys Prison. So, you see! Anybody, Anyone can do this!!

I also know that while I am away, our own precious Back to School Giveaway through Serve Wenatchee Valley will be affording tremendous opportunities to give away Father's Love by the many Serve Volunteers in, and then to our own community. And, you dear Reader, may be one of these.

Costly to love? Sure. More costly not to love?? I believe so.

Until next month, let's Agape like there's no tomorrow!! Gretchen.