



The Christian Index

June 7, 2017 | Reaching the World Through Mission Georgia | www.christianindex.org

Clarkston International approves NAMB partnership, 70-0

By Joe Westbury
Managing Editor

CLARKSTON — After just three months of exploratory meetings that will forever change the future of Clarkston International Bible Church, the congregation voted 77-0 to enter into a partnership with the North American Mission Board.

The vote came May 7 on the heels of a joint worship service celebrating the eight congregations that comprise the growing network of ethnic congregations in Atlanta's nationally recognized refugee and immigrant community. The congregation has been featured in the Wall Street Journal and New York Times, among other publications, for its outreach.

The Clarkston mother congregation has 150 members and averages 120 in regular morning worship, but the packed joint service was held in the gym. At the conclusion of the service, members of the church adjourned to the standing room only dining hall to cast their votes.

"This is an historic moment for our congregation to partner with NAMB as its first church-based Send Relief hub. We are excited and expectant concerning what God has in store for us next," said Pastor Trent DeLoach after the vote.

DeLoach and the church's task force conducted at least seven question-and-answer sessions over the past 12 weeks to communicate the ramifications of the partnership. The vote came exactly three months to the day after NAMB trustees, meeting in Ontario, CA, on Feb. 7 gave the green light to the



Clarkston International Bible Church pastor **Trent DeLoach**, gesturing in the upper left, explains voting instructions to the congregation gathered in the dining hall. JOE WESTBURY/Index

proposal.

"Our task force did an incredible job of reading every detail in the Asset Purchase Agreement proposing the partnership. Essentially, NAMB will purchase our property for \$1 and assume certain obligations and responsibilities. We, in turn, we will write them a \$1 check each year for use of the buildings," he noted.

An architectural review will most likely result in significant improvements to make the complex more efficient. As a result, NAMB will promote the church as a national training center for congregations desiring to know more about how to minister in a diverse community.

First of two national partnerships for mercy/compassion ministry hubs

The agreement is the first of two being introduced by the Alpharetta-based agency.

Others, with different but just as unique ministries, will be added later pending similar affirmations as occurred in Clarkston today.

A second site in Ashland, KY, is under consideration and will serve the Appalachia Region.

Clarkson congregation on solid financial footing, debt free

DeLoach noted that the church is on sound financial footing, is debt free, and was not motivated by a weak balance sheet. The partnership will accelerate what the congregation is already doing but expand those options, such as providing one- or two-day seminars, more in-depth four-or-five-day total immersions for short-term teams, and even longer summer or six-month internships.

In addition to continuing to serve as pastor, DeLoach will gain NAMB missionary status and serve as director

of the hub.

During today's joint worship service, Georgia Baptist Mission Board State Missionary Jerry Baker brought the sermon and detailed the contributions refugees and immigrants have made to the nation. The former Clarkston resident, who now lives in Lawrenceville, noted that Georgia has the nation's ninth largest immigrant population and Atlanta has the nation's ninth largest metropolitan area.

He also noted that 105 million of the world's 214 million immigrant and refugees are Christians.

"Few people realize that nearly half of the world's immigrants and refugees are fellow believers who are bringing a spiritual dimension to the communities wherever they settle. Statistics also reveal that 74 percent of the immigrants coming to the United States are Christians and 5 percent are Muslim," he stated.

Another interesting fact is that for the first time in 1,000 years, there are more Christians living below the equator than who live above it. The center of Christianity has now moved from Europe to South and Central America, Baker explained.

Baker acknowledged the sacrifice those in the room have made by pulling up roots and moving to another country. Starting a life over from scratch is something few families have endured.

"God has blessed you in order for you to bless others. May the blessing continue," he concluded.

Macland Baptist is reaching students through FCA partnership

By Gerald Harris
Editor

Georgia Baptists are intent, resolved, and determined, with the help of God's Spirit, to reach the next generation for Christ.

In fact, you may have heard about U2019. It is the Georgia Baptist Mission Board's initiative to assist churches in reaching students for Christ.

Current statistics show we are reaching fewer students now than in years past. We must renew our efforts to reach today's students, because we are faced with the stark reality of losing an entire generation for Christ if we fail to claim them for the cause of the Kingdom now.

Richard Walker, pastor of Macland Baptist Church, has found an effective way to reach teenagers. He is partnering with the Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA) to touch the lives of middle school and high school students in and around Powder Springs.

FCA student clubs have access to public schools, because they are protected by the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution and the Equal Access Act, passed by Congress in 1984. The EAA puts religious clubs on an equal footing with all other students clubs by allowing them the same privileges and access to school facilities that other recognized clubs enjoy.

Building meaningful relationships

The schools being impacted by Macland include Hillgrove High School,

McEachern High School, Lovinggood Middle School and Dobbins Middle School.

During the football season Macland Baptist often feeds the football teams from Hillgrove and McEachern

is trying to be that kind of ministering church."

Macland Baptist also purchases advertisements in the schools' football programs and is now beginning to see that the church's investment

ed, "We have access to the school and invited the football team to our wild game dinner recently. Many members of the team came to the dinner where the Gospel was presented."

The students enrolled in the camps go through a regimen of drills, have meaningful practice sessions, and develop a greater knowledge of the coaches' expectations. But, they also have a strong spiritual emphasis and a time of worship each evening with a speaker to whom they can relate. Each year, according to Pope there are 400-500 commitments to Christ, many of them professions of faith.

Progress through partnership

Cody Carter, a member of Macland Baptist who also serves with the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, indicated that last year the number of commitments to Christ at the camp was incredible, that three lecture rooms were filled with students receiving counseling after the first day's worship time and call to commitment.

Who do you think will follow up on those players and coaches from Hillgrove and McEachern who make decisions for Christ? It is most likely to be Macland, because of the partnerships they have established and the relationships they have already developed with the athletic teams.

If we are going to reach this next generation we need to do whatever is necessary to get the job done.



Standing left to right are FCA representative in the Atlanta/West Cobb Area **Cody Carter**, Macland Baptist Church Pastor **Richard Walker**, Pebblebrook High School football coach **Kevin Saunders**, and FCA Coaches Ministry Director for West Cobb **Scott Pope**. Macland Baptist Church's partnership with FCA has led to inroads of reaching local high school students with the Gospel. MACLAND BAPTIST/Special

high schools prior to their games. John Thompson, student minister at Macland, and a group of volunteers he has mobilized have made significant inroads into the schools by simply demonstrating the love of Christ through service.

"There are situations all around us that can help us build meaningful relationships to the school's administration, faculty, and stu-

of time and service in the schools are beginning to reap a beautiful harvest.

Speaking their language

Thompson, a U.S. military veteran who was awarded a Purple Heart for his service in Iraq, and other members of Macland have had the opportunity of speaking to some of the FCA groups in the schools.

Last fall Macland Baptist

"The church is the best place to find help and hope in a time of crisis. Our church is trying to be that kind of ministering church."

John Thompson,
Student minister at Macland

dents," Thompson explains. "The church is the best place to find help and hope in a time of crisis. Our church

Church was recognized at one of the Hillgrove football games for their support of the school. Walker stat-

See more
inspirational stories
online at
christianindex.org

A twelve-step program for your church (Part I)

A recent Barna survey says that more than 8 million 20-somethings have given up on church or Christianity. Perhaps it is because Millennials cannot tolerate hypocrisy and they have seen too much of it in the church. They do not want us to talk about the Bible; they want us to live it. They don't want us to talk about change; they want to engage in the kind of Christianity that actually changes the world.

Martha Jean and I have a granddaughter, Brinley, who has taken pictures and even written for The Christian Index. She went to Ghana West Africa for her spring break to minister to some of the poorest of the poor.

She is graduating from high school this year. Actually, she is not walking across the stage to get her diploma, because she is leaving Georgia before the graduation exercise to work in a Christian camp in California for the summer. She will get back home in time to repack her bags and head out to Santiago, Dominican Republic, where she will serve Christ in an orphanage for almost a year.

I think all of our ten grandchildren and the generation coming behind us are looking for authenticity and genuineness in our worship and our witness.

Having been in ministry for more than 56 years, including 41 years as a pastor, I admit I am somewhat of a relic, old-school, traditional. But I would like to share some factors I believe will contribute to a growing, effective church in any age or generation. These 12 steps to growing an effective church will be presented in three consecutive editorials.

We will begin with

the first four factors, or elements, to an effective church. They are not listed in terms of priority, because all are vitally important.

1. Every church must have a vision from above.

In Proverbs 29:18 the Bible says, "Where there is no vision, the people perish." If the negative is true, the positive must also be true – "Where there is vision, the people flourish."

I have always been a dreamer. No one ever did what he did not plan to do and he never planned to do what he did not dream. Vision always hopes for something better, always expects it, and always believes it will happen. Pastors, ask God to give you a vision from above for your church.

2. Every church must maintain a high standard of holiness.

I don't think a church can be what God wants it to be unless Jesus Christ is the head of the church and He exercises His lordship through godly leaders. The world is looking for the church to be different from the country club, the educational society, the civic club, or the fraternity or sorority. Adrian Rogers has stated, "The child of God and the church should stand out in the dark world like a diamond in a coal mine."

Today's younger generation is looking for authenticity. If a church preaches one thing to the world and lives contrary to that message before the world it creates a dichotomy in the church and loses its credibility in the world. I Peter 4:17 says that "judgment must begin in the house of God." If immorality is totally unacceptable to

God, there must be an affirmation of the standard of holiness in order to preserve, strengthen, and empower the church.

3. Every church must maintain an emphasis on prayer.

Jesus said, "My house shall be called a house of prayer." There is nothing of eternal consequence accomplished apart from prayer. The only thing the devil fears on this earth is the Christian who knows how to pray. Prayer tips the scales in favor of blessing, good, righteousness, and truth.

A.C. Dixon stated, "When we rely upon organization, we get what organization can do; when we rely upon education, we get what education can do; when we rely upon eloquence, we get what eloquence can do; but when we rely upon prayer, we get what God can do."

4. Every church must maintain an emphasis on an intense loving spirit.

Years ago I read a book by Jess Moody titled *A Drink at Joel's Place*. He anticipated the seeker-friendly church by 30 years in the way he calls on believers to welcome guests into the Bible study and worship services. Joel's Place, as I recall, was a bar, and Moody said, "People can often find more friendship and hospitality at the local bar or tavern than in the local church."

However, love is not just a warm handshake, a warm fuzzy feeling, or a spiritual goose bump. Christ's love is self-sacrificial service. Churches that are known for conflict, antagonistic spirits, and exclusive fellowships are as helpful to God's church as an aspirin dispensary in a leper colony.



J. Gerald Harris
Editor

However, churches that give evidence they prefer others above themselves will grow. Let guests and the handicapped have the best parking places. Invite the stranger(s) to your worship experience to go out to lunch with you and your family. Find out how you can pray for those who are in your church whether they are members or guests. Go the second mile to express your love.

Part 2 will appear in the July 5 issue of this PDF download.

Twelve-Step PLAN

First 4 Steps:

1. Every church must have a vision from above.

2. Every church must maintain a high standard of holiness.

3. Every church must maintain an emphasis on prayer.

4. Every church must maintain an emphasis on an intense loving spirit.

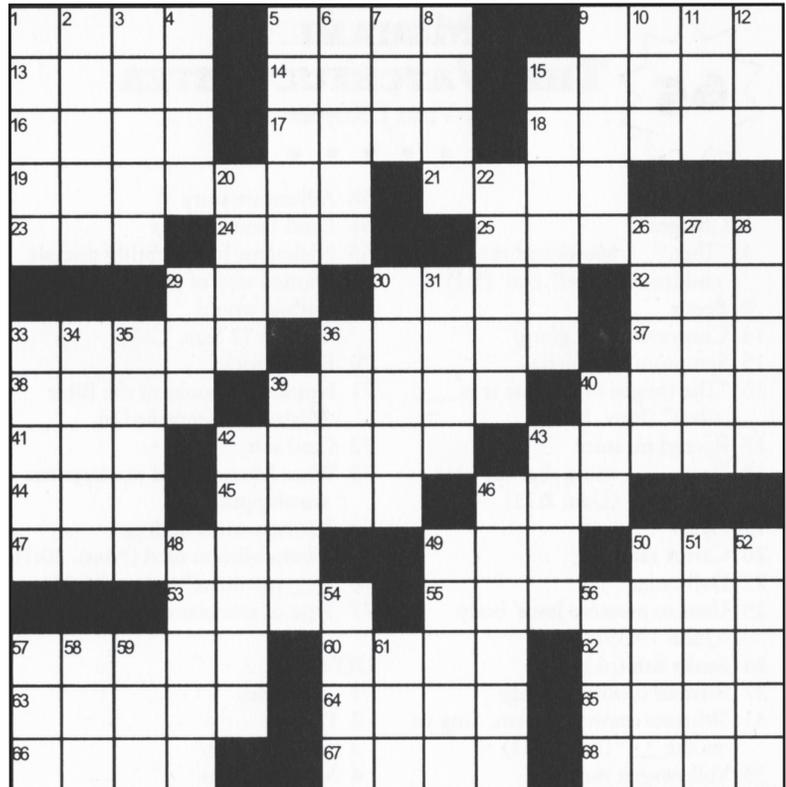
ACROSS

1. Samaria was one Micah prophesied against
5. “___ye, O mountains” (Mic. 6:2)
9. “I ___, I shall arise (Mic. 7:8)
13. Commentators note Micah uses these throughout his prophesies.
14. Harvard’s rival
15. Organized crime
16. Alcoholic brews
17. Epochs
18. How rainbows are shaped
19. “The ___ of Jacob” (Mic. 5:8)
21. Time in office
23. “___ the spirits” (I John 4:1)
24. Morse code dash
25. Abraham’s was Sarah
29. Butane
30. Joseph’s brothers were ___ to him (Gen. 37:23-24)
32. Before (prefix)
33. Saul’s was too big for David (1 Sam. 17:38-39) (var.)
36. Ezekiel’s valley of bones must have been this (Ezek. 37:7)
37. Jesus” was thirty when he began his public ministry (Luke 3:23)
38. “What is ___” (Mic. 6:8)
39. A righteous person’s prayer will ___ much (James 5:16)
40. Possible vessel Samaritan woman left at the well (John 4:28)
41. Samson had strong ones (Judg. 16:29-30) (abbr.)
42. Prophets like Micah did not deliver this kind of message

43. “Thou shalt no more worship the work of thine ___” (Mic. 5:13)
44. Ball holder
45. “Aaron, after application of Ps. 133:2’s ointment.
46. “They hunt every man his brother with a ___” (Mic. 7:2)
47. English class assignments
49. “Ten thousands of rivers of ___?” (Mic. 6:7)
50. School group
53. Pushed with the foot
55. Naaman’s ailment (2 Kings 5:1)
57. A Spartan slave
60. Little Mermaid’s love
62. Micah compared his mourning to sound of these birds (Mic. 1:8)
63. The Roman Coliseum is one
64. “The Lord require of thee...___ mercy” (Mic. 6:8)
65. Plateau
66. “Unto the ___ of Jerusalem” (Mic. 1:12)
67. The wicked will drink this from the Lord’s cup of wine (Ps. 75:8)
68. “Hear, I ___ you” (Mic. 3:1)

DOWN

1. “The Lord hath set ___ him that is godly for himself” (Ps. 4:3)
2. Micah prophesied a ___ from Bethlehem (Mic. 5:2)
3. “People is risen up as an ___” (Mic. 2:8)
4. Organization (abbr.)
5. Laughing dogs



6. “Now shall he be great unto the end of the ___” (Mic. 5:4)
7. Pie ___ mode (2 wds.)
8. “Not you ___” (Mic. 2:10)
9. Boaz ___ wheat and barley (Ruth 2:23)
10. Football assn.
11. Micah said even people who do this are hailed as prophets (Mic. 2:11)
12. Samuel was one when God called him (1 Sam. 3:8)
15. Leatherneck
20. Twelfth Jewish month (Est. 9:1)
22. Electronic messages
26. Produce eggs
27. Micah ___ God’s people to return to Him (Mic. 6:9)
28. “Then shall the ___ be ashamed” (Mic. 3:7)
29. “Walk humbly with thy ___?” (Mic. 6:8)
30. Isaac and Esau like ___ food (Gen. 25:28)
31. Canal
33. Syria traded this in the markets of Tyre (Ezek. 27:16)
34. “Scribes, which desire to walk in long ___” (Luke 20:46)
35. Micah reminded God’s people, “I sent before thee ___, Aaron, and Miriam” (Mic. 6:4)
36. “Woe to them that devise iniquity, and work ___ upon their beds!” (Mic. 2:1)
39. “___ and thresh, O daughter of Zion” (Mic. 4:13)
40. Micah to God’s people: “Thou shalt ___, but not be satisfied” (Mic. 6:14)
42. Japanese auto maker
43. God called Micah to ___, not hurt, His people (Mic. 6:9)
46. Sister’s daughters
48. God’s desire is for people to ___ for their sins (Mic. 6:8)
49. Psalm 128 likens children to “___ plants round about thy table” (Ps. 128:3)
50. Micah was “full of ___ by the spirit of the Lord” (Mic. 3:8)
51. Oklahoma city
52. Analyze properties
54. Small wooded valley
56. Sport
57. Old woman in fairy tales
58. Epoch
59. “___ the Lord God be witness against you” (Mic. 1:2)
61. Ashael was as light-footed as one (2 Sam. 2:18)

