

Acts of Faith



Spring 2010

"Your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity (love) of every one of you toward each other aboundeth." II Thes. 1:3

Pastor Jim Christian

by Joe Kadtko



Pastor Jim Christian is an easy going kind of person whom we all embrace as a man of wisdom and insight who teaches the practical application of the Word of God. When you get to know him, you find a true pastoral spirit. His love for the folks here at Faith Baptist Church is obvious. We are blessed and privileged to call him our Pastor as he shares the co-pastorate with our other man of God, Pastor George Nichols.

Jim was born in Wilmington General Hospital right here in Delaware. As a child, he lived in Vilone Village in Elsmere. He attended Oak Grove School through junior high where he participated in basketball, baseball, and soccer. He also played the oboe in the concert band and sang in the school choir. In high school Jim kept himself busy with two years of football, the student newspaper, and school music activities. He attended First Baptist Church of Elsmere with his family

In high school, God brought a new pastor to the church. His name was Dick Sparling. Pastor Sparling was a man who had a heart for young people and he took Jim under his wing. It was the little things that this pastor did that had a great affect on Jim as a young man seeking to know God's plan. Pastor Sparling took him on visitation and gave him opportunities to minister. They spent a lot of time together. "It was his passion for Christ and for people that most affected me. He directed me to Northeastern Bible Institute where he had studied. "I am thankful for this man who invested his time in me," Jim told me. Although Pastor Sparling was only at the church for two plus years, he was the person that God used to strike in him a call to serve the Lord.

After high school, Jim answered the call to attend Northeastern Bible Institute in Essex Fells, New Jersey. He majored in Bible Missions and continued to play soccer and

basketball. He was involved in the choir and traveled for the school for four years with a quartet. After graduation in May 1968, he began to date a young lady that caught his eye. Her name was Gail Lincoln. She was the dean's daughter. Jim continued his education at Northeastern and relationship with Gail. He graduated in May 1969 with a second degree and two weeks later he and Gail were married. From 1969 - 1974, Jim served at the college as Director of Athletics. He coached soccer and basketball and also served as the Dean of Men. In addition, he pastored part time at First Baptist Church of Millburn, N.J..

Pastor Jim and Gail began their ministry at Faith in 1974. It was in 1979, during a missions' conference right here at Faith, that both Jim and Gail understood a clear calling to missions. Thanks to the overwhelming support of the people of Faith Baptist and others, Jim and Gail were appointed by ABWE in 1980; they started language school in 1981 and left for Chile in July of 1982. Their ministry in Chile was very fruitful, working in church planting, education and leadership training in ABWE's Bible Institute and MK school. After sixteen years of faithful service in Chile, the Lord called the Christian family back to Wilmington where they now serve here at Faith.

Pastor Jim sees his main goal now as helping God's people know who they are in Christ, what they have in Christ, and how they can have a Christ centered impact in the world in which we live. He shared these thoughts with me. "I have learned more from folks than I could ever offer. It is a privilege to serve such loving people." "As our senior pastoral staff gets older, I feel the need to help the people of Faith Baptist Church prepare for the inevitable transition in leadership. This loving congregation must be prayerful with their hearts fixed upon the Word of God as we prepare for the future."

"I consider it an honor to serve at Faith Baptist Church. The people here have supported my family for many years and have even allowed us to continue involvement in missions in South America with ABWE."

But this writer believes that we are the ones who are privileged and honored to have had Pastor Jim and Gail Christian among us for so many years.

Grace Mission to Haiti



The land of Haiti has only recently become very well known. Prior to the earthquake, most people could not have told you that this country actually shares the island of Hispaniola with the Dominican Republic, centrally located in the Caribbean. Haiti, once called the "Pearl of the Antilles", is approximately the size of the State of Maryland in land mass, but is vastly different from its neighboring country. Haiti does not have the lush green vegetation covering its mountains due to the destruction of the forest centuries ago when all of the mahogany was stripped from the hills to be used for furniture and ornamentation by the French, who occupied the country during that time. Haiti is the world's oldest black republic and the second-oldest republic in the Western Hemisphere, after the United States. Voodoo practices had been a lifestyle accepted by most of the population. The eventual influx of missionaries bringing protestant and catholic beliefs to Haiti resulted in voodoo practices infiltrating those religions to varying extents.

Elections in 1957 brought to power Dr Francis Duvalier, a country physician, who subsequently presided over a brutal dictatorship style of governing. With the help of his secret militia known as the Tontons Macoutes (the Creole phrase for 'bogeymen'), political dissenters were systematically eliminated by jailing or murdering the opponents. The traditional Voodoo religion was widely abused in order to intimidate critics. Duvalier (commonly known as 'Papa Doc') died in 1971, handing the leadership over to his son Jean Claude ('Baby Doc') who ruled the country for the next 15 years in the same manner as his father. Despite the constant attention of the Tontons, political opposition continued to grow, particularly within the army. In the spring of 1986, these elements finally turned against the regime and "Baby Doc" was forced to flee to France.

My first view of Haiti was in 1970, when I flew into the airport in Port-Au Prince, in a US Navy C-54 transport/cargo plane. The flight from the Naval Air Station at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba to Haiti was considered an eight-hour R & R for sailors. Several of us rented a cab and toured Port-Au-Prince and the surrounding area. The downtown area appeared to be prosper-

ous, with street vendors and an open-air market providing for the sale of vegetables, fly covered fish, and a limited offering of house wares. The streets were neat and clean with white painted curbs adjacent to the sidewalks along streets with names like Delmas Street and Harry Truman Boulevard. The observations of young navy petty officers revealed the fact that the average man/woman on the street had a sub standard level of living compared to what we experienced back in the United States. Later we understood that the orderly streets and comfort level we felt was due to the fact that Papa Doc maintained that atmosphere through his personal police, which were seen on the streets wearing sunglasses, black cowboy style hats and red scarves. They could be seen openly carrying a variety of weapons in an intimidating manner.

My next visit did not take place until 1985 when a group of men from FBC traveled to Haiti under the auspices of Grace Mission to Haiti (GMTH), a mission organization that planted churches and schools. Additionally GMTH provided medical support to the Haitian people through clinics that were temporarily set up in the churches and schools in the general area of Port-Au-Prince and Carrfour. There were however, some remote sites and one of them was located in a very mountainous area west of the capital city. In the area, know as Palmistivan, our team project for the week was to build a classroom that would connect to the last classroom built by the previous team that had traveled there from the USA. A week in this remote mountain area exposed us to voodoo rituals taking place in the middle of the night, outside the church building in which we were sleeping. With the prayers of many there and back home, the Lord kept us safe. Nightly revival services were held at this mountain church. Those evening service revealed to us the truly worshipful attitude the Christians in Haiti had for our Wonderful Savior. This "mountain top" experience allowed us to encounter life in a tropical, dusty climate



without a bath or shower for a week. Ted Megonigal and myself are the only remaining members of FBC that went on that first and very exciting trip.

All subsequent trips to Haiti since that time have revealed the fact that the country declined rapidly without the civil order maintained through the dictatorship. Water and electricity have become less reliable as time has passed. Street crime has increased dramatically over the years, to the point that some of the

GMTH teams in the field have

been robbed. One a trip approximately tens

years ago a team member from FBC,

Bob Syme, had a watch ripped from

his arm in Port-Au-Prince. On the

same trip bandits attempted to steal

medical supplies from the top of our vehicle as we

slowly traveled through a market area. The increase in crime is a direct result of the continuously deteriorating economic conditions, lack of food, and the inability of local policing to keep the problem in check.



The recent earthquake did catastrophic damage and caused major loss of life in the epicenter and surrounding areas. The 28 GMTH churches and associated schools have reported damage that ranges from minimal to total destruction. Pastor Beril, his wife, Louise and all other GMTH pastors are in good health. They are however being strained to over capacity as they attempt to meet the needs of their respective church members who have had family members killed, homes destroyed, with most left with very little or no resources such as food and water. A country that was lacking all of the basic infrastructure and civil authority now finds itself being rescued by relief agencies and governments from around the world. FBC members have been very generous in providing a donation of over \$5,000 to GMTH for Haiti relief. This combined with the offerings of churches that provide the base of GMTH support will realize approximately \$80,000 to \$100,000 that will be going to GMTH needs over the next few weeks. God's people are generous, and for that, the people of Haiti are forever grateful.



Yes, Josh Day is one of our many skilled piano players, but most Faith Baptist people know that Josh's skills go "beyond" to quite a number of other instruments.

He was born in Seaford, Delaware. Later the family moved to Hockessin, where Josh became a student at H.B. DuPont Middle School. When a

fifth grader, he became interested in the trumpet, his first instrument. He

played in school from then on, and on to John Dickinson High School. He played trumpet in the Marching Band and was selected drum major in his senior year. The highlights of his Dickinson years were spending his senior year singing in Joe Hocking's choir and taking theory class from Mr. Hocking and another teacher, Sheila Cassidy. Josh appreciates these instructions as the greatest strength of his musical career. His interests began focusing on piano, which he explored on his own, having fun learning to play by ear. Other instruments got his attention: the Clark Tin Whistle, and many varied flutes. On a trip to Hawaii he began purchasing flutes from other cultures. He now has a collection of ten.

After high school, Josh entered the Art Institute of Philadelphia, graduating in 2003 with his degree in Multi Media and Web Design.

Josh's first visit to Faith Baptist Church was in November of 1999. Thankfully, he continued coming, being drawn to receive Jesus as his Savior in 2000. It has been a great joy to our congregation to see his growth! He is a faithful, valuable, super bass member of our choir.

An aunt and uncle invited him to a concert at their church, where he listened to a performance on the dulcimer. Know what he wanted to do after that? Of course, he borrowed one and learned to play it. He bought his own hammered dulcimer in 2005. Every time we hear him play it, he surprises us with increasing skill.

Much of his attention now is toward his lovely, soon to be bride, Jocelyn Lorenz. Their plan is to become Mr. and Mrs. Joshua Day on May 15. Let's support this sweet couple in prayer and praise for the special ministries, which Josh enjoys doing for God.



"Uncle Sam wants you!" The familiar but stern profile of a bearded gentleman in top hat and coattails extends an invitation to join the military and protect and defend this country. For a number of families at Faith Baptist, that patriotic symbol of Uncle Sam holds special meaning--their loved ones have answered the call with "Yes!" Though some veterans in the pews can remember combat in WWII, the Korean War, and Viet Nam, a younger crew, representing the Army, Navy, and Marine Corps, among others, now protect our freedom in a variety of ways.

Jonathan Wojack, son of Tom and LaVerne, began his military career in 2006, when he enlisted in the Army as a signals collector/analyst. After Basic Combat Training in South Carolina, he headed to Florida and then Arizona for Advanced Individual Training in his area of specialty: military intelligence.



August of 2007 found him at his first duty station in Germany. Field training exercises there and later in Wales occupied his time, in addition to responsibilities as company armorer, a job which involved keeping track of and maintaining the weapons. Though his assignment required long hours, Jonathan took advantage of opportunities to travel in his spare moments, visiting the concentration camp of Dachau and then venturing outside Germany's borders to Oslo, Prague, Reykjavik, and London.

Purchasing a new Ford Escape in Germany in August 2009 enabled Jonathan to reach his next assignment in North Yorkshire, England, in comfort and to tour Luxembourg, Belgium, and France along the way. In November of that year, he received a promotion to the rank of sergeant. He continues to do computer research for Uncle Sam in England and is taking correspondence courses toward a degree in computer science through the University of Maryland.

Within twenty-four hours of hanging up their McKean caps and gowns in 2005, Brandon and Brad Eliason headed to boot camp at Parris Island, South Carolina, for 13 weeks of intensive "roughing it." Brandon's first years with the Marine Corps were devoted to survival skills: Marine Combat Training in North Carolina, Naval Aircrew Candidate School in Florida, and SERE (a cold weather survival course) in Maine. By 2006, he was immersed in the MV-22B Osprey Mechanics Course in North Carolina, eventually earning the Honor Grad title.



During his certification and service as a flight crewchief on the Osprey, (a combination fixed wing/helicopter aircraft), Brandon enjoyed becoming a lead instructor and teaching others critical skills in night systems, low altitude, and confined area landings. By 2008, he had earned the rank of sergeant and was a journeyman instructor at the New River, North Carolina airbase. In 2009, he participated in an academic preparatory program at Quantico, Virginia, to gear up for fall studies at Penn State University. Now in the ROTC program there, he majors in business and fulfills Marine responsibilities as a guide and squadron leader.

As a Marine Reservist, Brad returned from boot camp and transitioned to college life at UD. One weekend a month, he donned his "cammies" (camouflage) and reported for duty with Company Bravo in the Bulk Fuel unit at the Kirkwood Highway Marine Corps Naval Reserve Center. In the summer of 2006, Brad attended the Marine Corps Officer Candidate School (OCS) for six weeks at Quantico. In 2008, he participated in Marine Combat Training and then continued with specialized bulk fuel training in Virginia. By June of 2009, Brad was switched to active duty. He learned to maneuver 7-ton trucks and drive Humvees in preparation for his assignment in Iraq and then was promoted to corporal just before his departure in October. Assigned to the Motor T unit near Baghdad, he participated in convoys that scouted the region for insurgents and IEDs. Just before Christmas, Brad returned home and now serves full time at the Kirkwood unit.

Each of these young men has contributed in a unique way to the preservation of the liberties we enjoy in America. Uncle Sam, along with Faith Baptist Church, says "Thank You!"