

A PUBLICATION OF EVANGELICAL FRIENDS CHURCH MID AMERICA

## HOPE IN THE MIDDLE OF CRISIS

Just over a year ago, this country received the invoice, due and payable, for its years of overspending and excessive debt. Millions have lost jobs and many now live in fear that we are beginning what might turn out to be a rerun of the "Great Depression."

Looking at the approaching Advent Season and Year-End Inventories, it seems to me that leaders must become "Dealers in Hope." I want to give you some handles for hope as we move forward.

This may well be an exciting time when it comes to the advance of God's Kingdom. During a previous steep recession (1973-1976) we saw the beginnings of some of the greatest churches and ministries in America. Willow Creek Church near Chicago began in 1975. So were the Vineyard and Calvary Chapel movements. A few years later during the 1979-1983 recession, Saddleback Church began. Down economic times have frequently been up times for the Kingdom of God. This is not a time to fear, but to hope, and to anticipate what God will do in our time. Did you know that charitable giving (including church giving) did not decline during the Great Depression? Again, down times can be up time for God's work.

I know that it will be a temptation to stop tithing. It will be a temptation to re-trench or at least to not move forward in generosity. I urge you to resist that temptation, and to trust in God. There will be a special temptation to reduce giving in anticipation of what might happen—not because our income has actually declined. Please don't give in to that temptation to sin. It really is sin because it's a temptation to stop trusting in God to provide for now and for the future. It breaks the principle of living on what God's provided, and giving at least 10% of income to kingdom causes. (See Malachi 3:8.)

While none of us would have wished for this time of difficulty, there is an opportunity for us, as God's people, to model to the world that our faith is not just a 'sunny day faith.' Throughout the ages, it has been during times of crisis that God's people have had the most impact. Let me challenge you to model with your life and lips by:

- Being a person of generosity while others are hoarding (John 3:16);
- Being consistent in faith while others are fearing (2 Timothy 1:7);
- Showing great love and concern for your friends and inviting them with you to church so they too can find hope (1 Peter 2:12).

Remember 2 Timothy 1:7: "For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline." Jesus repeatedly reminded us to "Fear not!" This is a time to shine like beacons of HOPE in the midst of darkness.



David J. Robinson,  
General Superintendent



### **LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE-NORTH**

The December session of the Church Leadership Institute for Ministry-North will be Monday, December 7 at 6:00 p.m. at University Friends Church. In track 1, Jesse Penna will teach the course "Spiritual Formation and Spiritual Direction". This session will be focused on the Inward Spiritual Disciplines of Meditation, Prayer, Fasting, and Study and the Outward Spiritual Disciplines of Simplicity and Solitude. In track 2, David Davenport from Friends Community Church in Angleton, TX will lead the discussion, "Leading a Healthy Church", speaking from his many years of experience as a Friends Pastor and Church Planter. For the first time ever, the Institute North and Institute South will have a combined session through the internet, with live interaction. The January session will be Monday, January 4.

### **CAMP QUAKER HAVEN**

With \$12,000 donated from Hutchinson Friends Church in November, Camp Quaker Haven now has all the funds necessary to purchase the remainder of the 17 Dining Hall tables and 134 cabin bunk mattresses needed. Thanks to everyone who donated towards Extreme Camp Makeover as well as to these specific projects!

### **RUN FOR MISSIONS**

The second annual Run for Missions was held October 26-27. This is a 100 mile run from the Ministry Center in Wichita to Barclay College in Haviland, KS to raise money for the mission's student scholarship fund. See the blog at [www.run4missions.blogspot.com](http://www.run4missions.blogspot.com) where you can see a full report and pictures from the 2009 Run. The goal is to raise \$25,000 by the end of the year. As of late November, more than \$17,000 has already been pledged! Please contact Adam Monaghan at the Ministry Center to make your pledge.

### **SALTSHAKER**

Saltshaker 2010 will be going to the EFM mission based in Manila, Philippines, June 24-July 12. Saltshaker is an advanced missions trip experience for High School and College students. Applications with a \$150 deposit are due January 15. See more information at [friendsyouth.com](http://friendsyouth.com).

### **BANGLADESH**

You are invited to a mission trip to Bangladesh, February 11-20, 2010. This is an opportunity to give much-needed encouragement to one of EFM's younger missions and to persecuted Christians in Bangladesh. See [friendsyouth.com](http://friendsyouth.com) for more information.

### **FRIENDS STUDENT CONFERENCE**

Friends Student Conference 2009 will be held at the Hyatt Regency Wichita, December 28-January 1. The theme this year for FSC is "Share Your Story". Gracia Burnham, Tommy Oaks, Eric Samuel Timm, Dr. Tim Anstine, and many others will be featured at FSC, which is for Jr. High, Sr. High, and College students. The cost is \$260, with a \$160 deposit by December 2. You can see details and register at [friendsyouth.com](http://friendsyouth.com).

### **MID AMERICA CHURCH PLANTING NEWS**

**Crossroads Friends Church** in Wichita, KS is excited to announce their first full-time Lead Pastor, David Norman, who began serving at Crossroads on November 1<sup>st</sup>. Jeff Mullen will continue to serve in an associate pastor role. **Southeast Community Friends Church** in Wichita, KS celebrated their First Anniversary as a church on Sunday, November 15. Alfred Lugalía continues to serve as the Pastor for this new church.

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