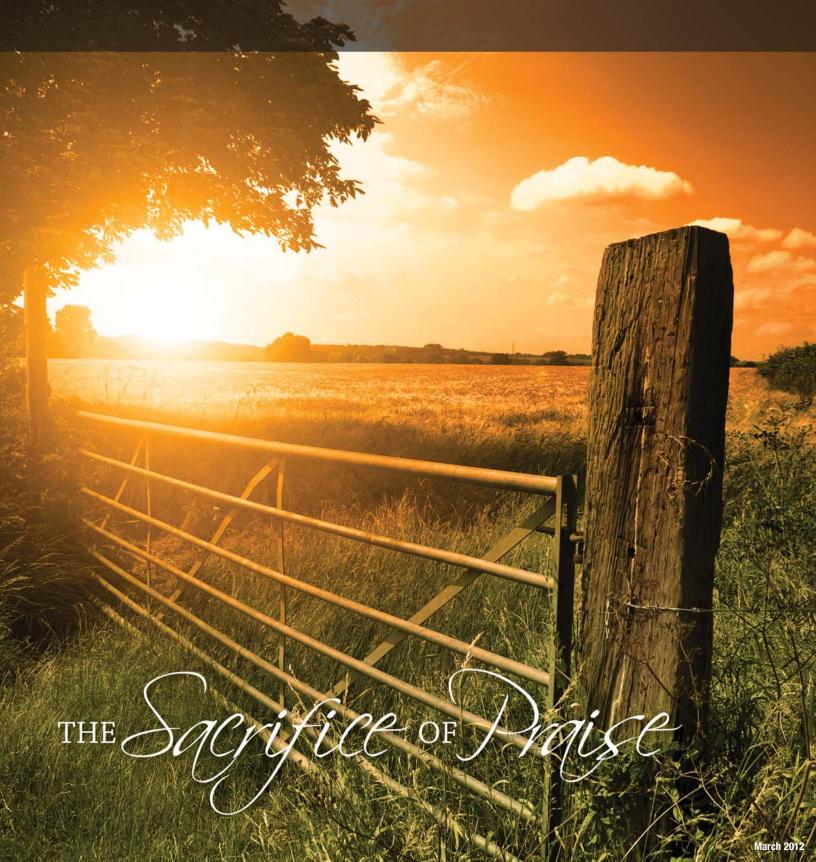
STANDARD





A genealogy, a goat and forgiveness

Have you ever slowly read through the genealogy of Jesus in the gospel account of Matthew? Once you get beyond all of the difficult names to pronounce and the fact that it looks like an ancient Jewish phonebook, there are some really interesting stories that can discovered. One story that intrigues me is the story of Judah.

Now Judah's famous brother was Joseph. Many people know something of the story of Joseph. Not very many people know the story of Judah, and yet as we read the genealogy that leads to Jesus, Joseph isn't mentioned. Instead, it's Judah and his brothers.



ROBERT BOOTH

And if you know the story of Joseph, and

you compare it to the story of Judah, you will see that everything about Joseph's story is absolutely remarkable—an extraordinary man. He's persecuted, he's punished, he's treated unjustly, he does things for the people that treat him unjustly, and at the end of Joseph's story he becomes a savior. He saves his family, he saves Pharaoh, he saves Egypt. He seems to be a perfect picture of Jesus.

If ever there was a boy to pick that would become the person through whom the Messiah would come, Joseph is perfect. But instead, God chooses Judah for the lineage of Jesus.

The story of Judah begins in Genesis 37, where Judah suggests that it is not wise for him and his brothers to kill Joseph. For a fleeting second, we are glad that Judah is courageous enough to say something, but Judah isn't done. Instead he suggests to his brothers that they they should instead sell Judah in slavery and make a profit.

So they sell Joseph to the Ishmaelites and Ishmaelites load him up, chain him wrist to wrist with all the other slaves they are taking to Egypt, and they march him off to Egypt.

From Judah's perspective that's the last he will ever see or hear from his brother again, as he splits up money among his other brothers. And off Joseph goes to Egypt as a teenager. And then they take that fancy coat and they dip it in animal blood. They break their father's heart and they choose to live with the secret that they determined they would go to the grave with. And before long all the money from the sale is gone, but the memory is not and the guilt is not.

Eventually Judah gets married and he has a bunch of kids, and his first three kids are boys. His first son—once his son is grown he marries him off to a woman named Tamar. And then his second son gets married, but his third son is not old enough to get married. And the Bible says that the first two sons did evil in the sight of God and died. According to the tradition and the customs of the day Judah is now responsible for this single woman, this woman that had been married to his older son. So he says to her, "look, I'm



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going to take care of you. When my third son is old enough to get married, I'll marry you off to him, and then my family will cover you and take care of you and protect you and provide for you financially."

Time goes by and once again, consistent with Judah's character, he forgets all about Tamar and he forgets all about marrying her off to his younger son. Tamar is becoming someone who can't provide for herself. Then the story takes a weird turn. She dresses up and disguises herself like a temple prostitute. And she covers her face and goes and sits by the gate. Judah is a man of great importance in the town and he would pass in and out of the gate and he would sit with the elders at the gate and make judgments.

Judah comes by one day, begins a conversation with her, or perhaps she began one with him. He decides to hire this prostitute.

They talk and they decide that the payment would be a goat. He didn't have the goat with him, so Tamar says as a pledge she wanted two things; his signature seal and his staff.

He gets home and finds a servant to go locate Tamar and pay her with a goat, and retrieve his two possessions. The servant does as he is instructed, but can't find Tamar. Judah didn't want to create a big deal, so he just decides to sweep the whole situation under the carpet.

Three months later somebody comes running up to Judah's house and knocks on the door and says, Judah, you're not going to believe this. Tamar is going to have a baby. Judah does what every person does who has a secret and who is pretending to be something they are not; he gets real self-righteous and says that Tamar has shamed the family name and must be burned alive.

Isn't this the same Judah who sold his brother into slavery? Isn't this the same Judah who broke his mom and dad's heart? Isn't this the same Judah who carries the secret that nobody is going to know about, that he is going to go to his grave with?

But of course Tamar has something that belongs to Judah. The day has come and apparently they've got it all worked out and today is the day that Tamar is to be burned alive. She sends a messenger to Judah with his two possessions and a statement that Judah is the father of this unborn child.

Judah goes in to see Tamar and according to the account in Genesis 38 says, "Tamar, you are more righteous than I am."

And Tamar gives birth to a little boy and his name is Perez. And he is in the genealogy of Jesus, the Christ.

The story is not over for Judah, because about twenty years after he thinks he will never see his brother again, there's a famine in the land. And Judah and some of his brothers go to Egypt to purchase food. And guess who is in charge of the food distribution? Joseph is.

Eventually they're in a room, all eleven brothers, and there is Joseph, the twelfth. But they don't know it's him, and Joseph sends everybody out of the room. And in one of the most dramatic scenes in all of Scripture says "I am Joseph, your brother."

And there on his face before Joseph is Judah, and Judah has to be thinking, "what would I do if the roles were reversed. What would I do to the man who sold me as a teenager thinking that would be the end of me and now I had the power to take his life; what would I do?"

I believe Judah knew what he would do. There he is on his face before the man that has the power over life and death. And Joseph says to them, get up, get up; I forgive you.

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"Isn't this the same Judah who carries the secret that nobody is going to know about. that he is going to go to his grave with?"



2012 Dates to Remember...

April 8
Easter Self-Denial Offering
for Home Missions

June 11–15 God's Missionary Youth Camp Penns Creek, PA

June 29–July 8 Mount of Blessing Camp Carroll, PA

June 29–July 8 Hanover Fellowship Camp Hanover, PA

July 26 77th Annual God's Missionary Church Conference Penns Creek, PA

July 27-August 6 Penns Creek Camp



Recommendation

I recommend the Brian Spangler family for evangelistic ministry. He preaches, they sing and do instrumentals. Please give them prayerful consideration for your church or camp meeting.

—Rev. Harry F. Plank Conference President God's Missionary Church

Rev. and Mrs. Brian Spangler are entering the field of evangelism after pastoring for more than 22 years. He has also served as a Camp President for 15 years, and both are graduates of Penn View Bible Institute. Brian is a very good preacher, and they do an excellent job singing as a family. All three of their children are serving the Lord. I strongly recommend them to your church or your camp. They can be contacted at 419-563-4014.

—Rev. John W. Zechman President of Penn View Bible Institute



Rev. Herman K. Noll

Rev. Herman K. Noll, 81, Paoli, died at 9:28 a.m. on January 17, 2012 at his home.

He was born on Sept. 3, 1930, in Cocalico, (Lancaster County) Pa., to John and Ada Kilhefner Noll. He married Marilyn Shuey on April 18, 1951, and she survives.

He was a minister of the Gospel for over 50 years in Pennsylvania, Ohio, Maryland and Indiana.

He was a U.S. Marine veteran of the Korean War.

Surviving with his wife, Marilyn Noll of Paoli; are one daughter, Donna Sexton and husband, Ray of Bedford; two sisters, Anna Fittery of Ono, Pa., and Dorothy Gingrich of Lebanon, Pa.; one brother, Lloyd Noll of Myerstown, Pa.; two grandchildren, Dr. Jonathan Dillman and wife Suzanne of Saline, Mich., and the Rev. Ryan Dillman and wife Lindsay of Mitchell; one stepgrandson and wife, Ray Sexton (Jamie) of Salem; three great-granddaughters, Kathryn, Meghan and Madison Dillman; and two step-great-granddaughters, Ashlan and Kirsten Sexton.

He was preceded in death by one sister, Lillian Dry; and three brothers, Willard, John and Robert Noll.

A word about the December Standard

The Standard staff strives to provide each issue in a timely manner. The December, 2011, edition was compiled and designed in mid-November, with the intention of it arriving in subscribers' mailboxes by early or mid-December. Due to circumstances that, at the time were unknown to us and out of our control, the December issue experienced a substantial delay in the last stages of production and mailing, rendering much of the content outdated. We apologize for this and have been assured that changes are being made to prevent this from happening again. We want the Standard to be a beneficial resource for God's Missionary Church and our subscribers.

—The staff of the God's Missionary Standard

Shirley M. Lyons

Shirley M. Lyons, 73, of Bellefonte, died unexpectedly on Tuesday, Dec. 6, 2011, at Mount Nittany Medical Center. She was born in Bellefonte on July 12, 1938, a daughter of the late Merrell and Laura Saltsman Gardner. She was married to Lawrence E. Lyons, who survives at home. Shirley was a homemaker. She attended God's Missionary Church of Milesburg. She enjoyed flower gardening. In addition to her husband she is survived by two daughters, Cynthia D. Fetters and Tina L. (Brian) McCauley, all of Bellefonte; one son, Larry E. Lyons, of Julian; one sister, Martha Weaver; and three brothers, Paul (Jack), Joseph and Dennis Gardner of NM.



Congratulations to Rev. and Mrs. Darren Aurand on the birth of Caleb Douglas. Caleb was born on October 15.

Congratulations to Rev. and Mrs. David Wise on the birth of Katherine Rose. Katherine was born on October 5.



THE ACTIFICE

Remember in the Bible when the Philistines were occupying Bethlehem and camping out in the fields around Bethlehem and David was hiding in a cave. Late one night, three of his champion soldiers came to report to him. With their attendants on the lookout a few steps away, the four men huddled together to "solve the world's problems." Perhaps one of the champions, knowing David could not leave the cave, offered his leather canteen to him and watched as he raised it to his lips and tipped his head back to drink deeply of the tepid water within. As David wiped the back of his hand across his mouth and chin, one of the champion's bushy eyebrows quirked and David shrugged. "At least it's wet," he sighed. "Man, I sure wish I could have a drink of that good water from the well by the gate in Bethlehem."





A youthful soldier to David's left breathed a small harrumph. "Don't we all?!"

"You're dreaming!" the burly captain on the other side of the circle declared, as he elbowed the soldier next to him.

"Yeah, right," commented the other man without so much as raising his head.

As darkness deepened, the men claimed various niches in the cave and bedded down for the night. In the quietness, one soldier nudged another and motioned him to follow him beyond the opening of the cave. The soldier buddy grinned and whispered, "I saw the look on your face back there. I know when you have an idea. What is it?" he prodded. "What's happening?"

The first man touched his finger to his lips to indicate silence. After several more steps, he felt safe enough to whisper back. "You heard David wish he could have a drink from the well? I've been thinking—"

"Tell me you're not planning to get it for him," interrupted the buddy as he grabbed the other man's forearm.

The reply was softly spoken but solid: "I am."

"But you could get caught. And killed," the buddy countered. The other man only nodded. "Okay then, I'm going with you. When are we leaving?"

Again came a mere but intense whisper, "Now."

A third figure suddenly took form in the darkness. "What are you two up to?" The three men conversed briefly before separating and moving silently in the encampment to gather a few items before meeting each other at the agreed-upon place.

They weren't known as "mighty men" for nothing. They had earned the title. This night their military prowess enabled them to break through the enemy's battle lines to secure water from the well just inside the gates of Bethlehem and return to David in the cave, not unscathed, but safe.

Perhaps as morning's first rays of light fingered the sky, the three champions stood at the foot of David's sleeping form. "David, wake up," the first soldier prodded. "We have something for you." "Yes," David sat up, rubbing his hand across his face to clear sleep from his brain. "What is it?"

"Water from the well just inside the gate of Bethlehem," answered another champion, smiling and holding out the leather pouch to David. David scrambled to his feet. His jaw dropped. His hands reached out and each grasped an arm of a soldier. Speechless, he simply shook his head from side to side. He waited until all three soldiers were looking into his eyes. With his voice breaking around the lump in his throat, he exclaimed, "God forbid that I should drink this! It would be like drinking your blood because you risked your lives to get this for me." Reverently he knelt and slowly poured the most precious water on the ground before the Lord.

Over the next several days, word of the escapade flew swiftly through the troops. Heads shook in disbelief. Eyebrows raised in skepticism. Hands stroked bearded chins. As the three champions walked through the Israelite camp and back to their tents, various comrades called out.

"You're nuts!" declared a bushy-haired man preparing his arrows.

"Absolutely crazy!" agreed another.

"Some people just need attention," a youthful fellow quipped as he tied on his sandals.

"Ain't nobody better think I'm gonna do something like that!!" a fourth man protested.

"Tsk... Kissing up to the boss, trying to get promoted," sneered a man standing in front of a nearby tent.

Two of the mighty men looked into the third's eyes. Obviously the barbed words hurt their comrade.

Another place, another time. The elegant and elaborate dinner is nearly over. The expensive delicacies have sated the guests and they relax on the luxurious couches around the table. From seemingly out of nowhere, a woman enters the room carrying an ornately carved and decorated square jar. The guests stop their conversations in mid-sentence and watch, wondering what will happen next.

At the foot end of the couch on which Jesus is reclining, she drops to the floor. With one swift, deliberate strike of the top of the jar against one leg of a couch, she breaks open the sealed container. She lifts it to hover above Jesus' feet, then reverently pours the pungent designer lotion over His feet until the last drop has dripped. The Bible says, "And the fragrance filled the house." Aghast, the guests sit motionless, speechless. The woman methodically unwinds her long tresses of jet black hair and gently massages the fragrant cream into His tired feet. Then as silently as she entered the lavish room, she rises and exits.

Speechless no more, the guests' thoughts erupt from their mouths. "Why'd she do that?!"

"Did you see what brand that lotion was?!" His fist pounds the table. "What waste!"

"That money could have been given to charity," another waves his hands to emphasize his words.

A fourth man stands to his feet and roars, "How'd she even get in here? Somebody," he pauses and glares at his host, "needs to step up and pay for real security."

Nearly apoplectic, the host grabs his head with his hands and wails. "Is that all you can think of?! She ruined my couch! I'll never get that smell out of there. And my house. It's going to smell like this for years! Every time we even answer a knock at the door, the person standing there is going to be like, 'Whoa! What's with the aroma?!' What will I say? People are going to know that woman was in my house!"

As the woman steps over the threshold to the outside, the lady of the house puts forth a hand to stop her. Tenderly she reaches up to wipe a tear from the woman's face and queries, "What in the world did you do in there to cause such a commotion? And why? I hope you aren't too badly hurt. My husband is speaking harshly, but he is a good man. Wow, your fragrance is overpowering! People are going to smell you all the way home."

Quietly, the champion, and the woman, turn and smile. "Yes, their words hurt, but I didn't do it for them. I did it for him/Him, and I know that he/He was pleased. He was grateful. He will always remember my gift, my sacrifice. So what they say doesn't really matter."

Our place, our time. Our pastor stands behind the pulpit. "Does someone have a testimony to share? Would anyone like to praise the Lord?" Suddenly we tense, hold our collective breath, and sit unmoving while the pastor suffers through elongated seconds of agonizing silence before moving on with the order of service. We have testimonies, we would like to praise, but we are glued to our seats. Why?

A favorite chorus, "We Bring the Sacrifice of Praise," expresses a deep desire of my heart. I want to bring praise and thanksgiving into the house of the Lord. But what is a sacrifice of praise? Why is praise called a sacrifice? When we stand to testify, our physical lives aren't in danger. Worst-case scenario, we might embarrass ourselves by something we say or how we say it. Someone might misunderstand or ridicule what we say, might think we're trying to get attention or be super spiritual. Do those mere possibilities persuade us to withhold our gifts, our sacrifices, our praises? Therein is the difference between the champion and woman and us: they sacrificed—as we must—the possible results, responses, and opinions of everyone but one/One!

Because we don't do it for them. We do it for Him, and we know that He is pleased. He is grateful. And He will always remember our gifts, our sacrifices of praise. So what they say doesn't really matter.

"We bring the sacrifice of praise into the house of the Lord;

We bring the sacrifice of praise into the house of the Lord.

And we offer up to You the sacrifices of thanksgiving;

And we offer up to You the sacrifices of joy."

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Someone might misunderstand or ridicule what we say, might think we're trying to get attention or be super spiritual. Do those mere possibilities persuade us to withhold our gifts, our sacrifices, our praises?



Above: Judea mountains near the Dead Sea at sunset.

continued from page 3

And the gospel writer Matthew underscores that little snippet of history in his genealogy because I believe on that day on his face, Judah was a picture of you and he was a picture of me—and that's the point of the story of Jesus.

He was the picture of a person who deserved one thing and got something else.

From the very beginning, in the book of Genesis, God gives us a picture of what it means to have grace and mercy and forgiveness.

Here's something amazing—years would go by and his dad, Jacob was about to die; he called in each of his twelve sons and he gave them a blessing. Here's what he said to Judah, hundreds of years before there was ever a kingdom of Israel, before there was ever a David, hundreds of years before Jesus would show up.

He put his hands on Judah the deceiver, Judah who broke his heart for twenty years, and he said to him, "Judah, through you and your descendants will rise up a king, and your brothers and their families will bow down to him."

And years later, a little boy was born named David, who would become a king. And eventually another boy would be born named Jesus, who would be the Messiah and the Christ.

travel notes from the

October 9: I preached at the Gospel Center and left as the congregation continued on with service. Rachel and I hurried over to the Lebanon church just in time for morning worship. It was our annual visit to celebrate Harvest Home, Pastor Appreciation Day for senior pastor and Mrs. Barry Arnold and Youth Pastor and Mrs. Anthony Harris. We enjoyed Sunday dinner in the home of Larry and Martha Shuey along with visiting friends Rev and Mrs. William Cornell. En-route to the evening service we made a visit to Sis. Lois Arnold who was recovering from knee replacement surgery in a nursing home.

October 12: We attended a revival service at the Gratz Emanuel Wesleyan Church where we were privileged to hear the preaching of Rev. Michael Weatherald. After the service, we enjoyed a nice lunch and fellowship in the beautiful parsonage, home of Pastor & Mrs. Daniel Durkee and family after the service.

October 13: I spent the morning in the Conference Room for a Penn View board meeting.

October 14: Today was Grandparent's Day at Penn View Christian Academy. We attended kindergarten with granddaughter Lauren where Miss Rachel Thomas has been the faithful teacher for many years. We also visited Ashley's fourth grade class, where Miss Jacinda Cravens does an excellent job as teacher. Principal DeStefano organized a lovely chapel service for this special day with many grandparents from near and far.

October 15: We were honored to be guests at the wedding of Stanley Fink to Debora Cox. It was a very nice wedding and great meal at the reception, cooked mostly by the bride's mother!

October 16: I preached at the Roaring Springs church in the morning service, in the evening we attended the New Columbia church where we were honored to hear Rev. John Knight speak of the work in Mongolia and other places.

October 17: I conducted a General Board meeting today.

October 22: We enjoyed fellowship and lunch with Rev. Leonard Sankey, who was preaching revival meeting at the Beavertown church during this week.

October 23: It was good to be with the Rebersburg congregation in the evening and in the home of Pastor and Mrs. Stephen Davis.

October 25-30: I preached revival meeting at the Allegheny Wesleyan Methodist Church in Salem, Ohio. It was great to have several visiting ministers in attendance including Rev. Henry Miller and Conference President, William Cope. I was honored to speak in the chapel service to the students at the Allegheny Wesleyan College. I also presented their library with God's Missionary Church's 75th anniversary book.

We were invited to have lunch with Mr. and Mrs. Larry Brunk and enjoyed learning the history of the Brunk Tent Revivals along with the visit up the elevator to the "cabin" on top of their silo! The pastor and I were guests at the local Gideon breakfast during the week. We along with the singers; Stephen and Jenny Troyer and daughter, Julia were well fed and cared for by Pastor and Mrs. Stanley Grabill and family. It was also great to get a little better acquainted with Visitation Pastor and Mrs. John Dye.

November 11: We made a visit to Sis. Nancy Herrick recovering from surgery in the Lewisburg hospital. Darvin Rine was also a patient there, due to serious problems facing an appendectomy. There were lots of concerned family members in the waiting room. In the evening we visited the Penn View Christmas auction

November 13: I preached at the Blue Knob church in the morning, and held a pastoral election, which eventually resulted in Rev. Van Dorman becoming the new pastor.

November 14: I was in a meeting with the Conference Pension Board. November 15: We met a good friend, Joe Holingsworth, who was up from Alabama, in Lancaster County for part of the day.

November 16: Mom and Dad Will , along with Cousin Kim Lupton and Nephew Tracy Merkley arrived. Tracy wanted especially to visit Penn View, in hopes to eventually become a student.

November 20: We made a visit and I preached at the Coopersburg church in the morning. We appreciated the good meal with the Kincaids. The evening found us at the Duncannon church. It was good to see that Pastor Jeremy Fuller is doing much better after some serious physical problems.

November 24: We enjoyed having more than 20 family members for Thanksgiving dinner; my mother, our children, grandchildren, nephews and great nephews.



HARRY PLANK

November 27: I preached for Pastor Goodrich at the little church in Elkland

November 28: This was the first day of deer season. I hunted on the farm with my brother, Tom, our son Andrew and grandson Jamison. The hunting results were, Andrew got a nice six point after Jamison and I both missed it.

December 3-4: I attended the viewing and funeral for little eighteen-month-old Cameron Habecker. Our sympathy to his parents Andrew and Jennifer.

December 5: I made and received numerous calls concerning the Florida District

camp grounds. What a frustrating experience trying to satisfy all building and fire code requirements

December 6: We stopped in at the Gratz church for a viewing and on to Harrisburg to meet with the Home Mission's board for Christmas dinner together. December 7: Attended the funeral for long time friend, Elwood Forney, grandfather of our daughter-in-law, Kara.

December 10: Rachel and I attended the Penn View Businessman's Dinner and

December 11: Attended the funeral for former parishioner, Joanne Womer in Selinsgrove, preached by her nephew, Rev. Nathan Walter. In the evening we attended the Christmas program at Beavertown church.

December 13: We made a visit to Aldean and Ellen Sauffley at Chambersburg. January 1: We enjoyed New Years dinner with family. I preached at the Beavertown church in the evening.

January 2: I attended a board meeting for the Missionary Youth Crusaders. January 4: I was at a Penn View Board meeting from 9:00 am until 4:00 pm, then

traveled to the Lebanon church for a pastoral election. Results were for Alan Walter to be the incoming pastor, starting later this year.

January 5: I conducted a General Board meeting.

January 6: The World Mission Board met in the morning.

January 7: Rachel and I attended the funeral of Lester Hess the father of Lois Arnold. Through out the day I received several discouraging phone calls concerning the Florida District camp buildings. It seems about the time we think we have things together, then we learn that there are several more requirements, which may cause us not to have either dormitory or the cooking facilities ready in time for camp. Regardless of the circumstances we are trusting God to meet with us in a special way during the upcoming camp meeting.

January 8: I preached at the Lebanon Gospel Center for both morning and evening services. We enjoyed a wonderful Sunday dinner with Pastor and Mrs. Booth and daughters Kalena and Natalie. After the evening service we traveled until after midnight and got a room for the night at exit 173 in North Carolina.

January 10-15: I preached a revival at the Kissimmee church. Pastor and Mrs. Barry Sweitzer took wonderful care of us, feeding us well, with the help of the parishioners. We will always have fond memories of this faithful congregation and the many visitors from area churches. Thank you to Country Singer Jack Calhoun for taking time to attend two nights of revival meeting to hear this country preacher.

gmc youth

crusaders

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Important dates...

March 9

Spring Conference-Wide Youth Rally with

Rodney Loper

April 27-28

Spring Camp Out at Hanover Fellowship

Camp Ground

May 6th

Conference Youth

Crusaders Offering

September 7

Fall Conference Wide

Youth Rally

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Dayton, Ohio

April 17–19, 2012 www.ihconvention.com