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CHRISTIANITY IN

action

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www.gccweb.org

CHANGING LIVES



DAVE LENNANDER

After pastoring for over 20 years at Cedar Creek Community Church in Eau Claire, Wisconsin, God led my wife, Sandy, and me on an incredible faith challenge that turned into an amazing adventure.

Pastor Mark Darling approached Sandy and me and asked if we would consider moving for a couple of years to Berlin, Germany to work with a church plant. After months of prayer and counsel, God confirmed for us to go. Following training and a tearful goodbye, we left in January 2005.

Over the three years at Rock Berlin, we helped develop a leadership team and build community and unity. I taught the Word through weekly services and seminars, while Sandy used her gifts of encouragement and hospitality through meetings and meals at our apartment. One of the highlights of our time was baptizing six young people in a lake in former East Berlin. This would have been impossible only 20 years earlier. It was a blessing to see Dieter and Lucy Schade join the team to work with John and Stephi Goering as Rock Berlin's leaders after we returned to the U.S.

We returned in January 2007 to rejoin the pastoral team at Cedar Creek, though I return to Berlin every four months to encourage the church and leaders. Please pray for the Rock Berlin and ask God for ways that you might advance His kingdom in other parts of His world.

Dave is a pastor at Cedar Creek Community Church:
www.ccreek.org.



WIDMAR V. VINCENT CASE

By Jonathan Williams

In 1977, the University of Missouri at Kansas City told the leadership of Cornerstone

Community Church in Kansas City they could not use university grounds for meetings due to separation of church and state. In spite of appeals, the university remained firm and Christian organizations were banned.

Cornerstone leaders took the university to court to maintain their freedom to assemble on campus. The District Court sided with the university. Cornerstone appealed and the appellate court voted in favor of Cornerstone. The university then appealed to the Supreme Court of the United States, and in October of 1981, both sides argued their cases. For months, people across the country prayed. Then, the decision came, 8-1—the Supreme Court voted in favor of Cornerstone.

This case, known as *Widmar v. Vincent*, was a landmark decision. The effort to maintain freedom on one campus kept doors open on all campuses. However, a new challenge faces this generation. There is a case before the Supreme Court that accuses Christian organizations of discrimination—a Christian organization cannot bar members based on religious belief. Theoretically, if Satanists joined a Christian group and elected one of their own as an officer, the Christian group could not stop them.

God worked mightily in *Widmar v. Vincent*. Now, a new generation faces a new test in *Christian Legal Society v. Martinez*. Pray for God to glorify Himself mightily and keep an open door on college campuses for the Gospel.

Check out Cornerstone Community Church:
www.cornerstonekc.org.

MISSION USA

NEW CHURCH PLANTS

THE ROCK IUPUI: INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA

By Ray Harmon

After encouragement by John Hopler for community churches to consider starting campus ministry, we began to reach out to the Indianapolis Purdue campus.

Many of our own college-age students had moved away, so we began small with three IUPUI students, and one attending a nearby community college. During our first year in 2008, we averaged between 15-18 students at our weekly meetings. It was an encouraging year as we were able to see significant spiritual growth in their lives.

That fall, our handful of students began conducting surveys and inviting others.

At our first meeting of 2009, we had more than in doubled attendance.

Tom Short came to preach on campus, and our students were excited to seek opportunities to share the gospel. Many of the students went to Faithwalkers and were inspired by the teachings in their walk with Jesus Christ.

Our prayer as leaders was that God would help us assimilate students from The Rock into Eagle Creek Community Church. Students are now part of the worship team and many others are attending regularly.

The students continually tell others about how God has used The Rock to



Baptism of an IUPUI student.

have a significant impact in their lives. We have begun the work of reaching students at IUPUI and we are rejoicing with our Lord in the lives that are being changed.

Check out The Rock at IUPUI: www.therockiupui.com.

COULEE ROCK COMMUNITY CHURCH: LA CROSSE, WISCONSIN

By Doug Markofski

Things are starting to heat up as we get more "soldiers on the ground" in the La Crosse area.

Currently, we have 10 adults and five children who have moved from Eau Claire, Wisconsin and are preparing for action. Our total team of 24 adults and 18 kids is making a push to get settled in this summer to begin the ministry of Coulee Rock Community Church.

Our team has been working on building unity with each other and has been planning and preparing for just over a year. We have been amazed as God has filled in so many blanks already.

Our ministry roles have been established and our focus will be on public service, our small groups, and community outreach events. We are doing our public launch by objectives, not a specific date.

Our location and meeting place is one of our last big blanks yet to be filled in. (God is doing some amazing things in that regard but that's another story.)

Overall, we remain excited, humbled and encouraged by all that God is doing and will do as we prepare to open our doors. We appreciate your prayers.



Coulee Rock church planting team

Check out Coulee Rock Community Church at: www.couleerock.com.

INTERNATIONAL

THE SWING FAMILY

By Craig Swing

In 1991, our movement of churches, with the simple focus on the Great Commission, grabbed my heart and I have never been the same. It seems that the Lord can do great things with willing hearts.

Around 2005, He began to impress on me the importance of understanding the Asian culture. In the summer of 2009, my wife, Melissa, and I, along with six of our seven children went to China. During this trip, I had the opportunity to teach a



Craig and Melissa with 6 of their 7 children.

few seminars on parenting and marriage at a Christian daycare.

During one of the seminars, one lady declared that she would believe nothing I said unless she heard it from my kids. I told the youngest four to go to the front of the stage and answer whatever was asked of them. It was a father's dream to hear his children answer the questions brilliantly.

Finally, the lady who was so distraught stood up and asked, "Why can Peter stand up on stage for half an hour and not move a muscle?" Peter, only four years old, looked around, and after he took his hands out of his pockets, simply said, "Because my dad asked me to."

Afterwards, I led those in the room in a prayer to receive Christ. People came up to me afterwards, wondering if they should feel different if they prayed to receive Christ. My answer was, "Yes, because now, you are truly forgiven."



As the fall of 2009 began, we could tell as a family, as a church, as a region, and as a nation of people committed to the Great Commission and planting churches, that the time had come for all of us, including my family, to move to China.

Needless to say, a venture like this will require the oversight and support of the nation, region, sub-region and local church committed to supporting the church overseas. Please pray for us!

Craig and his family attend Summitview Community Church in Loveland, CO: www.summitviewcc.com.

ROCK BERLIN UPDATE: BERLIN, GERMANY

By Dieter Schade

My wife, Lucy, and I landed in Berlin on October 31, 2007 to be part of the leadership team of Rock Berlin. The church was started in 2002 and has gone through many leadership transitions over the past eight years.

One couple that has been here from early on is John and Stephi Goering. God is slowly knitting the Goerings and us together to provide Rock Berlin with consistent and long-term leadership. An important step in developing the leadership team took place on April 11 when John and I were appointed as pastors.

Rock Berlin is still a young and small (approximately 25-30 people) church. Seven babies having been born in

the church over the past two and a half years, with two more on the way. God directed us to switch from Saturday evening services to Sunday mornings in March of 2009, which helped accommodate the young children and their parents. We still have many university students among the congregation.

Lucy and I have focused our energy on building this young church up in Christ and helping nationals grow into leadership. We also help lead an English-speaking home group of about eight people and are going through the Experiencing God workbook. John and Stephi are also leading a home group through the German version of Experiencing God.



Lucy and I are extremely blessed to be part of what God is doing in Berlin, Germany. We are growing in our faith as we help others know Christ more deeply. Thank you for your prayers and support.

For more information on Great Commission Europe, check out: www.gcweb.org.

INSIDE GCC

CONFERENCES

**FAITHWALKERS:
DECEMBER 27-30, 2010**



What does it mean to be a true disciple of Jesus Christ today? What does it look like? What does it take to become one?

Throughout His earthly ministry, Jesus would often turn to the crowds and share a message of discipleship. It was a clear, direct and challenging call to come, take up your cross, put all our dreams aside, die to yourself, and follow Him.

At Faithwalkers 2010, we will discover what it means to be a disciple of Jesus Christ in the 21st century, and how to become one.



MEET A GCC PASTOR

THIS EDITION: MARK DARLING

Mark has been married for 30 years, and is a father of four, two of whom are now married, and

the proud grandfather of four precious grandchildren. He and Kathy, his wife, live in Eagan, Minnesota.

After spending 10 wonderful years in Ames, Iowa, learning and growing in the church there, Mark was ordained and moved to Minneapolis, MN in 1986, where he and Brent Knox founded the Evergreen churches. He has been teaching, leading, pastoring, and church planting for the last 23 years.

In 2003, Mark spearheaded the launching of the Faithwalkers

conference, which has grown from several hundred to over 3000 attendees. He currently pastors at The Rock in Minneapolis, serves in the Northlands region and on the GCC board, and works nationally and internationally to help and strengthen Great Commission churches.

VERSE & ADVICE 1: O my people, trust in him at all times. Pour out your heart to him, for God is our refuge. (Psalm 62:8) "If you want God to be more real to you, start being more real with God! Start honestly pouring out your emotions and thoughts to Him. It will change your life!"

VERSE & ADVICE 2: The steps of the godly are directed by the LORD. He delights in every detail of their lives. (Psalm 37:23) "God doesn't do 'random'!"

CHANGED LIVES

JOHN HOPLER - DIRECTOR, GREAT COMMISSION CHURCHES



Eau Claire, Wisconsin is not a large city—about 100,000 people. But in this newsletter, we highlight how one church in this town—Cedarcreek Community Church—has had an amazing impact for Jesus Christ.

Cedarcreek is currently reaching people for Christ in their community and at their college campus. Also, a church planting team is being sent to a nearby city, La Crosse, Wisconsin. And a pastor and his wife, Dave and Sandy Lennander, moved to Berlin,

Germany to establish and strengthen a Great Commission church in that city.

Cedarcreek Community Church typifies the churches that God has developed in our movement. Cedarcreek is an "Acts 1:8" church—devoted to reaching its city, state, nation, and the world with the good news of Jesus Christ. And lives have been changed through the faith, love and obedience of the people at Cedarcreek.

God loves to work through normal people like you and me. He takes ordinary people in ordinary towns to be involved in an extraordinary mission: The Great Commission of Jesus Christ. What an amazing God we serve!

Are you living the great adventure? Will you join your church in the greatest mission given to mankind—the advancement of the gospel of Jesus Christ?



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