



# BRANDON VALLEY BAPTIST CHURCH

October 2022

Editor Janelle Daum

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We ask you, brothers, to respect those who labor among you and are over you in the Lord and admonish you, and to esteem them very highly in love because of their work. Be at peace among yourselves.

And we urge you, brothers, admonish the idle, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with them all. See that no one repays evil for evil, but always seek to do good to one another and to everyone. Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. Do not quench the Spirit. Do not despise prophecies, but test everything; hold fast what is good. Abstain from every form of evil.

I Thessalonians 5:12-22

E-mail: [jbvbeditor@hotmail.com](mailto:jbvbeditor@hotmail.com) your article.

This short passage gives us Paul's summation of what the church should look like. It's a statement of relationship. It's a statement of missionality. It's a statement of personal faith. Tucked tightly into this passage is a three-fold call for each of us to personally fulfill the will of God: "Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances..." Each challenge carries the idea of doing something consistently, but each gives us a different aspect of what this means for us.

He begins with the call to "rejoice always." The word rejoice means exactly what we expect... be glad and show that joy that emanates from the depth of our relationship with God. The word always makes this a more circumstantial expression. It carries the sense of responding to every circumstance that comes into our lives with that deep and abiding joy. Without fail we are to respond to every circumstance with the joy that comes from our knowledge of the sovereignty of God, and our belief in the promise of God that "...we know that for those who love God all work together for good..." (Romans 8:28) Why should we ever be sad or upset when we know that God is at work and it's all going to turn out for the good?

The second call is to "pray without ceasing." Paul uses the general word for prayer in this call to talk to God. In the Greek the word carries with it the idea that this should be as normal to us as breathing. We shouldn't even have to think about it. Talking to God is the most normal and natural activity that we do as Christians. To emphasize that he adds that we are to do this without ceasing. Prayer should never be driven by circumstances. It should be the most constant, continuous and consistent part of our Christian life. The body dies if we stop breathing. Our relationship with God withers and dries up if we quit talking to Him.

The third call is for us to “give thanks in all circumstances.” Rejoicing is the condition of our heart. Giving thanks is the outward expression of that joy. Again it is driven by circumstances... circumstances matter.

They affect us, sometimes very deeply, sometimes to the very core of our being. But as deeply as circumstances can burrow into our hearts and lives they will never be able to go deeper than the joy that we have in Jesus Christ. Paul isn't denying the pain of circumstances, he is telling us that they can only go so far in our lives. God is always greater than anything we face. Paul is telling us that when evil and tragedy strike we need to dig down deeper and find that wellspring of joy that the Holy Spirit maintains within us. When we dwell in that joy we give thanks.

This is our challenge for this year... to be a joyous church, a praying church, and a thankful church. We will be focusing on that relational emphasis throughout this year. Pray for that without ceasing.

Pastor Randy

# **UPCOMING EVENTS FOR OCTOBER AND BEYOND**

## **EVENTS CALENDAR 2022:**

### **Sunday's**

**9:30 a.m.** Worship Service

**10:30 a.m.** Fellowship

**10:45 a.m.** Sunday School for the Whole Family

### **Wednesday's**

**6:30 p.m. - 8 p.m.,** Awana

**7 p.m.** Middle & High School Youth Group

### **Thursday's**

**3 p.m.** Prayer & Women's Bible Study at BVBC

**6:30 p.m.** Women's Evening Bible Study

### **Saturday's**

**October 1, 8 a.m.** Men's Bible Study via Zoom

**October 15, 8 a.m.** Men's Bible Study via Zoom

**Monday, October 3,** Spiritual Vision Team Meeting

**Saturday, October 8, 8 a.m.,** Leadership Team

**Tuesday, October 11, 2 p.m.,** Discipleship Team Meeting

**Friday, October 23,** Newsletter Articles are Due

**Tuesday, October 25, 7 p.m.,** Outreach Team Meeting

## MISSIONARY UPDATES

### AMANDA BENSON - PHILIPPINES



September 1, 2022

#### **MERRY CHRISTMAS!**

Welcome to the “ber” months! It’s now officially Christmas season in the Philippines! My roommate isn’t going to let me put up the Christmas tree yet, but I am still so excited for it to be Christmas season! Here that means that Christmas music will be playing in the malls, and the decorations will be put up! The Philippines sure knows how to celebrate Christmas!

#### **Here are some updates of the last month:**

##### **School**

School got off to a great start! It’s been a joy to get to be in person and do normal school things again. I am teaching 8th grade Algebra and two 8th grade English classes. I also have an 8th grade girls’ advisory class. I love these girls! We’ve had some great conversations already, and I’m excited to see how God will build our relationships over the next year. I’ve been enjoying having some different responsibilities as vice principal, too. So far, life has felt fairly balanced between teaching, doing VP things, and life outside of school.

## **House**

One of our two roommates decided not to come (she was going to teach middle school English), so we just have one other lady living with us. Lot has been a joy to have in our house. She is Filipino and is teaching Elementary ELL (English Language Learners). We have been able to have a lot of guests over, too, so she is getting to know many of our coworkers and friends. We do still have one extra room, and it's possible God will still bring someone else this year.

We are still in need of a more permanent place to live. Would you continue praying with us that God will provide somewhere for us to stay long term? We really want somewhere even closer to school and with more hosting space.

## **Flight**

Our after-school Bible study this year is called Flight! I'm co-leading the 8th grade girls again! Kelly and I co-lead last year and really enjoyed it. We have a smaller group this year, as many of the 8th grade girls are in a group with the worship band. We have only met twice, but our girls have been great and are willing to share.

## **Board Games**

This quarter I'm having a board games club! I really love board games, so it's fun to get to share that with students. I've only had one meeting, but one student left saying "This is the best club ever!" (It may be the only club he's done, but who's counting??)

## **Sports**

For the first time since Covid, we are able to have official sports again! This is so great, especially for Marissa, who came here to be our athletic trainer. She finally gets to do her job! Last week I was able to go watch the volleyball teams play! We still have lots of work to do, as we're rebuilding after two years of no sports, but it's great to get to start and see growth.

## **Fighting Spiritual Battles**

The past three months in my life have been focused on learning how to fight spiritual battles. I have had a particular struggle over the last year that I don't remember struggling with before, and I became aware at just how much that struggle was being used by the enemy. I spent the summer reading a book to help with that struggle and doing Priscilla Shirer's The Armor of God Bible study. Both were immensely helpful at teaching me how to fight these spiritual battles. I've learned to recognize the enemy and stop aiding him in his goals. I'm learning to replace lies with truth. I'm learning that it is also my responsibility to come alongside those around me and fight with them in whatever spiritual battles they are facing. I'm learning to seek the Lord to fight for me as well.

But this is still hard. Sometimes it is hard knowing that I will constantly be fighting battles against the enemy until Christ returns or calls me home. In all honesty, I've been so tired lately of the constant fighting of the battles. But I know I can't just ignore the enemy, and I can't run the other way. That's what he wants. He wants me to just let him win the battle. But the Lord fights for me, and He has given us His church to also fight alongside me. He will strengthen me and He will redeem all that the enemy has tried to steal. I also have confidence that the enemy wouldn't be bothering me unless I am doing something he doesn't like and that God is up to something in my life.

It's quite amazing how any of us from around the globe can be a part of this battle. It's amazing that God uses your prayers to help me fight my battles on this side of the world, and that He can use my prayers to help you fight your battles. Prayer transcends our locations. Are there any ways I can help you fight your battles? I'd love to pray for you!

Thank you for your continued prayers and support and encouragement as I serve here. It's a joy to know I am where God

wants me, even when it is hard. I am blessed to have you as a team behind me as I live and serve here. May God bless you richly as you continue to serve Him where you are at.

Amanda

### ***Praises***

- For a great start to the school year!
- For the lessons God is teaching me about fighting spiritual battles and how I am able to use those lessons to help others fight their battles.
- I am building relationships with my students, and life seems fairly balanced between work and life.

### ***Prayer Requests***

- Pray that I would continue to fight my battles well and would learn the lessons God is teaching me. Pray that He would use these battles to mold me more into His image.
- Pray that God would use this school year to draw our students into relationship with him or deeper in relationship with Him.
- Pray that God will provide a more permanent house for us by next summer, and that it will be closer to school and have more hosting space.

September 7, 2022

## **PowerUp! Prayer Update**

### **Praises**

- We had a larger group of girls for our Bible study this week, and we had some great conversation!
- I have been able to get in contact with all three of the locations I was needing to contact for our potential Outdoor Ed site for this year. That makes me so excited!
- God reminded me that I need to turn to Him for strength to help me fight my battles - that I can't just do it on my own.

## **Prayer Requests**

- Pray for wisdom as I lead my advisory group and as Kelly and I lead our Bible study group. We have had a lot of good questions, and the girls are really open and sharing a lot. There are things that are hard to hear, so pray that I will have wisdom on speaking truth and that God will draw each of the girls to a saving knowledge of Him.
- Pray that I would have wisdom in working out the details for Outdoor Ed. Pray that we can get good deals within our budget, and that I can schedule a site visit soon.
- Please continue to pray that I would fight my battles well, with the Lord's strength. Pray that I would run to Him and not seek to run away.

## **Ongoing Prayer Requests**

- That God will do great things in the hearts of students and staff this year at Faith Academy. Our school theme is Renew, Revive, Refresh.
- That Marissa and I would use our house well to serve our housemate and our community.
- That God would give me wisdom as I learn this new role of vice principal. Pray that I would learn to lead well and would balance my role as teacher and VP.

## DARWIN & KAREN STOESZ - JAPAN



September 5, 2022

### **Ministry Update**

Home Service in Kansas is a lot about sunsets and open sky and after living in Japan we really enjoy watching the beauty around us. Clara has started her freshman year at Berean Academy and is making friends. She really enjoys the lunch program. We are getting ready for a lot of travelling and we are involved in the community in several different ways, and it has been good to get to know our supporters and prayer partners better. We are so blessed to know that so many people have prayed for us through the years. Thank you!

### **Support Update**

We are still working out our faith promises to see where we are at and how much we will need to raise. We are so thankful for those who give sacrificially to our ministry. As you know the prices here in the United States is high, more than we had anticipated. Home service is a time that we get to reestablish our relationships with our financial and prayer partners, as well as travel to the SEND International headquarters. We cover these expenses with funds set aside for home service.

In addition to your faithful monthly giving, would you consider a one-time gift to help give us a boost in our home service account fund?

SEND International's office is located near Detroit, Michigan. All gifts can be made out to SEND International. You can give via mail or electronically. For convenience, many people decide to sign up online and choose to have their gifts automatically debited from their bank or credit card.

If you could put somewhere on your donation "Home Service Expenses". You can give via online <https://send.org/give/missionaries/stoesz/> and when you see the box, "Add instructions to the receipting department" just put "Home Service Expenses".

You can also send a check written out to "SEND International" and send it to PO Box 513 Farmington, MI 48332 and put a note with the check to have it go towards Darwin and Karen Stoesz Home Service Expenses.

### **Why missions?**

As we drive around the USA we see a lot of churches, sometimes more than one church on the same block. In Japan the situation is much different. The need for the gospel is great in Japan. There are few Christians in Japan resulting in very few churches. We must live with an eternal perspective. Here in Kansas the sky is just big, and I have taught my girls to look up at the sky and say, "God is big, and I am not." When we take the focus off ourselves and put it on God then we will understand what is important.

Darwin and Karen have responded to God's call in our lives by going to Japan for the past 18 years. We were willing to go, and we have had to make sacrifices along the way, and it has been worth it. We have been deeply impacted by Matthew's account what is commonly called the "Great Commission" as found Matthew 28:19-20. It reads, "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing

them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

### **Contact Information**

Our contact information for the year is:

Our physical address is 219 W 1st St Elbing KS 67041

Our mailing address is PO Box 33 Elbing KS 67041

Our main phone number for text and calling is: 316-708-0127 (Feel free to send us a text)

Thanks for your prayers for us.

Darwin

### **Prayer / Schedule Update**

Our tentative schedule so far is as follows. Of course, all dates are subject to change. Please pray for us especially for these events:

Wednesday's Darwin will be helping with AWANA as much as he is able despite his travels

Sept 27 Lunch with one of our supporters locally

Oct 9-11 Evangelical Mennonite Brethren Church – Lustre, Montana

Oct 13 Karen as she celebrates her birthday

Oct 21-23 Union Valley Bible Church – Hutchinson Kansas

### **Please pray:**

1. Praise that Darwin was able to preach yesterday at Whitewater Community Church.
2. Pray that Darwin's teacher Mr. Tsuneizumi and Karen's friend Yuko-san would put their faith in Christ.
3. Pray for Anna and Clara that they would have continued growing relationships with Jesus.
4. Pray for Anna at John Brown University and studies kinesiology.
5. Pray for Clara at Berean Academy that she would seek God and make good friends.
6. Pray for wisdom as we setup our schedule of activities for home

service.

7. Pray for safety as we drive many miles here in the USA

Thank you for your continued partnership in our ministry.

Thank you so much for your prayers, financial support, and encouragement so that we can return to Japan.

Sincerely, Darwin & Karen & Anna (19) & Clara (15) Stoesz

## HARLAN MOSS - PRISON LIGHTHOUSE MINISTRY



September 2022

***“As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, rooted and built up into Him, and established in the faith, just as you have been taught, abounding in it with thanksgiving. Colossians 2:6***

Some hymns that I sang in the church growing up still come to my mind. One of those songs was, “Count Your Blessings.” The second verse is, “Are you ever burdened with a load of care? Does the cross seem heavy you are called to bear? Count your many blessings every doubt will fly, and you will keep singing as the days go by.” In these days when there are so many discouraging things happening in the world, we must remember all of God’s blessings and be thankful for what He has done!

The prison has been having some problems getting enough officers. Sometimes that can result in lock downs. In other words, the men can only go to the dining hall to eat and go back to their cells, everything else is cancelled. This has happened two days this week. That makes for long days for them.

The chaplains were notified from the Secretary of Corrections, that we can no longer go cell to cell. We can only go from the entry of the prison to our designated place, (chapel office, chapel). We can still call for men to come to the office. This seriously limits my passing out Christian literature cell to cell! This is not only discouraging for me, but also for the inmates. For now, I can't visit with them at their cell! Some of the Christian inmates have stepped up by using their job location as a means to pass out Bibles and Christian literature in their designated areas!

During the Thursday evening church service, the men sang praises from their heart. I do the prayer time during the service, and I always ask for prayer requests from the men. A couple of weeks ago, I thought it would be good to just ask for praises and thanksgivings during our prayer time. It surprised me how many raised their hand to tell of a praise or a thanksgiving. One of the men said he was thankful that God helped him keep his cool that day with an officer! Another read a passage from the Bible about being thankful for salvation. One was thankful for the trials in his life because it has kept him depending on the Lord! Still another was thankful for the peace that God has given him! One man was thankful for the family of God! Another was thankful for the volunteers coming into the prison. There were many more praises and thanksgivings than there usually are prayer requests for their needs. Pastor Greg than had an encouraging message from the Word of God about God's peace!

Brothers-in-Blue took place on a Friday, Saturday, and a Sunday weekend. They spent time in prayer with the men and giving

testimonies. This was a real encouragement for the men trying to live a Christian life! We are very thankful for their yearly visit!

Please pray for the volunteer restrictions to be relaxed. Also pray for the staff and inmates because the stress levels are high right now.

All your prayers and financial support are vital for this ministry! Thank you for your support! In Christ, Harlan

## **PAUL & JANET HARKNESS - AWANA**



September 9, 2022

Happy Friday, Everyone:

For some, the weekend is a time of “freedom” and relaxation. For others, the weekend means ministry at their church. For us, this Sunday will mean travel. We will be heading to Rapid City for our Monday evening Awana Connect meeting, stopping by a church along the way to worship.

Please be praying:

-For the Awana Connect this Monday, September 12th, at Parkview Evangelical Free Church

-For the 7 new Awana Clubs! Three in Nebraska, four in South Dakota.

-For preparations for our grandson’s wedding on October 1st

-For safety in travel; building good relationships; opportunities to talk with pastors

Thank you for your faithful prayers! Paul Harkness  
Serving Nebraska, SE Wyoming, Southern South Dakota, & SW  
Minnesota

## **CRISIS IN UKRAINE**



“Well, that’s how everything got started: we slept in peace and quiet. I went to sleep late, when at 5am my son ran into our room and said ‘Mum, I’m scared!’ He heard the first explosions and woke up. He checked his Telegram and saw that the war began.

My husband and I woke up in a shock. What shall we do? Shall we get dressed? Shall we run somewhere? Where to? What? How? How can we live with it? Nothing was clear.

On April 8 we (my husband, son, mother, and I) left Kharkiv. While standing in a queue for humanitarian aid I heard about the church.

I called them and applied for help. My son and I have been coming to church for a month. There is always a nice atmosphere and kind people. Thank you so much for the help! May God bless you with health and peace!”

## Missionary Contact Info.

### **Amanda Benson:**

**Website:** send.org/benson

**Email:** oboejo09@gmail.com

**Address:** 113 E. Leighton St., Brandon, SD 57005

Tax-deductible donations can be sent to: SEND International

PO BOX 513, Farmington, MI 48332, Missionary #169352

### **Paul & Janet Harkness:**

**Website:** highplainsawana.org

**Email:** paulh@awana.org

**Phone:** 308.730.2468

**Address:** 1713 L ST, Ord, NE 68862

**To partner with us by your donations:**

Go to <https://www.awana.org/missionary/harkness/>

### **Harlan Moss:**

**Email:** hpmoss1@Yahoo.com

**Address:** South Dakota Prison Chaplain's Association, Harlan Moss, PO Box 90509, Sioux Falls, SD 57109-0509

**Phone:** 605-940-4220

### **Darwin & Karen Stoesz:**

**Our physical address:** 219 W 1st St Elbing KS 67041

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**Our main phone number for text and calling:** 316-708-0127 (Feel free to send us a text)

How To Give to North American Baptist Missionaries:

**Step 1:** Go to the NAB's new missions webpage **nabonmission.org**.

**Step 2:** Click on the "missionaries" label.

**Step 3:** Click on the national missionary to whom you would like to designate your support.

**Step 4:** Click on the "give to.." button on the national workers page.

**Step 5: Fill out the form.** All gifts given through the NAB are tax deductible.