

A.R.M. Journal

Building Bridges of Hope and Change through Volunteer Missions

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Appalachian Regional Ministry Launches "Ideas and How To" Web Page

Finally, HELP has arrived. You can now spell relief with the click of the mouse on your computer.



Frequently, short-term volunteers experience anxiety over how to come up with creative ideas or how to properly put their ideas into action while on a short term mission trip. Others grow frustrated when they arrive on the mission site and discover they are poorly prepared to do the mission

project such as a block party or a community prayerwalk. Or you arrive and find that you have more volunteers and time on your hands than you have mission opportunities. Now what do you do?

With just a computer that is online and the flick of the wrist, you can now discover multiple ways to be engaged in missions and evangelism at www.arministry.org/ideas.asp. The webpage links you to multiple sites that give you all the information you need to be engaged in innovative evangelism.

Perhaps you are a church planter, a pastor, or a missionary receiving short-term volunteers and you

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God Will Make A Way



Some call it a miracle. When MSC Missionaries Bessie and Lester McPeek helped a young mother with disposable diapers fourteen years ago, little did they dream that one day that simple step of obedience would result in a major ministry in Eastern Kentucky.

On Saturday, November 20, 2010, I joined with sixty-five others for the dedication service for My Father's House Ministry in Jenkins, Kentucky. Under the coordination of Calvin McFarland, a member of Monticello First Baptist Church (Kentucky), volunteers from thirteen states - Alabama, Georgia, Kentucky, Maryland, Missouri, North Carolina, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, and West Virginia and twenty-five churches during the past two years completed renovating the old NAPA building, adding a major addition, and building a storage and distribution center. The newly renovated building contains a worship center that comfortably seats 75 people, a full kitchen and a fellowship hall.

Two years ago while on a mission trip to Jenkins, Kentucky, McFarland listened as Lester McPeek shared his vision of a mission that would welcome and

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minister to those being reached through God's Love from a Diaper Bag, the ministry that he and his wife Bessie had started to reach out to impoverished mothers. Each month God's Love from a Diaper Bag ministers to over 400 mothers and their children in Eastern Kentucky and Southwest Virginia.

As the McPeeks started reaching out through their diaper ministry they soon discovered many needs that included assisting with baby food, formula, bedding, clothing, toys, hygiene items, and as the children grew up and started to school, food and school supplies. The ministry also provides baby showers for expecting mothers and birthday parties for the children through age two – all of which is handled through volunteers.

As the ministry grew and many of the young mothers made salvation decisions, the McPeeks began working to assimilate them into local churches. To their amazement they discovered that area churches were not excited about the ministry or the new Christians. One Sunday, at the prompting of Bill

Barker, the Director of Appalachian Regional Ministry, the McPeeks brought twenty-six children to an area church where he was speaking. It was quickly discovered that none of the children had ever heard the name of Jesus, never attended a church service or heard the Christmas story.

Within weeks the number of children attending Sunday School had grown to thirty-six and then came the resistance. The church leadership asked that no one affiliated with the ministry attend their church, in fact several area churches made the same request. It was in that dark hour of ministry when the McPeeks were experiencing resistance from other Christians, ridicule from area preachers, and felt all alone, that God gave them a vision of what He would do if they simply trusted Him.

McFarland shared during the dedication service how that he caught the vision from Lester and believed that God wanted him to help them get the building built that they needed. He contacted several Baptist Builder groups and recalled the day one of the Baptist Builders called him back and said, "How well do you know this guy down in Jenkins? He ain't got no money, no one to raise the money, and there's no way we will touch this project."

McFarland called McPeek and told him the bad news. Lester simply replied, "We ain't got nothing but God and if He wants a building, He will provide it if we step out in faith."

Over the next two years there were many obstacles and challenges and yet looking back both McFarland and McPeek acknowledge that there had also been many God moments, as God miraculously provided everything that was needed from an architect, men to put in the foundation, pour the concrete and lay the concrete block to providing all the materials and furnishings that went into the building. The building was dedicated debt free.

As the mission moves forward, three Kentucky Baptist churches – Providence Baptist Church, Oak Grove Baptist Church and Monticello First Baptist Church have partnered together to provide a bi-vocational pastor, Jeff Combs. Over the past month the church has averaged 22 to 25 each week in worship attendance and Bible study.

Combs shared that the mission needs some long-

term partners - churches or associations that will adopt the mission and assist them with consistent volunteers, resources, and financial assistance. The mission contains a dental lab, a distribution center for ministering to the area, housing for volunteers and a worship center.

Since February 2002, Appalachian Regional Ministry has worked closely with the McPeeks as literally thousands of short-term volunteers have come to the area to do a wide variety of mission projects that include home repair, Backyard Bible Clubs, sports camps, youth and children events, conferences for women, and multiple other ministry activities.

As I toured the facilities with the McPeeks, Lester paused and with the sweep of his hand said, "Nothing is impossible with God" (Luke 1:37). Today, with over 700,000 disposable diapers, 5,000 toothbrushes and tubes of toothpaste, and thousands of jars of baby food and boxes of groceries distributed, the words of Don Moen's song, *God Will Make a Way* come to mind:

*God will make a way
Where there seems to be no way
He works in ways we cannot see
He will make a way for me
He will be my guide
Hold me closely to His side
With love and strength for each new day
He will make a way....
He will make a way*

For information on how you can become involved in a long-term partnership with the new mission contact

Pastor Jeff Combs

Email: lindajeffcombs@yahoo.com

Phone: 606-391-9151

For information on how you can become involved in short-term mission opportunities contact

Bessie & Lester McPeek, Directors

PO Box 1084

9757 Rte 805

Jenkins, KY 41537

Phone: 606-832-4008

Email: bessiempcreek@hotmail.com



Pictures:

Bessie and Lester McPeek, Directors of My Father's House and Calvin McFarland, the project coordinator— page 2

Above top: volunteers and members gather for the dedication service in the new sanctuary

Above middle: the new Ministry Center

Above bottom: Food in the new kitchen being prepared for serving the guests in the new fellowship hall

Appalachian Regional Ministry

28 White Rock Road
Hurricane, WV 25526

Phone: 606-316-4298

Email: bbarker@arministry.org

Email: bbarker@namb.net

Southern Baptists on Mission in Appalachia

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Bill Barker, Editor

On the web at

www.arministry.org

www.uvolunteer.info

www.armtube.org

www.thebridge.namb.net

Appalachian Regional Ministry is an intentional missions response to the spiritual and physical needs of persons living in the Appalachian region to mobilize Southern Baptists and their resources to provide ministries, to evangelize the lost, to assist existing churches and to start new churches in the multi-state region of Appalachia.

Appalachian Regional Ministry is a Cooperative Program ministry of thirteen Southern Baptist State Conventions in the Appalachian region in partnership with the North American Mission Board and the Woman's Missionary Union.

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are looking for ideas and the “how to” guides for innovative evangelism and outreach into your community. If so, go to www.arministry.org/ideas.asp and discover ideas and instructions in abundance.

An old proverb states, “He who fails to plan, plans to fail.” A visit to www.arministry.org/ideas.asp will provide you with the tools and ideas needed to effectively be engaged in missions at home in your Jerusalem and wherever God takes you on your mission trip.

Good planning and strategy are important if you are going to have a kingdom impact and make an eternal difference while on mission. Consider:

- for every ten to twelve (10-12) short-term volunteers who are involved in a short-term mission trip there is a reported salvation decision;
- for every four to six (4-6) short-term volunteers

who are involved in a short-term mission trip who come praying, prepared and intentionally engaged in evangelism there is a reported salvation decision; and

- for every six (6) short-term volunteers who come prepared, intentionally engage in evangelism and assist with the follow-up and discipleship of each convert for the next twelve months, there is a baptism in a local Southern Baptist church.

In conjunction with the launching of the webpage, Appalachian Regional Ministry, Mississippi River Ministry and The Bridge have produced a bulletin insert titled “102 Ways Short-term Volunteers are impacting communities across North America for Christ,” that can be downloaded at www.arministry.org/ideas.asp or order by sending an email to bbarker@namb.net. For short-term mission opportunities across North America go to www.uvolunteer.info.