

MRC Kluster and Charleston and LifeSpring Visit--Vol. 9, No. 19

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At the East Harrison Street Church of God



Missions board at East Harrison Street



Setting up for the next MRC Kluster Meeting

Several weeks ago I reported on the Kluster Meeting at Idaville, IN. This week I'm sharing another such report. Instead of one large assembly this year the Midwest Region Conference (MRC) is holding a series of seven district gatherings across the region. The goal is to more effectively reach the grass roots and involve more churches by providing various workshops along with worship and some ministry up-dates. From everything I've seen and heard it seems to be working well.



The East Harrison Street Church of God facility

Two weeks ago Linda and I traveled with Bill Shoemaker to Charleston, IL to attend the fifth Kluster Meeting held at our East Harrison Street facility. Originally known as Mt. Pleasant the church organized May 9, 1874 in the home of John P. Hall and erected its first bethel two years later. In 1902 the church decided to erect a new house of worship which was later expanded in 1966 with a two-story addition. Then in 1982 the church broke ground for a new educational wing, and in 1999 they dedicated their new family life center and multipurpose sanctuary/gymnasium. We left Findlay at lunch time on Friday and arrived at our destination about six hours later. After checking into the hotel we went to the church building to unload and set up the Churches of God, General Conference (CGGC) display tables.



Bob Eatherton catches up with Pat Major (left)



The CGGC display area

When we finished set-up we went out for dinner with Bob Eatherton, MRC regional director, and “Butch” Kinnson. Then it was time for bed as it was a long day. Saturday morning early we headed back to the church building for the day’s events. East Harrison Street Church hosted the event by offering snacks and a luncheon for the 40 plus people who came and providing the worship music. The day consisted of a rotation between worship times and a variety of focused workshops. I conducted three: “Discovering Your Life Plan,” “Praying with the Psalms” and “Better Church Structure.” Bill led several on church development topics. Other leaders included Travis Bodden, Jeff and Julie Burns, Brian Miller, and Jeff Rockey.



Snacks and refreshments



Jeff Rockey leads a workshop session



The East Harrison Street worship team

In the afternoon business sessions Tom Toner and Tony Cargle were presented with credentials and later assisted in serving the Lord’s Supper (pictured below).



Tom Toner (left) and Tony Cargle (right) receive their credentials

The Kluster ended about 4 p.m. and after packing our stuff we headed north three hours to Joliet for the night.



The LifeSpring facility



Sunday morning we journeyed a few miles to Plainfield, IL to visit our LifeSpring congregation and our dear friends Fran and Linda Leeman. They planted this congregation in 1993, meeting in local school buildings, setting up and tearing down every week for seventeen years. The church bought ground to build in 2002, but it took eight more years to raise the funds and get the approvals to build. At the end of 2010 the church moved into its new home. I note all this to show the dedication and commitment required to birth and raise a church to maturity and viability. In 2006 the church launched <http://www.newlifeforhaiti.org/> as their prime mission focus. LifeSpring is everything its name implies.



An inviting gathering space at LifeSpring



When we arrived we were greeted with a sweet and tantalizing aroma. In his former life Fran worked as a baker and so every week he makes donuts for the church. Talk about creative outreach or maxing your talents! There must have been two dozen varieties or more! The worship room was festively decorated with beautiful floral bouquets, compliments of Fran and Linda's son Luke who had been married the day before.





The LifeSpring worship team



Pastor Fran gives the Sunday morning message at LifeSpring



Fran gave an excellent message on walking deeply in Jesus and invited all into the abundant life that only Jesus can provide. After worship Bill, Linda and I headed directly back to Findlay. I would have loved to visit, but I'm certain Fran and Linda needed some R&R after their full weekend.

Even for us this weekend was on-the-go, but we got to see Jesus at work in and through his Church, which is always uplifting. We actually arrived back in Findlay before dark and were able to do a yard walk and enjoy the blooms. It seems every day something new emerges declaring the glory of God. So let it be with us too!

ONE Mission together,
Ed
Soli Deo Gloria!