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Confirming the Churches

world evangelistic work of Al Parr
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July-August Report

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Dear brethren, family and friends,

Greetings from southeastern Michigan, where our work of helping to strengthen the faith and service of Christians continues to be well received and much appreciated. I have seen more encouraging results in these past two months than in the previous 6 months combined. After reading some of the details, will you help to spread the word of what is being done, and of what can be done in other places? Thank you.

After a happy and restful fourth of July holiday with my daughter's family visiting here for several days, I drove the four hours to Ludington, Michigan. The first of the two gospel meetings I mentioned in the last report ran July 10-14 with the James Street church there. Steve Baisden, who started the church about 8 years ago, had asked me to stand by for Holger Neubauer, who was scheduled for the meeting but had some concern that his health might not permit him to keep the appointment. As it turned out, his health was excellent; Holger preached Thursday and Friday, and I preached Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday. I also appeared on the church's regular 1-hour Sunday morning radio program, during which Steve interviewed me concerning my 1970 conversion from the Methodist Church. Steve and many regular listeners said that it was the best program they had done. We had several listeners call the station during the broadcast, some supporting and some challenging the things we taught. I was a professional broadcaster in the 1960's and had preached on the radio many times, but it was my first time on the air since 1989. Other lessons I preached during the meeting were, "You Can Understand the Bible," "Taking the Precious From the Vile," "A Proven Plan for Church Growth," and "One Lord, One Faith." Technical difficulties and lack of time to correct them have so far prevented the posting of these lessons online, but DVD's are available free of charge. Tell me what you want, or contact Steve Baisden directly at 219 S. James St., Ludington, MI 49431 (or steve@jamesstcoc.com).

The Saturday after that meeting ended was the VBS of the Saline church. About a dozen women and 3 or 4 men did an outstanding job of decorating the church building in a railroad motif for a "staying on the right track" all-day series of Bible lessons. Letters were mailed, flyers posted around town and handed to neighbors and strangers personally. We had twelve children in classes. The numbers sound discouraging, but I never saw a look – or heard a word – of discouragement in the saints who prepared long and hard, and gave their all to teaching and loving the children. I taught a summary lesson to the whole assembly before classes, and led several songs both at the beginning and the end of the day.

That same evening was an assembly of Christians from a wide area for singing in the building of the Ypsilanti church, meeting on Cross Street. Around a dozen churches participate in this fellowship that gathers, on a non-structured schedule, about every other month in the various cities. There are usually about 20 song-leaders leading for about 2 hours, and the local preacher speaks words of admonition and encouragement. I take my turn at leading singing.

The morning after the VBS and singing I began a 6-day gospel meeting with the Ridge Road church in Ypsilanti. The leadership of the church was overwhelmingly supportive of the preaching, and of the personal encouragement I gave to many of the members individually. There were a few visitors from the community, and one of them was among the three who publicly asked the church to pray for spiritual strength in drawing closer to the Lord. An uncounted number equaling nearly half the church privately spoke to me, the local preacher, Leonard White, and other leaders expressing repentance and recommitment to the Lord. Lessons for this Sunday-Friday meeting were "The Tie That Binds," "One Lord, One Faith," "A Proven Plan for Church Growth," "Jesus and Josiah," "I Will Follow Jesus," "The Mighty Gulf," "Less and More," and "My Ebenezer." On Sunday afternoon I also taught the song-leaders' class that is described on the web site (see <http://www.acts1541.org/classes.htm>). It was the first time I had condensed it into a 1-lesson study, but all in attendance said that it was very helpful, and encouraged me to teach it again if the opportunity arises. Except for the song-leaders' class, all these lessons may be heard on, or downloaded from, the Ridge Road web site at <http://www.ridgeroadcoc.org/page.php?12>.

The 18th Annual Michigan Bible Lectures were conducted in the facilities of three area churches (Saline, Garden City and Plymouth West) August 8-11 on the subject of the Epistle to the Hebrews. I spoke Thursday night on "The Superiority of Christ in Hebrews," and then Sunday morning on "Words For the Last Days" (various matters in Hebrews not previously discussed in the

lectureship). The four days were a very encouraging time of fellowship with saints from southeast Michigan, and from various other states – and I was able to promote this work publicly and privately. The Sunday morning lesson was in the regular assembly of the Garden City church. The elders and many of the members of the church thanked me for speaking directly and boldly about several of the specific points in that lesson (especially “last days,” and “whoremongers and adulterers”). At this writing I have no information on any online access to these lessons. Watch the Facebook page for updates.

During these past two months I have been able to a little bit of printing (funds are lacking for this important part of this work). A new tract titled “Why Should I Be Baptized?” was published, and has already been distributed to two area churches and is being used in the correspondence course programs of both. This tract should be posted on our web site (<http://acts1541.org/tracts.htm>) by the time you receive this report. The other printing was a new formatting of a tract I wrote 20 years ago: “Introduction to a Study of the Bible.” This is kept in the tract rack of the Saline church, and is being used regularly in local evangelism. This title has been listed, but the tract not posted, on the web site, but should also be up as you read this.

The personal evangelism class continues to meet Monday nights in my house. We took off two nights when more than half the class was away on vacation, but when we met again there were several reports of studies and attempts to study. The confidence is growing in the class members that they can actually lead their neighbors to Christ. Eight members of the church are also involved in a Bible correspondence course program that is currently growing at the rate of 10 new students each week. The program is about 3 years old, and there are now over 400 students enrolled. Nineteen have been baptized, including four during these past two months.

We welcome new contributor Sybil Pefley to our team. With her help the budget is now balanced for this year. Our sincerest thanks go to every individual contributor, and every member of every church that has helped to make this work possible. As may be clear above, there are small churches and struggling preachers all across America who are asking for such help as we are prepared to give. May God bless each one of you. The fund-raising letter for 2014 is going out at the same time as this report. You may read it on the web site (<http://www.acts1541.org/support.pdf>). If you can consider increasing your support, or know anyone who would like to hear about this work, please let me know.

My work generally does not provide or promise financial support to mission churches, but one of the faithful brothers with whom I work in India has lost nearly all of his personal and work support as a result of the age and disability of his primary U.S. supporter. This hard-working family of four is well worthy of support. If you can help, see the details on the web site (<http://www.acts1541.org/Ibrahimpatnam.htm>), or contact me for more details.

As of April 1, 2014 we expect to lose about two-thirds of our current support, so there is yet much to pray about in the coming months. Thanks, and may God bless you.

In His service,

A. L. Parr
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Contributions July 11 - August 5:

Greensboro Road church	\$250
Egypt church	\$100
Harrisburg church	\$100
Nettleton church	\$200
Drucilla McIntire	\$200
Sybil Pefley	\$200

(Make checks payable to Church of Christ and designate For: Al Parr mission work, and mail to the Greensboro Road church address in the header of this report)