

Looking Ahead

Carbondale Bible Fellowship



March/April, 2004

Volume 3, Issue 2

Prayer & Praise Update

Pray for James as he prepares for his ordination council which will be held on July 10, 2004 at First Baptist Church in Marilla, NY.

Pray for upcoming outreach events including a dinner this spring, Scrapbooking Basics, and a Dinner Theater in August

Praise God for His daily provisions in all of our lives.

Information Tidbits

Carbondale Bible Fellowship address:
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Find CBF on the web:

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(570) 282-2413

Carbondale Bible Fellowship is a church plant sponsored by First Baptist Church of Marilla, New York.

Upcoming Events

Sunday, April 11, 2004

Easter SONrise Service held with three other area churches. Service will be at 7:00 A.M. at the Lodge.

Saturday, April 24, 2004

Ladies' "Scrapbooking Basics" This will be the first ladies' outreach event of this kind. Please pray for a good turnout.



Thank you for your continued prayers and support.

TO GOD BE THE GLORY!

Contact the Schmidts:

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Spring brings plans for another formal seven-course dinner

Some of you may remember the article "Formality returns through CBF event" from the January newsletter. That article described the use of a seven-course dinner as a means of outreach. As a result of the dinner held in November as well as the previous one from June, 2003, several individuals from the community have told us of their interest in coming to the next dinner we host.

The purpose of these dinners is to allow members of the Carbondale community to gain trust in the people and ministry of Carbondale Bible Fellowship and through this trust to allow a future opportunity to share the Gospel with these community members.

About a month ago, James and Andrea went to visit a lady in town. She had attended a previous dinner and told us how much she enjoyed herself. She also told us how some of her friends had asked why we were doing this (the dinners). There were two main thoughts which came to their

minds. First, were we after their money? Second, were we there to convert them? In both instances, our lady friend defended our purpose stating that it was just something we wanted to do for the community. Please note that the relationship with this lady took a long time to build. We met this individual while we were members of a local library club. Praise the Lord for allowing us to have this friendship. As you can see from the questions asked, people are very skeptical. It is exciting to be able to win them over with a very fine, formal dinner. We have several prayer requests related to hosting a dinner this spring. Please pray with us for a location to hold the event. Pray for those who are planning this event as there are many details involved. Lastly, please pray for a good response from those individuals who requested another dinner. Our goal is to have 32 people come. We desire to have at least 22 from the community and 8 to 10 people from CBF or another local church who can host at the individual tables. We look forward to bringing a positive update this summer.

Clouds May Come, But the Sun Still Shines

By Andrea L. Schmidt

So many thoughts fill my mind as I sit to pen (type) this article. How do I begin such a personal and heart-wrenching account? How can I show what God has done and bring glory to His name on account of trials which James and I have encountered over the past month and a half? Well, here is my best effort. If you have actually made it through my introduction, perhaps I still have the opportunity to hold your attention through the next few lines. Please allow me to share what God has done in the past so that I may best share the recent events. I will start with a day to remember in 1998. On that sunny twenty-third day of May, James Ray Schmidt and I were joined in marriage. We knew God had called us together and we also knew He had called us to start a church in Carbondale, Pennsylvania. James and I had just graduated from Baptist Bible College two weeks prior to our wedding. We were young and excited to see what God had in store for us. Four months before our wedding day, God had provided the perfect housing situation for us. We knew James was to continue his schooling at Baptist Bible Seminary. We knew that there would be no possible way for us to have enough money for housing, schooling and living. So, on February 2, 1998, God gave us more than we



could have ever imagined. He gave us a three bedroom trailer on the top of a beautiful mountain. In exchange for caretaker responsibilities, our housing and utilities were completely free. Please note that much prayer went into this as our family's knew our need and prayed earnestly with us for God to provide. That provision was far beyond our dreams, yet God knew exactly what we needed. Then, in 2001, the property owner decided to allow us to have a new house. Since James' dad is a builder, he was given the opportunity to design and build a house which could be used for our ministry as well as our housing. Thus, God gave us another opportunity to glorify Him through a dream house which served as a meeting place for our preliminary Bible studies.

Bible studies had begun in the Fall of 2001, but they quickly required more space than our tiny trailer could afford. We moved into the new house in March, 2002—just in time. Once again, we saw God's hand at work in our lives and in the ministry of CBF. He gave us just what we needed at exactly the right time.

In January of 2003, we found a facility in Carbondale which was perfect for our Sunday meetings as well as a study for James.

Now, I will return to our personal story. God has brought James and me through so many circumstances which remind us of His sovereignty in our lives. Through it all, He has been right there beside us to lead and guide us. His love is overwhelming. He has allowed us to grow stronger in our

marriage as well as in our desire to serve Him.

Discouragements have come. Recently, we have felt overwhelmed with the tasks which are before us. James is still in Seminary. I am a full-time mommy of a very energetic 10 month old baby boy. James and I work a part-time job in order to maintain our housing. James and I also work together with the church plant and he is the pastor of this church plant. I do not share this as a means to complain. I want to be open about the feelings we as "missionaries" face sometimes. We are just simple, ordinary people who desire to serve God to the best of our ability. Sometimes reflecting on our blessings reminds us of where we have come from and how He will carry us on through the next trial we face.

Little did we know as we were facing such an overwhelming time in our life that there was a beacon of hope just around the corner. That beacon shone through on March 1, 2004. That is the day I discovered I was pregnant with our second child. I would love to say that we were exhilarated. However, it took time to allow our excitement to overshadow our recent discouragements. Then, we became very excited. We decided to tell our parents right away. When plans for a new child surface, there is so much hope and so many dreams. I was thrilled about having two children eighteen months apart. I couldn't wait to

start pulling out those maternity clothes and those tiny little outfits for a new life. My dear nephew and wife were also expecting a child around the same time. I was ecstatic to think of having our children grow up together. So much hope and so many plans filled one week of my life. Then, on March 10th, all of my dreams were dispelled as God allowed me to have a miscarriage. If someone had told me I would face this in my life, I think I would have told them I could not handle it, but God's grace is sufficient. He prepared me and allowed me to realize His ultimate control in my life. He has a plan, and He knows what is best. That situation allowed James and me to be alone and to get away for a vacation which we probably had needed for the month and a half before. This was finally the time to go away and get our minds off of things. We spent two days in Connecticut and returned so rested and ready to face more of God's plan. Not only has our dear Father carried us through, but He has also given us fellow laborers and brothers and sisters who have lovingly supported us and shared our burdens. We bring all the glory and praise to Him.

There are still uncertainties in our life right now, but even as I finish this, I am reminded that God will never leave us or forsake us. He has called us to this ministry and He is our sufficiency and sustenance.