

The Northwest Baptist

December 2007



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Sent By the "Sent One"

Dr. Charles Revis, Executive Minister



"My food," said Jesus, "is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work." John 4:34

Advent celebrates the Savior's entrance into the world to

accomplish a mission, a rescue mission that sprang out of the Father's loving heart. We were people cut off from the Living God and abundant life. Our sins left us condemned and without hope. Our Father would not allow people He had created to remain in such a hopeless state. Love compelled Him to do the unthinkable, to offer up His only begotten Son.

His heart would be broken just as His Son would be broken. The rescue mission was dangerous, difficult and His Son would pay the ultimate price. The mission's trajectory started at the cradle and ended at a tree. That tree had no lights or tinsel on it, only the red blood of a perfect man.

That pure blood was shed because we had rebelled against the One who launched the very mission that would rescue us. God's rescue mission to this dark world changed all of that. Through His death and resurrection Jesus transformed our enmity

against God into friendship. His death purchased our life. His captivity gave us freedom. His blood washed away our sins. In Christ, we who were once hopelessly lost have now been found! (see John 5:24-25) Uncountable blessings are ours because the Son gladly embraced the mission of His Father. No wonder we give gifts at this time of the year, for we have been given the greatest of gifts and many blessings besides.

But hold on! The mission isn't over. The mission continues. The first "Missionary" sent the "Rescued Ones" back into the world to continue the work of rescuing. This happened when the disciples were all huddled together in fear behind a locked door. Their leader had been crucified. There was a rumor about that Mary Magdalene had seen him alive again, but they weren't fully convinced. Instead they were waiting for the dust to settle. Perhaps the Jews were already on their way to stamp them out. To their utter amazement Jesus came and stood among them. As some were trying to figure out how he did this with the door locked firmly in place and while others were shaking in their sandals, He announced peace to them. Translated for today, he said, "Quit sweating it, I'm with you!" He showed them the marks in His hands and His feet from His recent suffering. And, just as joy and renewed hope were welling up in their hearts Jesus said,

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Sent By the “Sent One” (Continued from page 1)

“Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.” (John 20:19-20)

All too often we forget that all followers of Jesus are “under orders.” Every Jesus follower has been sent. Each believer is a commissioned believer. Every true disciple is a missionary. John MacKray said it like this, “The whole church must become a mobile missionary force, ready for a wilderness life. It is a time for us all to be thinking of campaign tents rather than of cathedrals.”

When we gather together for worship, we gather as the sent ones, who are scattered once again into the world. Huddling together behind locked doors on a Sunday morning fearful of the world beyond belies the church’s purpose. Instead, worship services are more like huddles in the midst of a football game. It’s a brief timeout to reconnect, look to the director, coordinate the next play, pick up the ball and move down the field a few more yards, all for the glory of God. Imagine how frustrating for a coach if the only play the team ran was the huddle. On the other hand, imagine how thrilling when the team touches the life of a broken, starving, disillusioned, despondent, or homeless person with God’s love. Or, the team reaches yet another person who otherwise was headed to an eternity separated from God.

The Advent season is an auspicious time for Jesus followers to be on mission. Whether you are working alone or in a team, this is a season to be aware that during Advent people far from God are especially open to God’s

love. Some will respond to an invitation to attend a worship service or candlelight communion. Others will join you when you go to feed the homeless or give toys to disadvantaged children. Or, how about something as simple as inviting some “pre-Christian” friends over for a meal and conversation?

Christmas offers us a time to reflect on the mystery of a rescuing Father who loved us so much He gave His only begotten Son. Such reflection will cause us to not only praise God for His great gift in Jesus, but it will motivate us to go forth and serve in obedience, for the world continues to be at the center of God’s rescuing heart. May your heart be warmed with the love and grace of Jesus throughout this Advent season.



Shift In Region Staffing for 2008

Since mid-2003 the Region has maintained a part-time “Communicator/Search Consultant Coordinator” position in Western Washington. After evaluating the position and how the Region works with search consultants the Region Board and Dr. Revis have closed out the position starting January 2008. The position is currently occupied by Rev. Skip Grover. The Region expresses gratitude for Skip’s assistance in this role. Skip will continue to serve the Region as a mentor pastor, search consultant and occasional coach. Rev. Patti Duckworth will assume responsibility for coordinating the work of search consultants across the entire Region.

As a way of a reminder the first contact person with the Region for local churches and pastors is with your nearby mentor pastor. A list of these individuals may be found on the Region web site at www.abcnw.org, click on the

Pastor Resources button on the left hand side. If you have trouble reaching the mentor pastor in your area feel free to call the Region office and ask for Charles Revis or Patti Duckworth.

The Region has established a new part-time position of Director of LLC Ministries starting January 2008. This position is designed to further the development of the Leadership Learning Community ministry for pastors. Rev. Clint Webb, senior pastor at Church on the Rock in Oak Harbor, WA, will assume this role. Providing 40 hours a month to this important work. Clint has been a mentor pastor from the inception of the program and is exceptionally gifted in leadership and encouragement. His church continues to baptize large numbers of people through a wide variety of outreach ministries.

ABCNW Biennial Gathering May 16-17, 2008 with Anne Graham Lotz

Every other year ABCNW holds a biennial gathering for the purpose of celebrating what God has been doing in our churches. We come together to worship, receive excellent training and hear God's Word preached. Our next biennial will be hosted by Southside United Protestant Church in Richland, WA and features keynote speaker Anne Graham Lotz.

The Biennial Planning Committee has chosen the theme "There Is a River..." with the theme text of Isaiah 41: 17-20. A portion of that text reads, *"I will make rivers flow on barren heights, and springs within the valleys. I will turn the desert into pools of water, and the parched ground into springs."*

Richland, WA sits above the massive waters of the Columbia River. This mighty river provides life-giving moisture that transforms the surrounding desert into a cornucopia of agricultural bounty. In like fashion Jesus is our River of Living Water. Through him flows life and grace. He is a spring for wanderers in a parched land. Our churches, our lives, are totally dependent on Him. It is our hope and prayer that this Biennial gathering will be one that renews our love for Jesus Christ. Ann Graham Lotz is uniquely qualified to inspire us to that end. A fundamental emphasis in her ministry is simply leading people to become more fully devoted followers of Jesus.

This year's biennial departs from previous meetings with a change of schedule. The Biennial officially launches on Friday morning, May 16 and concludes with an afternoon worship service on Saturday, May 17, 2008.

Many people travel great distances to attend an ABCNW Biennial. Anticipating that a good number will arrive early the Southside Church will be offering a free evening meal followed by a pre-biennial worship service devoted to prayer on Thursday, May 15th. Registration opens mid-afternoon on May 15th and continues through the morning of May 16th. Registration packets and more information will be mailed to all ABCNW churches in early 2008.

Please use the following biographical information to start spreading the word among your people about Anne Graham Lotz. Let's pray for an awesome, inspiring, Christ-honoring Biennial in 2008.

ANNE GRAHAM LOTZ BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Anne Graham Lotz was born and reared in Montreat, North Carolina, the second daughter of Billy and Ruth Graham. She is the wife of Dr. Dan Lotz, the mother of three children and three grandchildren.

From 1976-1988, Anne taught Bible Study Fellowship, a weekly Bible study class in Raleigh, NC of over 500 women. Her original class multiplied until today there are nine other classes of similar size in Raleigh.



In 1988, Anne established AnGeL Ministries, a non-profit corporation, which seeks to give out messages of Biblical exposition through her speaking, tapes and books.

In the year 2000, Anne launched Just Give Me Jesus, life-changing revivals for women, which have been held in over twenty-five cities around the world, including Seoul, South Korea; London, England; Cardiff, Wales; San Juan, Puerto Rico; Asuncion, Paraguay; Kiev, Ukraine; Panama City, Panama; Toronto, Canada and Oslo, Norway.

Anne was the only woman to be a plenary speaker at the International Congress of Itinerant Evangelists in Amsterdam in 1983, 1986 and 2000 and at the School of Evangelism in Moscow in 1991. She has been the featured speaker at conferences, seminaries, churches and universities on every continent of the world with the exception of Antarctica. She presently serves on the Board of Directors for the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association, the Board of Trustees for Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary and the Board of Regents for Baylor University.

Anne's aim is clear - it is to bring revival to the hearts of God's people. And her message is consistent - she calls people to a personal relationship with God through His Word.

Help! We Need a Pastor Rev. Patti Duckworth, Associate Executive Minister



One of the more challenging events in the life of a congregation happens when the pastor either resigns or retires. Sometimes members of the congregation might have a sense that a change is coming, especially in the case of a pastor's retirement. More often than not, the event is a surprise to many people. What may be even more of a surprise is that at any one point in time, a significant number of

churches are searching for their next pastoral leader. But that is a normal state of affairs. Still, when it does happen, it leaves any congregation with sense of concern and uncertainty. At the very least, people have a lot of questions and are not sure what happens next or where to turn for help.

One of the reasons Baptists have associated together as congregations over the past 400 years has been to provide guidance and assistance in seeking qualified, trained pastor leaders for their congregations. In fact, mutual aid in attaining qualified pastors was a key reason Baptists began to associate together in the late 1600s. Of course, there are horror stories about isolated churches being taken advantage of by lone wolf pastors who appear on the scene at what seems to be "just the right time," only later to be found wanting in leadership, integrity or a call supported by other churches. Drawing on the experience of hundreds of Baptist churches over the years, ABCNW has put together a process to assist churches during their pastoral leadership search. This process has much in common with what other regions provide for their churches but is adapted to meet some of the special needs within our region. While not perfect, it does provide the framework and assistance needed while at the same time allowing the Holy Spirit to work in our midst as churches seek the Lord's direction in calling a new pastor leader.

Timely Help

One of the challenges of the past has been to provide leadership and training for search committees as soon as an announcement of retirement or resignation was made. Calendars, travel schedules and other church needs often left area ministers struggling to meet this need of a church, especially when a number of churches were searching for a new pastor at the same time. In an effort to support search committees and church leadership during this important time of transition, ABCNW has begun to enlist and train individuals to serve as search consultants. Search consultants generally meet face-to-face with a search committee 4 or 5 times during the time of the search and are in touch on a monthly basis with the committee by phone and email.



The primary **ROLE** of a search consultant is to

- assist with the process the search committee engages in to find God's person for leadership;
- advise the committee about the process; and
- encourage the committee and the congregation to remain hopeful and faithful to the work they have begun, especially through consistent prayer times.

Conversely, search consultants are **not**

- members or regular attendees of the search committee;
- members or parts of the congregation;
- decision-makers for or with the search committee or congregation.

Additionally, search consultants are advocates for

- strengthening the congregation's partnership with other ABC/NW churches through financial giving;
- participation in area and region gatherings/training events; and
- the pastor's participation in Leader Learning Communities, the ethics conference, *Leading Edge*, and other similar gatherings.

At this time, we have 8 -10 search consultants trained with more consultants to be trained in the near future to be available throughout the region.

What Do We Do Now?

There is much that happens in the life of a congregation when a pastor leaves. There is grieving, and there are tasks to be done. There are good-byes to be said and questions to be answered. And Sunday worship, outreach, and discipleship still need to happen. To ease the uncertainty, we recommend the following steps and provide the described help in "writing the next chapter" of the church's kingdom work.

1. Church leadership should arrange for appropriate celebrations of ministry for the retiring or resigning pastor.
2. Church leadership should put together a search committee according to its rules of governance.
3. Church leadership should contact the region staff to request the services of an interim pastor and a search consultant.
4. The search consultant meets with the search committee on a scheduled basis to provide training and resource materials for the process of the seeking the person God is calling to be pastor.
 - a. The first part of the search committee's work is to create a "church profile" – the history, goals, vision of the church, and picture of the community as well as put together compensation for a new pastor (according to the church's governance rules). This profile is similar to a church's resume" to be shared with potential candidates.

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Help! We Need a Pastor (Continued from page 4)

- b. The second major aspect of the work is – through a process of prayer and discernment – to review materials presented by possible candidates, conduct interviews, and check references in order to narrow the list of potential candidates to one person to present to the congregation. The congregation then gathers according to its stated rules and votes to extend the call to that person to become pastor.

1. When the church profile is complete, region staff “searches” the American Baptist Personnel Services (ABPS) for possible candidates who general match the criteria given by the search committee.
2. Pastors who sense the Lord may be leading them to a new ministry will contact the region staff, submitting their materials. Those who seem to also be good potential matches are included in the list.
 - The Region staff are always visiting pastors they meet who seem to have the kinds of gifts and skills needed by our churches, asking them to prayerfully consider doing ministry in the churches of the Northwest.
3. Ministry Opportunities Listing (MOL) is published once a month and contains the names and general information of churches seeking pastoral leadership. Some people who believe the Lord is moving them to a new ministry will see this listing and contact region staff, asking to be considered by specific churches.
4. People hear about an open pastoral position via “the grapevine.” While some want to send their materials directly to a search committee, search committee members understand the best practice is to invite these people to contact region staff so they can prepare the same materials others prepare. This allows the search committee to compare similar input from all the candidates.

NOTE: During this process, the church’s life does not come to a halt. Often, this time during the search can be opportunity for reflection and new growth. In addition, the search committee calls on individuals outside the committee to assist with certain aspects of creating the church’s profile.

5. When the new pastor has been called by the church and accepted the call, the search committee’s final work is to arrange for a service of installation. This is a time of worship in which sister churches are invited to formally recognize, bless, and commit this person to the work of pastor-leader of that church.

Timeline

One of the first questions that congregations ask about the search process is “how long will it be before we have a new pastor?” The general answer is 12 to 18 months, on the average. Some wonder why it should take so long. The process allows for time to pray through all decisions, gives enough time and space to diminish some of the inevitable comparisons between old and new pastor, and to take stock of what God might be calling the congregation to be and do next. A timeline of the general events looks like this:

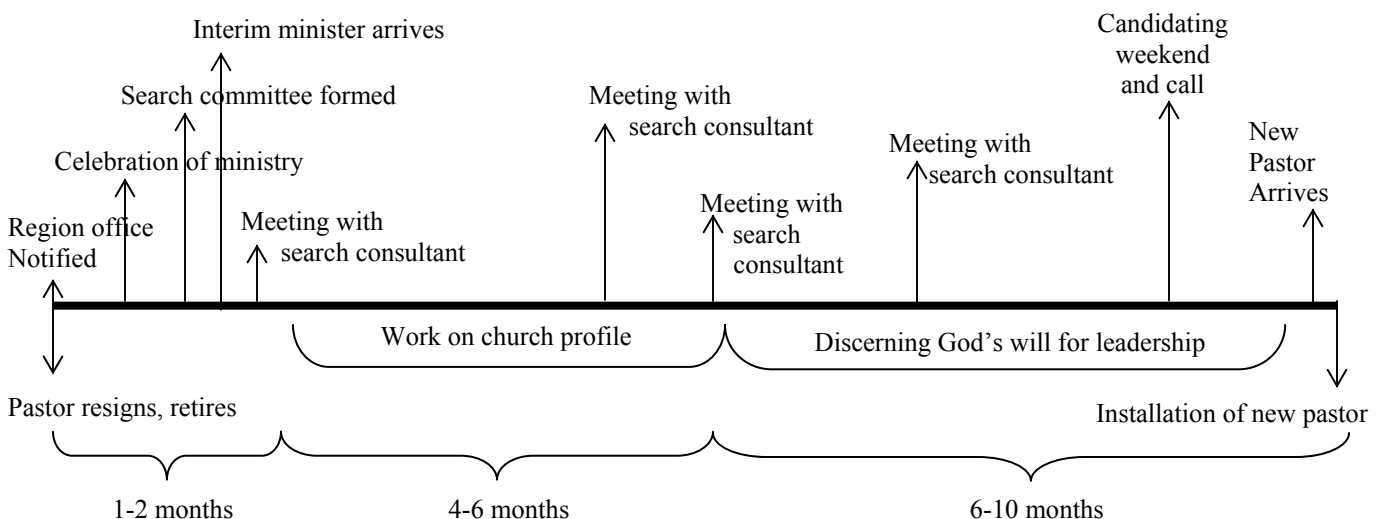
In all cases, the region staff attempts to screen all names given to the search committee in order to remove those who might not qualify because of misconduct or leadership issues. Search committees are instructed to complete reference and background checks before interviewing any potential candidate.

Need more information?

If you have questions or need help to get the search process started, contact Dr. Charles Revis (execminister@adelphia.net) or Rev. Patti Duckworth (duckworthpg@msn.com). It is our desire to assist every church in moving closer to God’s plan to be a vital, healthy, disciple-multiplying church, even in the time of transition between pastors.

And the envelope, please.

One other often asked question is “Where does the search committee get names of potential candidates?” There are four general ways the search committee receive names.



Around the Region

Dr. Charles Revis, Executive Minister

Rev. Jeffrey Cooper has started as the Senior Pastor of First Baptist Church Twin Falls, ID on September 4th. Jeff comes from Ohio where he served various ABC churches and was active in the ABC of Ohio Region.

First Baptist Church of Anacortes welcomed their new pastor **Eric Malamma** last September. Eric and his wife Monique hail from Lake Isabella, CA where Eric had served as the pastor of First Baptist Church for eight years.

First Baptist Church of Lewiston, ID called **Matt Jorgens** as their new pastor back in June. Prior to coming to the northwest Matt served as the associate pastor at the First Baptist Church Windward in Kailua, Hawaii.

First Baptist Church Bellingham called **Jeff Flint** to be their senior pastor back in September. Jeff will assume his new role on January 1, 2008. Meanwhile Rev. Steve Gage has served as the interim pastor while Jeff completes his studies for the M. Div. degree at Regent College in Vancouver, BC. Jeff has been FBC's associate pastor for several years.

Raymond First Baptist Church celebrated 100 years of ministry August 4-5 of this year.

Spokane Valley Baptist Church will celebrate their 100th Anniversary during April 11, 12, and 13 of 2008. In addition to celebrating what God has done in the past they are also celebrating where God is leading them.

The congregation of **FBC Snohomish** voted earlier in the year to close in order to merge with a nearby new church plant to form an entirely new church, The Bridge Church of Snohomish County. The new church is affiliated with ABCNW, ABC-USA, NW Baptist Convention (SBC), Puget Sound Baptist Association and The Bridge ICN, a missionary training and deployment ministry led by Rev. Tim Moore. Tim is also the founding pastor of The Bridge and the directional elder of the congregation (read: pastor). The new congregation has baptized a significant number of new believers this year and is active in many externally focused ministries to the community. The Bridge meets in the same location as the former FBC of Snohomish.

FBC of Idaho Falls recently issued a new "working" mission statement. It reads: *"We exist to love God and to introduce those in our community to an exciting experience in His love at FBC of Idaho Falls."* Pastor Melinda Oberhelman explains

that it incorporates both the Great Commandment (Matt 22: 37-39) and the Great Commission (Matt. 28:19-20) and sharpens the focus for their ministries in Idaho Falls.

Pastor Paul Burnham sends out a devotional email every day to his congregation, Newport Hills Community Church in Bellevue, WA. Paul customarily begins each devotion with a folksy update on some new project the church is tackling (such as the construction of their new lobby or planting plants in the new prayer garden). On other occasions Paul will start out with a personal story or reports on an area of the congregation's ministry. Paul segues from the story to biblical reflections. His words are wise, biblical and encouraging. Perhaps Paul will add you to his devotional email list if you ask. His devotions are an excellent way to use technology and keep the entire congregation spiritually centered and in missional alignment.

Congratulations to the newest church to join ABC of the Northwest, **Shalom Church** of Wenatchee is pastored by Rev. Sam Detwiler. Shalom had applied as an Affiliated Church to the Inland NW Area earlier in the year. During the fall meeting Inland approved the church's application which was subsequently ratified at the Region Board meeting in November.

During the Inland Northwest Area meeting, October 26-27, an **Ordination Council** composed of representatives from the Area's churches met to consider the ordination request for **Corey Laughary**, pastor of Palouse Community Church in Palouse, ID. The assembly reviewed Corey's theological paper and posed a series of thoughtful questions throughout the almost two hours of review. After discussion the group voted unanimously to recommend that the church proceed with ordination and for the Region to grant national recognition of the ordination upon its completion. The meeting was concluded with a time of prayer for Corey and his wife, Tina. This was the third year in a row that Inland NW Area has hosted an ordination council.

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First Baptist Church of Renton, WA called **Rev. Chester Gross** to be their new pastor on Sunday, December 9th. Chester had previously served as the executive pastor for Real Life Church in Maple Valley, WA. He has also served as a missionary in Mexico and Central America in addition to holding a variety of positions in churches through the past years.

Osburn Community Church (ABC) and Wallace Congregational Church (UCC) have recently called **Rev. Bob Evans** to be their pastor. These congregations are a "yoked parish" in that they share the same pastor. The Osburn church reports that Bob just recently finished his M. Div. degree in 2004 from Bangor (Maine) Theological Seminary and while studying there was pastor for three years at Kenduskeag, ME, a church associated with both the Congregationalists and American Baptists. Since graduation a couple years ago, he has done informal pastoral work in a small Presbyterian Church in Wrangel, Alaska, and has been working in Sandpoint, ID, with the developmentally disabled.

Kittitas Community Church recently called **Pastor Michael O'Cain** to be their part-time pastor. Michael also directs Koanonia Camp for the United Brethren just outside Cle Elum, WA.

During October ten people from four different **American Baptist churches in Montana** returned to **Pass Christian, Mississippi** where they spent five days working for "Randy's Rangers", a non-profit group that coordinates the efforts of several volunteer organizations there. The Montana trip was made by a church van generously donated by the First Baptist Church of Miles City and occurred between the dates of October 11-21, 2007. Four team members were from Emmanuel Baptist Church in Roundup; two from Yellowstone Church, Billings; two from First Baptist, Billings; one from First Baptist, Great Falls; and one from the small community of Florence in Western Montana. The 4000 mile trip took three days each way. All but two of the non-professional team were female, three were over age 70, and one was only eleven. Despite these limitations, in five days they managed to insulate two houses and install vinyl tile in another one. As the group returned home, they were struck by the huge amount of effort that it will take to restore normality to this part of the US. When they showed up, they were able to see for themselves the destruction and also were able to encourage others who live there as they continue tirelessly to put back the pieces of their lives.

Rev. Jim Steiner, senior pastor of Second Baptist in Boise, ID, has been leading Prayer Summits for churches throughout the Region. Recently he led prayer summits for FBC Ontario, OR and FBC Filer, ID. The reports coming out of these prayer summits have been most encouraging. Jim has more than a decade of experience with prayer summits having participated in many city-wide summits in Boise, ID. More often than not the church assessments conducted among the Region's churches will recommend an increase in the church's prayer life. Prayer Summits are one method among many for helping a church make prayer a higher priority.

Rev. Mark Wilks, senior pastor of FBC Chehalis, WA reports that the needs in Chehalis in the aftermath of flooding continue to be overwhelming, keeping the congregation constantly busy in assisting people who have lost their homes as well as helping with the clean-up efforts. Mark reports of two families in FBC who have completely lost their homes, and in both cases there is no flood insurance to cover the losses. Many other houses and businesses have been invaded by water, and although there is insurance for repairs, the need for assistance in the cleanup efforts continues. FBC Chehalis church members are helping others put their lives back together. To assist in these efforts ABC-USA has forwarded \$5,000 from the One Great Hour of Sharing offering.

Many of the books that pastors are reading in their Leadership Learning Communities make for **good studies for church leaders**, Sunday School classes and small groups. Among the many titles studied by ABCNW pastors the following would be standouts: *The Externally Focused Church* by Rick Rusaw; *Present-Future* by Reggie McNeal, *Beyond the First Visit* by Gary McIntosh and *Breakout Churches* by Thom Rainer. All LLCs will start reading in 2008 *Leveraging Your Leadership Style* by John Jackson and Lorraine Bosse-Smith. John spoke at the North Puget Sound Area gathering back in October.

Please continue to pray for these churches who are searching for their next pastor: Lynden Community Church (WA), Belfair Community Baptist Church (WA), Clearfield Community Church (UT), First Baptist Church Bozeman (MT), Blessed Life Church (WA), Immanuel Baptist Church (WA), Buena First Baptist Church (WA), Vida Community Baptist Church (MT), and Big Sky Church (Froid, MT).



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Tools For the Trade, Saturday, March 1, 2008 At FBC Kent, WA



Main Speaker:
Dr. Jeff Johnson,
Pastor, Evangelism
Expert and Trainer,
and part-time
Evangelism Director
for National
Ministries

Far West and North Puget Sound Areas are working together under the guidance of Rev. John Lyttle to host another excellent Tools for the Trade event in the spring of 2008. Jeff Johnson is an excellent preacher and trainer with a contagious passion for evangelism. Our evangelism consultants (aka “associates”) can vouch for Jeff since they’ve all received his training in evangelism styles. Plan to bring a host of leaders, workers and folks from your church. This will be an excellent event, just as it has been in previous years.



Growing Healthy, Mission-Focused Churches that Multiply Disciples

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