

**Baptists
for Life inc.**

Holding forth the word of life. Paul Gill

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ALGAE-COVERED PONDS are a common sight around West Michigan during summer months. Floating carpets of green are a sign the water has turned stagnant by inactivity.

Stagnation isn't only a physical phenomenon. If believers don't watch out, spiritual pond scum can quickly overtake them, leaving their Christian testimony ineffective. In fact, inactivity for the cause of Christ can stagnate an entire congregation.

But, do we stir the waters just by being busy? No. Avoiding stagnation requires a commitment to spiritual renewal, or ongoing transformation. The Apostle Paul put it this way: "Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind." (Romans 12:2a).

This process is vital to the health of a local church. Transforming people make for a strong work and dynamic witness for Jesus Christ. In the same way, compassionate pro-

life ministry is fueled by men and women passionate for biblical transformation.

In the first eleven chapters of Romans, Paul lays out some heavy doctrine, but by the end of chapter 11, he's breaking out in praise for God's wonderful work and mercy. Then, at the beginning of chapter 12, he exhorts his readers to respond by leading lives of ongoing transformation.

Living water looks clear and sparkling. What does a fresh, transforming spiritual life look like? According to Romans 11:33-12:2, transforming Christians . . .

Rejoice in the unending and unmerited sovereign mercies of God.

Rest on the spiritual altar of sacrifice for the glory of God.

Renounce identity with the world for the testimony of God.

Renew their thinking in obedient response to the Word of God.

Like algae in a pond or weeds in a garden, the pressing worries and responsibilities of daily life can soon choke out one's commitment to serve God faithfully (Luke 8:14-15). Regularly renewing our minds in compliance with God's Word is vital for fruitful outreach and ministry.

So, how's the process of transformation coming along for you? Are you being renewed and refreshed daily in your Christian walk? Or have you become stagnant? Stir the waters. Thank the Lord for His work in your life and ask Him to use you for His glory today.



Ray Paget, BFL
executive director

FALL 2002 REPORT

Scholarship Program

Since our first fact-finding trip to Romania in 1997, Baptists for Life has committed a major portion of our outreach to developing pro-life evangelistic ministries on foreign fields. Recognizing the dire need for trained and committed foreign pro-life leaders, BFL in 2001 established a Pro-life Ministry Educational Scholarship Fund for Foreign Students studying in the United States.

To qualify, students must have experience in pro-life ministry in their own countries, preferably with organizations in partnership with BFL. Also, they must be enrolled in an approved Christian institution of higher learning in the U.S. and pursuing course work applicable to pro-life ministry. Students selected for financial assistance must also plan to return home for employment in pro-life related work or ministry.

Our first participant in the Educational Scholarship Fund is Ana Maria Popovici of Romania. BFL board member, Tom Ritchie, first met Ana Maria at a pro-life conference in Romania where she

expressed a desire to be involved in PCC ministry. After graduating from Bible college with a degree in counseling, Ana Maria served as assistant director for a BFL-associated center in Brasov, Romania.



Determined to gain more counseling proficiency, Ana Maria (photo at left) applied for entrance into Grand Rapids Baptist Seminary's masters of biblical counseling program. She was accepted, began her schooling in the fall of 2001, and is now in her second year.

If you'd like to add to the scholarship fund, or learn more details, please contact our office.

Ultrasound for Peru

With the opening of a third center in Lima, Peru, New Life Prenatal Center continues to reach women facing unplanned pregnancies and those suffering from the pain and anguish of their abortion choices. Many of these women have been saved and are now actively involved in discipleship programs through associated local churches.

You may recall that a year ago we announced our intention to purchase an ultrasound machine for the newest Lima center. In less than a year we were able to find and purchase one that is only a few

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years old and will more than meet their needs. New Life's medical professionals are already familiar with this model, and manufacturer technicians are available in Lima for any maintenance and servicing it may require.

As of this writing it's ready to be shipped, however we're still awaiting documents from the government that will enable us to get it into Peru as humanitarian aid. Please pray with us that this need will be met soon.

Pennsylvania PCC Encouragement Day

This year, instead of hosting a two-day PCC training conference in Pennsylvania in April, we tried something different. We designed an "encouragement day" for August 13 to gather center personnel for discussion, fellowship, prayer and worship. Attendance exploded from around 40 to 85 guests.

In the morning, we divided into eight networking groups to discuss topics such as marketing and promoting a PCC, the pros and cons of a PCC becoming a medical clinic, how to encourage volunteers, and how to care for donors. After lunch, a representative of each group shared their ideas with the entire assembly. The day ended with prayer, worship, and a splendid dinner.



Sherry Cammie (center), director of Small Beginnings Pregnancy Center in Oxford, PA, leads a discussion on ways to offer material assistance to clients.

Here's what one participant had to say: "... Encouragement Day . . . was just that. I am new to . . . the world of development (fundraising). I have been blessed by my director's support in sending me to various seminars, mostly secular. . . . So why does your offering stand out? Because Jesus was invited and He came. I do my work because of Him, and to have Him involved in my learning that day was refreshing and, for me, essential."

Networking is something new we tried earlier at this year's Leadership Summit in Grand Rapids, on July 18-19. Attendees were able to connect with others and benefit from their experience, as well as share ideas of their own. Even though our speakers and workshops were much appreciated, by far the most popular feature was the networking session.

Quick Clips

- This January will mark the 30th anniversary of the Roe v. Wade decision.
- In July, Evelyn Stone and Ray Paget taught more missionaries how to take pro-life ministry to the foreign field.
- Donna Harris takes the LIFT training to Minnesota in October.
- BFL is raising funds to build a home for AIDS orphans in South Africa.
- Access our prayer calendar online at www.bfl.org/calendar and become a Prayer Partner today!

Golf Marathon

Our fourth annual golf marathon, on August 19, was a success in more ways than one. God truly intervened on our behalf.

Sunday had been absolutely beautiful, but a thunderstorm greeted us as we rose early Monday and made our way to Cedar Springs, Michigan. For the next six hours, heavy rain soaked West Michigan – everywhere except at Cedar Chase

Golf Club, the site of our marathon. We experienced only about a half an hour of rain around lunchtime, then the sun came out and we had a gorgeous day. This was a tremendous answer to prayer.

So was the overall response to the marathon. Nineteen teams enjoyed 100 holes of golf and raised awareness and support for the ministry. After expenses, over \$20,000 in pledges and gifts was brought in.

Next year's event will be Monday, August 18. If you've never played in our marathon and want information about the 2003 event, give Tom Lothamer a call.



Mike Bartels puts everything into this shot on the par 5 number 15.

Tom Lothamer, BFL director of finance and development, participates in a discussion about donor care and fundraising during the PA Encouragement Day.



Current financial picture: As you can see, the Lord continues to bring us many opportunities for ministry – and we haven't even mentioned our work with local churches, our web site, and our publications. We're just continually grateful He allows us to impact the lost for His kingdom.

We've struggled financially in 2002. Gift income has been down, making it even more challenging to move forward as planned with all our ministry programs. Yet, He is at work through the prayers and gifts of our supporting churches and friends.

To make a long story short, we need roughly \$150,000 in gift income between now and year's end. Will you please pray that the Lord will provide for this need through His people? And will you consider being part of the answer to this prayer? Thank you so much!