

**"Growing Godly Generations"**

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# Fellowship News



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## Reflections on the New Year

by Carrie Middleton

*"As for God, his way is perfect: The Lord's word is flawless; he shields all who take refuge in him."*  
Psalms 18:30

We've all heard it said that life is a journey, and 2009 is leading me down some roads I'm a little unsure of. Usually, I can't wait to get older. Usually, the failures of the past year leave me more than happy to welcome a new one and start over. But 2008 was good. The year went in a different direction than I expected, but it was filled with many blessings. I'm grateful for these past twelve months and the experiences and personal growth that I've gained from them.

On the flip side, this means I'm not terribly eager to see 2008 end or to leave my status of being 15 years old behind. I'm comfortable with where I am and how things are. I'm hesitant to accept the change, but the truth is it's not mine to accept. Every year, every month, every week, and every day, I am setting off into the great unknown.

There are things on my horizon this year that honestly frighten me. I'll have to learn to drive — I've had nightmares about that scenario already. My education path will likely be changing drastically. I'll hopefully be entering the workforce. And, God and church staff willing, I'll likely be leaving the country for my second missions trip, an experience that all but demands personal growth. There are challenges ahead of me, bumps in the road that I'd probably rather postpone a little while longer if I had the choice.

But none of these things I worry about are certain. Nothing is. This year could contain absolutely anything, and the only way to find out what it holds is to live it. If

life is a journey, I don't know where I'm going — but no one does. As James chapter 4 tells us, none of us know what will occur tomorrow, let alone the rest of a year.

This thought is paradoxically comforting and unsettling. Maybe I don't need to be concerned about any of it or maybe the things in store are worse than what I'm envisioning. But in the end, it doesn't matter. My life, as well as yours, and the entire world, rests in God's capable hands. All we have to do is go where God leads us. Unfortunately for our questioning nature, we don't always know where He is taking us.



**Carrie Middleton**

However, living a Christian life is not necessarily about knowing what God wants us to do, but being willing to do whatever it is. Hebrews 11:8 says, "By faith Abraham, when called to go to a place he would later receive as his inheritance, obeyed and went, even though he did not know where he was going."

All we need to do is obey God. No matter what uncertainty or anxiety you are faced with this year, you can take comfort in the fact that God has a plan for your life, and He will not lead you astray. Our most important task in life is to follow God where he leads us even when we don't know where we are going.

So, I am going to try to trust 2009 to God, with confidence that everything will happen for a reason and go just as He plans it to. I pray that we can all have this faith and have a blessed new year.

*"And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose."* Romans 8:28

### Questions and Answers - continued from page 3

limited to, the following: the favorable reaction of those in our 9:00 service to Mike Martin's choice of worship music which has represented a blend of both the traditional and contemporary; a strongly positive reaction to our combined worship event back on October 12 ("The Church Has Left the Building" Outflow Sunday); Andrea Baugher's decision to step down as our praise band leader for the 11:30 service after six years of faithful, dedicated volunteer ministry; the current construction/remodeling effort of the church's primary restrooms which would necessitate the 11:30 service meeting in the sanctuary temporarily; the support of our entire program staff (Pastor Glenn, Mike, Beth, Aimee and myself) when we consider the overall effect of these changes upon all aspects of our ministry.

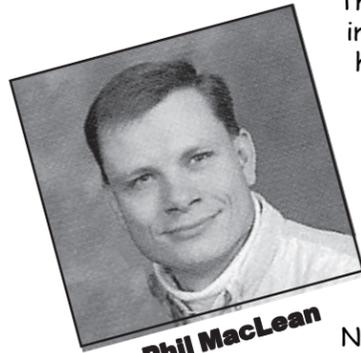
Frankly, the most compelling reason for me is the growing sense that God Himself has orchestrated these events and developments and is moving us toward this change. Again, I would not have thought this kind of change would benefit the church as recently as six months ago, but it would appear that the Holy Spirit is nudging us in this direction. I can honestly say that your staff and leaders are simply trying our best to listen to the Lord and obey His leading. We want to discover His purpose and plan for our church in all areas — including worship — and then follow it.

#### 4. What can you do to help?

Patience. Prayer. Perspective. Any change impacts people both positively and negatively. So, first of all, we need your patience. Give the new schedule a fair opportunity. Be open and flexible regarding changes in the worship service itself. Secondly, we need your prayers. **Prayer is the single most important act you can offer in helping us make the right decision.** Of course, we want your input and thoughts about the changes. But, most of all, we covet your prayers to hear clearly what the Lord wants us to do and that we'll have the courage to do it. Finally, we ask you to keep a proper perspective. Let's all abandon "the search for the perfect worship service" that has only alienated evangelical Christians across our country from one another and resulted in needless division and heartache in congregations. All too often "the perfect worship service" is a reflection of our own preferences! I am convinced that great worship is a by-product of our church's ability to keep the main thing the main thing! In other words, if our primary objective as a church is to be outwardly focused (reaching the lost and being salt and light to our community) as indicated in Matthew 28:19-20, then, I believe, we will experience great worship as just one wonderful result.

## KRBC Athletes in Action

by JoEllen Landman



**Phil MacLean**

The beginning of a new year often finds folks setting personal goals for self improvement. Who hasn't thought he should exercise more and take better care of his health? Two members of our church family combine hobbies with good health habits and make it look fun in the process.

**Phil MacLean's** sports of choice are running and weight lifting. "I've only been running for about two years. I'm not 100% sure why I started. For my whole life, I was a lousy runner so I guess I began mostly to take on a new challenge. Initially, I just hoped to run a local 5K race," Phil said. He runs 3-4 days a week averaging 20-25 miles per week and also spends time working out in the gym. He progressed from running in two half marathons in 2007 and 2008 to completing the 26 mile Nationwide Better Health Columbus Marathon in October with a final time of four hours 36 minutes. He also competed in a few triathlons and /or duathlons in 2008 and is a member of the KRBC Iron Man softball team.

Phil's next challenge is competing in the 5K Pump-n-Run at the Arnold Classic in March. It combines a 5K race with a bench-press competition. Competitors bench press their weight (or a percentage of their weight, depending on their age) as many times as possible. Their time in the 5K race is then reduced by 30 seconds for each bench press repetition completed. Phil also is planning to run in the Capital City Distance Half Marathon in the spring. Phil's wife Karolyn (herself an avid walker) and their daughter, Sarah, will certainly be cheering him on from the sidelines.

Phil said running and training can be both challenging and relaxing. "I enjoy the fact that it can be peaceful and it gives me a chance to be alone with my thoughts and listen to music on my iPod. It can be monotonous, however, and it can be painful when the mileage builds to marathon length. The only person I ever compete against is myself, sometimes trying to run a distance I've never done before, or beating a personal best time for myself," Phil said.

**Barb Baroni** is hooked on curling. Most Americans recognize the sport from watching the 2008 Winter Olympics. Curling is a little like shuffleboard except curlers propel a 42 pound shaped granite stone down an ice sheet by grasping the stone handle and throwing the stone forward. Each four person team slides eight stones down the sheet during one end. A game has eight ends. As the stone slides, two team members sweep the ice in front of it with brooms. A good sweeper can make the stone glide farther, move straight or curl by making the surface slicker. All curling stones come from the same quarry in Scotland.

Barb's parents have curled for more than 50 years in Albany, NY. (Barb's dad is 81 years old and still curls.) Barb began curling four years ago at the Columbus Curling Club at the Chiller ice rink. The club now has its own facility in an old north side warehouse at 2999 Silver Drive, just north of Weber Road. The 100 member club is looking to expand now that it has its own place. Trial memberships are available for the curious. Barb said all ages can curl. Flexibility helps but there are several methods of delivering a stone, Barb said. The club is closed in summer as it's difficult to keep the ice nice in warm weather months, and too expensive.

Barb played soccer for 24 years in an organized league so she is no stranger to team sports. "I don't like anything as much as I like soccer." She and her husband Bob are on a mixed curling team and both are on competitive teams. "I love team sports. Curling is a strategy game. It's a gentlemen's game. You call your own foul. You always shake hands and say 'Good Curling!' You don't trash talk your opponent," she said. Barb has made lots of new friends through the sport from other states and Canada. She encourages everybody to give it a try.



**Barb Baroni**



## Medical Mission Update from the Obregons

by Doctor Pete Obregon



**Judy & Dr. Pete Obregon**

First of all, Judy and I would like to thank Karl Road Baptist for its faithful support of our ministry these many years. You made it possible for us to do God's medical mission work in foreign countries. You have supported us faithfully, not only financially, but also with your love and prayers.

About 160 of you have joined us in many mission trips the past twenty years. We fondly remember the time that practically the entire congregation was involved with gathering, packing and loading the 40 foot container we sent to the Ukraine in 1993. Our church is really a mission minded, mission sending and mission preaching church.

I have been a member of KRBC since the early 1970's when Dr. Bowser was the Senior Pastor. Judy joined the church in 1989. I am a product of the American Baptist missions in the Philippines. My parents were one of the first students of Central Philippine University, an American Baptist school where I was also educated. When I finished medical school, I promised the Lord that I would serve Him in some capacity in the future. I didn't realize at that time that foreign medical missions was what the Lord had in mind.

When we were in active surgical practice in Columbus, we started two

homeless shelter clinics at the Open Shelter and Faith Mission. Many of you have also been involved in that work. We did short term mission work before we started the clinics which we loved to do. We thought this was all the Lord wanted us to do for Him. However, He had other plans for our lives. He kept nudging us toward foreign medical missions. The Director of Medical Ministry International also kept pleading for us to become Director for MMI. In 1993, at the height of my successful surgical practice and not yet ready for retirement, we took a leap of faith and decided to quit surgical practice and work full-time for MMI as Director for Asia, Africa and Eastern Europe...Judy as Project Director and myself as Medical Director. This year we are celebrating 15 years as full-time short term missionaries and 20 years total as participants prior to becoming full-time directors.

God is good, all the time! He has given us good health, wonderful and generous financial supporters and wonderful and faithful prayer partners who helped sustain us in our work. We have had the privilege of taking more than 120 teams to 38 different countries of the world. Our teams have operated on 7,000+ patients and treated 25,000+ dental and medical patients.

We are not only privileged to be used by God to minister to the physical, mental and spiritual needs of the poorest of the poor but also to serve and influence those who serve on our teams. Lives have been changed in these mission trips. There are a number of you in our congregation whose lives have been changed and who are serving the Lord in many different areas of ministry. This is one of

the most satisfying and gratifying parts of our work.

In 2008 we took teams to Chiang Rai in northern Thailand and Vientiane, Laos in February; Winneba, Ghana in April; Blackfeet Indian reservation in July; Playas/Galapagos, Ecuador in September; and Soddo, Ethiopia in November. We're advancing in years, but not getting old. We have slowed down from 10 to 12 teams a year to 4 to 5 teams a year. God willing that we can continue to maintain our good health and to continue serving in missions. We will pass the baton to our younger colleagues like Doctor Steve Foor and Doctor Matt Campbell when we will no longer be able to do surgery. Yet we hope to continue to do medical work in some capacity.

We also work in the Free Clinic at Vineyard Church in Sunbury, Ohio for people who have no insurance and have no physicians. They have fallen through the cracks in our medical system. God willing, in 2009 we plan to take teams to San Juan, Boliia in February; Kibogra, Rwanda in August; Nkhoma, Malawi in September and Puerto Viejo, Ecuador in November. We may also take part in disaster relief in New Orleans or Galveston, Texas in July with either Campus Crusade for Christ or Habitat for Humanity.

Thank you again so much for your love, prayers and support all these years.

