



**Ceresco Baptist Church**  
**The Ceresco Messenger**  
**May 2021**

## One Great Hour of Sharing Announces 2021 Theme “Let Love Flow”

Dear American Baptists,

The season for the promotion of One Great Hour of Sharing has begun! The theme of this year's annual offering is *Let Love Flow*. Despite the many ways in which life has been restricted in the past year, I think you will be encouraged to learn how your gifts to One Great Hour of Sharing did indeed *Let Love Flow*.

The year 2020 was unlike any year we have witnessed in our lifetime. Record-breaking fires on the west coast of the U.S. devastated communities and burned millions of acres. An extremely active hurricane season brought destruction to the Gulf Coast. A massive explosion in Beirut displaced thousands of individuals. All these events happened during the prolonged COVID-19 global pandemic. We are living in a time of uncertainty greater than that with which we are familiar. And yet, even with so much that is unclear about the future, one thing is certain: through this ministry of One Great Hour of Sharing, you continue to *Let Love Flow*.

The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted every area of our personal and communal lives. In the same way, it also touched every area of the work of One Great Hour of Sharing: sustainable development, disaster relief, and refugee support. With so many in need, your compassion is more important than ever.

Our reality is that we have carried into 2021 many of the same challenges. Disasters will continue to occur. Displaced populations remain vulnerable. And hundreds of millions of people around the world struggle under the weight of poverty. Thanks to your faithfulness and generosity, One Great Hour of Sharing will continue to respond.

Events of the past year have shown us that even in times when we cannot be physically together in one place, our offerings to support One Great Hour of Sharing continue to strengthen our church's presence all over the world: providing water to the thirsty, food for the hungry, and hope for the weary. When you give to One Great Hour of Sharing, you “*Let Love Flow*.” Your generosity ensures that, even during uncertainty, the transforming power of love continues to change the world.

In grateful partnership,

Lisa Rothenberger-Winter, World Relief Officer



**One Great**  
**HOURL**  
**OF SHARING**

We are collecting the OGHS Offering during  
May & June in honor/memory of moms/dads.

## **A Snippet of Ceresco Baptist Church History – Part 2 (Continued from the April, 2021 Messenger)**

The previous article told of the fire at the church in the early morning hours of September 3, 1986. Also, how church members quickly took action to reconstruct the damage and through the grace of God, make improvements.

Because of the concern of the firemen, Bibles, hymnals, library books (on shelves in the Narthex) and other physical properties of the church were moved away from the fire. Extensive damage was incurred in the front of the building and the rear of the sanctuary. As the men entered the building, an explosion was heard which later was found to be the  $\frac{3}{4}$ " thick glass from the upper-story cry room (now the balcony). As the glass fell, it damaged three pews, two pew cushions and a large-print Bible. The educational wing suffered smoke damage and the "old" Fellowship Room received the water.

Several area churches offered use of their buildings for services however, it was the consensus that services be held in Ceresco. A large white posterboard sign was attached to the church sign inviting everyone to "Come Rejoice with us at the Ceresco Community Building on Sunday at 9:45 A.M. for Worship." GOD TAUGHT US TO GIVE THANKS FOR OUR BLESSINGS.

Meetings and work began in earnest following that first Worship Service. Since none of the Rebirth (reconstruction) Committee had ever experienced the devastation of fire, they were faced with a new and somewhat frightening experience. Church Mutual, the insurance company, was contacted for names of firms for cleanup. Consumer's Power (now Consumer's Energy) was contacted to restore power to the educational wing. A cleanup crew was hired to mop, dust, wash walls and generally get rid of smoke from the educational wing and they began that task immediately. That allowed Worship Services to be held in the "new" Fellowship Room for the duration of the reconstruction since the only damage to that portion of the building was smoke and later, construction dust. A spinet organ, on loan from John and Betty Stange and the upright piano were used. The room created a warm and somewhat less formal worship, but the presence of God was felt just as much and everyone was extremely thankful that He spared that part of the building. GOD TAUGHT US COMMITMENT. Our temporary sanctuary saw many activities during the week which required extra love and labor but again God's love shown through others. The Hanging of the Greens was no less exciting that year brought everyone together working on that project. The choir presented their Christmas Cantata. GOD TAUGHT US TO WORK TOGETHER.

Stars shone through holes in the roof in the sanctuary. The independent adjuster, George Pahl, toured the building, taking inventory and asking questions. The organ, which suffered minor water damage, the piano and pulpit furniture were moved to classrooms. Forms from the adjuster to determine the insurance company's responsibility were completed listing all personal property destroyed. That was a monumental task but the Committee received help from others in the church.

Several contractors were contacted and two placed bids – Quality Construction of Detroit and South Central Contracting, Inc. of Jackson. On Sunday afternoon, October 26, the Rebirth Committee traveled to Rives Junction Baptist Church in Jackson for the purpose of looking at the workmanship of South Central. Rives Junction was destroyed by fire in January of 1986. The work done by South Central was exceptional. The Committee met the following Wednesday with the adjuster and South Central owner, Butch Morris and his assistant, Bill Braman. The Rebirth Committee voted unanimously to hire South Central. Butch requested only one thing from the Committee and it was that he have only one boss. Alden Rocco and Pastor McElwain were selected to oversee the work. Butch had a crew at the church the following Monday, November 10, to begin work. Alden spent so much time at the church during the reconstruction that his wife, Betty, threatened to take a cot to the church so he wouldn't have to waste time coming home to sleep.

The completion of the story and pictures will appear in the June Messenger.

## Martha Circle - Minutes from April 14, 2021 Meeting

Meeting called to order by Vice President Gretchen King, as Anthony's are in quarantine due to possible exposure of Carl at school. Their 14 day quarantine started today.

Devotions were given by Gretchen, reading a daily devotion "Lifting the Weight of Our Burdens" by Charles Stanley. We should cast all our burdens to God, and let him handle them. Our concerns won't weigh us down if we cast them on God. She then gave opening prayer.

Secretary/Treasurer - last month's checking balance was \$958.26, since then we spent money on flowers for Gretchen for passing of her sister, AFC offering check was cashed, so we're around \$900.00. We need to look up the birthdays & anniversaries of our missionaries.

Sunshine - Joanne reported on the cards she has sent since January - many cards have been sent out! Will send a card to Anthony's T-o-Y, Joyce Cary, and Marcy Bonney.

Joy read a thank you card from Pam Kirkland & Family for the plant for her mother's funeral.

Old Business - Treasure Sale date - August 21. Sharon will be in charge again this year.

We are still collecting for the Haven of Rest - same products, but we will add men's socks to the list of things to collect.

We have one blanket left that we will give to Sally Beltz. We will need to make some more soon! Gretchen & Joanne both have material they will bring next month so we can start making some more.

When we find out there are people that need something locally, we can do something for them. Need to keep each other informed.

Sharon/Dave & Rick/Dawn will be looking over the storage room and doing clean-up, and reorganizing everything. Maybe Martha Circle can donate some money to the project.

**Hostess schedule** needs to be set - will fill in the missing dates at the next meeting.

May 12th - Joanne Henley, June 9th - open, July 14th - open, Aug 11th - open, Sep 8th - open, Oct 13th - Sharon Hadley, Nov 10th - open, Dec 8th - open.

Devotion Collection \$14, Love Gift \$13.78

Scripture Reading: Romans 14 - 15:13; We need to treat everyone the same, whether weak or strong, rich or poor. When has your freedom been a stumbling block to someone else? What happened?

Gretchen closed the meeting in prayer. We then enjoyed snacks and fellowship. Our next meeting is May 12 at 6:00 pm.

## Storage Room Reorganization - Items Available!

3 heavy wooden benches

3 round cardboard barrels

1 32" interior hollow wooden door

If interested, they need to be picked up ASAP. Items are free on a first come, first served basis. Thank you! - Dawn Frey



May	3	Valerie Kibby	Jun	3	Reginald Matthews Jr
May	3	Stephen Phelps	Jun	4	Linda Chisholm
May	5	Jayne Biljum	Jul	9	Ed Kirkland
May	5	Alex Finch	Jun	10	Bud Halder
May	6	Jared Babcock	Jun	12	Joshua Ivey
May	15	Marcy Bonney	Jun	17	Sally Beltz
May	19	Heather Casey	Jun	17	Barbara Gary
May	24	Patricia Ivey	Jun	18	Sally Slayton
May	25	Diane Biljum	Jun	21	Angela Sommers
May	25	Melissa Boysen	Jun	26	James Anthony
May	26	Shawn Skinner	Jun	28	Hailey Shepherd



May	2	Scott & Melissa Boysen	Jun	22	Ed & Pam Kirkland
May	6	Craig & Nicole Thomas	Jun	26	Justin & Heather Casey
May	21	Jason & Emily Ivey			



**May Quiz Question . . .**

“How do you obtain salvation?”  
Hint: It is not by doing good things.

Answer next month!

April’s Q&A: Where was a door open?  
See Revelation 4:1 for the answer!

If your family birthday or anniversary is missing or is incorrect, please send an email to Joy Sommers at: [cerescobaptist@gmail.com](mailto:cerescobaptist@gmail.com)

Thank you!

Dear Friends,

April 2021

This week I went to Kimpese to celebrate the installation of Dr. Mbala as director of the sprawling IME medical complex. Festive palm branches lined the entrance road of the IME campus. Jubilant students and hospital staff packed 'overflow' tents outside the IME Chapel. Rows of fancy cars in the parking lot announced the presence of "dignitaries" including the provincial governor.

A pillar also of our Baptist medical coordination, we were proud to see Dr. Mbala *take up the baton* as "director general" of the IME mission. He is a devout man of God, and every aspect of his life and profession is a witness that he takes every lap with Jesus. We pledged our prayers for the course.

The Evangelical Medical Institute (IME) was founded in 1951 by **six** protestant mission groups. A British Baptist missionary was the first medical director followed by

American Baptist missionary Dr. Glen Tuttle in 1953. Missionary directors *carried the baton* of IME's mission to provide comprehensive medical care (400 bed hospital) and to train Christian health professionals (nursing school) until 1971. That year, the first Congolese director was installed and *the baton* has been in local hands since.



**Dr. Charles Mbala, pediatrician, professor and new director of IME.**



**IME Chapel: Dr. Mbala with his wife during his installation celebration.**

In a relay race, you train for your lap, and to hand off the baton. A good hand off to an able runner means that the team will not slow down. In a little over a year and a half, we have watched as fellow missionary colleagues Ed and Miriam Noyes, Mike and Jill Lowery, and Glen and Rita Chapman have passed on their batons. All are retiring after a lifetime bringing the light of Jesus to Congo. Goodbyes like these bring a lump to my throat, even if I swallow hard. Is the end of IM's missionary presence in Congo in sight?

Remaining now are Bill and Ann Clemmer, in Goma, Tim and Kathy Rice at Vanga, and Wayne and me in Kinshasa. God's mission of "on earth, as in heaven" is a team effort. We each carry a baton in this work to be passed to another until Christ returns. Yet you inevitably wonder, will the follow on team carry the baton well? Will they honor generations of investment into bringing "salt and light" to Congo?

Might Jesus have had the same concerns after only three years with 12 followers, when his turn came to pass the baton? His earthly mission was accomplished, but those with whom he shared that mission were rather an imperfect group of individuals, like me! The same promise that Jesus gave then, he gives to us now - "Go ... and I am with you always".

Thank you for your faithfulness to our mission in ministry in Congo over years; even generations.

Through you, and those to whom we will one day pass the baton, God's Kingdom is being built on earth, as in heaven.

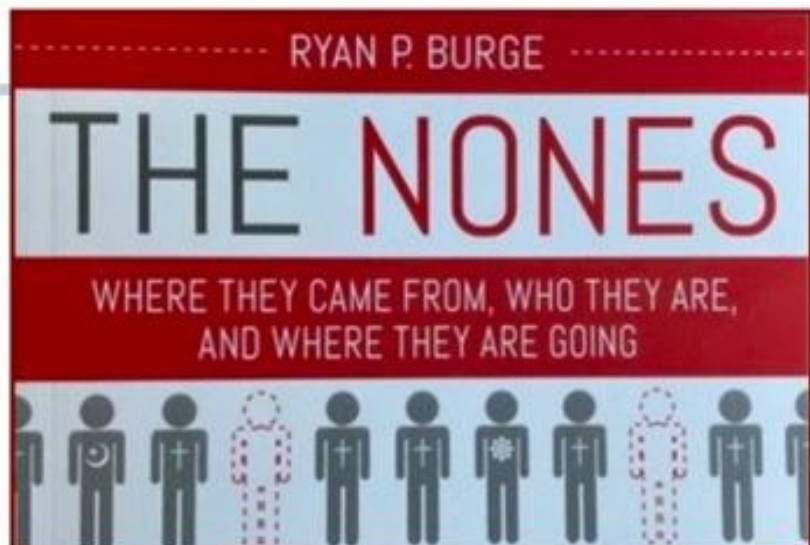


**L to R Katherine & Wayne Niles, Glen & Rita Chapman after one of many farewell celebrations given for the Chapmans.**

Katherine Niles

**The "NONES"**  
A Webinar with author,  
pastor and social scientist  
researcher, Ryan Burge

**Thursday, May 13th**  
**11:30am EST**



*In 2018, the number of Americans with no religious preference rose to 23.7 percent, making the nones as numerous as both evangelical Protestants and Roman Catholics. Every indication is that the nones will be the largest religious group in the United States in the next decade.*

*Using data gleaned from the General Social Survey and other sources author and pastor Ryan Burge provides clues as to why fewer Americans identify with the Christian faith. Through careful examination of the data he shares insights as to how we should respond as Christians. These observations can help churches retool their ministries to be more effective in connecting with the unchurched. Join us for this important presentation and discussion with Ryan Burge. Hosted by Mission Northwest and other ABC regions.*

## **WEBINAR HIGHLIGHTS**

- Factors driving the growth of Nones
- Practical insights for churches
- Characteristics of the NIPs ("Nothing in Particulars")

## **CONNECTION INFORMATION**

**<https://ministrelife.zoom.us/j/3937664223>**

**Meeting ID - 93 766 4223**

Ryan is an Assistant Professor of Political Science as well as the Graduate Coordinator at Eastern Illinois University. He teaches in a variety of areas, including American institutions, political behavior, and research methods. His research focuses largely on the interaction of religiosity and political behavior (especially in the American context).

He has published over twenty articles in a number of well regarded peer reviewed journals, as well as, having his research covered in a variety of media outlets. He is the co-founder and frequent contributor to [Religion in Public](#), a forum for scholars of religion and politics to make their work accessible to a more general audience. Finally, he is a pastor in the [American Baptist Church](#), having served his current church for over thirteen years.



# May 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>
Communion Sunday		Bible Study 10 am Fellowship Hall in use 6-9 pm, Relay for Life Meeting				
<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Mother's Day</b>		Bible Study 10 am	Martha Circle Meeting 6 pm			
<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>
		Bible Study 10 am Fellowship Hall in use 6-9 pm, Relay for Life Meeting				
<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>
		Bible Study 10 am	Information for June  Messenger due by noon			
<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>6/1</b>	<b>6/2</b>	<b>6/3</b>	<b>6/4</b>	<b>6/5</b>
Memorial Sunday	Memorial Day	Bible Study 10 am				

**Ceresco Baptist Church**

230 C Drive North, PO Box 35

Ceresco, MI 49033

(269) 964-9669

[www.cerescobaptist.org](http://www.cerescobaptist.org)

**Pastor Mary Fair-Matthews**

**(313) 303-3301**

Charm is deceptive, and beauty  
is fleeting; but a woman  
who fears the Lord  
is to be praised.

PROVERBS 31:30 NIV

Wishing you God's unending  
favor, kindness and love this

*Mother's Day*  
and always.

