

Baptist Campus Ministry Judson Fellowship

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When I was the Chairman of the Baptist Campus Ministry Board two years ago, it was with great sadness that I accepted then Pastor/Director, Zach Dyrda's resignation from BCM. I told Zach that if he should decide to return, he would be welcomed back. During the past two years Zach and I have stayed in touch. It was a rare conversation when I did not ask him if he was ready to return to BCM because I wanted him back. Much to my delight Zach called me this spring and indicated that he wanted to come back to BCM. As proof that God is always working, I have simultaneously been called to another church.

Two years ago, when I came to BCM, I stopped pursuing other ministry opportunities. One of the churches that was considering my candidacy has expressed an interest in having me take their pulpit.

It is hard to believe that none of this was coordinated or planned. It is just a God thing. My last day at BCM will be June 30th. I still have some banking work to do, a couple of building improvement projects to coordinate with contractors and a little more painting. More importantly, I want to say two things to all of you before I go.

First, I am not done with Baptist Campus Ministry. I have not given up on BCM. My departure from the Pastor/Director position is for
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**“He is the one we proclaim,
admonishing and teaching everyone
with all wisdom, so that we may
present everyone fully mature in
Christ.”**

(Colossians 1:28)

Hello,

It has not been very long since I sat in this beautiful building and wrote a newsletter. I find myself being washed over with wonderful and beautiful memories. It feels like coming home. As many of you remember I left BCM back in 2016. I had to leave for various reasons. I not only need to grow personally, but my family was going through enough changes that I knew I could not give the love and dedication that the wonderful people at BCM needed. So I stepped away. Leaving broke my heart.

However, I was still in school with Pastor Walt. I found myself staying in contact and helping BCM in a new way. My friendship with Walt and love for BCM allowed us to talk about the ministry often. Our love, passion, and hope for the ministry allowed us to pray through a lot of tough times together. I truly believe that through it all God placed us both where we needed to be. BCM has gone through hard and wonderful changes thanks to the leadership and humility of Pastor Walt.

Both Walt and I came to a crossroads in our lives where we knew Christ was moving us in new directions. As we called to talk to each other about it, we found that our crossroads intersected. What we and the board have come to see as God's beautiful plan coming into action in ways no one saw coming. Part of this plan is me returning to the role of Pastor and Director.

Coming back to BCM, the Lord reminded me in prayer of Colossians 1:28. This verse was made important to me by Rev. John Peterson when I first was at BCM. He told me the scripture we

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the betterment of the ministry. You may recall that I have said that I am flexible on everything except spreading the message and Zach is very good at moving the message. If I did not believe this, I would not have resigned in favor of Zach. Second, I am not done with BCM by a long shot. I continue to believe in and support the campus ministry. This is not the end of my association with the campus ministry. I have to go away for a while, but I look forward to a time when I can assume a new role with BCM.

Finally, I cannot leave without telling you how important your role has and continues to be. I saved every note that you included with your donations. I am taking those with me because you have been instrumental to both the success of BCM and my spiritual formation. Your notes were pure gold. Just knowing that you were there, praying with me for the ministry, was more important than I can put into words. There were days when things were going great. Then, there were days when I sat alone in the Director's office, looking out at a gloomy winter day, feeling completely lost and overwhelmed. Budgets, crazy neighbors, squirrels, repairs and a rash of other problems had brought me low. But, I knew that all of you were there believing that God was still working here at BCM and I could go on under borrowed power.

In the coming days, Zach will be sitting at the same desk, looking out the same window at another DeKalb snow storm, weighed down by inevitable ministry problems. He will need your support and prayers because this job is not easy. A local, more experienced minister friend recently told me that campus ministry is one of the hardest pastoral jobs around. I believe it too. This is a non-stop church plant. So, I pray that you will join me in continuing to support BCM as Zach takes the ministry into new and better places. And, don't worry about me. I will be on the phone with Zach, listening to complaints, problems and giving advice where I can. As a good American Baptist, I lift my glass of sparkling grape juice in a toast to our once and future Pastor/Director, Zach Dyrda. God bless you and keep you all. Thanks.

Love,

Pastor Walt

begin our vision for ministry from is Colossians 1:28. We are to proclaim the risen lord, teach his salvation and wisdom, so that all may become mature in Christ. I have been meditating, reflecting, and praying over Colossians for some time as to see in what ways BCM can live out this scripture and mission.

I have come to recognize the fulfillment of any of our mission is only possible with your help. It begins by asking you all for your prayers. I pray that you wash over our ministry with a sea of prayer. Praying Colossians 1:28 over every student that is greeted in the the name of Christ through BCM.

I also recognize that your contributions and support is critical. This ministry does not move a step, turn on a light, or reach a person without you. BCM has become a place that reaches people from all over the world thanks to our affiliation with Northern Illinois University. In countries where missionaries find it hard to enter, students from these countries walk through our doors. We do not just minister and reach students at home, but also abroad. So I thank you for your support in making our local and global reach of BCM possible.

My vision for the ministry is simple: CROSS.

Create a safe environment for all to encounter Christ.

Reflect God's loving presence into our NIU community.

Organize ourselves to create leaders in the church and the world that are mature in Christ.

Seek to deepen our relationship with Christ through each other and scripture.

Serve our students through hospitality and love.

It is my hope BCM will become a beacon of light of hope, hospitality, and Christianity on the campus of NIU. I also hope that we create memories and friendships that will last a life time. I am sure all of you reading have amazing memories about BCM that continue to impact you.

This place has meant so much to so many people. It is my desire to see it continue and thrive for many more years while creating wonderful and new memories.

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Get Involved

Baptist Campus Ministry will remain in DeKalb just as long as you want it to be there. Your prayers, donations and participation allow the American Baptist Mission and message to remain at NIU, serving students and the youth of DeKalb. In a world full of messages God has called us to continue to offer His message of salvation to the next generation. They are our children and our future.

For many congregations BCM is their only youth outreach program. Please donate as you feel moved and as you have the means to give without financially impairing your home church. Together, we can continue to Know Christ and make Christ known to the next generation.

Thank you for your faithful support. It means so much to the students and to me to know that you are there. God bless and thanks.

Baptist Campus Ministry

449 Normal Road

DeKalb, IL 60115

(815) 756-2131

or donate online at

baptistcampusministryniu.com

Email me at niupastorzach@gmail.com

Do You Need a Place to Meet?

Baptist Campus Ministry is ready to host your event. Call or email Zach at BCM and let him know what you have in mind. DeKalb has great accommodations and restaurants. The Baptist Campus Ministry is ready to help your group make their event a success. Better yet, when you use the BCM building, your contribution goes directly to the core BCM mission, making converts to Christ and spreading American Baptist theology throughout the student body of Northern Illinois University.

Why don't you give us a call today and see how we can help you make your group's event a success. We look forward to hearing from you. Zach is available to take your call.

Please feel free to reach out to me for questions, thoughts, or to let me know you are praying for the ministry. I can be contacted via phone by calling BCM or by writing to niupastorzach@gmail.com.

Please stay tuned for more information about the exciting things we have planned for this upcoming fall.

Pastor Zach

Improvements and Upgrades that You Made at BCM

This year we have met many challenges to your campus ministry. Let's take a look at some of the projects and improvements that you have made possible around the BCM building. The chimney and all of the flashing around the upper roof have been repaired and are good for decades to come. This was the biggest area of concern. The original flashing was in such bad shape that it is a miracle we avoided water damage. The parking lot fencing is completed and the parking lot is now completely free of illegally parked cars. We also instituted a parking permit system similar to the ones commonly used around the NIU campus in other private parking lots. Members of the campus ministry and our community partners who use the building have all received their rearview mirror parking permits. If you come to DeKalb and use the Baptist Campus Ministry parking lot, you are always welcome. Just refer to the contact information on the last page of the newsletter and give us a call or send us an email so that we know that you are coming.

The outside utilities are fenced in to prevent further vandalism and theft. Fortunately, Gary, our heating and air conditioning contractor has managed to locate a compressor for the air conditioning unit that was damaged in the last incident of vandalism. The compressor was installed on July 5th, protected by a padlocked gate that your contributions made possible. Gary is truly a blessing. The location of the compressor was a divine gift because the compressor part is more than 20 years old. Gary was relentless in his search, taking weeks and countless phone calls. He saved us thousands in

Do You Need a Prayer Partner?

We have said before, the notes and suggestions that you send back with your donations are more important than you might think. It is so nice to know that you are interested in our campus based church community. Your suggestions are great. One of you wrote in and asked if we had a prayer chain. We do now.

The students at Baptist Campus Ministry are interested in your challenges and your blessings. They have set up a Facebook page that has a prayer section. If that format is too public for your request, you can always send me a private message to me at niupastorzach@gmail.com. I look forward to hearing from you and sharing in your life.

Upcoming Events

Life at BCM takes on a frantic quality as the semester winds down.

August

- Gearing up for students return.
- setting up worship times, visiting students, going to incoming student fairs and events, starting up worship, and beginning other outreach programs.
- Having our welcome back dinner on August 26th. Also go to NIU Involvement Fair to welcome new students.

September

- Host Student Elections for Board Positions.
- Zach's Installation Service. Info to come soon.

[CHECK OUT OUR NEW WEBSITE TO KEEP UP TO DATE ON EVENTS AND READ OUR BLOG.](#)

www.baptistcampusministryniu.com

replacement costs had we been forced to replace an air conditioning system. As I write this the heat index is 112 degrees outside. I cannot fully express my appreciation for both Gary and your support that keeps the AC on!

We will eventually have to face replacing more of the furnace and air conditioning units but, thanks to Gary, they may last for a few more years if needed. New roofing and a parking lot badly in need of sealcoating demand attention from our repair budget and there is always painting needed inside the building too. The sanctuary has not been painted in years. Thank you in advance for supporting both the student programming and the building updates. You make the continued spread of the Gospel message possible. Your prayers and support keep this candle lit for lost and wayward souls. I am constantly inspired by you. On a less loving note, you have also made me the winner of my personal rodent vendetta.

All of the improvements have been good and necessary. But, most personally satisfying to me is the fact that the squirrel is finally and permanently evicted. Oh yes, the miserable little rodent-apostate has been sent packing back into the trees. Joe, the siding contractor, assures me that after the repairs, if Mr. Squirrel wants to get into the building, he'd better bring help. That squirrel often callously interrupted Sunday worship services by scampering across the worship area attic during quiet moments of services, causing snickering and upward glances by the student participants.

On quiet winter afternoons when decent, God-fearing squirrels were hibernating, this furry blasphemer was awake making weird noises that echoed through the otherwise silent building, causing a hard working pastor to pause in his sermon preparation and gaze upward with a malevolent stare. But, now Mr. Squirrel's freeloading marauding will be heard no more in the BCM building. He is permanently expelled from church fellowship. Now I can call my doctor and have him lower my blood pressure medication dosage because Mr. Squirrel is gone, never to return. I'll finish like a proper James Bond movie villain when I say, "Good bye Mr. Squirrel. There can only be one winner and it appears that I have prevailed. Muahahah!"