

## A Job Well Done

by Doug Rice

Prior to beginning my work at Stewards Foundation, I only knew two Board members personally. Now, almost six years later, I have come to know and appreciate the contributions each man makes to the Board. Solomon said, "In the multitude of counselors purposes are established." The wisdom in a plurality of elders leading the local assembly is readily seen in the complimentary balance of abilities and gifts, strengths and weaknesses. The same is true for the leadership of Stewards Foundation.

Dr. Stephen Underwood, our senior board member, has decided to retire from his faithful service to Stewards Foundation. In my opinion, Stephen's greatest impact upon Stewards Foundation is that he has been the spiritual compass of the Board. During Stephen's tenure many decisions have been deliberated in light of temporal information, but Stephen's question has often been, "is there a biblical basis for our decision?" Such a query might easily be overlooked in the decision-making process. Thankfully, the Board has been attentive to Stephen's spiritual perspective; after all, his question may have been the most important one. I trust that after his departure, the Board will maintain a mindset that always makes Stephen's question relevant.

*"is there a biblical basis for our decision?"*

In honor of Stephen, you will find below a record of his service and some of his personal thoughts as he departs the Board this fall.

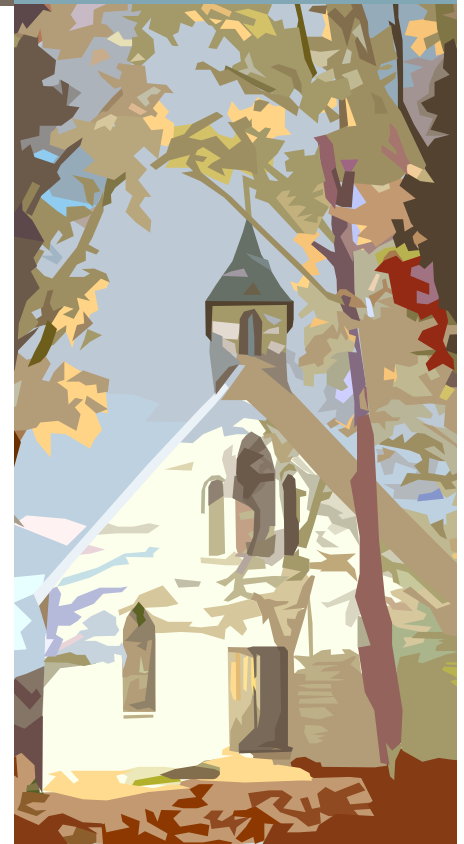


**Dr. Stephen Underwood,  
Treasurer**

Stephen has been a Trustee of Stewards Foundation since January 2006. His service includes: Treasurer 2010-Present; Executive Committee 2006-Present; Nominating Committee 2006-Present (Chairman 2010-Present); Loan Policy Committee 2006-2009; Public Relations Committee 2006-2009; Health Care Committee 2006-2009 and 2013-Present; Finance / Compensation Committee 2010-Present.

"As I reflect on my experience of serving on the Board of Stewards Foundation, I can only give thanks to the Lord for such a privilege. The first thing that one learns as a Board member is that it is made up of men who are like-minded as to the things of the Lord, men who are committed to serving the Lord Jesus Christ. As a Board we have experienced some difficult times and on the other hand we have seen the Lord answer prayers. As we have gone about holding to the mission of Stewards Foundation, there has been one goal that has always been before us, serving and bringing glory to our Savior.

*Continued on page 2*



## Giving INSIDE THIS ISSUE

### • Page 1:

*A Job Well Done*

### • Page 2:

*Assembly Testimonial*

### • Page 3:

*Commended  
Worker Testimonial*

# I CORINTHIANS 4:2, "IT IS REQUIRED"

*Continued from page 1*

These experiences have been important to me in my Christian walk. I have grown as a Christian in my faith and confidence, which requires a day-by-day searching of the Word of God and persistent prayer.

Our experiences, Jean and I, with the Board members and their wives have been a special experience that only those on the Board can know. We have been given the opportunity to visit many sections of the country and have precious fellowship with the Lord's people. To see how funds from the Foundation have been used for the Lord's glory and the encouragement of His Saints has been a special privilege.

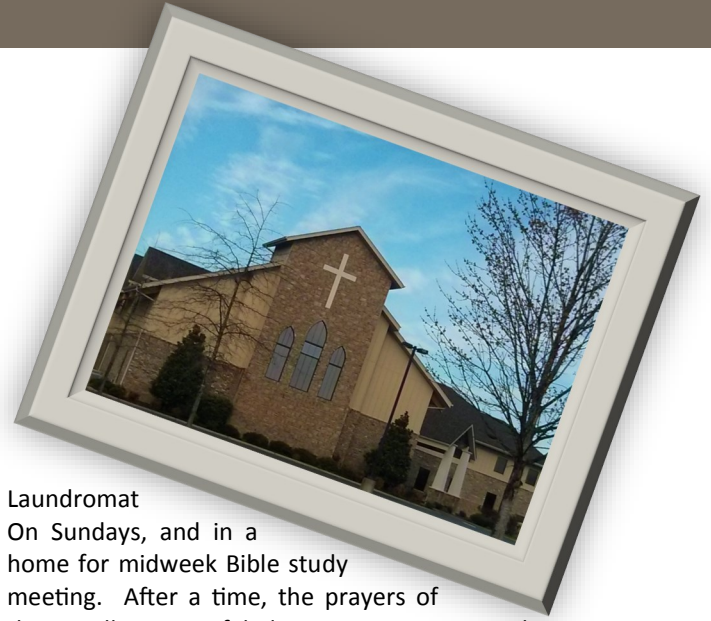
As the Board has met through these ten years, the morning devotionals by the different brothers has set a goal for us as we desire to serve our Lord. The way the Board sessions have been conducted has been in a most professional manner. Have we always been in total agreement? No. However, there has always been a display of Christian love as we work toward His solution. In addition to our work there has been tremendous behind the scenes work on the part of our Executive Director and his staff in the Dallas office. To them we can only extend our special, "thank you."

## ASSEMBLY TESTIMONIAL

### New Heights Chapel

Murfreesboro, a city once designated as the capitol of Tennessee, is located at the geographical center of the state. Like many cities, Murfreesboro has an interesting historical past. Split rail fences surrounding fields dotted with now silent cannons are a reminder of the Battle of Stones River, a hard fought 3-day battle of the Civil War in which over 23,000 soldiers met their end. Ninety-two years later in the early 1950's, God's providence placed three Christian businessmen from Murfreesboro of differing church backgrounds together on a vacation to Florida. Through improbable circumstances, these men met a Godly Christian teacher who introduced them to a way of worship through a study of the Scriptures that resonated with their desire for a more authentic worship of their Lord and Savior. Before returning to Murfreesboro, the vacationers were encouraged to seek out a church planter by the name of T.B. Gilbert who was meeting in Shelbyville, Tennessee, only 30 miles from Murfreesboro.

These men began to sit under the teaching of T.B. Gilbert in Shelbyville where they and their families became fully aware of the value of worshipping in this New Testament fashion. These families then began meeting locally in a closed



#### Laundromat

On Sundays, and in a home for midweek Bible study meeting. After a time, the prayers of this small group of believers were answered when the Lord laid on T.B. Gilbert's heart a calling to move from Shelbyville to Murfreesboro to begin a church plant there. The meeting of believers began to grow under strong teaching from God's Word.

During that time, property adjoining Middle Tennessee State College was purchased for a church building. There, College Heights Chapel came into existence and became a meeting place for a growing number of believers. T.B. Gilbert remained in Murfreesboro for 10 years as a full-time worker, pouring his life into the saints who worshipped there. The three vacationers who learned of a new way to worship became elders, as did others sitting under teaching at the chapel.

*"The same faithful, generous and gracious God had provided a meeting place..."*

Over the years, but not without struggles and setbacks, the chapel continued to grow. Two additions were made to the original chapel building to make room for Sunday School classrooms and AWANA. While the chapel grew, so did the chapel's neighbor, now Middle Tennessee State University. When the College Heights Chapel property became a designated area of the university's expansion master plan, the leadership began to sense a need to seek an alternate meeting place, perhaps a new church building in a growing area of the city. All along the way, the Lord faithfully met the needs of College Heights Chapel.

In 2007, a piece of property in a newer growth area was generously made available and plans for a new building were completed the following year. While the move to a new location across town from a familiar place was bittersweet, the

*Continued from page 2*

process of financing the construction of the two-story, 24,000 square foot chapel building was made smooth due to an affiliation with Stewards Foundation and their strong commitment to Brethren Assemblies. In August of 2009, on a bright and sunny Sunday morning, the first church service was held at New Heights Chapel on St. Andrews Drive. The same faithful, generous and gracious God that had provided a meeting place, first in a Laundromat, then in a modest chapel building, had now generously provided a wonderful new meeting place. In 2012, the Lord made funds available once again through Stewards Foundation to complete the unfinished 7,000 square foot area on the second floor where ample space was made for a Hispanic church, more Sunday School classrooms and a youth room.

At New Heights Chapel, each Sunday morning begins with a Breaking of Bread Service at 9 AM followed by a 10 AM Sunday Morning Service. At 11:15, attendees split up into Sunday School for children and into four youth and adult groups for a non-traditional gathering called “Afterwords.” Facilitators lead discussions to more fully examine the subject matter brought forth during the 10 AM service. On Wednesday evenings after a church wide meal is served, there is both adult Bible Study and Discipletown, a time of Bible teaching for the youngsters.

## COMMENDED WORKERS

### PABLO & SARAH CENEPO-TORRES

Pablo: My desire to serve the Lord in Peru was born out of the time I spent with veteran missionaries Herbert and Colleen Elliot. It was while they were serving in the town of Yurimaguas that Colleen assisted my mother at my birth. A few years later, when I was six, my parents divorced and for a while I struggled growing up without a parent at my side.

My grandmother was a faithful Christian who noticed my withdrawal from church after my parents divorced. When I was nine, she pushed me to attend Vacation Bible School, and I went hesitantly. During one session, the teacher taught about the death of Christ and its meaning. Even though I was young, I knew Hell was not a cool place to go in every sense of the word. I stayed behind after class and was led to



accept Jesus into my heart. I did not feel a colossal weight lifted off my shoulders; but with time I came to understand the truth of passing from death to life. In my mid-teens, the Lord re-united me with the Elliots in the coastal city of Trujillo, where they became like much needed parents to me.

*“Since then, many things have happened in our lives that testify to the faithfulness of our great God”*

In the summer of 1988, I made some good friends from Canada who came to Peru to help build the chapel in Trujillo. Through their efforts I attended New Brunswick Bible Institute in Canada. The Lord later led me to attend Washington Bible College in Lanham, Maryland. After graduating with my Bachelors degree, I returned to Peru to help the Elliot’s. I arrived in Trujillo at a crucial time for the recently founded Elliot Christian School, becoming one of its first teachers. Two years later the Lord blessed me with a scholarship to attend Capital Bible Seminary in Lanham, Maryland; I graduated in May of 2001. While in Maryland, I met a beautiful missionary-minded gal named Sarah; we were married in the summer of 2000. After finishing my studies, we sensed the Lord leading us to the work I learned to love as a boy in Peru.

In August of 2002, Grace Bible Fellowship in Portland, Oregon commended us to the Lord’s work in Peru. We left for Peru in November of 2002. Since then, many things have happened in our lives that testify to the faithfulness of our great God.

The Lord has blessed us with four beautiful daughters, Abi born in 2003, Hannah in 2005, Gabriela in 2007 and Selah in 2009. In 2012, after serving ten years with the Elliot’s, they both passed into the Lord’s presence.

Sarah: Being born into a Christian family, I attended church since I was 3 weeks old. As a child, church was fun because I got to play with friends and hear bible stories but as I grew a little older I started paying more attention to what was being

*continued on page 4*

# Psalms 126:3, “The LORD hath done great things for us; whereof we are glad”

## *Continued from page 3*

taught. One Sunday I asked my mother what a Christian was and how I could be sure that I would go to Heaven. She took me into my room and told me that even before I was born Jesus loved me so much that He died for me so that my sins could be forgiven. My mother explained that I could go to Heaven if I believed in Jesus, that He died for me, and was raised from the dead.

At the age of six I prayed and asked Jesus Christ to forgive my sins and at that moment He became the Lord of my life. I was so excited following that day because I knew that I was going to spend eternity in Heaven.

I remember a missionary named Sarah Ann Blazer coming to our church. I thought it was neat that she had the same first and middle name as mine so I started sending her letters all the way to Africa where she was a missionary. I thought, maybe I could be a missionary doctor in the jungles of Africa when I grow up.

After graduating from high school, I attended Liberty University in Lynchburg, Virginia and graduated in May of 2000. During my

junior year, I went on a ten-day mission trip to Jamaica to help build a village for deaf adults, work with deaf children and other children in an orphanage. We shared with them the same thing that my mom shared with me when I was young: the love of Jesus. After I returned from Jamaica, I knew that God was calling me to be a missionary. As Pablo and I got to know each other, I quickly learned that his desire was to return to Peru and serve the Lord there. In November 2002, we moved to Peru; we had been married for two years and I was two months pregnant with our first child.

Our current ministries involve overseeing the Elliot Christian School, the orphanage Hogar de Esperanza, and the assembly Centro Biblico Trujillo where Pablo serves as one of the elders. We attempt to make rounds through the mountains and jungles as well as bring in short-term mission teams periodically to teach in these areas.



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