



## Related Partners

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“For the body is one, and hath many members, ...” (1 Cor. 12:12a, KJV)

This verse continues, “... and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ.” Paul expands this by presenting a parallel of the physical body having many parts with different functions, to the members of the one body in Christ having a variety of administrations (“ministries” in the NASB) in the community of believers in Christ who is Head of the church and Savior of the body (Romans 12:4-5; 1 Cor. 12:5; and Eph. 5:23). Further in Chapter 12 of 1st Corinthians, Paul expands on gifts of individual believers in the body.

These gifts such as ministering, serving, and leading, when applied in New Testament patterned assemblies, should be done with each believer having the same care for one another so that there is no division in the body (1 Cor. 12:25). Having received the gift, we should minister the same to each other as good stewards of God’s grace and do this with the ability God gives so that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ (1 Pet. 4:10-11).

Over time, assembly-related support and service entities have been established to serve the assemblies and their fellowship of believers. To avoid duplication of ministries and services, assembly-related entity partnerships are established where appropriate. A blessing I have experienced as a Stewards Foundation (SF) Board member is the functioning of two related partner assembly support ministries, each with a unique mission, yet interdependent in service to the body.

At the Assembly Care Ministries (ACM), Believers Stewardship Services (BSS) and SF related partners Information Seminar at Grace Bible

Chapel, Fullerton, California, Mr. Doug Rice, SF Executive Director, reviewed the purpose and 72 year history of Stewards Foundation. With a current loan portfolio of \$10.7 million and possibly \$70 million in total funds loaned since 1945, SF has helped assemblies and assembly-related entities such as Bible camps and retirement homes; purchase, build or maintain facilities for God’s mission for each.

As stewards of God’s financial resources, SF keeps a short-term Primary Investment Account of funds waiting loan disbursement and for loans in the pipeline. These funds are invested in money market, fixed income, and low risk securities. SF also keeps a longer-term Investment Account for loan reserves. SF could employ additional staff members to manage the investment accounts and planned giving opportunities. However, as Mr. Rob Sullivan, President of BSS, shared at the Information Seminar, BSS has financial planning, a registered investment advisor, CPA and legal staff to serve multiple purposes, including managing funds for assemblies and their believers as well as assembly-related entities and planned giving instruments.



To avoid duplication of unique functions, SF entrusts BSS with the management of Primary and Investment Account funds and planned giving instruments such as charitable gift annuities. Interdependence of operations is established between Mr. Rice and Mr. Rob Sullivan, President of BSS, and their staffs. Interdependence of communication is established by Mr. Sullivan’s service on the SF Board and my service on the BSS board.

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

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Another purpose of SF is to provide healthcare gifts to commended workers through the Health Care Assistance Program (HCAP). Mr. Rice reported at the Information Seminar that HCAP has provided \$14.7 million in health care gifts since 1995. At that seminar, Mr. Paul Morris, Director of ACM, presented information about the 2COR9 worker support program; publications through their website and printed material such as the Assembly Directory & Map; and their most recent initiative, the ACM Health Line.



The Health Line provides commended workers and missionaries phone and web-video telemedicine consultation, prescriptions and follow-up with registered nurses or referral to volunteer Christian doctors; maintains an electronic medical records system; and recommends Samaritan Ministries for major healthcare. The SF and ACM Boards decided that since HCAP is a funding source for healthcare gifts to commended workers, and the Health Line is a focused medical care provider, a related partnership should be established for interdependence. Mr. Rice assisted Mr. Morris with the final planning stages of the Health Line. Mr. Walter (Skip) Elliott, SF Chairman, and Mr. Greg Drake, SF President, serve on the ACM Board for strategic planning and communication, and Mr. Sullivan helped in the planning of the Health Line.

In conclusion, related partnerships establish interdependence between assembly-support entities without duplicating their services "...that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion, forever and ever. Amen" (1 Pet. 4:11b).

## Bethesda Bible Chapel

Bethesda Bible Chapel (BBC) is the result of several families feeling the Lord's leading to hive off from an existing assembly and start a new work. After much prayer and deliberation, BBC was formed in 2003, with about sixteen families. Initially, we met in a space rented to us by a Baptist group. Even though we had a place to gather and worship, many felt the need to have our own facility, with the freedom to meet for various ministries and church related activities. Being a small assembly with limited funds made it seem like an impossible task to build a new facility, or buy an existing one.

Trusting in the Lord, we decided to move forward. It was important that the new facility be centrally located because families lived in eastern and western areas of the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex. The initial



thinking was to buy an existing church facility in the Irving area. But it soon became apparent that this was not a viable option as many of the available facilities were far overpriced. The focus shifted to finding suitable property where a new facility could be built. By the grace of our Lord, a piece of land was found at an ideal location in Irving, Texas.

After much prayer, the decision was made to first raise funds for the project from the congregation; only then would outside funds be solicited. The Lord enabled us to raise a large amount from those in the assembly. Funds were also received from other believers and assemblies. The remaining funds needed were financed through a loan with Stewards Foundation. Our late brother Ska-riah Varghese, an elder at BBC, took the lead in purchasing the property and the construction project. The facility of about 6000 square feet includes a beautiful sanctuary, fellowship hall and classrooms. In November 2008, the assembly at BBC started gathering in the new facility.

Our Sunday schedule starts at 9 AM with Sunday School and Bible Studies for youth and adults. The Lord has blessed the assembly with Sunday School teachers who teach the children in the ways of the Lord. The worship service begins at 10 AM with the entire congregation involved in the worship of God, through His Son, Jesus Christ, as led by the Holy Spirit. We observe the Lord's Supper weekly, as the central part of our worship. The worship service is usually bi-lingual, in English and Malayalam. After the worship service, there is a break for coffee and refreshments, then we all gather again for singing and ministry of the Word. Gifted men are asked by the leadership to teach and preach the Word.

In addition to the Sunday meetings, the assembly gathers on Saturday evening for Bible Study. Several families gather for midweek prayer meetings in various homes. The assembly also gathers for prayer on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday of each month. The sisters gather once a month, for the sisters meeting. The children and young people gather for Kids Club, youth meetings and small group meetings.

# IN STEWARDS THAT A MAN BE FOUND FAITHFUL”

BBC is involved in several outreach ministries including tract distribution to various local communities. We are also active in various mission-oriented ministries in the U.S., India and across the world. Our involvement includes prayer and financial support for the missionaries and the mission work, support for the sick and the needy and construction of assembly halls. For the last several years we have supported two ministries in Jhabua, India, a remote tribal village: translation of the Bible into the tribal language of Bhil, and the construction and operation of Bethel School, a Christian school with about 200 students. Recently, the Lord has enabled us to undertake the building of a new assembly hall in the rural community of Jamtara, India. Our prayer is that the Lord will use this ministry to encourage the relatively new congregation of about thirty believers in this poor region of India.

*“Through the years the Lord has continued to bless us ...”*

Through the years the Lord has continued to bless us and add new individuals and families to the assembly. Presently, there are about twenty-six families with a total attendance including adults and children of approximately ninety. As an assembly of His people we are eternally grateful. ***“The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad.” Psalms 126:3***

You can find more about BBC at [www.bethesdabiblechapel.org](http://www.bethesdabiblechapel.org).

## Truth is Expensive

Letters of Interest , November 1957

Even in secular affairs truth is expensive. At an annual cost of many thousands of dollars the U.S. Bureau of Standards maintains in Washington, D.C. accurate weights and measures, proportions, formulas, etc. The inch, for example, is kept true to the one-millionth part of durable, rigid gauge blocks. Yet even that degree of accuracy is not sufficiently precise to provide measurement of the microscopically tight tolerances required by the atomic age. And at a cost of several hundred thousand dollars the Bureau is pushing its hair-splitting of the inch down to a ten-millionth. Truth in measurement is that important.

In spiritual affairs truth is never cheap. The truths of Scripture which we may lightly esteem and even let slip through our fingers have come to us at the cost of rivers of blood, sweat and tears. Even today the maintenance of these truths is most costly. Those who go to propagate the truth usually do so at great personal expense.



Today, as in every age, much of the work of the Lord is carried on according to men's own thoughts, and not in keeping with the pattern prescribed in the Word of God. We can thank God for every means by which the gospel is told out. But should we not also be fellow helpers to the truth by supporting those who strive to adhere to the Word in their work for the Lord?

The work of the Lord carried on in the way of the Lord usually is far from the spectacular. It lacks the appeal to the senses that some other enterprises have. And, in consequence, those carrying on the work may be neglected.

In America today many Christians are enjoying exceptional prosperity. If a generous portion of that prosperity is employed for the furtherance of the truth, and incidentally to raise the standard of living of those gone forth for the truth's sake, those dollars will be transmuted into treasure laid up on heaven.

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

## News You Can Use

Stewards Foundation has been actively involved in assisting the Lord's servants with the cost of health care for over 60 years. Our commitment to commended workers has led us to look for more cost-effective ways to assist with medical expenses. Assembly Care Ministries (ACM) recently launched a project to help commended workers manage medical expenses: the **Assembly Care Ministries Health Line**.



Stewards Foundation has partnered with ACM in advancing this new service that provides medical advice at no cost to commended workers in the U.S. and abroad. We encourage elders to investigate this new service and bring it to the attention of all their assembly's commended workers.

The ACM Health Line is a telephone call center staffed by medical volunteers ready and willing to take health-related calls from missionaries and commended workers in North America. It does not take the place of insurance, however a phone consultation with one of the volunteers can potentially mitigate the cost of a medical office visit.

If you are a commended worker needing care, or simply interested in more information, go to [www.acmhealthline.org](http://www.acmhealthline.org) to find out how you can benefit from this free service. You can schedule a phone consultation for a current medical situation, or plan ahead by filling out the necessary paperwork in anticipation of a future need.



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