



Lake Country Bible Chapel

Granger, Iowa

The Lake Country Bible Chapel assembly is a group of believers that are located 20 miles northwest of Des Moines, Iowa. It started in 1992 when three families were meeting together for a weekly Bible study. Two of the families were in fellowship at another assembly, and the third had recently moved to Des Moines.

The assembly met in a home for the first 3 years, and the Lord added to their numbers. When it became apparent that a different and larger location was needed, one of the men in the meeting offered to vouch for us in our application to rent a community center. For the next 13 years the assembly met in the community center on Sundays.

*“...The Lord has done this and it is marvelous in our eyes.”
Psalms 118:23*

Over the years the assembly has benefited from various camps and conferences. Story Book Lodge Christian Camp in northern Minnesota, Turkey Hill Ranch Bible and Ozark Family Camps in Missouri, and Willowbrook Bible Camp in Iowa have all been a blessing to our assembly. They have ministered to our children and families, and given our young people opportunities to both serve as counselors and staff and be discipled.

In 2008, the community center was undergoing renovations, and another man in the assembly informed us that a local school district had an elementary school facility that could be rented. We were able to rent the school cafeteria and have access to the gymnasium.

In 2016, the assembly moved to another elementary school in the same district

with the same arrangements for cafeteria and gym access. We met at this location until the COVID pandemic closed the school in March 2020.

During the pandemic the assembly met for 3 months using Zoom, then started meeting outdoors at the end of May 2020. Negotiations and discussions with the school district made it clear that we would not be able to use the facilities with the same degree of freedom that we had enjoyed in the past.

After 28 years of meeting in homes and rented facilities, we began discussing the possibility of owning a building. While we had previously discussed this topic over the years, this time we began the process in earnest. In 2020, we rented one more facility while we looked at several existing buildings to purchase, but ultimately decided to build a facility.



The decision to build was a tremendous undertaking. Several in the assembly made sizable donations. In addition, the assembly was blessed with members that facilitated the legal, financial, architectural, construction, and other decisions that needed to be made.

We also were blessed to have two brothers that were the general contractors on the construction of the building.

Continued on page 2



Inside This Issue

Swing
Page 1:

Assembly Spotlight

Lake Country Bible Chapel

Page 2:

Commended Workers

John and Bobbie Heller

Page 3: *Stewardship*

News you can Use

Assembly Service

Organization Seminar

Stewardship

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Continued from page 1

We are grateful for the assistance provided by Stewards Foundation as our financing partner. We reviewed local sources of financing and found them to have somewhat lower rates but higher equity requirements. Some local banks also required personal guarantees.



We were also motivated by the fact that the interest we were paying would be used to benefit other assemblies and to help defray medical expenses in lieu of private profits. Stewards Foundation was very good in helping us understand the amount of debt that would be prudent for an assembly of our size. Once we commenced construction, they helped us do things "by the book", making sure that invoices and bills were paid correctly and systematically.

Construction started in May 2021, and 11 months later in April 2022 we started meeting in the new facility. Our continual prayers during the building process were for unity in the assembly, and it was a joy to see the individual efforts of so many and the desire to bring this project to completion. Psalm 118:23 states "... the Lord has done this, and it is marvelous in our eyes." We agree!

Commended Workers

John and Bobbie Heller

God's grace was demonstrated in our lives as neither one of us were raised in Christian homes. The Lord saved us both in 1972, John as a result of the Navigator's outreach at a college in Oklahoma and Bobbie at a gospel meeting in New York. From there we were eventually led to attend Bob Jones University. During our time at Bob Jones, God continued to grow us in Himself. Each of us at separate times sensed God's calling to serve full time either through camp work, preaching or helping married couples.

Following graduation in 1977, we married and made our first home in Washington, Georgia. The shepherding of Owen and Tom Hoffman played a key role in those early years after graduation. There we worked alongside the believers in tent meetings, preaching and teaching while working a full-time job. It was there we became established in the Biblical order of the local church.

"We know that if we seek Him we will always find that HE is working to will and to do of His good pleasure."

Through work and family, God led us to return to John's hometown, Tulsa, Oklahoma in 1979. At that time, we began meeting with the saints at East Tulsa Bible Chapel and were benefited greatly by the shepherding and discipling care of the Moffitt and Anderson families. In the early 80's John was also encouraged by Leonard Lindstead to pray about going into full time ministry. He worked in secular employment for almost 10 years while becoming more active in children's ministries and preaching locally. There was always a special burden in sharing the Word with teens at summer camps and in marriage shepherding.

Eventually, camp work, conference speaking and marriage shepherding took most of our available free time. We were approached by the elders and asked to pray about quitting secular employment and consider going full time. We both desired to be available for whatever God would have us do. In 1986, we were commended to full-time ministry by the saints and oversight at East Tulsa Bible Chapel, and have been blessed by the Lord to continue in that commendation for the past 36 years.

In 1998, we felt the Lord was leading us to be part of a new work in Little Rock, Arkansas. Along with the help of

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many believers from the U.S. and Canada, a 2-to-3-week outreach was conducted and as a result a small group of believers began meeting. Outreach Bible studies continued and the assembly began to grow. We had the joy of seeing some souls trust the Lord as their Savior. Believers who started attending experienced spiritual growth, and in addition lifelong friendships were made. One of the things we remember most was a statement by one of the believers who appreciated the Scriptural pattern for meeting, “What took you so long to get here, I’ve been looking for this for many years.”



After serving the Lord for 14 years in Little Rock, we believed through a series of events and answered prayer it was time to move to Northern Minnesota in 2012. Through the Lord’s grace, we continue to serve in the North central and central U.S. with an emphasis on helping smaller assemblies, encouraging the next generation of those who have a heart for the Lord’s people and the lost, as well as camp work, marriage shepherding and preaching.

Of the various individuals and groups who have encouraged us through the years we would like to acknowledge Stewards Foundation for their consistent help. We are deeply grateful for their mission to help the Lord’s people in several ways. For 36 years they have consistently provided funds to offset the rising costs of health care coverage for workers.

Philippians 2:13 has been a strong encouragement to us as whatever comes our way, we know that if we seek Him we will always find that He is working to will and to do of His good pleasure.

News You Can Use

Assembly Service Organization Seminar

The 2023 Stewards Foundation Semi-Annual Board Meeting is scheduled for Friday, April 14th in New Orleans, Louisiana. On Saturday, April 15th, a Seminar will be conducted at Lake Park Chapel in Belle Chasse, Louisiana about the history and services of three Assembly Service Organizations.

Doug Rice, Executive Director of Stewards Foundation, Rob Sullivan President and CEO of Legacy Ministry Services (formally BSS), and John Peasland Executive Director of Christian Missions in Many Lands, will talk about the work and various ministries of these service organizations. Even if you are already aware of these organizations, and know something about their work, the Q&A session will offer an opportunity for you to ask questions regarding their current services to the assemblies.

In particular, the information presented may benefit:

- Any assembly considering a building purchase or construction project, or that may have questions about the process of such an undertaking
- Anyone that has questions about financial and estate planning
- Elders interested in protecting their home assembly from current legal issues
- Those responsible for the care of commended workers abroad

Stewards Foundation’s Board of Trustees will be present to interact with those attending the Seminar. We encourage all who are interested in Stewards Foundation and our services to take advantage of the information that can be found on our website, www.stewardsfoundation.org.

If you are in the New Orleans area, or the trip is not too lengthy, we encourage you to join us for the Seminar and lunch afterward.

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

Winter 2023



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