



Arbor Oaks Bible Chapel Dubuque, Iowa

In 1983, when Emmaus Bible School in Oak Park, Illinois purchased property in Dubuque, Iowa, plans were set in motion to start an assembly. "Chicagoland" had many assemblies, and faculty, staff, and students were spread out in many of them. At the time in Dubuque there was an assembly meeting in a home. "The people of Emmaus were going to alter that life," recalls John Rush, Emmaus University librarian since 1983. John still attends that first assembly, now called Arbor Oaks Bible Chapel, and recalls that the first meetings in Dubuque, "were held in the Faculty/Staff lounge at the College and that as more people moved to Dubuque the meetings were moved to the auditorium."



ARBC met at the college for several years and the Lord blessed with slow but steady growth. In the 1990s, the leadership felt the Lord guiding them to look for a more suitable and permanent place to meet as the congregation continued to grow. In 1993, the Lord provided six acres of land on John F. Kennedy Road in an area that was on the edge of town at that time. Meetings continued at Emmaus as funds were saved to put a building on the JFK property. In 2003, the new church building was completed, and the name was changed to Arbor Oaks Bible Chapel (AOBC), since it was no longer on Asbury Road.

This assembly has always been very missions-minded and features several missionaries throughout the year as "Missionaries of the Month." The assembly commended their first missionaries in 1987, Gil and Carolyn Vargas, who are still serving in Spain. In 1998, Dan and Nikki Rogers were commended to Ecuador; in 2016, Amanda Delzer to Bolivia; and in 2024, Jamin and Lynelle Lorch as missionaries to Indonesia once they complete their training with JAARS (Jungle Aviation and Radio Service).

One of the most vital outreaches at AOBC is the children's ministries. Vacation Bible School and AWANA have been happening for forty years, along with various other programs.

Continued on page 2



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The Assembly was named Asbury Road Bible Chapel (ARBC), based on the address of the Emmaus building. "We did not have recognized elders at first," says Emmaus faculty member Dr. David MacLeod. "We waited until they emerged." MacLeod made the move to Dubuque with his family and forty years later, he is still a regular speaker on Sunday mornings.

Charlie Fizer, former missionary to Japan, was one of those first elders. According to Fizer, "It was a joy and privilege to work with the first recognized elders," who also included Ken Fleming, John Harper, Bob Logan, then later Jim Dunkerton. We had so many profitable, stimulating meetings in those early days. It's amazing how far things have come in the last number of years. We can rejoice together in what the Lord has done.

Inside This Issue

Giving
Page 1:
Assembly Spotlight
Arbor Oaks Bible Chapel

Page 2:
Commended Workers
Ken and Joyce Hardisty

Stewardship
Page 3:
Supporting HCAP

Giving
Stewardship

I CORINTHIANS 4:2, "IT IS REQUIRED"

Continued from page 1

Participation in these outreach programs continued to grow, with AOBC often partnering with other area churches in the work. For many years, AWANA met in the gymnasium of Emmaus University, until COVID hit, and the activities went on hiatus. By the time life got back to normal and AWANA was starting up again, the Emmaus athletic program had expanded and could no longer host the program. AWANA moved back to AOBC but was bursting at the seams and more space became a necessity, not a luxury.

Thankfully, the Lord had seen this coming and in 2016, as the original banknote for the church was paid off, the AOBC elders began discussing what was next. The building was already too small, so either an expansion was needed or another move. God closed some doors and opened others, so the elders and deacons approached the City of Dubuque with a site plan that was approved.



After much prayer, the Lord provided the right contractor who submitted an estimate of \$1.498 million to add restrooms and classrooms, double the size of the kitchen, and build a gymnasium. The project not only came in under budget but was completed two months ahead of schedule. Last Fall, AOBC celebrated their heritage with a "Faithful for Forty...and Forward" service and gym dedication, christening the new addition by singing a gloriously resonant A Cappella version of the Doxology in the gym.

The saints of Arbor Oaks Bible Chapel are grateful to Stewards Foundation, not only for their financial support, but also for their guidance throughout this phase of growth.

Commended Workers

Ken and Joyce Hardisty

As I write this article, I am sitting in a room at the Christian Missions in Many Lands guest house. Being here always brings with it a flood of memories. When I walk by the garage, I can see Len Brooks building crates, and recall myself

backing up a U-Haul truck which contained all the earthly possessions Joyce and I had to be packed into those crates and shipped to Manila, Philippines.



Back then, in 1987, we had no idea of the things that would transpire over the next 35 years of service to the greatest of masters. The Lord knew all the challenges that we would face. He knew all the tears and all the joys that still lay before us.

As I reflect back on all the years, one thing above all others has been instilled in the fabric of our lives: God is good. He is faithful to His promise to never leave us or forsake us. He has proven Himself faithful through so many challenges from those early days into this new millennium.

Those early years were years of language study, adaptation to a new culture and trusting Him to provide. Learning a new tongue was the initial arduous but necessary task to equip us for the years of ministry that lay ahead. But through the graciousness of the Lord, after about 5 years there was a measure of fluency that continued to grow as the years went by.

Teaching Bible studies in those early years outside of Metro Manila, consisted mainly of working with an assembly to build them up and encourage them in the faith. Evangelism in the local squatter communities where people had so little of this world's possessions was always a gentle tug at the heart, and to witness faith in Christ in their lives made all those hours of study and prayer so rewarding.

For many years we worked in the community of Cogeio in Rizal Province where the faithfulness of our Savior was evident in providing for us. These were challenging years; there were months when we did not know how we would make it. How we would pay our bills, provide for the family, pay school bills and simply live.

Continued on page 3

IN STEWARDS THAT A MAN BE FOUND FAITHFUL”

Continued from page 2

But at the end of each month, in a way we still do not understand, all would be well.

Our girls grew up with a world view that many in the States do not possess. By God’s grace they attended Faith Academy and had friends from all over the world. They learned what it was like to be third culture kids and they thrived. They still call Manila home after all these years. Now married with families of their own they continue to live based on the principles they learned over their years in Manila. Our middle daughter Kim and her husband Larry and their three children, Tyler, Abby and Andrew are serving the Lord at Faith Academy; they are fourth generation from when family members began serving the Lord in one capacity or another at Faith. Now their children are fifth generation from those in the family first living in the Philippines.

After our time in Manila, and a time at home, we made the move from the Lowlands of Manila to the mountains in North Central Luzon. In 2007, we moved up to Baguio in the Cordilleras to begin working together with the saints at what was once called Morning Glory Bible chapel, a work started by Ken Engle in the 1960s.

“As I reflect back on all the years, one thing above all others has been instilled in me: God is good.”

From there we planned on moving further up into the mountains to continue a work started in Sagada by Mike and Bev Smits in the 1990s. After a couple of trips up the mountain, we were ready to make the transition to living up there. However, the Lord closed that door as a heart condition that I developed prevented that move. In hindsight we can see how the Lord used that to place us where He wanted us, teaching the saints in Baguio and doing evangelistic Bible studies alongside them.

Joyce began having some rather severe migraine headaches while we were there. For over 5 years she would wake up with them each day and never find relief. We went to doctor after doctor with no solution. One day I found her weeping by her desk and with tears in her eyes she looked up at me and said the words that would change our destiny. “I cannot do this anymore”. It was time to return to the States to find the medical attention she needed.

In 2015, we returned and after 2 years a neurologist was found that had a solution. Today she rarely suffers from migraines. Having medical coverage during those years was so essential and we thank the Lord for His provision.

Now we have come full circle, and are back at CMML where we come frequently as I speak at the assemblies here in the New Jersey area. It has been an adventure for sure, but through it all we are thankful to our Lord and His people for their kindnesses to us.

Supporting HCAP

Stewards Foundation is offering Member Assemblies the opportunity to help generate the funds required to enhance the HCAP gift, and to add workers commended from a Member Assembly.

Traditionally, the 100% Pass-Thru Fund has been the only source of revenue to supplement loan proceeds in funding HCAP. Now, there are two additional ways available to Member Assemblies to directly participate in enhancing and expanding HCAP:

- **NEW** - Demand Note Program: Modeled after the original concept for Stewards Foundation, this Program establishes a channel for funds to flow from assemblies willing to invest in the Lord’s work to those serving Him. Member Assemblies that invest in a Demand Note benefit from knowing that the investment is helping the Lord’s servants in HCAP while receiving a return on their investment.
- **NEW** - SF HCAP Support Donor Advised Fund (DAF): Member Assemblies that place funds in a DAF will have the benefit of knowing that the proceeds from their donation are being used to support the Lord’s servants in HCAP with the anticipation of receiving a modest return from their donation.
- **EXISTING** - 100% Pass-Thru Fund: Established in 2009, the 100% Pass-Thru Fund permits assemblies and individuals a means of directly supporting HCAP. These funds are deposited into a separate account established specifically to supplement the annual HCAP gift. Each year, the funds in the 100% Pass-Thru account are added to the HCAP gift from Stewards Foundation’s net income.

Please contact Stewards Foundation at 972-726-6550 for more information on these HCAP support opportunities.

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

Spring 2025



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