

THE

# ENVOY

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## BRIDGING THE RIFT:

*Gospel Work Along  
Racial Fault Lines*  
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## THE ENVOY



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# SPIRITUAL DNA: What You Inherit—and What You Pass On

**A**s I sit here writing, the snow apocalypse of 2026 has just passed. Many are working from home, some have shoveled their way out and made it to work, and kids are sledding and playing video games—I *mean*, attending school virtually. Life in Indiana, in all its resilience, just keeps moving forward.

Yet when we turn on the news, the world feels anything but calm. We hear about riots, ICE—not the kind from the winter storm—bombing of terrorist organizations, the war in Ukraine, talk of a Greenland takeover, and a peace deal in the Middle East. And somewhere in the middle of all that, pastors everywhere are wondering how many people watched the online service yesterday and whether the giving will catch up next week.

A few years ago, I wrote about our spiritual DNA—those who have spoken into our lives and helped shape us into who we are today. I named several people who played a vital role in my spiritual journey. My pastor, Billy Burris, faithfully preached and taught as I was growing up. Lance Smith, my youth pastor, showed me the importance of prayer and worship. Others spoke words of life over me—people like Brian Ross, Gary Hanson, Ralph Holdeman, and many more.

They are part of my spiritual DNA, and many of them don't even realize it. I am better because of them. They planted seeds of heaven in my life—seeds that grew, matured, and produced a harvest that has

helped shape me into the man God has called me to be. I still have a long way to go, and I'm thankful that there are seeds others have sown that have yet to sprout and mature. I am deeply grateful for what my spiritual future looks like, and I am excited for the growth that is still to come.

The idea of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—and the spiritual DNA line that I come from—is only one part of the equation. What about those who are still to come? The twelve tribes of Israel, if you will.

*There is a spiritual DNA  
that flows from you to the  
next generation,*

and then to the next, and so on. When I pray over my family, I often pray, “Lord, may the prayers I am praying today touch my family line to the millionth generation, if You should tarry that long.”

But what about the next generation we are going to reach—not just those within our families, but those we impact through our everyday lives? Do you have a plan for the next generation? How are you intentionally sowing your spiritual DNA into those who are coming after you? Who are the people God has placed in your path for you to reach, and how do you plan to reach them?

Recently, I received a message from one of my former teenagers—who I'm pretty sure is in their 40s



# NEXT GENERATION

now. They shared some incredibly kind words, but then said something that truly stopped me in my tracks: *“I am serving Jesus today because of what you did as my youth pastor.”*

Let me tell you, as a youth pastor, you often wonder if anything is really getting through to these kids. But to hear that testimony twenty years later lit up my spirit with a whole lot of praise God and hallelujahs for His faithfulness to the next generation.

But who is the next generation? Of course, they are the ones sitting in the churches we are currently teaching and pastoring. They are absolutely those who carry our own biological DNA—brothers and sisters, moms and dads, children and grandchildren. But they are also the person who works on the line next to you if you’re bi-vocational; the coworker at your school; the bus driver who parks beside you every morning. They are the nurse, the dentist, the person at the gym, the shopper at the grocery store, your barber or hairdresser—the person who may never step through the doors of your church yet lives in your community and rubs shoulders with you on a weekly basis. See them as Jesus sees them and win them into the Kingdom.

As Paul spoke to Timothy, he said, *“But you, keep your head in all situations, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, discharge all the duties of your ministry.”* -2 Timothy 4:5 (NIV)

Do the work of an evangelist—

*don't let your spiritual DNA die with you.*

The people in your community need a testimony someday that includes your name because you were faithful to do the work of an evangelist.

Go ahead and make a list of people for 2026 and begin to pray for them—people you will intentionally speak life over, people who will one day carry a testimony like Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. From generation to generation, this is not just about what happens from a pulpit, but about how we live every day. As we do the work of an evangelist, we reveal the Kingdom of God to those all around us.

We have examples all throughout Scripture—Peter on the day of Pentecost, Philip with the Ethiopian, Paul tent-making as he shared what Jesus had done for him and planted churches along the way. There was a starting place for everyone, and then it was passed on.

So, pass it on. Don’t be selfish with your spiritual DNA. Do the work of an evangelist, and let’s see what God does across Indiana.

**Chad McAtee**, IDAG Superintendent



# SPIRITUAL FORMATION:

*The key to spiritual formation is found in the authority and power of the Holy Spirit.*

**W**hen you ask a missionary to write on spiritual formation, they will take you to the Great Commission. In Matthew 28:18-20 (ESV) Jesus came and said to them, *“All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”*

The Lord’s final instructions to his followers gave a blueprint for spiritual formation that continues to form disciples today, locally and around the world. Although we often begin with verse 19, the key to spiritual formation is found in the authority and power of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit prepares the heart for transformation, convicts of sin and produces holiness. Taking the time to wait for the promise and receiving the power to be effective witnesses is the true starting point. Jesus gave us His authority to make disciples everywhere.

The Great Commission is not only for missionaries: it is for everyone. Wherever you are, make disciples. The world needs Christian plumbers, lawyers, and car salesmen. Even in the marketplace, we should be making disciples. Showing others how to follow Christ. We must make disciples on the university campus, the major cities and small towns. We are to share the good news with all creation (every creature Mark 16:15) everywhere.

# From Revelation to Reproduction

Spiritual Formation is God's process of revealing Christ (Revelation), calling us to obedience (Response), shaping us through discipleship (Relationship), and multiplying the gospel through others (Reproduction).

**Revelation:** As Christians, our first requirement is to know Christ. Spiritual Formation begins with a personal knowledge of who Jesus is and what He has done for us. It is a lifelong revelation that encompasses savior, healer, friend, and father. As ministers, our primary assignment is to make Him known. Each sermon, each appointment, each counseling session, we endeavor to reveal His goodness, character and power to those around us. The light God has entrusted us must be placed where all can see.

**Response:** We are called out of darkness into his wonderful light (1 Peter 2:9). This revelation requires a response. In the New Testament, conversion was followed almost immediately by baptism. Baptism marks this beginning with a funeral for the old things that have passed away, and the new life that begins. Following the Lord in this ordinance is key. It marks a specific before and after. This serves as tangible evidence of the internal transformation that has occurred.

The distance between the brain and the heart is about 18 inches. This is where the hardest spiritual battles are fought. Between knowing and believing. King Agrippa came very close and was "almost persuaded" to accept the gospel. Even the best preachers and crafted sermons cannot bridge this gap without the help of the Holy Spirit.

**Relationship:** Spiritual formation is shaped through intentional discipleship relationships. Making disciples requires transferring all that we have learned and everything the Lord has taught. It requires systematic study of Scripture. Not just knowledge but putting into practice: observing everything that Jesus commanded. What you have

learned and received and heard and seen in me—practice these things (Philippians 4:9). It requires modeling godly character. It involves creating opportunities for applying what is learned. This relationship takes time and energy and can be messy. Discipleship corrects, in love.

Much has been said recently about solitude, silence and contemplation regarding spiritual formation. Countless disruptions, emergencies and inconveniences interrupt our ministry and delay our progress. It would be amazing to go to a monastery and focus on the Word! But we are called to ministry and ministry is people. Needy, difficult and obstinate people. Everything we do in ministry is done in community. The New Testament lists at least thirty "one anothers." Serve one another, forgive one another, prefer one another. The one repeated most is love one another.

**Reproduction:** The result of spiritual formation is that we have prepared someone to take our place when we are done. We should all be looking for a Timothy to invest in. In ministry, especially in missions, we will have followers who will go where we never will. They will take the gospel further than we could. Our experience is that they do it better than we could. 2 Timothy 2:22 reminds us of the purpose and pattern of spiritual formation is that what you have heard and learned must be entrusted to faithful men and women, who will be able to teach others also.

In this same way the Lord promised to accompany, resource and empower us for the work of the ministry, we must be committed to the next generation. They are gifted with abilities, resources and technology we cannot imagine. We must do all within our power to ensure they are successful in completing the Great Commission. In this way, the process of spiritual formation continues until the end of the age.

Wanda Ferguson, *Missionary to Panama*



# When Meaning Matters:

## INTERPRETATION AND THE CHURCH'S WITNESS IN CULTURE

**T**he church at Corinth held a special place in the heart of the apostle Paul. There he labored as a tentmaker to support himself while seeking to establish a church. In weakness and fear, he preached the gospel with power and demonstration of the Holy Spirit, and many Gentiles became followers of Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 2:1–4). The Jews in Corinth pushed back against Paul, but the local synagogue leader was converted, and within eighteen months a church was established (Acts 18:1–17).

Paul wrote several letters to the church at Corinth, including the one commonly known as First Corinthians. In its introduction, he addressed them as saints—holy before God—enriched with favor and lacking none of the gifts (1 Cor. 1:2, 5). In an amazing pronouncement, he told them that because of their standing in Christ, all things belonged to them (1 Cor. 3:21–23). This may have been who they were positionally in Christ, but division and serious dysfunction had emerged, and this deeply

concerned Paul. His correspondence boldly confronted sin and provided practical instructions for restoring unity within a divided assembly.

Considerable emphasis was given to how spiritual gifts were to be used for the common good (1 Cor. 12:7). One gift specifically addressed by Paul was the interpretation of tongues—a wonderful gift for the church when used in an orderly way.

The Gentiles in the church at



Corinth had emerged from a lifestyle in which idols were consulted for answers to life's questions. A person interpreted what the idol supposedly revealed; however, as Paul explained, the idol was unable to speak, and a demonic spirit stood behind the communication (1 Cor. 10:20; Deut. 32:17). These Gentiles, once pagan worshipers, had been transformed and, through the power of the Holy Spirit, declared Jesus as Lord. The gifts of the Spirit, including interpretation, were available to

them, but ignorance and disorder were not an option in their exercise (1 Cor. 12:2–4).

The gift of interpretation was also important for the Jewish converts within the Corinthian church. Dating back to the time of Nehemiah and Ezra, Jews returning from captivity were tasked with rebuilding Jerusalem. The priesthood was revived and given responsibility for ensuring that the Law of the Lord was read and interpreted so that its meaning could be understood

(Neh. 8:8). By the time Jesus arrived on the scene, interpreters known as lawyers and scribes had distorted the law of God by adding countless rules and regulations handed down through tradition (Matt. 23).

Another group present in the church at Corinth were those influenced by the teaching of Peter (1 Cor. 1:12). Peter was a direct link to the events of the Day of Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit was poured out and those filled spoke in other tongues. The sound

accompanying the Spirit's coming drew the attention of crowds gathered from across the Roman Empire for the Pentecost celebration (Acts 2:5). They were bewildered and amazed when they heard unlearned individuals speaking in languages known only to foreign nationals (Acts 2:8, 11). These tongues were interpreted as prophetic declarations of the mighty deeds of God (Acts 2:11). A further layer of interpretation occurred when Peter stood before skeptics and boldly proclaimed the gospel, supporting his message with quotations from the Old Testament.

When Paul addressed the saints at Corinth, he understood the importance of unity around two key realities. When gathered for worship, they were to function as a body in which every member exercised their gifts for the edification of others. At the same time, they were the church—called out of the world yet placed within it. The body viewed life from the inside out, while the church was witnessed from the outside by the surrounding culture (1 Cor. 12:27–28).

First Corinthians unfolds the gifts of the Spirit, presenting interpretation of tongues as an important aspect of both private and corporate worship (1 Cor. 12). When the church assembled, interpretation was to accompany speaking in tongues, and if no interpreter was present, the gift of prophecy was to be exercised. Paul taught that if a person prayed in tongues privately without interpretation, the mind was unfruitful, and the church was not edified (1 Cor. 14:9–15). Significantly, immediately before





**THE SURROUNDING CULTURE WAS TALKING, AND THE CHURCH NEEDED TO INTERPRET WHAT WAS BEING SAID (1 COR. 5:1).**

addressing prophecy, tongues, and interpretation, Paul devoted extended attention to the supremacy of love and commanded the church to pursue it (1 Cor. 14:1). The implication is that interpretation—whether in private devotion or corporate worship—should reflect the loving activity of God, especially among the nations (Rom. 5; 1 Cor. 13:1; 14:3, 11, 23).

An unusual transition occurs amid Paul's instruction concerning tongues and interpretation when he exhorts the Corinthian believers to stop thinking like immature children and to grow up (1 Cor. 3:1; 14:20). Earlier, he had explained that childish behavior—particularly evil behavior—results from acting without reflection (1 Cor. 13:11). Paul then cited Isaiah to remind them that speaking in tongues was not inherently a sign of spirituality, since God had once used foreign peoples with unfamiliar languages to bring judgment upon Israel (Isa. 28:11; 1 Cor. 14:21).

This served as a clear word from the Lord to the church at Corinth. Outsiders—barbarians, strangers, and unbelievers—were aware of the divisions, sexual immorality, lawsuits, immaturity, and misuse of authority within the church. The surrounding culture was talking, and the church needed to interpret what was being said (1 Cor. 5:1). God's command was to identify the leaven of malice and wickedness and remove it from their midst (1 Cor. 5:8). Their standing in Christ as a holy people was the standard by which they were to measure themselves. Through the Word of God and the empowering work of the Spirit,





## IF THE CHURCH HAS LOST ITS WITNESS WITHIN CULTURE, IT MUST INTERPRET WHAT IS BEING SAID AND ADDRESS INTERNAL DISORDER.

they were to return to their identity as a called-out people, abounding in the work of the Lord (1 Cor. 1:1–7; 15:58).

The gift of interpretation remains vital within the Spirit-filled church, for it is through understanding the written Word that Jesus is revealed. An example is found in Jesus' experience in the synagogue of Nazareth, where He read from the prophet Isaiah. Prior to this moment, He had been baptized by John and affirmed by the Father's voice, declaring His pleasure in the Son (Luke 3:21–22). After being led by the Spirit through forty days in the

wilderness, Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit and read the Scriptures publicly, interpreting them as fulfilled in Himself as the Anointed One who came to break the curse of sin (Luke 4:18–21).

If the church has lost its witness within culture, it must interpret what is being said and address internal disorder. This is illustrated following the ascension of Jesus, when His followers gathered in Jerusalem to await the coming of the Spirit. For ten days they devoted themselves to prayer and confronted the consequences of betrayal and suicide. The inhabitants of Jerusalem were

aware of the scandals surrounding Jesus' crucifixion, making it essential that the disciples deal openly with Judas's actions. Through repentance, unity, and expectation of the Spirit's power, they were prepared to reach the nations (Acts 1:8, 15–19). That mandate remains unchanged. May the world understand that our mission flows from a pure heart, demonstrated through love and empowered by the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 1:4).

**Mike Bean,**  
Ordained Minister



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# BRIDGING THE RIFT:



*Gospel Work Along  
Racial Fault Lines*



## **WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE CHURCH IN THE MIDST OF THIS? IT IS TO BRIDGE THE DIVIDE WITH THE GOSPEL.**

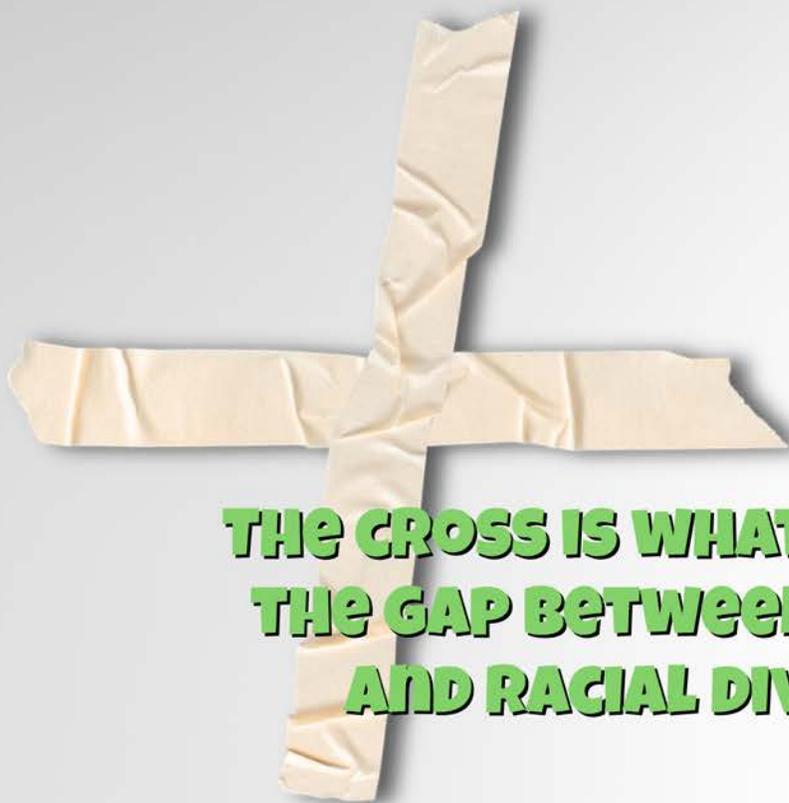
Take yourself back to 2020 and remember the earthshaking division in our nation, as it felt as though the ground beneath us was splitting open along deep racial fault lines. Lines of demarcation, long present but often ignored, ran through the core of our country much like the historic Mason–Dixon Line once did. These are lines that divide people simply based on where they are from or the color of their skin. Though we are well beyond the days of slavery and Jim Crow laws, a fault line of racial tension still runs beneath the surface of our nation.

When an earthquake occurs, it does not create a fault line; it reveals one. In the same way, moments of national crisis expose what already exists beneath the surface. The death of George Floyd did not cause racial division in America; it revealed it. What was uncovered was not merely a national problem, but something even deeper. At the core of our societal fracture lies the reality of the sinful human heart.

So, what is the role of the Church in the midst of this? It is to bridge the divide with the gospel.

Division along ethnic lines is not a new phenomenon. Scripture speaks directly to the hostility that existed between Jew and Gentile in the first century, one of the most entrenched divisions of the ancient world. The apostle Paul does not minimize this divide, but he does point clearly to its solution. He writes:

*“For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility by abolishing the law of commandments expressed in ordinances, that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace, and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby killing the hostility” (Ephesians 2:14–16, ESV).*



## THE CROSS IS WHAT BRIDGES THE GAP BETWEEN ETHNIC AND RACIAL DIVIDES.

The cross is what bridges the gap between ethnic and racial divides. At the cross, all ground is level. We are all sinners in need of grace. It is there that Jew and Greek, black and white, male and female, slave and free find equal footing and a new identity as children of God and brothers and sisters in Christ.

Yet, while this gospel reality is clear, it is not always consistently lived out in the Church. Too often, our view of others is shaped more by culture, environment, personal comfort, or unexamined prejudice than by the reconciling work of Jesus. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. famously observed in 1963, “It is appalling that the most segregated hour of Christian America is eleven o’clock on Sunday morning.” While we may have made some progress since then, many of our churches still quietly reflect that painful truth.

If Christ has broken down the dividing wall of hostility, why don’t our congregations more fully reflect that reality? What are the keys to change? Below are several principles that can help cultivate multi-ethnic ministry in a local church context.

**First, to become multi-ethnic, you need a clear multi-ethnic vision.** Without intentional, repeated communication, churches naturally drift toward the path of least resistance. Vision must be preached, taught, and modeled. For us, this commitment was so central that we placed it front and center in our name—Diversity Church.







**Second, the vision should reflect the demographics of your community.** If your area is 90 percent white, it is understandable that your congregation may largely reflect that. However, are you also making space for and reaching the remaining 10 percent?

Faithfulness means reflecting the mission field God has placed you in, not simply catering to comfort.

**Third, platform people of color.** Like it or not, like attracts like. It is difficult to reach diverse communities if there is no visible representation in leadership, preaching, or worship. Representation communicates belonging.

**Fourth, reach out intentionally to minority communities.** One of the first outreaches we hosted as Diversity Church was called *Taste of Diversity*, a multicultural food festival designed to bring the community together in a non-threatening way. We set up a booth, shared meals, and built relationships. The first person who came to faith through that outreach was an African American man. He came for food and left having encountered the Bread of Life. He and his family became some of the first members of our church.



**Finally, fight for unity.** Unity does not happen accidentally. It must be protected, taught, and sometimes defended. We regularly teach on communication, especially in the age of social media, on how not to be easily offended or unnecessarily offensive. When rumblings of division arise, leaders must address them directly and pastorally, rather than ignoring them and allowing pressure to build beneath the surface. Racism is ultimately a product of the sinful human heart.

Therefore, the only lasting solution is the gospel of reconciliation, our reconciliation to God and reconciliation to one another. As the Church embodies this calling, it offers the world a glimpse of heaven on earth: people from every tribe, tongue, and nation united in Christ. Godspeed as you labor to reflect that vision in your local church.

---

**Jonathan Ember**, *Lead Pastor,*  
*Indianapolis Diversity Church*



# Calling Plays

## FROM THE SECOND CHAIR

**A**s I write this, all of Indiana is celebrating the national championship of our IU football team. And football is the perfect framework for the topic of leading from the second chair.

Think of the lead pastor as the head coach, and the second-chair leader as the offensive coordinator. It's a unique kind of leadership that doesn't get the microphone very often... no press conferences after the game, no endorsement deals. But it is real leadership with real authority and real responsibility.

The offensive coordinator is a key contributor to the team's success by designing systems, developing strategy, and using personnel wisely to move the ball down the field. You can't win if you don't score.

In the same way, the second-chair leader contributes to the ministry team by:

- **Translating vision into structure, action, and alignment**
- **Building systems for staffing, budgets, operations, and execution**
- **Helping ministry scale in ways that are repeatable, sustainable, and effective**

Sunday is game day, but the wins are prepped in the film room, player development, and the game plan. Or in ministry terms: systems, staffing, culture, and execution.

You don't need a large staff to have second-chair leadership. Every church has someone helping shoulder the weight, calling the next play, and turning vision into action. Over the last 40-plus years in ministry, I've had the privilege of serving in a few different positions on the team—Worship Pastor, Lead

Pastor, and now Executive Pastor at Realife Church for the past ten years. I've sat in the head coach's chair, and I've spent a lot of time in the coordinator role. And I've learned this: **Healthy churches don't win on the strength of one leader. They win when the leadership is aligned, trusts each other, and runs the game plan together.**

From my experience, here are four essentials to a healthy relationship between first and second-chair leaders:

### 1) TRUST

Integrity is the foundation of trust, but it's often the simple things that quickly build trust. Like following through, meeting deadlines, and telling the truth. When I first came to Realife, Lead Pastor Adam Detamore and I were learning to trust each other. I focused on doing what I said I would do, working hard, keeping confidences, and publicly supporting leadership decisions.

Trust is also strengthened when leaders know their goal is the same: to make the best decisions for the church...no agendas. I've heard Pastor Adam say several times, "I just want to do what's best for the church." Strong leaders will see things differently, but underneath it all must be a shared conviction: **We're on the same team, and on mission together for the Kingdom of God.**

### 2) COMMUNICATION

Poor communication can cause a second-chair leader to drift out of alignment. Can you imagine a Head Coach not knowing the offensive game plan...or finding out the quarterback is injured only after the team takes the field?



And it goes both ways. Clear communication from the Lead Pastor on vision, direction, and expectations will help the whole ministry team be in sync and hit the target.

Communication is key, but too much information overwhelms. I once updated Pastor Adam by email on everything that had happened while he was gone on summer vacation. It was way too much. On the other hand, too little communication creates blind spots and leaves the Lead Pastor wondering why they're out of the loop. The goal is a healthy rhythm of clear, consistent communication that keeps everyone aligned.

### 3) HONEST INPUT

About a year into my time at Realife, Pastor Adam said something that reshaped the way I approached our decision-making conversations. Since I was in a new role at a new church (with a different culture in a different part of the country), I spent that first season doing a lot of listening and learning. One day, while we were wrestling with a decision, he said: "When I ask for your opinion, I don't want you to just agree with me. I want to know what you really think."

That's a gift.

**Second-chair leaders don't serve well by being echo chambers, but by bringing clarity, perspective, and sometimes words of caution.** A healthy leadership team depends on a Lead Pastor who welcomes honest input and creates an environment that leads to better decisions.

### 4) HONOR

Pastor Adam and I share a mutual respect for the different gifts, experience, anointing and calling each of us brings to the table. I deeply believe in the authority of the pastoral role.

When I offer honest input, and especially in moments where we start from opposite perspectives, I try to frame it with honor and humility: "God has placed you here as Pastor. You get to make the call. But here are my thoughts ..."

That posture is biblical, and it keeps unity intact. It protects the relationship. And it reinforces trust on both sides. Leading from the second chair is an art. When done well, it doesn't diminish leadership or influence, it multiplies it.

No matter where you serve—whether on staff or in a volunteer role, please hear this: **You matter!** The Kingdom advances through unified teams who serve faithfully and shoulder the load together. Thank you for using your gifts and influence to strengthen the local church and make disciples for Jesus throughout Indiana.

**David Eichler**, Executive Pastor,  
Greenfield Realife Church



# CHANGING THE MAP

## Rekindling Youth Alive Across Indiana

**A**bout a year and a half ago, I sat in a conference ballroom staring at two maps that I haven't been able to shake since. The first map showed every school across the state of Indiana, hundreds of campuses filled with students who walk their hallways every day searching for hope, identity, and truth.

The second map showed the number of active Youth Alive clubs, Spirit-empowered student ministries happening inside those very schools. The contrast was jarring. One map was full. The other was nearly empty. And in that moment, the Holy Spirit whispered something unmistakable to my heart: **"We need to change the map in Indiana."**

Jesus once said, *"The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few."* (Matthew 9:37) Looking at those maps, I knew, Indiana's schools were a plentiful harvest field. All they needed were workers. So, we prayed. And then we followed where God began leading.

This past summer and fall, we placed a fresh emphasis on Youth Alive across Indiana. Students heard the heartbeat of the movement at camp. They attended breakout sessions on sharing their faith. Over *300 students* committed themselves to being campus missionaries, young men and women boldly saying, "I'll take Jesus to my school."

We put a 30-day Youth Alive devotional in their hands. We met with churches, youth pastors, and leaders who were hungry to see students empowered for mission. And then the stories started to surface... A new club launching... A student boldly sharing their faith... Moments of breakthrough only the Holy Spirit could have orchestrated.

It reminded me of Acts 4:13, where ordinary people, filled with the Spirit, spoke boldly and changed the

world. **That same boldness is rising in students across Indiana.**

Behind the scenes, we knew we needed someone dedicated to helping steward this movement, someone who would walk alongside churches, resource students, and help accelerate the momentum we're seeing. After prayerful conversation, we're excited to share that **Nathan Jorris** is now serving as Indiana's Youth Alive Missionary, helping lead and support this growing movement. His heart is simple: to see students reach students with the hope of Jesus. You'll hear much more from him soon in his own words, and trust me, you'll be encouraged by what God has placed on his heart.

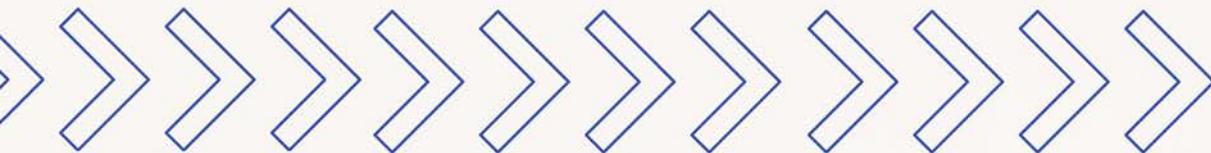
Youth Alive is not about adults doing ministry to students. It's about empowering students to minister in the spaces God has already placed them. Jesus said, *"You are the light of the world... a city on a hill cannot be hidden."* (Matthew 5:14) Right now, students are choosing to shine that light at their lunch tables, in their hallways, on their teams, and in their clubs.

Indiana's map is already beginning to change. And I believe we are only at the beginning of what God wants to do. The best days for Youth Alive in Indiana are ahead. Not because of a program. Not because of a strategy. But because students are saying yes to the calling of God, *today*.

*At Youth Convention, we heard one testimony that stopped us in our tracks: More than 50 students at one school had given their lives to Christ since the beginning of the school year, because students stepped into the mission right where they were.*

**Mark Whitehead**, IDAG NextGen Ministries Director





**I**f you would have asked me a year ago, stepping into the role of Indiana Youth Alive Missionary would not have been on my bingo card. I've spent my life investing in students, and I knew this would be a major piece of discipleship for students across Indiana, but I honestly assumed someone else would lead it. Over time, through prayer, conversation, and unmistakable confirmation from the Lord, it became clear—God wasn't just showing me a need. He was asking me to say yes.

At its core, Youth Alive is about one simple but powerful idea: **Students Sharing Jesus**. Indiana's schools represent one of our largest and most strategic mission fields. Every day, hundreds of thousands of students walk into hallways filled with questions about identity, purpose, and hope. While pastors and churches often have limited access to those spaces, students have something no one else does—**full access**. When a student shares Jesus with a friend, the Gospel travels in a way no program ever could.

The vision moving forward is not complicated, but it is intentional. Youth Alive in Indiana is built on four key components designed to effectively equip and send students.

First, **Campus Missionaries**. These are students who are called, committed, and equipped to live on mission where God has already placed them. Youth Alive inspires students to see their everyday lives as their mission field and their friends as their responsibility. Students will change the map as they realize their responsibility as believers goes beyond inviting friends to church and includes personally sharing the Gospel with them.

Second, **Student Movements**. These take shape through

official school clubs, prayer movements, and campus gatherings where campus missionaries put their faith into action. These movements create safe, student-led environments where the Good News is shared boldly and consistently.

Third, **Outreach**. These movements don't just speak the Gospel—they live it. Outreach moments allow students to serve their schools in practical ways, demonstrating the love of Jesus while opening doors for spiritual conversations.

Finally, **Prayer Partners**. Every move of God is sustained by prayer. Our heart is to mobilize churches and believers across Indiana to intentionally cover schools and campus missionaries in prayer, believing that spiritual breakthrough always begins there.

The urgency behind this moment is real. Last summer, more than 300 students across our state responded to the call to be campus missionaries. Some clubs have already launched, and testimonies are beginning to emerge. But we also recognize the responsibility of stewarding this momentum well. We cannot afford to collect commitments without providing the ongoing coaching, resources, and relational support students need to thrive.

As we look ahead to the coming school year, our goal is clear: to move from inspiration to activation. That means equipping students before they step onto campus, walking alongside churches as they champion student-led mission, and creating pathways for students to confidently share the Gospel with their peers.

Romans 10 reminds us that *"Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."* But it also asks the question that continues to shape this movement: *How will they hear unless someone tells them—and how will anyone go unless they are sent?* Youth Alive exists to answer that question by equipping and sending students to reach their generation.

Indiana's map is changing—not because of a new strategy, but because students are saying yes. I am honored to come alongside what God is already doing—and excited for what He is just beginning—as we continue to see **students sharing Jesus** and a generation surrendering to Him!

**Nathan Jorris**, Indiana Youth Alive Missionary



**NATHAN & SOPHIA JORRIS**  
INDIANA YOUTH ALIVE MISSIONARIES

# MEET THE *Nominees*



## JAMES CLARK

**Current Ministry Position** - Lead Pastor at DeMotte Calvary AG

**Length of time in ministry there** - 41 years

**Other district leadership positions held** - Sectional Presbyter; Church Planting and Revitalization team; Credential Interview Committee; Ministry Group Leader; ISOM Instructor

**Prior ministry experience** - Youth Pastor in Bethalto, IL; Youth and Music Pastor in Valparaiso, IN; Youth Pastor in Minier, IL

**Education** - Bachelor of Arts from Central Bible College; Master's Degree from AGTS



## RYAN MCDOWELL

**Current Ministry Position** - Lead Pastor at Hobart Equipppers Church

**Length of time in ministry there** - 19 years

**Other district leadership positions held** - Ministry Group Presbyter

**Prior ministry experience** - Youth Pastor in New York and Connecticut (10 years)

**Education** - Associate's Degree in Computer Science, Purdue University; Bachelor's Degree in Bible, Northpoint Bible College



## ORLANDO SOLER

**Current Ministry Position** - Lead Pastor at Hammond Life Point Church

**Length of time in ministry there** - 26 years

**Other district leadership positions held** - Sectional Leader, Executive Presbyter

**Prior ministry experience** - Chaplain for the Hammond Police Department

**Education** - Bachelors Degree in Biblical Studies, Moody Bible Institute; Masters Degree in Leadership and Ministry, Evangel University AGTS

# MEET THE *Nominees*

SOUTHWEST



## JEREMY FAUGHN

**Current Ministry Position** - Lead Pastor at Evansville Oak Hill Christian Center

**Length of time in ministry there** - 6 years

**Other district leadership positions held** - Ministry Group Presbyter

**Prior ministry experience** - Lead Pastor - Northlake AG, Charlotte, NC (2010-2020); Associate Pastor - Venice Assembly, Venice, FL (2007-2009); Youth Pastor - Bi-vocational, Lighthouse AG, Metropolis, IL (2002-2007)

**Education** - Global University - Berean School of the Bible; Murray State University, Murray, KY, Bachelor of Science in Business



## JIM GIDCUMB

**Current Ministry Position** - Lead Pastor at Petersburg River of Life

**Length of time in ministry there** - 21 years

**Prior ministry experience** - Itinerant Minister

**Education** - Global University - Berean School of the Bible; Indiana School of Ministry



## JOEL RIVERA

**Current Ministry Position** - Lead Pastor at Jasper Victory AG

**Length of time in ministry there** - 14+ years

**Other district leadership positions held** - Executive Presbyter, Ministry Group Presbyter

**Prior ministry experience** - Youth Pastor; Associate Pastor

**Education** - Global University - Berean School of the Bible; Kentucky School of Ministry

# AROUND THE DISTRICT!



## GLOBAL WORKERS HOME AND AVAILABLE

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Superintendent Chad and Julie McAtee attended a special consecration service at Terre Haute the Journey Church for the installation of Pastor Shawn and Heather Riggs on January 4, 2026.



Pastor Jeremy and Stephanie Faughn, Evansville Oak Hill, had a special Mortgage Burning service on January 18, 2026.

## NOW WITH CHRIST



**Rev. Robert Curtis Calvert**, age 69, passed away on January 19, 2026. Bob graduated high school in 1975 from Lutheran East, Cleveland, OH. He earned a bachelor's degree in 1979 and master's degree in 1980, from Ohio University, Athens, Ohio. He married Debbie Host in 1983 and shortly afterward felt a call to ministry. Bob was ordained with the Assemblies of God in 1989.

Bob's ministerial career spanned many years and included being an intern in LaGrange, IL; a youth pastor in Des Moines, IA; an Assistant Pastor/Administrator in Wakefield, RI; an Associate Pastor in Ashland, OH; a Senior Pastor in Chardon, OH; a Family Life/Counseling Pastor in Indianapolis, IN; a Hospice Chaplain in Danville, IN; a Hospice Chaplain in Indianapolis, IN; and a Bereavement Specialist/Chaplain in Columbus, IN.

Bob is survived by his wife of almost 43 years, Debbie, and two sons: Clay Calvert and Cody (Samantha) Calvert, his father-in-law, John Host, and his brother-in-law, John Host Jr.



**Rev. Cletus R. Snellenberger**, age 88, passed away on August 10, 2025. He was born October 14, 1936, in Clay City, Indiana to the late Reville and Floyd Snellenberger. He accepted the Lord as a teenager and remained a faithful servant throughout his life. Cletus was united in marriage to Carol McWilliams on June 19, 1956.

Cletus started his working career with IBM where he was employed for 22 years. He then felt called to full-time ministry at Faith Gospel Tabernacle in Bad Axe, Michigan, before attending Rhema Bible School in Tulsa, Oklahoma, for further training. He and his wife, Carol, then returned to Port Huron in 1980 and pastored Life of Faith Fellowship Church in Port Huron from 1980 to 1990. After leaving Port Huron, Cletus continued a lifelong ministry helping start up churches (including Lyons Assembly of God in Indiana), going on countless mission trips, and never missing the opportunity to plant the seeds of the gospel and share his love for Jesus wherever he went.

He is survived by his wife, Carol, to whom he was married just a few months shy of 70 years; his three children, Candis (Russ) Lavender, Christopher (Angela) Snellenberger, and Caremy (Sonya) Snellenberger; ten grandchildren; several great grandchildren; and his sister, Mazie. He was preceded in death by his brother, Kenneth Snellenberger; and sister, Loretta Wellman.



Indianapolis Franklin Park Church celebrated its 19<sup>th</sup> Anniversary on February 8, 2026. Former Pastor Greg and Amy Allison were there with Current Pastors Josh and Charissa Stephens.



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# IDAG 2026 CALENDAR

## MARCH

- 2-3 Gather Retreat
- 7 JBQ/TBQ Meets
- 21-27 AIM Trip (El Salvador)
- 21 ISOM at Indpls Lakeview
- 21 JBQ State Meet

## APRIL

- 3 IDAG Office Closed - Good Friday
- 11 The Arts Festival
- 12-14 Presbyter's Leadership Intensive
- 18 ISOM at Indpls Lakeview
- 24-26 Royal Ranger FCF Spring Trace
- 25 STAND Men's Conference

## MAY

- 2 REAL Women's One Day
- 8-9 Lake Placid Work Days
- 17-19 District Council  
 (Greenwood GRACEHOUSE)
- 20 Bike Ride for Missions
- 23-25 Foster Family Camp

## JUNE

- 1-5 Youth Camp 1
- 4 Credential Orientation
- 5-7 Ranger JLDA Camp
- 8-12 Youth Camp 2
- 12-15 Youth Weekend Camp
- 15-19 Youth Camp 3
- 22-26 Youth Camp 4

## JULY

- 6/29-3 Youth Camp 5
- 5-8 Kids Camp 1
- 8-11 Kids Camp 2
- 9 Credential Exams (C & L)
- 12-15 Kids Camp 3
- 12-17 National Ranger Camporama
- 27-31 National Fine Arts (St. Louis)

## AUGUST

- 21-23 PK Retreat (Lake Placid)

## SEPTEMBER

- 12 Boys & Girls Adventure Day
- 14-16 Ordained Women's Prayer Retreat
- 21-24 Men's Pastors Prayer Retreat
- 25-26 Women's VITAL Conference

## OCTOBER

- 2-4 LIFT Retreat
- 2-3 Girls Ministries Camp-O-Rama
- 3 JBQ/TBQ Meets
- 9-11 Royal Rangers FCF Fall Trace
- 10 NextGen One Day
- 25-27 Ministers' Retreat

## NOVEMBER

- 6-7 Youth Convention
- 14 JBQ and TBQ Meets
- 25-27 IDAG Office Closed for Thanksgiving

## DECEMBER

- 3 Credential Orientation
- 23-25 IDAG Office Closed for Christmas
- 30-31 IDAG Office Closed for New Year's

SCAN FOR MORE  
 IDAG EVENTS

