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Confirming the Churches

world evangelistic work of Al Parr
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January-April Report

Dear brothers, sisters, family and friends,

Thank you for your prayers and financial support on behalf of encouraging the church in our generation to be what our Lord wants it to be. Christians in every section of our country have been overwhelmed by the temptation to materialism and doctrinal modernism. Many of the church's leaders have promoted new doctrines, and others have simply failed to preach "all the counsel of God" (Acts 20:27). A restoration of the original doctrine, practice and spirit of the church must be preached with great urgency. You are a big part of my small efforts toward that end, and I thank God for you every day.

The writing of this report is usually scheduled for the last week of each even-numbered month. The last week of February was a time of unexpected requests and much Bible study, so that I didn't get to the report. Attention didn't return to it until April, and I have written a little at a time with eagerness to tell you of our activities. This has been a very rewarding four months.

As the year began I was in a continuing series of Bible studies with the couple who were baptized in December. That eventually turned into a great disappointment when they both left the church with hostility after we learned that they were continuing in sin, and tried to teach them what the Bible says about it.

Other studies have had brighter outcomes, and some are ongoing in a good spirit. Lengthy correspondence on specific topics has developed from some students enrolled in Saline's Bible Correspondence Courses. For various people I have written on observance of the Sabbath, the role of baptism in God's plan, and on some family and social issues. The writings on the "Sabbath or Sunday" is being formatted into a tract, and there are already several orders for multiple copies of it.

A big part of the rationale for this work is the encouragement of preachers laboring in difficult places. Opportunities and progress in this aspect of the mission have been very encouraging to me. During these months I have spent considerable time with two preachers in the U.S., one in Canada and four in India – some in person, some by phone, and some electronically. One preacher in the U.S. is under the particular stress of a pending church split over personalities and major doctrinal departures. Brother Chinta V. R. Raju in India asked me in late March to join him via Skype to answer questions being asked by a group of preachers who assemble weekly to study the Bible. I stayed with them for an hour. Brother Chinta has asked me to make that a frequent event, and I am eager to do so. We had considered making the connection again last Saturday, but the Nepal earthquake (yes, south India had some damage from that) and locally heavy rain prevented the class from meeting.

Another Indian preacher with whom I worked in person last year, and with whom I correspond frequently, has sent a letter that I have incorporated into this report. To save print space it is posted on my web site. Brother Bontha Swarna Raju is a hard-working faithful evangelist worthy of support and encouragement. The church with which he works in Kamepalli is in serious need of a better meeting facility. Please read the letter at <http://www.acts1541.org/reports/Kamepalli.pdf>.

The work fund was able to help a family near Saline who had suffered a house fire. In addition to their house and all interior belongings, they lost two trucks and a trailer filled with all the tools of their landscaping business. They are not members of the church, but I have studied with them briefly twice, and gave them some tracts to study. Pray for their conversion to the Lord.

There have been two major changes to my schedule since the first of the year. In mid-January I began teaching in Michigan Bible School, and in early March I began a weekly on-line live Bible class.

Michigan Bible School meets Tuesday and Thursday evenings for people in the area who want to increase their knowledge of the Bible. I am teaching "Survey of the Minor Prophets" in a 2-hour class on Thursday. It's a 16-week class, scheduled to end on May 7. Audio CDs and Video recordings on DVD are available. Each 2-hour DVD comes for \$3.00; if interested in the audio CD, ask me for details (I'll have to check on that).

Follow this work at <http://www.acts1541.org> and at <http://facebook.com/Confirming the Churches>.

Printed reports are mailed to supporters, and to others who specifically request them.

The live-streamed Bible class is something that we have been wanting to do for over a year. In January I finally found the vehicle that would give the kind of presentation I wanted. After several weeks of online training via various articles and videos the class went live. I call it "Confirming the Churches Bible Class," and we have begun with a study of the book of Acts (for obvious reasons if you understand the rationale for this mission work). It's a 30-minute class every Tuesday evening at 7:00 (eastern time). You can find it on the web site at <http://www.acts1541.org/CTCclass.htm>. We don't cover much ground in 30 minutes, but attendance is increasing as families find the class a good core around which to build their evening devotionals or family Bible time. The technology is complicated (many levels of features), but I am learning something new each week, and adding new features to the interactive experience.

During April 12-15 I preached the first of three gospel meetings scheduled in three successive months. The church in Clyde, Ohio had invited me, and they supported the meeting well. One soul was baptized into Christ on the first day of the meeting: a man with whom the preacher had been studying for several months. Something very rare happened to upset our plans for that meeting: I got too sick to preach. That's only the second time that has happened in my over 44 years of preaching. For that matter, it was the first time I had been sick enough to stay in bed since January, 2009, and the last time before that was in the spring of 1989 (I just don't get sick very often). The local preacher, Brian Sherrell, preached Wednesday night in my place. I wasn't strong enough to drive home until mid-day Friday (thus having to cancel also my Thursday night class at MBS). Videos of the lessons in the meeting are on my growing YouTube page (search "Al Parr," and select the one with my picture - I have no idea who that other guy is).

My records are not precise regarding tract and book distribution, but in these four months about three dozen books of three different titles and about 300 tracts of four titles have been purchased at events and online. All such proceeds are returned to printing and free distribution in mission areas. In March we printed 8,000 copies of three tracts in Ibrahimpatnam. These were initially divided among three churches for local distribution. There is now a "shopping cart" feature for book sales (tracts coming later) on the web site: <http://www.acts1541.org/books.htm>.

The Saturday following the Ohio gospel meeting was the annual "Spiritual Saturday" of the Ridge Road church in Ypsilanti. Their theme this year was, "Can God Really...?" My assignment was "...Keep You Saved?" Video and audio recordings will soon be posted to the church's web site, if the Lord wills. When they are up you will find them at www.ridgeroadcoc.org under the "Events" tab.

July is the only month this year that I don't already have something scheduled away from Saline. The invitations are increasing. In fact I have already cancelled a planned August 3-nation mission to Africa in order to give the time and resources instead to U.S. churches that call. U.S. churches have always been the focus of this work. (Last week I received an invitation from Korea, a country that I have long wanted to visit. That trip is not possible this year, but I haven't ruled it out for next year.)

The Saline church just passed the 45th anniversary of its planting. We are recognizing that anniversary with a homecoming lectureship May 31. Five former preachers and I are scheduled to conduct an all day period of Bible study and socializing. The two preachers with the longest tenures, including the first full-time preacher, and the first two elders are planning to be here.

You might wonder how I do all that and continue to work with the church in Saline. When I am not traveling I have to be somewhere, and the church in Saline is an excellent supporter of all of this work. For two weeks every month I am not committed to the Saline church; they have given me that time to do the broader work. Invitations continue to arrive every week to come help a church or preacher somewhere, or write a book or tract to help in a particular area. Time and finances do not permit me to honor many invitations. There are enough invitations that I could travel and write full time if the support were available. A new fund-raising package is nearly ready for distribution. If you know someone who would like to consider it, please let me know.

Thank you for your support and prayers, and may God bless you.

In His service,



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Contributions received January 1 - April 15:

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|------------------------|--------|
| Butternut Ridge church | \$500 |
| Corinth Road church | \$1200 |
| Greensboro Road church | \$1000 |
| Egypt church | \$200 |
| Hazel Park church | \$400 |
| Nettleton church | \$800 |
| Ridge Road church | \$200 |
| LeIsha Kensey | \$100 |
| Drucilla McIntire | \$100 |
| Sybil Peffley | \$800 |
| Joann Yarborough | \$100 |
| Book & Tract sales | \$244 |

(Make checks payable to Church of Christ and