



# The Fellowship Journal

*Rooted in Grace, Growing in Love*

339 LWE, Chambersburg, PA, (717) 504-8789

Volume 9, Issue 2

February 2017

## TEN MAJOR TRENDS FOR CHURCHES IN 2017

*From Thom Rainer*



For those who read my blog regularly, you know I do a “trends post” every year early in January. This next statement sounds totally immodest, but I’m pretty good at predictive trends.

Now let me tell you the whole truth.

I’m pretty good at these predictive trends because I have been following developing patterns for the past year. In other words, I’m really not that bright or prescient. The best I can say is I’m pretty observant.

So what are the ten major trends for 2017? It’s a mixed bag of good news and bad news.

1. **Renewed emphasis on evangelism.** Many church leaders want to know how their churches can better reach the non-Christians where they are. This emphasis on the “Jerusalem” of Acts 1:8 will result in more intentionality in evangelism and, thus, more people becoming followers of Christ.
2. **Renewed emphasis on practical ministries.** Many of our churches have gone through a period of theological recovery for which I am very grateful. Now the leaders want to know the “how” along with the “what.” They are looking for practical solutions built on biblical truths.
3. **Increased frequency of allegations of child sex abuse in churches.** Sexual predators see churches as places of vulnerability and opportunity. Too many churches are not prepared or equipped to deal with these issues. Please see my recent post on this topic at: <http://thomrainer.com/2016>
4. **Increased financial fraud in churches.** Once again, some of those with ill intent see the church as a place of opportunity to commit theft. I will address this issue more fully later. I am an advocate of outsourced church financial ministries like MAG Bookkeeping to do payroll, bookkeeping, and financial records. It takes the burden and liability off the church.
5. **The multi-site movement becoming a neighborhood church movement.** I have written about the multi-site movement many times at this blog. The next extension of this movement is an intentionality to start or acquire campuses to reach and minister to residents of specific neighborhoods.

Church Office Hours  
Mon-Fri 9AM-1PM

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6. **An acceleration of church closures.** The death rate of churches is sadly increasing in America. I do not see that trend abating.
7. **Church acquisitions becoming normative.** I am surprised how quickly churches and denominational entities have become strategic about acquiring churches that are declining and dying. While the trend of church closures is not encouraging, it is encouraging that more churches are becoming intentional about saving these churches from total extinction.
8. **Worship center downsizing becomes normative.** This trend was easy to predict. The Millennials are leading the way to attend worship services that are small to mid-size. As a consequence, the huge worship centers have lost their attraction. Church architects and design/build firms will be busy downsizing worship centers.
9. **Longer pastoral tenure.** This trend is being led by millennial pastors. These younger pastors do not desire to climb the ladder to larger churches. They are more desirous to stay and make a long-term difference in the community.
10. **The remarkable shift toward continual learning.** Our research is showing that pastors and church staff tend to have greater success in their roles if they are intentional about continual learning. Some go the path of greater formal education, but more are receiving coaching and intentional programs of continual learning like the ministry we developed called Church Answers. An ancillary trend to this one is the increase in number of mentors and coaches for pastors and staff.

These trends are relatively easy to predict, but that does not make them less important. Think how they might impact your church.

## 10 AREAS FOR GOALS IN 2017

*From Chuck Lawless*



It's hard to believe that it's 2017. It is, though, and it's time to turn our attention to what God might want to accomplish this year. If you haven't already set your goals (and even if you have), I encourage you to set goals in each of these areas:



1. **Spiritual disciplines.** Establish a plan to spend time with God each day. Do whatever it takes to walk more closely with God (to learn how I read the Word each year, check out my blog).
2. **Relationships.** Most of us have room for improvement in how we relate to others. Perhaps you need to pray more regularly with your family. You might need to reconcile with someone.
3. **Finances.** Saving money requires a plan. Set goals, start working your plan, and spend wisely. If you do, you'll have more to give to God's work.
4. **Career.** Whatever your profession is, you likely want to improve in some area. Do all that you do for the glory of God (1 Corinthians 10:31).
5. **Education.** Even if you have earned a terminal degree in your discipline, there's always more to know. Set some reading goals. Take another class. Keep learning.
6. **Health.** God has given us one body that He expects us to take care of. Simply walking more each day is a start.

7. **Local church.** If you're not already involved in a local church, you can start now. If you're already committed to a congregation, don't let yourself grow stagnant – set some new goals for service in that church.
8. **Evangelism.** Few of us are natural evangelists. Set a goal to share the gospel with somebody at least once a month, once a week, etc.
9. **Missions.** Your options might include international service, or they might be limited to North American opportunities – but you can likely do *something*.
10. **Spiritual reproduction.** Make a commitment to pour yourself into another Christian this year, with this goal in mind: somebody will love and follow Christ more at the end of 2017.

## UPWARD BASKETBALL

UPWARD Basketball began their games on January 21. Come out and support our teams. Games are held on Saturdays 8:30 a.m. through 6:00 p.m. For more information contact Pastor Gary.

## BRETHREN FELLOWSHIP'S GOT TALENT



We are planning a second Pie & Praise (Brethren Fellowship's Got Talent) event for Sunday evening April 30 at 6:30 p.m. It's time to start planning your performance. If you're a musician, magician, comedian, ventriloquist, acrobat, poet, or have a funny pet trick get ready to display your talent.

If you're interested in being part of a small vocal group (quartet, octet, small choir) contact Ron Burge. Also let Ron know if you want to be a participant in this event. If you can't participate, please plan to attend and encourage those who perform. The price of admission is to bring a dessert. We'll praise God with our talents and then celebrate with dessert.



Total offering to date: \$ 25,245.31  
Total Special Offerings to date: \$ 469.00  
“Steady plodding brings prosperity; hasty speculation brings poverty.”  
Proverbs 21:5

## FROM OUR LEADERSHIP TEAM

As the year 2017 begins, it is hard to believe that in three years it will be 2020. What will the next three years have in store for us, individually and collectively? Will there be hardship, discovering our courage, loss of loved ones, birth, new friendships, reconnecting with long ago friendships, challenges, new journeys, heartache, disappointments, joy. Whatever is in the future, one constant is God.

Remember how all computers were supposed to shut down on January 1, 2000? Because of the belief that the computers were not programmed to go from 1999 to 2000, power grids would shut down and there would be catastrophes such as: no electricity, water, phone service, gasoline and not to mention national defense. There was such a hullabaloo fear was instilled and people were responding irrationally. Well, upon that New Years, it came in without so much as a peep. How disappointing for the doomsayers. How comforting for those who went to sleep the night of December 31, 1999 knowing whatever was presented in the New Year that God was in control.

My New Year's wish for you is that you find comfort and hope in knowing God is in control. That Brethren Fellowship not look back and allow fear to keep from going forward. That Brethren Fellowship will step into the future with strength, beauty, courage, compassion, hope, joy, talent, imagination, reverence, wisdom, love and faith.

Mary Kimmel, Leadership

### Fellowship Team

The Fellowship Team met on January 10, 2017. They welcomed new member Linda Logsdon, reviewed kitchen duties and new layout and went over schedule for Sunday Fellowship, setup and cleanup. They are scheduling a Hershey Bears Game to attend on April 1. A sign-up sheet will be posted by February 1 through March 1. Attendees would have to provide their own transportation and ticket cost is \$10. –Report submitted by Beverly Henneberger.

### Discipleship

The team met January 19. They will be having “Breakfast with a Message” on January 29, at 8:30 a.m. The event is for everyone and will be held in months with fifth Sundays. They are planning Family Fun Nights from June through October 2017. They will need volunteers for future “Breakfast with a Message” and “Family Fun Nights.” They discussed the need for volunteers for Nursery and Toddler babysitting. They are in need of a Sunday school helper for the Kindergarten class.

## HERSHEY BEARS HOCKEY GAME

Sign-up for the Hershey Bears Hockey game on April 1. Tickets will be \$10 per person. Each person or family will need to provide their own transportation. Seats will be in the same area as last year. A sign-up sheet will be available from Feb. 1 to March 1.



## THE KIDS OF CHAMBERSBURG

Many of you know that we are a group of ladies and gentlemen that get together, plan and do fundraisers to raise money to give to other non-profit agencies in Chambersburg that help hurting children. We appreciate all of you.

### Mark Your Calendar with Upcoming Date

**April 4, 2017-- Taste of the Valley.** This event has 13-15 area restaurants and caterers that come and donate a "Taste" of their Specialty foods for 240 people. It is held—right here—at Brethren Fellowship. We will be holding a small live auction, bigger silent auction of donated items. We will also have some entertainment (to be announced) Good Food—you will not go away hungry and there is always great Fellowship. All proceeds go for a good cause—KIDS! Tickets are \$25.00 per person and are available now! It would be a great Easter Gift for family and friends. List of Restaurants and Caterer's will be available soon.



We will be holding other fundraisers which we will announce as soon as we get them scheduled.

## DOMINICAN REPUBLIC MISSION TRIP

Ron and I will be taking Leah Shatzer and her friend Natalie Truman to the Dominican Republic, Feb. 18-25. We are going to join up with a youth mission team that is coming from Crossroads Church, Atlanta GA.

Our travel expenses will be covered, but we are asking for donations so that we can pack newborn baby kits, some wash cloths, newborn diapers and trial size health kit items. The girls will be packing up and taking health kits for hospital patients, baby kits for the new mothers in the hospital. They will also be buying some needed school supplies as the girls will work in the school. One of the days we will be going out to the Bateyes and taking bags of food. We will purchase the food items once we get to Colegio Moriah.



Some of the things that we will be doing is helping form a youth choir with the children in the school, and working with the children on their English language studies. The girls will be worshipping with the youth at Christ for the Nations Church in Las Colinas in a youth rally. They will be doing an in-depth study of Joseph and the many trials that he went through as a young man.

If you want to join us, please contact me ASAP, if you want to sponsor Leah with the cost of packing the health kits talk to Ron or me. We also ask for prayer as this will be a life changing experience for the girls.

Kathy Burge

## INCLEMENT WEATHER

In the event of inclement weather, we will only have worship service at 10:00 a.m. There will be no Sunday School Classes. In this event, please use your judgment concerning your safety while traveling to and from church. Public announcements will be made on (WHTM abc27) TV channel 27 or whichever channel is abc27 with your TV provider or abc27.com. If inclement weather happens during the week and you have a planned meeting, contact your committee chair to verify if your meeting is cancelled.





## OUR CHURCH FAMILY

### THANK YOU

Dear Brethren Fellowship Family; Thank you so much for the countless ways you love us! The Christmas gift was a great blessing and your amazing care for us and passion for God keeps us praising Him for giving us such a great forever family! We are praying for a New Year filled with joy as we serve together! We love you and pray for you!—Manny and Jan



Terry G. Koons' and family and Frank and Mary Sue Keath and family are grateful for all the kind expressions of sympathy and concern from our church family during the illness and following the death of our mother.

Dear Brethren Fellowship, Thank you so much for the Christmas gift. My daughter and I feel truly blessed by everyone at the church. —Mona



### February Birthday's

Rafael Alvarado  
Julian Alvarado  
Pam Cook  
Tom Hovetter  
Janora Hovetter  
Dan Knode  
Elizabeth Knode

Trinity Kramer  
Tricia Murray  
Grace Murray  
Mervin Musser  
Ruby Pentz  
Gloria Secrest  
Linda Sharar

Mike Shatzer  
Jere Shipp  
Troy Shover  
Joan Smith  
Evan Statler  
Marcia Wilkins

### CHANGES TO YOUR INFORMATION

If your address, telephone number, cell phone number or email has changed please let the church office know so we can keep in touch with you. You can email Mona at [brethrenfel@hotmail.com](mailto:brethrenfel@hotmail.com) or place a note in the church mailbox. If you haven't received a birthday card or anniversary card, please let us know the correct dates for our records.

### “SEASONED TO SERVE”

Feb. 16, 2017 - 6:00 p.m. Dinner at Naomi's Country Kitchen. (an Amish family kitchen). The bus will leave the church parking lot at 5:30 p.m. A signup sheet will be available.

Contact Reid and Linda Pletcher for information or sign-up for events: Phone 423-5288 or email: [reidlnda@hotmail.com](mailto:reidlnda@hotmail.com)

## FEBRUARY 2017 CALENDAR

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			<b>1</b> 5:30-9p-UPWARD Basketball Practice 6:15p-Prayer Time 6:30p-Youth 6:30p-Bible Study	<b>2</b> 5:30-9p-UPWARD Basketball Practice 5:30p-Discipleship	<b>3</b> 5:30-9p-UPWARD Basketball Practice	<b>4</b> 8:30a-6:00p UPWARD Basketball Games
<b>5</b>  9:00a-Sunday School 10:00a-Worship Service	<b>6</b> 5:30-9p-UPWARD Basketball Practice 6-7:15p-UPWARD Cheerleading 6:30p-Property Team	<b>7</b> 12:00p CTC 12:30p-HOG Yoga 5:30-9p-UPWARD Basketball Practice 6-7:00p-UPWARD Cheerleading 6:00p-Outreach	<b>8</b> 5:30-9p-UPWARD Basketball Practice 6:15p-Prayer Time 6:30p-Youth 6:30p-Bible Study	<b>9</b> 8:00a--EFCV  5:30-9p-UPWARD Basketball Practice	<b>10</b> 5:30-9p-UPWARD Basketball Practice	<b>11</b> 8:30a-6:00p UPWARD Basketball Games
<b>12</b>  9:00a-Sunday School 10:00a-Worship Service	<b>13</b> 5:30-9p-UPWARD Basketball Practice 6-7:15p-UPWARD Cheerleading	<b>14</b> 12:30p-HOG Yoga 5:30-9p-UPWARD Basketball Practice 6:15p-Worship and Music Team 6-7:00p-UPWARD Cheerleading	<b>15</b> <b>Newsletter Articles Due</b> 6:15p-Prayer Time 6:30p-Youth 6:30p-Bible Study	<b>16</b> 5:30-9p-UPWARD Basketball Practice 6:00p-STs Dinner at Naomi's Country Kitchen-leave parking lot at 5:30p	<b>17</b> 5:30-9p-UPWARD Basketball Practice	<b>18</b> 8:30a-6:00p UPWARD Basketball Games UPWARD Basketball and Cheerleading Teams Pictures taken
<b>19</b>  9:00a-Sunday School 10:00a-Worship Service	<b>20</b> 5:30-9p-UPWARD Basketball Practice  6-7:15p-UPWARD Cheerleading	<b>21</b> 12:30p-HOG Yoga 5:30-9p-UPWARD Basketball Practice 6-7:00p-UPWARD Cheerleading 6:30p-Deacons 6:30p-Finance Team	<b>22</b> 5:30-9p-UPWARD Basketball Practice  6:30p-Youth 6:30p-All Church Prayer Time	<b>23</b> 5:30-9p-UPWARD Basketball Practice	<b>24</b> 5:30-9p-UPWARD Basketball Practice	<b>25</b> 8:30a-6:00p UPWARD Basketball Games
<b>26</b>  9:00a-Sunday School 10:00a-Worship Service	<b>27</b> 5:30-9p-UPWARD Basketball Practice 6-7:15p-UPWARD Cheerleading	<b>28</b> 12:30p-HOG Yoga 5:30-9p-UPWARD Basketball Practice 6-7:00p-UPWARD Cheerleading <b>6:30p-All Leadership Team Members</b>				

a=a.m. p=p.m.  
Weekly Pray Time is held downstairs

STS-Seasoned to Serve  
HOG Yoga is held in the Chapel

All Church Prayer Time is held in the  
Chapel

