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# 2014 Annual Report Murray Christian Fellowship



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# A Year in Review

“Life is difficult. This is a great truth, one of the greatest truths.  
It is a great truth because once we truly see this truth, we transcend it.  
Once we truly know that life is difficult—once we truly understand  
and accept it—then life is no longer difficult.  
Because once it is accepted, the fact that life is difficult no longer matters.”

M Scott Peck penned these words in his famous novel The Road Less Traveled. From these words, one can acknowledge that in life, difficulty can be a great teacher. 2014 has been a difficult year at MCF on many levels and we have learned much through these moments. What have we learned?

1. The vision and mission of MCF is ....
2. Integrity before God is foundational for this ministry
3. Quality over quantity: escaping the numbers trap
4. Sometimes quantity does matter
5. God truly is our source of life

The Vision of MCF is to see students (faculty and staff) at MSU in a thriving relationship with Jesus. Using the parable of the sower, seed and soil (Matt 13), MCF has had several thorny plants, big rocks and disturbing birds come into the fellowship and choke the life, obscure our vision and steal away our joy. When we lose sight of this vision, the life of MCF suffers and begins to wither, wilt and die. So this year we have made it our mission to go deeper in our understanding and practice of our relationship with Jesus. Colossians 2:6-10 sets the lattice work to support the plant that is MCF as we have struggled and grown this year.

**6** And now, just as you accepted Christ Jesus as your Lord, you must continue to follow him. **7** Let your roots grow down into him, and let your lives be built on him. Then your faith will grow strong in the truth you were taught, and you will overflow with thankfulness. **8** Don't let anyone capture you with empty philosophies and high-sounding nonsense that come from human thinking and from the spiritual powers of this world, rather than from Christ. **9** For in Christ lives all the fullness of God in a human body. **10** So you also are complete through your union with Christ, who is the head over every ruler and authority. (NLT)

Several instances centering around Christian integrity have challenged the vision and mission of MCF. Let me ask and answer several questions to point this out:

- Has grace been given to those who have misused, taken advantage of, abused, defied, and spoken against the purpose and mission of MCF making Jesus real? Yes
- Has truth been told in love – tough love at times – in these moments? Yes

- Has appropriate discipline been given that is consistent with challenging people to go deeper in their relationship – trust and obedience, worship and commitment – with Jesus? Yes
- Has honesty, transparency, confession and accountability been practiced in these circumstances by those in position of responsibility? Yes
- Yes, we have spent long moments in discussion and prayer, ended lease agreements, and asked people to leave the premises in order to bring about an atmosphere of mutual respect, honesty, compassion and commitment to Jesus.
- Yes, we have had to write the following policies of presence and conduct (of what has been in the past, non-legislated understanding of Christian community life here at MCF).
  1. During all MCF programmed activities, all persons on the premises of MCF are expected to participate. Those who are not adhering to this policy and supporting this ministry do not encourage the cause of Christ and may be instructed to leave.
  2. The focus of this ministry is to engage MSU students for the cause of Christ. Non-students—whether alumni or otherwise—shall participate in supportive roles under the direction of MCF leadership.

All of these questions and answers point to the importance of having integrity before God and each other so that not only our life in Christ can exist, but our relationships in Christ will thrive!

Attendance at MCF has been down this year, greatly influenced and affected by the attitudes and actions of various people alluded to in these circumstances. While we are not here to plan a weekly meeting that is entertaining enough to have good attendance, the number of people attending our events gauge the work we are doing in reaching out to this campus – fulfilling our mission and seeing through our vision. Some of our attendance struggles are due to the many scheduling conflicts that are rocks in our soil. Some struggles come from attitudes and perspectives that choke the life out of us like thorns. Some of our students are experiencing cultivation of the soil/pruning of the branches, affecting their enthusiasm and initiative to go and relate with others in the name of Jesus. We have learned that the quality of a student outweighs the quantity of students. Therefore our hope is that through these moments of cultivation and pruning, our students will begin to grow and bear much fruit for Christ through MCF to the MSU campus.

Sometimes quantity does matter though, not in students but in the area of financial support for MCF. This year MCF's finances have experienced a drought due to multiple factors: a struggling national economy that influenced not only the number of donors but the amount donated and a confusing transition of bookkeeping methods/accounting programs between 4 financial secretaries (1 outgoing, 2 interim and 1 incoming). God used these experiences to cultivate a renewed awareness of our stewardship of resources. After several months of record lows in receiving support, the MCF family and friends responded with two months of record highs in undesignated giving. Also several key individuals and congregations gave very generous designated gifts. We ask you to continue to pray thanks for our generous supporters AND to recruit new participants of God's ministry through MCF. So in the midst of the drought, God poured out provisions onto MCF. Through those provisions, our plant survived and bore fruit for the Kingdom!

These moments of drought moved us to dig deeper in our faith, seeking the source of living water. MCF, along with the Christian Campus House at Ball State University, co-lead the Winter Retreat January 31-February 2; this annual event was not only well-attended by 8 campus ministries, but was a very powerful weekend of spiritual formation (many participants acclaimed that this was one of the best Winter Retreats in years!). MCF is part of the United Campus Ministry Association (Mike Kerrick being president 2014-2015); this year through UCMA, MCF initiated a Resurrection Celebration during the Easter season; it was one of the highest attended UCMA events in the past 10 years. We also provided service learning hours for over 10 students within the Nonprofit Leadership Studies department. Not only did we provide a positive experience and place for students to develop but also further strengthened our reputation and service to the university. MCF also sponsored a mission experience to Mexico. After a difficult experience of student commitment (going from 20 wanting to go to 5 committed to go), we were able to invite 2 people from another campus ministry (fulfilling our heritage of being a unity movement) and had an amazing mission moment with Christ Ambassadors through CrossRoads Missions. Another instance of God's work being done through MCF came at the National Student Conference (sponsored by the Association of College Ministries – of whom MCF is a member and Mike Kerrick being on the executive team 2013-2016). MCF sponsored the Prayer Room, which had great reviews and touched many of the 300+ students who participated in the conference. Throughout all of these moments, both difficult and wonderful, our God is faithful, Jesus is alive and the Spirit is moving.

M Scott Peck's words reveal an insight into our life's journey. At the same time, Jesus, who IS TRUTH says, "Come to me all who are weary" from carrying burdens while traveling these difficult roads of life. "My yoke is easy fitting" because I am walking with you all the way. "My burden is light"; the life I'm asking you to live is full of life and light and joy and praise and .... well you get the idea.

## Student Service Team

By Christen Johnson ('16)

The 2014 year has been an odd one for student life at Murray Christian Fellowship. What was once a busy, vibrant, life growing place to attend became an apathetic and spiritually draining place to be. In the spring semester, students no longer wanted to serve each other but themselves and thus created a strong sense of self-entitlement. Cliques began to form and unity began to dissipate. Committed people still attended services and events but the fire for Christ was no longer there. There were still good things that happened during this time, however. The mission trip to Piedras Negras, Mexico was a blessing to so many. God really used the team to touch so many lives in Piedras. This trip also allowed the team to grow together and learn from each other in order to build each other up and serve as a community for Christ. This was my first semester on Servant Team, so I used my observations to plan for the upcoming fall semester.

I had so many plans and expectations for a revived MCF. Many good things came from these plans. MCF has a great new group of freshmen. Though we are still small in number, God is continuously showing His mighty hand in events. I am encouraged by the excitement of the freshmen and the desire they have to learn more and enrich their lives with the Lord. The Servant Team continued to show support to the Theatre department by supplying them with water for rehearsals and also by having students attend performances. We have also shown support to the Rodeo Team. Ellen Jarvis, an active MCF student, has started a Rodeo Team bible study that is well-attended and continuously growing. There have also been many Youth and Non-Profit Leadership students who have been volunteering to serve with and through MCF on campus. These have been great opportunities to reach out and get our name out. These are sure signs that God is alive and doing great things on Murray State's campus. All in all, MCF is going through a very dry period where there is yearning for fire, but no flame. I continue to pray that there will be unity and a self-sacrificing service that overwhelms the students who attend MCF. I am also praying that students will reach out on campus and invite their friends.

Some adjustments have been made for the upcoming year. Since we have a small number of students attending and their interest and gifts are not in creating a worship team, we are teaming up with talented members of our supporter churches to have Wednesday night worship. (We want to give a big shout-out to Adam McKenzie, Greg Taylor, Amanda and Payton Pennington, Brad Brauser and Kevin Qualls for their musical talents and generosity with time this semester!) This has been a great blessing as it fosters relationships between the students and members of supporter churches. Friday night events will be specifically outreach events, aimed at bringing in new people. Creating a unified and active body is important in serving Christ and leading others to Him. I am excited and encouraged as this coming year happens upon us and I have faith that God will provide the necessary people, resources, and spiritual gifts that it will take to life Murray Christian Fellowship out of its rough patch and into the salt and light that we are called to be.

## Missions

By Kody Sutton ('15)

I went with Murray Christian Fellowship to Piedras Negras Mexico in May of 2014, and the experience was one that I will never forget. I was a new face among the people that I went with, but they accepted me as one of my own and since I have been close to them. We were intending on arriving in Mexico with able hands and willing hearts to not only work in the blazing sun to help people, but also to share our experiences with them, and also give them the gospel of Jesus Christ. We arrived in Texas after flying all day to a drive that lasted the rest of the day in order to cross the border into Mexico. The next week was a week of hard labor digging trenches in sun baked soil, tearing out a roof and building a new one in its place, and spending time interacting with orphans and mentally ill patients. The labor was hard, but getting to speak to the people and the children there about our Lord and savior Jesus made every drop of sweat worth it.

One memory that will stick with me forever happened at a house where we were digging trenches for more water lines. Another team member and I were taking a break from working to play with the local children. They were playing “battle tops” using spinning tops in a empty sand box to pass the time. We played with them for a while and they loved that the Americanos wanted to play with them. As we were about to leave, a little boy handed me his top and said, “Es para ti” (It’s for you). Not wanting to take the only toy the boy had, I gently nudged it back and replied “No, es no para mi, es para tu” (No, it’s not mine, it’s yours). He then grabbed my hand, put the top in it, and closed up my hand replying, “No. Es para ti” (No, it’s for you). Even in their poverty, these kids were willing to bless someone else.

So we got them a couple soccer balls to return the favor. They were shocked that they gave one little top to an American, and they got SOCCER BALLS in return! The smiles they had on their faces made it all worth it.

## **Alumni Relations**

By Joel Cates ('09 & '11)

The Alumni Relations Committee (ARC) had another great year in 2014. We were able to expand our vision and reach. We were able to use the connections that we built in late 2013 and early 2014 to rally alumni to reconnect with MCF through prayer and finances. We had a great Alumni Gathering in October with attendance by multiple generations of MCFers. We are looking ahead to the summer of 2015 for the possibility of adding a second alumni social event to our calendar. All in all, 2014 was a successful year and we look forward to 2015 as a year of continued growth.

# 2014 Board of Directors and Trustees

## **Directors**

### *Terms Expire in 2014*

Marie Taylor (Aurora Christian Church- Aurora, KY)

### *Terms Expire in 2015*

Tom Green (Christian Community Church- Murray, KY)

Zack Browning (Reidland Christian Church- Reidland, KY)

### *Terms Expire in 2016*

Larry Call (Brookport First Christian Church- Brookport, IL)

Dr. Ruth Ragovin (First Christian Church- Murray, KY)

### *Terms Expire in 2017*

Janet Foster (Community Christian Church- Metropolis, IL)

William Call (Christian Community Church- Murray, KY)

## **Directors-At-Large**

### *Terms Expire in 2014*

Joel Cates (Relevant Church- Paducah, KY)

Kevin Qualls (Christian Community Church- Murray, KY)

Amanda Pennington (Christian Community Church- Murray, KY)

### *Terms Expire in 2014*

Lissa Gibson (Henshaw Christian Church –Morganfield, KY)

## **Trustees**

William Call- term expires in 2016

Marie Taylor- term expires in 2014

Tom Green- term expires in 2015

## **Officers for 2014**

Chairman - William Call

Vice-Chair - Larry Call

Treasurer - Lissa Gibson and Amanda Pennington

Interim Treasurer – William Call

Financial Sec. - Tom Green

Recording Sec. - Janet Foster

## **Campus Minister**

Mike Kerrick (August 2008- present)

## **Student Representatives**

Christen Johnson (Servant Leadership Team)

# MCF Facilities

The two Give Assist & Pray (GAP) appeals this year went specifically toward improving the yard and landscaping of the two houses. With the funds raised, we purchased a new mower, shop-vac/leaf blower, and had four stumps and clumps of bushes removed. With the remaining funds we will be constructing a nice fire pit for our fellowship events in the front yard. We also have plans to purchase a large outdoor banner for visual publicity on the North side of the house so that students at MSU's intramural fields will know "what is that place over there?"

One significant development has been the AC unit for the Girls' House. Christian Community Church gave a very generous gift to cover the purchase and installation of a new AC unit. Another project handled by the Call brothers (Bill and Larry) was engineering a better drainage system for the driveway.

What to expect in the near future:

- New roof on the Girls' house
- Some structural repair on the Girls' House back porch
- Continued driveway repairs

# Finances

<b>SUPPORT FROM CHURCHES</b>	<b>Jan-Dec 2014</b>
Aurora Christian Church	318.03
Brookport First Christian Church	300.00
Carmi First Christian Church	2,650.00
Grapevine Christian Church	580.00
Henshaw Christian Church	1,800.00
Hickman First Christian Church	100.00
LaCenter Christian Church	500.00
Metropolis Community Christian Church	2,100.00
Murray Christian Community Church	6,500.00
Murray First Christian Church	1,112.76
Murray First Christian Church CWF	150.00
Owensboro Christian Church	4,875.00
Reidland Christian Church	2,520.00
Sturgis First Christian Church	1,300.00
Union Christian Church	2,400.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>27,205.79</b>

The following table shows receipts and disbursements.

<b>MONTH REPORTED</b>		
	<b>*Jan-May 2014</b>	<b>**June-Dec 2014</b>
<b>Disbursements</b>		
Salary, Minister		
Salary, Admin. Asst.		
Phone		
MCF – Electric		
MCF – Other Utilities		
Girls' – Electric		
Girls' – Other Utilities		
Postage		
Printing		
Website Account		
Maintenance		
Literature		
Program		
Insurance		
Office Supplies		
Association Dues/Exp./CM		
Bank/Paypal Charges		
Retreats		
Missions		
Alumni Banquet		
CCLI License		
Accounting		
<b>Total Disbursements</b>		

\* Transition bookkeeping

\*\* Beginning new bookkeeping