

FBC CONNECTION

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Leif & Kathy Jensen



Leif and Kathy Jensen, Levi, Jude, Claire Photo by Kimberly Broadwell

Ministry Focus: Missions by Leif Jensen

“Though I’m weak and poor, all I have is yours, every single breath.” The words seemed to find a way into a place of my heart that had previously been impenetrable. They provided an answer for which I had been searching and would direct the future steps of the Jensen family.

Four months earlier, in April of 2014, the director for North American

missions with ABWE (Association of Baptists for World Evangelization) had informed Pastor Art about an exploratory trip being planned in Montreal, Canada. For ABWE, the goal was to meet potential churches and ministry partners in the hopes of aiding in the work of church planting in this gospel deprived region. For the Jensens this presented an opportunity to investigate a part of the world that uniquely matched our giftedness and calling – it was French-

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ONE28 Retreat...more pictures on page 8

Photo by Langley Thorp

Ministry Focus

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speaking (Kathy is fluent), it is a magnet for Muslim immigrants (10% of the population claim Islam), it is the largest college city in North America and it is in need of evangelists and disciple-makers to assist in church-planting (less than 1% of the population are evangelical).

The trip was to begin on the 17th of May and we had to decide quickly as we would only have a month to renew our passports, find someone able to watch our two children, go through the application process, secure the time off from work, as well as other miscellaneous details. In the words of Ezra, the good hand of the Lord had been upon us for this trip. God providentially provided for all these needs and so Kathy (6 months pregnant) and I left our 2 other children, Levi and Claire, with their aunt, uncle, and cousins in San Diego to take a week and a half long exploratory trip in Montreal.

The time we spent in the city proved to be both fruitful and confirmatory. We were able to observe and take part in an English-learning class led by an ABWE missionary and attended by several Muslim women. We spoke with local church planters and confirmed the neediness of the region. The university quarter of the city was a particular draw to me (Leif) as I participated with CRU (Campus Crusade for Christ International ministry) while going to Cal Poly Pomona and had started a Christian outreach at Chaffey College. Additionally a missionary couple, forced to leave French-Speaking Africa, also testified to the strategic role of ministry in Montreal by their decision to relocate to this city as many of their African contacts had relatives living there. We returned home from the trip convinced that this was a place that suited our gifts and that had great spiritual need... and yet, doubt lingered in my heart.

How did I know this is where God wanted us? Weren't there other equally needy regions of the world

we could serve? Should we decide to go to Canada just because we invested the time to visit? The questions haunted me and I could not escape the fear in my mind that this was an arbitrary decision. Still, a decision had to be made. God had entrusted Kathy and me with a treasure of gospel truth and training through the various experiences and people he had brought into our lives, and the words of Paul to Timothy weighed heavily on my heart – “The things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, entrust these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also” (2 Tim 2:2).

I thought back on all the experiences and training God had entrusted to us.

As a new believer, I had worked with my high school Christian club as part of the leadership team and in college I was part of CRU having been disciplined by our FBC elder Jim Kercheval. It was through him that I was introduced to Foothill Bible Church and my growth as a Christian began to accelerate. I began serving in AWANA and availing myself to all the opportunities for training and discipleship open to me – FITT Classes (Foothill Institute for Theological Training), preaching

labs, door to door evangelism, evangelistic campaigns in Argentina and Upland. Following the last campaign in Argentina (2006) Pastor Art challenged me to consider seminary. After prayer and investigation, in the fall of 2007, I began attending The Master's Seminary and a year later was supported by FBC as a Church Planting Intern. Those 4 years in seminary were transformative years. Professors in the seminary imparted their knowledge of Biblical exegesis, Biblical languages and theology and the pastors of FBC invested their wisdom, love and practical theology.

For Kathy, as a new believer, she was given the

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opportunity to travel to France in a study abroad program and while she was there became a part of an evangelistically-oriented church. Impressed with the simplicity and yet vibrancy of the church that relied upon prayer and the Bible instead of flashy programs, she enrolled in the Bible institute that was associated with the same mission board that started this church. She returned to the States for

“The things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, entrust these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.”

2 Timothy 2:2

a short time to raise support and then traveled back to France to study at the institute and serve as a missionary in this under-reached part of world. Kathy's time in France was formational in her spiritual growth as women in the church and her professors invested in her growth and maturity as a Christian. She served in many capacities there, sharing the gospel on the streets and door-to-door, leading youth programs and visiting women of the church to minister encouragement to them. Shortly after her graduation from the institute Kathy found increasing doctrinal differences with her missions agency about the work of God in salvation and so she traveled back to the US with the goal of further theological study. She attended FBC and, in God's providence, Pastor David was preaching through Romans chapter 9 which provided the very grounding that she needed – God was indeed sovereign in the work of salvation!

So, in 2008 we met at FBC and eventually dated, married, and began our family with the intention of serving in missions together. The pastors and elders at FBC continued to invest into our lives helping us to grow as a married couple and family as we served in leading small groups and leading evangelistic Bible Studies with neighbors.

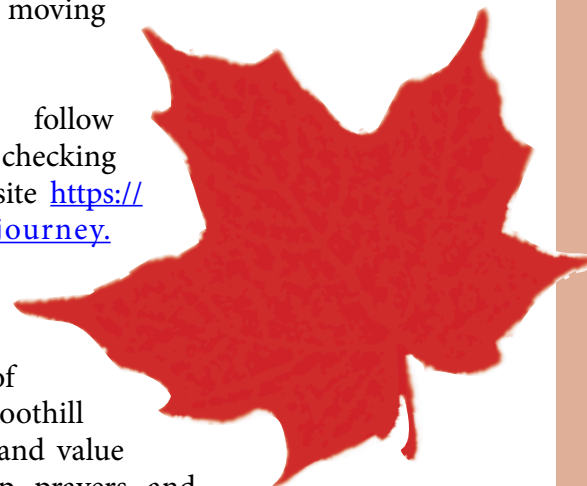
Entrust these to faithful men...

I was by myself at a Sunday morning worship service. Kathy was at home on bed rest mandated by the doctors immediately upon our return from Montreal. The congregation was singing a song before the giving of offering and the words of the song struck me. “Though I'm weak and poor,” I could affirm this reality. I felt my weakness. It was, in part, what delayed our pursuit of missions and what left me in such confusion about where to go. But it was the second part of the line, “all I have is yours, every single breath,” that opened my eyes. All this time what had masqueraded in my mind as confusion and inability to discern God's guidance was really my lack of faith and trust of God. In truth, I was not my own. I belonged to Christ. It was not for me to be tossed about by fear and confusion, but to step forward in faith. That morning, as the offering was being taken, I did not place a check on the plate, but my very self to be used of God however He pleased.

It is now 2017, not quite 3 years from that moment and we have seen great things from our God. By the grace of God I, Leif, was enabled to complete the process of being ordained through Foothill Bible Church this past December. We have been able to investigate two missions' agencies with teams working in French-speaking Canada and complete our preliminary application with Biblical Ministries Worldwide (BMW). We believe that the Lord is leading us to serve with a team of two young families and a veteran church planter presently working in Ottawa, Ontario (Canada's Capital) with the hopes of eventually moving to Montreal.

Please follow our journey by checking out our blog site <https://jensenfamilyjourney.wordpress.com>

We are so blessed to be a part of the family at Foothill Bible Church and value your fellowship, prayers, and the opportunity to be a part of the great work God is doing in glorifying His name in Upland, California, Canada, and the world.



New Assistants in the Church Office

by Linda Mawby

If you happen to go to or call the church office on a Thursday, you may have had the pleasure of meeting Ann Melkesian, who has been helping Carolyn Chambliss in the office for the past year. She often helps with the missionary letters and song sheets, along with various support tasks. Ann and her husband Brent have been attending FBC for the past four years. They have been married for 28 years and have three young adult daughters: Katy, Emily, and Caroline. Ann originally grew up in San Gabriel and Brent in Arcadia. They lived in La Verne for many years and moved to Upland in 2002. With a degree in vocal performance, Ann has trained and performed as an opera singer and recently began teaching voice lessons. It goes without saying that she has a beautiful voice!

Brent owned and operated an aerospace parts manufacturing business in South El Monte until 2013, sold it and stayed on for 2 years to assist the new owner during the transition. After a year of home remodeling projects, Brent has re-entered the aerospace industry. For many years, Ann assisted Brent with the running of their family business.

Ann grew up regularly attending church and fondly remembers the wonderful spiritual influence of a great-aunt on her and her older sister and brothers. As a child she came to realize that she was a sinner who needed salvation through the atoning death of Jesus on the cross. Brent remembers attending church every Christmas and Easter as he was growing up but did not come to faith until he was an adult.



Ann Melkesian

Ann's "life" verse is Philippians 4:4-7 *"Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice! Let your gentle spirit be known to all men. The Lord is near. Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."*

You may also have the pleasure of meeting Carrie Castillo, who has been helping Carolyn in the church office on Mondays and Fridays. She also helps with the many and varied clerical, bookkeeping, or office assistant duties required in operating the church office. Carrie and her husband of 27 years, Mike, have been attending FBC for the past four years. They have 5 children, Andrew, Haley, Cade, Emma, and Lucas. Haley and the two youngest, Emma and Lucas, live with them and attend FBC. They relocated to Beaumont two years ago, after living in Upland for 8 years.



Carrie Castillo

Mike has worked in the flooring industry for many years, for many of those years also having his own business. More recently he has also been studying to become a biblical counselor through the Institute for Biblical Counseling and Discipleship program located in Escondido, which is the precursor for the Association of Certified Biblical Counselors formerly known as NANC. He has completed one year of an estimated four-year program and is looking forward to ministry in this field. Carrie lived in Upland since the age of 10 and Mike grew up in Torrance. Before becoming a full-time stay-at-home mom, Carrie also had an unusual job working as a court reporter taking depositions in Los Angeles, Orange, San Bernardino, and Riverside counties. More recently, she has been busy as a homeschooling mom for the four youngest children.

Both Carrie and Mike were raised in the Catholic Church growing up. They came to new faith as young adults and have grown in the knowledge and faith of the Lord since then. Right now their hobby is life, as their days are very full with work, school, and raising children.

Carrie's favorite verse is James 3:16, *"For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there is disorder and every evil thing."* A loving reminder, that when we give these up, we have His peace.

Please join me in thanking these kind and talented women for their valued assistance to our church body!

Julio and Olga Curiel

by Rhonda Risser

Julio and Olga Curiel along with their two sons have been fellowshipping at Foothill Bible Church for almost two years and when I asked how they found FBC, Olga said, “We were praying and searching on the internet for local churches.” Praise the Lord for His hand in directing them here via their search!

Julio grew up in San Bernardino, the oldest of five siblings. The story of how he (and ultimately, his whole family) started attending church was a beautiful example of God’s providence. In Julio’s neighborhood, there was a very special elderly lady who had a heart for the children who lived around her as she wanted them to know Jesus. She would invite and provide transportation to VBS (Vacation Bible School) and church to the kids whose parents agreed to let her bring them. When Julio was 12 years old he received his invitation and started going with her to the nearby Church of the Nazarene. It wasn’t long before his parents and siblings were joining him! Julio made the decision to follow Christ at the age of 16, while at youth camp. Praise the Lord for that sweet woman’s heart for those kids!

Olga hails from Rancho Cucamonga where she and her older sister were blessed to grow up in a Christian home. Olga’s family were members of their local Nazarene church and it just so happened that Olga’s and Julio’s church youth groups would often meet up together for events. Well, it didn’t take any time before Olga caught Julio’s eye and that was that! They have now been married 18 years and have two sons, Micah, 17 and Lucas, 8.

Julio is a commercial electrician and Olga has worked for the Claremont Police Department for 15 years. They are in the Lopez’ small group and Olga has been involved with Cheerful Cooks, Women’s Bible Study and helping out in the nursery.

The Curiels have passages of Scripture that are particularly meaningful to them right now. For Julio, it is a beautiful reminder of our only source of praise,



Julio and Olga Curiel, Micah and Lucas Photo by Kimberly Broadwell

Psalm 113:3 - “From the rising of the sun unto the going down of the same the Lord’s name is to be praised.”

For Olga, it is a Psalm of assurance of God’s help and protection - “I lift up my eyes to the hills. From where does my help come? My help comes from the LORD, who made heaven and earth. He will not let your foot be moved; he who keeps you will not slumber. Behold, he who keeps Israel will neither slumber nor sleep. The LORD is your keeper; the LORD is your shade on your right hand. The sun shall not strike you by day, nor the moon by night. The LORD will keep you from all evil; he will keep your life. The LORD will keep your going out and your coming in from this time forth and forevermore.” Psalm 121

New Member



Sally O'Guinn

by Cindy Behnke

Sally O'Guinn started attending FBC in July of 2016. "After just a couple months, I knew it was the right church for me." She had been attending Community Baptist Church in Alta Loma for several years. Having suffered some severe health issues that required a 30 day hospital stay and 14 hour surgery, Sally found herself really hungry for God's Word. "Foothill gave me what I was looking for, really good doctrine from the pulpit. The Scripture is taught here!" Sally has embraced FBC, immersing herself with the women's Tuesday morning Bible study, Training Hour with Pastor Art's class, and weekly Sunday morning attendance. "I feel so blessed to have become a member here at Foothill." She really values how this fellowship is multigenerational and the avenues to learn and grow in our knowledge of the Lord and His Word.

Sally was first introduced to Christ from a co-worker who shined for Jesus in his attitude and actions. She watched first hand this co-worker, Frank, go through many tragedies but proclaimed Jesus through it all. Fast forward a few years and Sally and her husband, John, had grown to a family of 4. She remembered Frank's testimony and wanted their family to have the same peace she had

seen Frank live. She wanted to start attending church for the first time. Her husband, who had grown up Catholic, agreed and they started attending Chino Valley Reformed Church. Here she professed faith in the Lord Jesus Christ!

When asked what her favorite book or verse is she shared, "So much of the Bible has such beauty in it. One of my favorites is Philippians 4:7 which says, *'And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.'*" But she said she often finds herself repeating James 4:7 to herself. "Whether driving or dealing with a customer service agent, I can't let frustrations overtake me. I have to remember to surrender to God."

Sally met her husband, John, at her brother's engagement party. Sally's brother was marrying John's sister! Six months after their siblings got married, Sally's brother and new wife were going sailing on John's sailboat. Sally's brother secured her a seat for the day of fun and even coordinated for John to pick her up. They spent the day sailing together. That was the start of John and Sally and "it's never stopped!" she shared. John and Sally have now been married for 39 years! "We didn't have a big wedding." So now with their 40th anniversary coming up next January, they are talking about renewing their vows and having a celebration!

Sally retired last February as a bookkeeper for a commercial insurance broker. She is enjoying retirement with her husband and loves spending time in her yard, reading books and magazines. She enjoys cooking and her favorite recipes come from the Christian cookbooks she's bought at different fundraisers over the years. Sally and John have two grown sons who live locally, one who is married and the other is *almost* engaged! They look forward to the possibility of future grandbabies.

While Sally may self deem herself as shy, grace and kindness poured forth from her. She shared about the struggles of balancing health and being a full-time working mom while raising her boys. She encouraged me greatly about parenting and it's many blessings in the young years, and excited me as she shared her understanding of the priority of the local church. What a blessing that we are able to worship together!

"Foothill Bible Church is my church family... life is about our relationship with Christ and the relationships He brings us to, whether friends or family. I have been blessed tenfold."

Michael Lagal

by David Martinson

Born and raised in Los Angeles, California, Michael Lagal attended UCLA and earned his Bachelor of Science degree in Engineering. It was at UCLA that he met his lovely wife, Evelyn, who was pursuing a similar degree. After working as a high school math teacher for six years, Michael decided to open his own tutoring center (Access Tutoring Center) in Glendora that would focus on helping students in the areas of math, physics and chemistry. Over the years, he has continued to serve students in this capacity. After learning about cancer and nutrition's role in combating it, Michael's main pursuit has been keeping his children and himself healthy through eating a healthy diet and through proper exercise.



Michael was raised in a Roman Catholic home and came to faith in Christ in 6th grade after his older brother shared the gospel with him. How did he end up at Foothill Bible Church? Well, about nine years ago, after receiving an invitation from Sheryl Shwetz to attend an Easter service at FBC, the Lagal family visited FBC for the first time. They loved it so much that they came back the next Sunday and have been attending ever since. It was at FBC where Michael and his wife Evelyn were both baptized. During their tenure, they have been active in serving in the nursery and also AWANA. Their children, Julianna (13), David (12) and Matthew (8) have spent most of their childhood under the ministry of FBC.

Michael's favorite book of the Bible is Matthew and their family verse is Romans 8:28. This past November 2016, Evelyn went home to be with the Lord. Michael and the kids miss her very much and continue to hold onto their family verse as they walk forward trusting in God each day. Currently, Michael is attending Pastor David's training hour class New Testament Survey on Sunday mornings and is blessed by that ministry. .

Just Married!

Jeremy and Valentina Valenzuela

by Julia Buehl

Jeremy and Val were married on February 25th, 2017 with Micah Lugg officiating. The ceremony was held at Heritage Park in LaVerne followed by a reception at Foothill Bible Church.

Val is the daughter of Mark and Sandy Anderson and began attending with her family over 13 years ago. Jeremy first came to FBC four years ago as a high school student in the ONE28 ministry after being invited by his cousin Andy Valenzuela.



Photo by Lucas Roybal

The two met at FBC and their relationship grew throughout their time in Crossroads starting in November of 2014. They both love eating at restaurants they have never tried and visiting new places. For fun, they enjoy singing and listening to music, hanging out with friends, spending time at the beach, and playing soccer. Jeremy is employed at Preferred Ceilings in Brea, California and Val works as a hairstylist. The newlyweds are attending the Harris small group and reside in Ontario.

"I love how selfless Jeremy is and how much he loves the Lord and leads me toward Him," shares Val, "Jeremy is hilarious and so easy to get along with. He loves people! Also, he laughs at my jokes." Jeremy adds he loves laughing at her jokes and making her laugh. "Val is loving, funny, and is the first to get up and serve people," he says. "She makes sacrificial love very easy to do." Congratulations, Jeremy and Val!



Over 50 junior high and high school students and leaders attended this year's retreat. Photo by Langley Thorp



Being used by God with the gifts and talents each has been given, we strive to humbly bring God the praise he deserves. Photo by Langley Thorp

This year marks 500 years since Martin Luther nailed his 95 theses to church door in Wittenberg, Germany. This act symbolically represents the start of the Protestant Reformation, the event that shook the entire western world. It changed the political scene. It gave power to the common man. But most importantly, it recovered the gospel as taught by Christ and his apostles.

The retreat this year took a look at this momentous era of church history to learn about the people and truths that we stand on today. Our desire is to see a new generation of young men and women passionate about the gospel recovered during the reformation and found in the Scriptures. We also pray that they will be a generation who continue to reform their lives, the church, and the world for the glory of God alone.

FBC Connection

The purpose of the FBC Connection newsletter is to inform and inspire the FBC body of what God is doing in the life of its members. Please note that the testimonies and articles are written by volunteers and do not necessarily reflect the sentiments or endorsements of the elder board. The apostle Paul explains in I Corinthians 12 that the local church is one body made up of many members and gifts. FBC Connection recognizes this diversity in the FBC body and seeks to promote community through this form of communication. On behalf of the elder board of FBC, we invite you to proclaim the excellencies of Christ who called us out of darkness into His marvelous light.

Art Nakamura, editor-in-chief

Julia Buehl, editor

Ann Inlow, layout