Memory Lane

We’ve all been here: after beginning to clean a closet or trunk, with every intention of completing the chore, we stumble across a long-neglected photo album (Remember when pictures were not stored digitally?). Simply cracking open the cover means the cleaning chore is derailed, likely for hours. Why? Because we’ve stepped onto "Memory Lane," a road that winds through pleasant scenery, inclines just slightly downhill and offers a richly visual and emotional experience that defies distraction. That closet or trunk will remain unpurgéd, having tumbled into the barrow pit beside Memory Lane.

For the most part Memory Lane is a happy place, maybe because folks always tended to take photos of “happy” events, like birthdays, holidays, weddings and school events. (Surprising, isn’t it, how often the family dog jumped in front of the camera? Has she really been gone since ’75?)

God’s people were sensitive to retaining memories, whether generationally by taking care to instruct their children (Deuteronomy 6.6-9), or tangibly by building memorial cairns at strategic high points in their history (Joshua 4.19-24; 22.10, 21-25). Hebrews 11 offers a Memory Lane experience.

Though without photographs, the Bible’s review of distinguished saints nevertheless invites our sanctified mind’s eye to envision how they might have looked, sounded and felt as they played their various roles in God’s unfolding Kingdom-building saga. Imagine being an eye-witness to the dramas that included Noah, Abraham, Moses and the other saints who trusted God despite all that the world, the flesh and the devil threw against them! Had we been a “fly on the wall” at any point with these prophets, we would retain unforgettable memories.

Hebrews 12 refers to the believers of Hebrews 11 as a “cloud of witnesses” that still plays a role from the gallery of history, encouraging today’s saints to stay the course with our eyes fixed on Jesus. It occurs to me that, as God’s history continues to unfold, His cloud of witnesses continues to grow. His roster of distinguished (not to be confused with “famous”) saints is ever expanding, to include more and more names you and I might personally recognize.

This Profile documents a number of stalwarts who continue to encourage us to stay the course laid out by Jesus. There are many others whom God has used in similar fashion in all our lives. May their tribes increase! As for you and me, let’s remember and rejoice!

Jim Carlson, President

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Graduation 2015

Please join us in celebrating this year's four-year graduates! Receiving a Bachelor of Arts in Biblical Studies...

Nate Dalbey
Pastoral

Alyssa Gregory
Biblical Counseling

Tatjana Groenewald
Biblical Counseling

Evan McCotter
General Ministry

Shannon Neeley
Missions

James Peterson
Pastoral

Stephanie Tronson
Biblical Counseling

Seth Vannier
General Ministry

Chelsy Wielenga
General Ministry

Sam Wielenga
General Ministry

Erica Gilliland
Biblical Counseling

During this year's graduation, Erica was in labor with baby Alarik! Congratulations!
“Hide it under a bushel, NO! I’m going to let it shine!”

These simple words from a song I sang as a child have been action words for myself and Montana Bible College over the past several months. As I began work at MBC, I realized we face an immediate need simply for exposure for boosting enrollment numbers and therefore producing more “Kingdom-Difference-Makers.” This fueled our journey toward reshaping some of our admissions efforts: establishing new relationships and partnerships, developing a better plan of communication with prospective students, and designing new promotional pieces that will assist our sharing of the MBC message.

Over the past several months we’ve established partnerships with nearly 15 discipleship schools throughout the U.S. These one-year schools share the same passion for discipleship as MBC, and it’s our hope that we’ll become an option for those students who want to continue their biblical education.

In addition to getting the word out to these schools, we’ve also navigated a successful “MBC Sunday.” Partnership with the local churches is vital on multiple fronts. While the local church can be a feeder to MBC of potential students, our deeper role is the part we play in enhancing the work of the different churches and providing them helpful resources. I believe this teamwork approach will become essential as our world continues to push biblical truth to the backburner.

We’ve also established some exciting new opportunities with many youth groups and Christian schools. Many miles have been traveled and countless hours and cups of coffee have been consumed in establishing these new relationships, and it’s been a personal pleasure to watch the enthusiasm for Montana Bible College from many people that never knew we even existed!

Ultimately, God is in charge of all we do in admissions and our team is simply a vessel toward achieving His ultimate purposes. Please pray that we will have hearts that hear His desires and feet that put those desires into action.

Dan Hovestal, Director of Enrollment
Godfrey O’Rear

Born in Virginia’s serene Shenandoah Valley, Godfrey became a follower of Jesus Christ in 1946. He embraced rural home missionary work in the American South before coming to Montana Institute of the Bible (MIB) in 1968. He served at the school as vice president and director of public relations until 1982. Godfrey spent the next season of his life serving God both in Washington state and in Venezuela before returning to Bozeman in 1999 to serve as president of Montana Bible College (MBC). While in Bozeman, he felt tugged to return to the South; this time to Georgia. "The Bible says to visit widows," Godfrey said. "I found one down in Georgia who I figured needed some visiting." A widower himself, Godfrey married Doris in the year 2000 and returned to Georgia with her in 2004.

Now 85 years old, Godfrey and Doris reside in Fitzgerald, Georgia. They boast 55 children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Godfrey has served as a local hospice chaplain and does fill the pulpit in his local church on occasion. When asked about his time with both MIB and MBC, Godfrey said, "My own Bible college experience was a tremendous foundation for me, which is why I was so interested in working for MIB and MBC. Through the Bible college ministry, I’ve seen many lives turned around - including my own grandson."

Sandy Oertli

Sandy was born in Missoula, Montana, and considers western Montana to have always been her home. After graduating college with a teaching degree, Sandy began work in Winifred, Montana. During her time in Winifred, Sandy heard of MIB in the nearby town of Lewistown and pursued a certificate there in 1978. She stayed on at MIB as the librarian until the school closed its doors in 1983.

After working on the library staff at Denver Seminary for several years, Sandy joined the MBC team in 1988. It’s difficult for Sandy to pin down exactly what her role was at MBC. "I really did a number of things," she said. "I cooked meals. I was a ‘dorm mom.’ I did bookkeeping. I also served as the assistant librarian and prepared the Tuesday lunches for quite a while. I even worked in maintenance for a bit."

Sandy retired in 2010 and moved to Eureka, Montana. She lives with her father and takes an active role in both her church and community. Reflecting on her time with both MIB and MBC, Sandy said, "I would recommend anyone to MBC. They teach the truth of the Bible. They disciple their students, mentor their students, and everything is very Christ-centered."

Jane English

Jane comes from the vast South Dakota prairie, where she was born in 1918. She married Willard in 1936 and began her career as a mother and homemaker. Jane and Willard spent the majority of their married life in Idaho, though Jane hesitated before naming any single place as their "home." "There’s a passage in the Bible about being content in whatever state you’re in,” said Jane. "Well, we lived in six states, so we really came to understand the meaning of that verse," she joked. Willard retired from a career as a mail carrier in 1977. It was then Jane and he came to Montana Institute of the Bible. Willard mostly worked in maintenance and some in the school office. Jane was instrumental in the running of the post office and book store. Their real niche, however, was in the hospitality they extended to the students, faculty and others. "Our home was always full of people. We had the students over all the time for Super Bowl parties and things like that,” she said. Jane and Willard also opened their home to missionaries, pastors and anyone else passing through the college who needed a pillow and warm meal. "We loved sharing our home. Some people have said we were a blessing. Really, though, we were the ones who were blessed by all the wonderful people we were able to share our lives with."

Now 97 years old, Jane resides at Parkhaven Retirement and Assisted Living Community in Manhattan, Montana, where she loves her regular Bible studies and fellowship with other residents.
Friends are such a blessing. What would any of us do without the friends who have been such a boon in our lives? Friends take an interest in you. Friends share both your joys and your sorrows. Often, friends have similar passions and goals as you, especially in the Lord. Each of us knows the value of a personal friend. What about an institution of higher learning? Can a Bible college have friends? We sure think so! We consider all of you reading this publication to be friends of Montana Bible College.

Over the years many of the alumni of Montana Institute of the Bible (MIB) and Big Sky Bible College (BSBC) have taken a special interest in MBC. These brethren have rejoiced as MBC has grown and received the Lord’s blessings. They have also prayed with us and share our passion for the equipping of God’s people to be disciple-makers. Some even join in our mission by supporting us financially. Because of this unique friendship, MBC is delighted to announce that all alumni of MIB and BSBC have been granted honorary alumni status with MBC.

We are excited to invest in this friendship and see it nurtured in the future for God’s glory!
Corinth was the Apostle Paul’s next stop after Athens and his famous sermon in the Areopagus. After being in Corinth a short while, opposition was brewing like the “déjà vu” of a bad nightmare. But one night in Corinth, Jesus spoke to Paul in a vision, parking him in that city for the next year and a half. “Do not be afraid; keep on speaking, do not be silent. For I am with you, and no one is going to attack and harm you, because I have many people in this city” (Acts 18:9-10). That last phrase captured our thoughts for the conference: “I have many people in this city.” Jesus had appointed a destiny for people in Corinth to know Him. And they were hiding in plain sight! Human eyes couldn’t see them, but the gospel opportunity was there – with the promise of success to boot.

As Commander-in-Chief of His Church, Jesus may send us to the opportunity, or He may send the opportunity to us. We believe He is doing both. This conference, Hiding in Plain Sight, aims to help the churches in our region see and seize the cross-cultural gospel opportunities Jesus is sovereignly placing within our reach. To hit this mark, we’ll come at it from four angles.

1. We’re bringing pastor Dave Ridder to encourage and challenge our hearts from God’s Word concerning Christ and His mission in the world, from its genesis to its full revelation.
2. We’re bringing Nabeel Jabbour to help us understand the Islamic tidal wave, recognize our opportunity in it, and engage the Muslims with whom we have increasing contact right in our own towns.
3. We’re bringing people who have proven track records of cross-cultural ministry in our region to help us see the opportunities and serve as resources to guide us in practical action. We’ll address ministry with Native Americans, migrant workers and international students in our high schools and colleges.
4. We’re bringing church missions leaders to help us think through the slough of issues regarding missions philosophy.

Visit MBC’s web site to see speaker bios, the conference schedule, and individual session descriptions. The decadence and idolatry of our own culture sounds a lot like the ancient city of Corinth. But in the midst of all that, we believe Jesus has strategically parked us right where we are to see and seize the opportunities He’s giving. He has many people to call into His kingdom; they’re hiding in plain sight!

We specifically design this conference for all church leaders, and we keep it affordable at just $50 per person with the early group rate. We know churches will have so much more traction to implement when multiple leaders have attended. So bring your whole ministry team!
HELP!!!
Last fiscal year we ended up short by nearly $38,000. The decrease in enrollment for the 2014-2015 school year did not help the situation, so, unfortunately, we are further behind this year. This means MBC could end up short more than $50,000 for the 2015 year. We would so appreciate your support—financially, if you are led; prayer, if you will. Please pray that we will see an increase in students. We are excited to train and disciple more young people for service in the Kingdom; please share in the joy of knowing you have a part in that!

SCHOLARSHIPS
In January we increased the church matching scholarship to $500 annually. This type of scholarship is available to any student at Montana Bible College. Giving to the general scholarship fund helps MBC to fund its portion of this scholarship and the need-based scholarships available to returning students. Please consider supporting both MBC and the scholarship fund.

Welcome!
MBC would like to welcome Richard Bennett to our family!
Richard is our newest adjunct instructor.
Richard received a Bachelor of Arts in Accounting in 1974. He received his Certified Public Accountant certification in 1981. He has worked in both the private and public sectors. He and his family were called to Montana in 1994. Richard recently retired as business manager for the ministry of Yellowstone Alliance Adventures, a non-profit Christian camp and conference center south of Bozeman. Richard was asked to teach a basic economics course at Montana Bible College in Bozeman in the spring semester 2015, which is MBC’s first offering of economics to their students. Richard serves at Bozeman Evangelical Free Church as a deacon. He and his wonderful bride of 30 years, Laura, are currently adapting to the “empty nest.” Richard enjoys golfing, fishing, other outdoor pursuits and singing with Laura in the Bozeman Symphonic Choir and church choir.
Our Mission:

Montana Bible College is committed to glorifying God through biblical higher education by training men and women for a lifetime of dynamic Christian living and service.

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STUDENTS SPEAK:

Two of a Kind
Josh and Amanda Taylor

Married in 2011, Josh and Amanda came from Washington state to Montana Bible College as newlyweds. Their story starts long before then, though. They’re both US Navy "brats" and have known each other since junior high school when their parents’ duty stations brought them together. Once they were married, they agreed that vocational ministry was in their future. At the recommendation of a friend, they visited MBC. According to Josh, the tour wasn’t even finished when he decided, "We are definitely coming here." Amanda agreed.

"We both want to go into missions -- probably Mexico or South America somewhere. We’d love to be a part of planting indigenous churches," Josh said.

Josh and Amanda especially love the interaction they are able to have with the single students on campus at MBC. "We love hanging out with the students," Amanda said. "We sometimes have them over to our place. We hang out, eat dinner or just talk with them."

"Even though we’re the ‘weird married couple’, students seem to like hanging out with us," Josh added. "It’s such a blessing for us to spend time with them."

Josh and Amanda agreed that MBC is a wonderful environment for all kinds of students, not just married couples.

"MBC is a great place for married couples, but it’s also a great place for single students, too. In fact, I think MBC is a great place for anyone looking to learn about and grow in Christ."