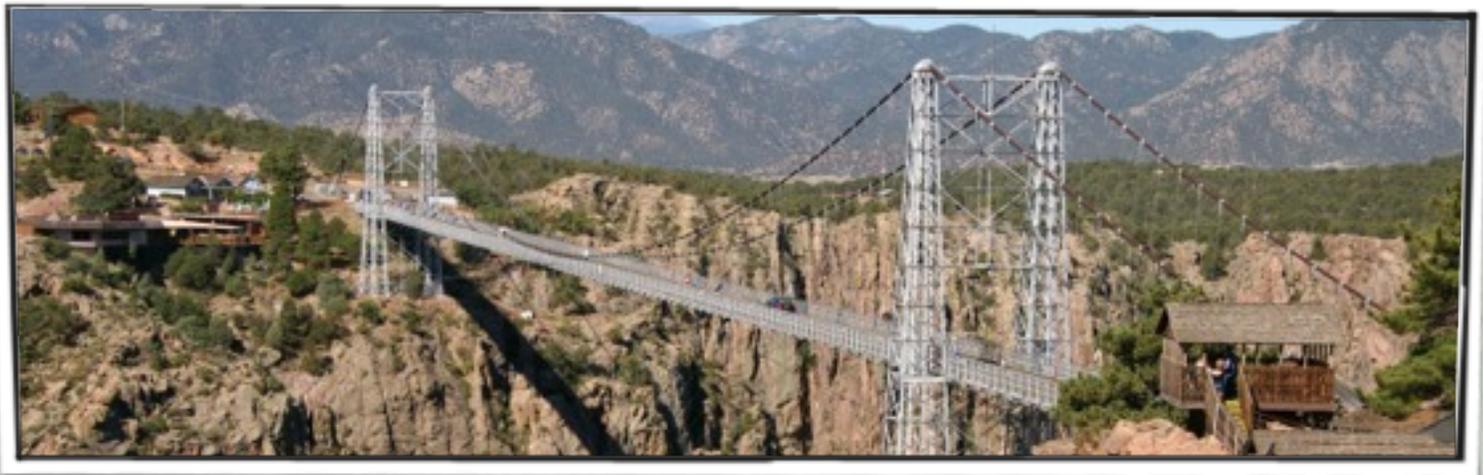


MCA CONNECTION



2014 Sabbatical

by Jeremy Miller

I remember the first time visited the Royal Gorge in Colorado. The views were stunning. But the best view required courage, courage to stroll out onto the massive bridge hanging 1000 feet above the Colorado River. I remember looking at the incredible chunks of concrete holding the bridge in place. I remember noticing the steel plates and numerous bolts lending assurance that the bridge was safe to pass over. To experience this perspective, a person had to depart from the normal patterns of life. Our family's sabbatical is this departure for me. I am somewhat nervous. I am checking plans, thinking through interactions, and seeking to ensure that the bridge we walk onto this summer doesn't collapse. To be sure, no one lives on the bridge hanging over the Royal Gorge. But most people will tell you they are better for having visited. I am hoping that after this summer, we might all feel the same about this sabbatical. I want

to give you an overview of our plans for this summer:

May - The month of May will be spent detaching from my responsibilities as a pastor. I am anxious to do something with my hands. I will spend the weekdays preparing our house for new siding and doing many little handy-man projects around the house. One of the goals Sarah and I have for the



sabbatical is that our family develops a sustainable rhythm of life. I am eager to begin new habits that develop our family spiritually and relationally with the way we use time together. And so our days will be filled with work, reading, play, and spiritual practice. Our weekends will be spent visiting other churches and friends.

June - June is dedicated to becoming more intentional about exploring God's direction for our family, for our church, and for me personally. We will spend a good portion of June in Kansas, helping my dad with the wheat harvest. During that time, I have several scheduled meetings with others to help discern God's direction and calling. I am excited about my interaction with mentors and friends in the ministry including a trip to Boston to visit with a church planter whom I have grown to love and appreciate very much.

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Spotlight on the “BLT” Leaders

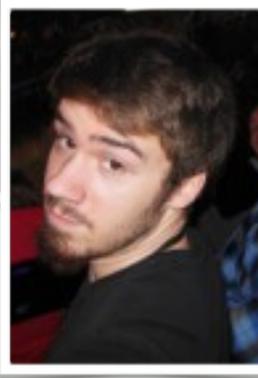
Many of you may not know it, but a new group of leaders have risen up at MCA. Do you remember the Post High group, the SWAT (Singles With A Testimony) group or the 20 Something group? Well, over the past 6 months or so, these groups have merged, morphed, changed and grown into what is now called the “BLT” Core Group. BLT, not to be confused with Bacon Lettuce and Tomato, is an acronym that stands for “Building Leaders Together”. The group has 4 individuals that are taking this name to heart and leading together as a team. In this edition of the MCA Connection the spotlight shines on these individuals as they work together living out God’s call on their lives.

Adam Mast – Adam lives near Millersburg and is the son of Luke and Laura Mast. He works as a Pipeline Contractor for CPRO Development with his brother Josh. Starting this job during the past year has been a significant event for Adam because it is a job that he actually enjoys. Family has been very important to Adam and he credits his path in life to the strong values and

Jennifer Coblentz



Adam Mast



Nick Mast

relationships that his family has instilled in him. Adam says, “The most important lesson I have learned is to always keep your faith in God, never stop trusting Him and always keeping Him number 1 in my life.”

Adam enjoys working out, reading and hanging out with his family. He loves to eat anything you can slap on a grill and smother in BBQ sauce. Adam likes eagles because of the proud look they have and thinks that it would be amazing to have the ability to fly.

Ada Marie Troyer – Ada Marie lives in Millersburg and grew up as New Order Amish. When she was 23 years old she decided to leave the Amish way of life behind. She recalls living on the family farm, which included plenty of chores and hours of playing with kittens and

puppies. Ada Marie said, “God’s hand has been so present in leading me exactly where I needed to be since then, and He has been teaching me to live by His Spirit rather than a bunch of rules.”

Ada Marie has worked at Homestead Furniture in Mt. Hope for the past 13 years. She has had multiple positions and is currently working in the accounting department. She enjoys hiking in the mountains, traveling, gardening, cooking, reading and long talks with friends. Some of her favorite foods include chocolate, fresh fruit and seafood.

Recently Ada Marie has changed to a gluten free diet and has a favorite Gluten Free Burrito Casserole recipe. Ask her for it sometime. Looking back over the past year Ada Marie points to several women’s retreats, in the mountains of Colorado, as something that has changed her life forever.

Ada Marie Troyer



She equates herself to a wild mustang horse. The freedom represented by wild horses reminds Ada Marie of the freedom that she has in Christ.

Nick Mast – Nick lives in Walnut Creek and is the son of Jason and Janet Mast. He works at Hummingbird Music in Sugarcreek as a music instructor and equipment salesman. He also works at the Olde World Bakery and Café in Berlin. You may recognize Nick as he has been part of our MCA Worship Team for several years playing drums. Nick sites his involvement in the MCA Youth Group as having a big part in helping him grow and be a better Christ follower.

Nick enjoys playing drums and guitar, basketball, reading and hanging out with friends and family. He likes to make omelets and French toast, but his favorite food is BACON. He likes the Cheetah because of their speed and has always been fascinated with how fast they are.



Jennifer Coblentz – Jennifer lives in Kidron and is the daughter of Jon and Karen Coblentz. She works at the Mt. Hope Killbuck Savings Bank as a Bank Teller. Jennifer and her family of 5 siblings have called many places home over the years. When Jennifer was 4 Jon and Karen joined Wycliffe Bible Translators and have served in Columbia, Papua New Guinea, North Carolina and Ohio. After graduating from High School Jennifer attended Rosedale Bible College for 2 years and went on to Malone University where she earned a

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The Australian Quokka

5 Barriers to Great Worship by Jeff Polen

Earlier this year I led the MCA Worship Team through a study called “5 Barriers to Great Worship”. The idea was that there are very simple barriers that can hinder our effectiveness as a worship team. If we can locate these barriers and simply correct them, then we can maximize our effectiveness as a worship team. The 5 barriers that we looked at are:

The Zombie Barrier - when the Worship Team physically looks like they would rather be doing anything other than leading worship

The Not-Enough Barrier - when we feel like we can't be effective because we don't have enough musicians, talent, tech people, money, space, equipment, etc

Lack of Commitment - when we are just going through the motions instead of actually investing ourselves into the program

Poor Preparation - when we don't take the time to prepare both individually and as a team. This is a barrier because you can't *lead* well what you don't *know* well

The Monster Song List - when we have so many songs to sort through that there is no opportunity for repetition, memorization, and heart application



Overall, I believe that the study was beneficial and I believe that we, as a worship team, are growing in these areas.

Now I want to turn the table just a bit.

It is true that our job as a worship team is to lead the congregation in worship of the Almighty God. This is nothing short of a privilege, and we want to do it as well as we can. But what about the congregation? What is their role as members of the body who are being led in worship?

I want to propose a congregational version of “5 Barriers to Great Worship”. These are 5 barriers that can hinder *your* worship, regardless of how well (or how poorly) the Worship Team is doing:

The Zombie Barrier - when the congregation physically looks like they would rather be doing anything other than worshipping the Lord (think yawning, texting, and checking your cuticles - all three of these consistently happen on a typical Sunday morning.)

The Not-My-Style Barrier - when we feel like we can't worship because the music is not in the style that we prefer. (Confession: I personally do not like all of the songs that we sing, but I appreciate all of the songs that we sing.)

Lack of Commitment - when we show up late and feel like worship is something that the Worship Team does, instead of recognizing the Worship Team is simply leading us ALL into worshipping God together (roughly 150-200 people are seated during the music time each Sunday.)

Poor Preparation - when we don't take the time to prepare both individually and as a family for church. (This could be anything from lack of praying for the service, lack of praying for our hearts prior to the service, or lack of getting to bed and waking up at a reasonable time.)

The Me Song List - when we expect the Worship Team to play all of our favorite songs and refuse to try to sing anything else. Please remember that the Worship Team is trying to serve the

congregation and that particular Sunday morning service. Many songs are selected specifically because of the content of the morning sermon. Singing is a Biblically ordained way of preparing our hearts to receive what God wants to speak to us. The Worship Team is not an iPod or a jukebox. We are simply tools in the hands of God.



Our desire as a worship team is to serve you so that we can all worship God together. It is very difficult to do that well when there are barriers standing in the way. Now that these barriers have been located, let's see if we can correct them and experience the kind of worship that is fitting for the King of kings and Lord of lords.

Amen?

**5 Barriers to Great Worship
Worship Team:**

1. The Zombie Barrier
2. The Not-Enough Barrier
3. Lack of Commitment
4. Poor Preparation
5. The Monster Song List

**5 Barriers to Great Worship
Congregation:**

1. The Zombie Barrier
2. The Not-My-Style Barrier
3. Lack of Commitment
4. Poor Preparation
5. The Me Song List

2014 Sabbatical Continued...

July - We anticipate July being a month of thinking seriously about the next season of our ministry here at MCA and preparing to return. Much of our July will be spent in Colorado. We have a family retreat scheduled to happen and I also have several ministry friends and acquaintances we want to connect with and learn from. A side excursion I am anticipating is the climbing of one of Colorado's "14ers" with a pastor friend of mine. Toward the end of Colorado, we will travel to upstate New York for the annual Conservative Mennonite Conference's conference.

In an effort to help build good habits, I have cut many desired destinations and conversations out of our plans. I don't want to pack our schedule so full that we need a vacation when we return from sabbatical. Through each of the months, Sarah and I want to practice living well as a family. We want to practice habits that will help us have a sustainable ministry here at MCA. According to one survey 80%

A Colorado 14er is a Mountain that peaks over 14,000 feet above sea level.

of pastors believe pastoral ministry affects their family negatively. An August 2010 article in the New York Times reported that pastors were fatter, sicker, and had higher rates of depression than average

Americans. If we as leaders refuse to live a life that lends its self to health and Godly rhythm, how can we possibly lead others toward a spiritually healthy life? Staying centered on the calling God has given and refusing to live like the church and world depends solely on us is an important first step to help this problem.

On another note: I am planning to read...a lot during the sabbatical. I want to live in the Gospels to catch a fresh look at our Savior. But I have also developed a reading list that I want to share with you and invite you to read some of the books with me. I have chosen four from the reading list that I think will be very beneficial to you, should you choose to read them with me.



A complete list of my reading schedule will be made available to you on our website later this month.

Please know that we will miss seeing you on a regular basis. We will pray for you and give occasional reports to the church. We are also very grateful to you for allowing us this opportunity to catch a different view of what God is doing in us and in the world. I trust we will all be better for it.

Spotlight on the "BLT" Continued...

Bachelor of Arts degree in Communications with a concentration in Theatre.

Jennifer enjoys playing crochet, reading, watching movies, writing and painting her nails. She recently discovered Irish Soda Bread and it has become one of her

favorite things to make and eat. She points out the significant events of the past year as seeing 3 of her favorite bands and planning a trip to Ireland with her sister. Jennifer says that the Quokka [kwok-uh] is the animal that would represent her best. They are known as the happiest animal in the world.

Having these four people living their life at MCA and leading their peers is a true testimony of our church family. Three of these four leaders have been part of MCA all of their life. We are in a time when the Larger Church Body is seeing 75% of the younger generation walking away from God. It is a blessing to see God at work in our church and in the lives of these four leaders.

UPCOMING EVENTS

APRIL

Worship Night (9th)
Youth Fundraiser Lunch (13th)
Passover Supper (18th)
Sunrise Service (20th)
Communion (20th)
Baptism Sunday (27th)

MAY

Red Cross (6th)
Worship Night (21st)

JUNE

VBS (16th)
Kentucky VBS (22nd)
Youth Mission Trips (28th)

JEREMY'S RECOMMENDED READING LIST

*Son of a Preacher Man:
My Search for Grace in the
Shadows*
by Jay Bakker

*The Secret Thoughts of an
Unlikely Convert*
by Rosaria Butterfield

*Spiritual Parenting: An
Awakening for Today's
Families*
by Michelle Anthony

The Pastor: A Memoir
by Eugene Peterson