



# SEEDS NEWSLETTER

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## MEET THE FAMILY

### T.J. & Kara Hanna



Over 25 years ago, a young man from Indiana met a young woman from Kentucky while attending college. She impressed him with her firm belief and commitment to Jesus Christ – a commitment also shared by her family.

“The quiet joy and peace they all displayed was so different and appealing to me. I wanted it too: and that’s how I met Jesus,” recounts T.J. Hanna. He and Kara were soon married.

Their lives together took a different path to the one they imagined when the attacks of 9/11 occurred. After much prayer, T.J. joined the U.S. Army and served two combat

tours in Iraq with the 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Division. Now he is employed by the Federal Government in Lexington, KY. Kara works as a pharmacist at the Veterans Administration in Lexington.

Their children, Trace (10) and Riley Jo (13) were both baptized here. The family have been members since 2018, and their quiet testimony to the reality of Jesus Christ in their lives is a blessing that carries over into a variety of ministries where they are active.

## Ray & Judy Johnson

Both are from Kentucky (Ray, Foxtown, and Judy, Lexington). They are the parents of Shannon Lawson (one of three sisters), and happily count seven grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren!

Judy received Jesus as her Savior in 2003. Ray followed a year later, during a New Year church service.

They met in Lexington, where Judy worked with Ray's sister, and married in 1970. Ray's career was in the motor industry, working for Ford, then Chrysler, before moving to Georgetown to work for Toyota (now retired). They have been members here since 2020 and are blessed by the faithfulness to Scripture and the friendliness of our church family.



## Shane Mayo



Shane was born in Western New York, moved to Texas at the age of 23, and later to Wyoming, working for law enforcement. He moved to be closer to family in Kentucky about two years ago and now works for Toyota.

Salvation came early, at the age of five, after family devotions one evening.

Shane chose to be part of BBC because of the Biblical truth taught here, and our traditional music and style of worship.

## **PASTOR'S PERSPECTIVE**

### **Out With the Old—In With the New!**

The end of each calendar year always brings joy and sadness to my heart. It is an opportunity to reflect on the past year's successes and failures. It is also an opportunity to project what might be in the coming year. This is true across our physical, spiritual, and emotional being and true for our corporate health as a church body.

As I reflect on 2024, I think about the faithfulness of so many who attend the Sunday services, who find a ministry role in the operation of the church, who engage in the Men's and Women's activities, who participate in church-wide functions, and who find and participate with their LifeStage.

The fellowship and partnership of each one in the church speaks to spiritual healthiness and community. It shows the love of God that is shed abroad in our hearts (Romans 5). My reflection also reminds me of the divine commission that we must fulfill. That is to be witnesses of Christ's and His salvation as we go about daily striving to do God's will. We must be witnesses, we must be engaged in God's work, we must be obedient to God's will. God does not demand perfection, but He does demand that we passionately seek to do His work in His will according to His Word.

Please reflect on your efforts from this past year. Does your effort for God reflect what you say your love of God is? Would you (not Pastor) say that you have done what God expects from a believer who has been redeemed from sin and renewed to have the ability to please God with his service?

This leads to a good projection into this next year. For the believer, failure does not have to be final. Where we find weaknesses or disappointments, forsake them, and by faith, commit to being a follower who pleases God in word and deed.

Living the Christian life is defined for us in the Bible. We should contemplate where God would want us to be in our spiritual, physical, and emotional health at the end of 2025 and commit to obeying the Bible to that end. Jesus said, "If ye love me keep my commandments."

Paul acutely addresses this reality:

But ye have not so learned Christ; If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus: That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. (Ephesians 4:20-24)

Paul’s solution and excellent resolution could apply to us all for 2025: Out with the old and in with the new!

## WHAT’S HAPPENING! Christmas Celebrations



*Our Christmas Cantata, “Love is Born” was a glorious celebration in song and Scripture reading, featuring both adult and children’s choirs. Nathan Hamm gets a special mention for wearing a splendid Christmas suit and tie!*





*A lot of happy children aged 4 to 11 got awards for attending the Bible Adventure Club on Wednesday nights. Singing, learning Bible verses and playtime make BAC a highlight each week.*



*We're not quite sure what this is or when it was taken, but the Homebuilders LifeStage, parents and children, look weird enough here to qualify as a bunch of Christmas grinchers all year long!*



*The Forerunners LifeStage (young single adults) met at the home of Mike and Geri Duffy for a pre-Christmas fun evening.*

## **ENCOUNTERS: LIVING AS A CHRISTIAN IN A POST-CHRISTIAN WORLD**

**Here we share anecdotes from church members about their experiences (inspirational, amusing, or sad) as Christians living in a world that is hostile to the Gospel. This month's story by Edward Thal is about his unexpected introduction to Jesus Christ.**

My parents were not in any way religious, but I spent most of my childhood at a British-style boarding school where church attendance was mandatory every Sunday morning and evening. From that experience I grew convinced that God was a fantasy and church attendance was a farce. On the one hand, I was exposed to teaching from a Book that spoke of a glorious, holy and mighty God, and on the other hand I was surrounded by church-goers whose lives reflected everything but glory and holiness and spiritual reality.

My cynicism was confirmed by the reply from a church leader to my genuine puzzlement about why belief in God was necessary. After a moment's hesitation he shrugged off my question by saying, 'Well, I suppose it's important that we believe in something.'

My choice was to believe in nothing. Then, at the age of 23, my comfortable atheism was shattered by a strange man who came to my home. His particular oddity lay in the fact that he was a Jewish convert to Christianity, and I wondered out loud why he would bother to swap one religious fairy tale for another? We had a brief conversation about Jesus Christ as Savior, before I slammed my door in his face. The man was clearly mad and I had better ways to spend my time than listen to his religious nonsense.

But something profound had happened during our encounter that would change my life forever. Yes, the unwelcome Jewish-Christian visitor represented everything I despised and distrusted about religious snake-oil salesmen—except for one very important, inescapable fact that I could not ignore: the man did not just believe what the Bible said about Jesus; it was obvious in the way he spoke that he *knew* Jesus, not as a fable but as his best and closest friend! His attitude wasn't an act, it was an expression of an extraordinary inner reality.

A week later, after much argument with myself, I surrendered to the same Jesus. It dawned on me later that I was a descendent of Jewish immigrants from Germany, introduced by a Jew to the Jewish Messiah!

As a last strangely-related fact, my German-Jewish ancestors were long-established horse breeders and trainers. I occasionally wonder if it is mere coincidence that my life's journey brought me to Central Kentucky, horse country!

## **BIBLE QUESTIONS & ANSWERS**

**Answering your particular questions while also providing an information resource for our church family.**

**This Month's Question** is about finding the right church. If we believe, as we should, that church membership and attendance is a vital contributor to our spiritual health and strength, how can we know when we have found the place of our spiritual service where we will grow in the grace and knowledge of God? The question becomes especially significant when circumstances dictate that we must move to a different location far from our familiar community, as is often the case with those in military service.

Scott and Pam Lindner moved many times and lived in four different countries while Scott served his 22 years in the Marine Corps. Since Pam's salvation, before she and Scott were married, she had been part of two different churches. Since their marriage, they have together been members of eight churches, which may qualify them as experts on the subject! Here are some of Pam's thoughts, beginning with the observation that because they had very little control of where they would be stationed or when they would have to move, they learned to trust God while also learning much about what church membership entails, and why it was so important for them.

"We were always at peace knowing that while it seemed the Marine Corps had all the control, God was really in charge and would place us exactly where He knew we needed to be. We were going to be away from friends, family, and all things familiar, but we knew that there was always going to be a church body waiting for us to fellowship with them!

"We never had to visit more than 3 churches at any location before it was made clear to us where we should join. Once we were sure of doctrinal positions, we always joined the church right away. Some military families decided to keep their memberships at their churches 'back home,' or decided that just attending their new 'temporary' church was enough because they would only be there for a short time. But we always believed that the first step to complete fellowship was becoming part of that local body. We were all in!

"There were two times when we did have a choice about our future, and after much prayer for wisdom, and trusting that God would lead us, we stepped out in faith."

***Next Month: Some surprising moves, and the joy that followed!***