

# Icthus News

## Spring 2006

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Greetings in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ! I got a letter from a dear brother a few weeks ago with this statement: "Bill, it's time for another news letter."... Translation (my translation), what in the world are you doing???? Good question. I hope you'll have time to read on and catch up. So sorry it has been so long since our last communication with you, please forgive me. I will try to do better in the future. To misquote Nehemiah: "I'm doing a great work and I can't sit down." (Nem. 6:3). I hope you'll be blessed as you read on and be motivated to stand with us in prayer.

### **Details, details, details...**

We are definitely in a season of details in the Dingle house. It is amazing the change in the "group dynamic" that the birth of Lydia brought to our house. To borrow from my brother Eric, we've had to shift from "man to man" to "zone." In this season we no longer have the option to get up, throw on some clothes, wolf down breakfast, get in the car, & go. Now, it's get up, change the young'uns, dress the young'uns, feed the young'uns, clean the young'uns, try to get something to eat, clean up the throw up, change a dirty diaper, try to get some clothes on, get the car seats in the car, get the young'uns in the car, get sippy cups, snacks, extra clothes & diapers, go change clothes with fresh throw up on them, go back out to the car, and go. And so goes the day (and night). I am not complaining. In the midst of all the details I am constantly reminded of how intimately aware our heavenly Father is aware of and involved in the details of our lives. Psalm 139 starts out by saying; "Oh Lord, you have searched me and you know me. You know when I sit and when I rise; you perceive my thoughts from afar. You discern my going out and my lying down; you are familiar with all my ways." I am indeed a blessed man in the midst of all the details, and am passionate about training up my children in the way they should go.

### **The Dingles (littlest to the biggest)...**

Lydia is ten months old. She is walking (for about a month now!), and eating everything in sight with her four teeth. She is generally happy, especially when Mama is holding her. She has a great smile, and like all the Dingles, loves being outside. Now that she is weaned from breast milk, I can help with the feedings at 12:30 & 4:30 AM. Edith is now able to get more than 2-3 hours sleep at night (sometimes), PRAISE GOD!!!! People say that Lydia looks like me, but I disagree, especially after we got the beard off of her. Reah turned three on May 1. She is our blonde -haired, blue- eyed beauty. Like all of my beauties (except Edith), she loves anything to do with dirt, rocks, and/or water. So far she has learned a Bible verse for every letter of the alphabet and most of the references. Last winter she got to go snow skiing for the first time and had a blast! At two and a half she was as good as most skiers on the hill... I'll never tell if she was that good or if everyone else was that bad (lol).

Emma will be five on August 11. She has become quite the prayer warrior, especially in the area of healing. Any time she sees me wearing a neck tie she prays, "Lord Jesus, help Daddy to preach good. In Jesus name, amen." She also has learned 26+ Bible verses and knows most of the main bible characters. Her favorite video is a hunting video she calls "shoot the deer." I think her favorite verse is going to be Acts 10:13, which says, "Arise Peter, kill and eat."

Edith will be... fourteen years younger than me all her life. She is now beginning to regain her strength

after birthing a baby and experiencing nearly a year of very little sleep! She continued playing the piano for all of the special programs at Grace Christian Academy this past school year, in addition to taking care of our three gorgeous girls and laboring along side me as we minister to groups and neighbors. It is such a joy to come into the wonderful home Edith has made of our house! Edith still enjoys painting, playing music, and baking breads. Two highlights for her this past year were selling two of her paintings and recording some solo piano compositions in a professional studio.

I turned fifty on May 23 and am having as much fun as two twenty-five year olds (And hopefully have more sense, but we won't go there!). One of the highlights so far this year (besides waking up in a house with four of the prettiest girls in the world), has been the opportunity to minister with Edith at a church in Alabama and to counsel together. The Lord is opening a door for ministry to several of our neighbors that are experiencing various illnesses/diseases. We are praying specifically for the Lord's will to be done. Jesus taught his disciples to pray "...your kingdom come, **your will be done on earth as it is in heaven...**" (Mat. 6:10). We believe since there is no illness/disease in heaven, that it is His will there be none on earth. It's not rocket science, but I've decided to start taking God at His word.

### **Staff...**

The Smiths and the Sorgs ended their service to Icthus in May. Lynn is working full time with our neighbor building houses, and Dan has applied for a pilot's position with a company in TN. We are grateful for all the good things they accomplished over the last two years. We wish them blessings, peace, joy, and health in their new endeavors.

Lonnie Grimes of Phenix City, AL has joined our staff for the summer. He is helping with maintenance, landscaping, cleaning, counseling, teaching, hosting, intercession, encouragement, plumbing, and whatever else we can talk him into (lol). Lonnie has a true servant's heart and is ready and willing to do whatever he can to advance the Kingdom of God. He has just finished a five month internship with Auburn Heights Baptist in Phenix City and was on their volunteer staff for about two years before that. In the fall he plans to continue his education in Columbus, GA, but right now he is listening for what Father God has for him. We are grateful to have this young man labor with us and hope you have the opportunity to meet him this summer.

Eric & Ashley Brendle were blessed with their third son, Caleb Isaac, on June 3, two weeks early. Their oldest son, Jesse, prayed the night before that his new brother would be able to share his birthday with him. When Ashley woke up the next morning her water broke... the prayers of a child. Ashley & Caleb are doing well. Please pray for her continued recovery and strength as they too shift from "man to man" to "zone". We are considering calling them the "June Bugs" since Jesse & Caleb's birthdays are June 3rd and Samuel's birthday is June 9th... maybe not. The Brendles will be serving with us through the end of July. In September they will be moving to Redding, CA where Eric will be entering the School of Ministry at Bethel Church. We hate to see this dear family go, but we know that the Lord has great things in store for them.

### **Winter...**

Even though we have been closing down the retreat center the last few years during the winter months, we continue to be about our Father's business with Bible Club in the middle school, preaching, and maintaining/improving the grounds and facilities. One of the highlights this winter was speaking at Pawley's Island youth ministries' ski retreat in West Virginia. Several of the students and leaders from Pawley's Island, SC, had been to Icthus in the past and honored me by inviting me to join them on their ski trip (ok, so I begged them to let me go!) in WV. We had a great time in the Word, hanging out together, and can you believe it, skiing! I even got to share a table with Willie Nelson in the lodge... well, he looked like Willie... sorta.

### **Spring...**

This spring we hosted three groups: Sigma Alpha Omega sorority from Western Carolina University, Cornerstone Community Church Jr/Sr high from Orangeburg, SC, and First Baptist Sr High all the way from Bryson City, NC. It's the first time that we've hosted a local church for more than a day event, and it truly was a blessed time! The focus was on the power of our testimony from Revelations 12:11: "They overcame him by the blood of the lamb and the word of their testimony...". We're learning to defeat Satan by speaking to each other about what God has done, is doing, and is going to do in our lives. Sigma Alpha Omega had such a great time that they have already scheduled another retreat for this fall. This spring I also had the opportunity to preach a revival at Cornerstone Wesleyan Church here in Bryson City, and at the homecoming service at Baynes Baptist in Burlington, NC.

### **Summer...**

So far this is the busiest, slowest summer we've experienced since coming to Icthus. How can that be? Well, as God continues to bless us with land/facilities it takes quite a bit of labor to keep everything in good order. But as far as groups go, this is the least attended summer since God called me here in 1990. Our first two groups ended up cancelling at the last minute, so as of yesterday we just completed our first week of summer camp with 22 middle school students and adults from Peace Presbyterian in Cary, NC. They are the only group we will host in June. July is a little better; from the 6th -22nd, we will have folks here everyday from Alabama, North Carolina, and Florida, four groups in all. Still, to have an open week at the beginning and end of July is unusual. Also, we only have one group scheduled for August (Bethany Baptist, Aug.2-5). Typically by the end of February we are booked solid through the summer and are starting a waiting list. We don't know all of the factors that have played into such a "light" summer schedule, but we are confident that the Lord is well aware of our situation and will bring ministry and provision where, when, and how He wants to.

### **The Haven...**

You may or may not be aware that since September of 1999 we have purchased thirty-eight acres and a small house about three miles from the current retreat center. The vision is to build a new lodge and move the current operation, located on one acre, to the new site. The original purchase of twenty-four acres was the remainder of a cattle farm. To differentiate between the two locations we've always referred to the latter as "the farm"... until now. As we get closer to building a new facility, we believe that "The Haven" more accurately describes what the Lord wants the new place to be. It is indeed our prayer that it will be a "safe place"; a "refuge"; a "Haven", for all who come in the future. Officially it will be referred to as "Icthus at the Haven" or simply, "The Haven". Please join with us in praying for God's plan to bring this vision into reality. His plan is absolutely the most important thing, because when we have His plan, He brings everything we need exceedingly, abundantly, more than we can dream or imagine, according to Ephesians 3:20.

### **What's next???**

Cut grass, cut grass, cut some more grass; that's a given (we have a lot of grass at Icthus!), but the two major projects that have been on the plate for a while are to build a maintenance/equipment shed and renovate the barn. The barn has been a chapel, shop, storage, junk place for waaaaaaaaaaaaay too long, and we want to make it strictly a people place. THEN....

After nearly six years of looking at different designs, buildings, camps, etc., I believe we've found the basic design that we're looking for in a retreat center. It was in our back yard the whole time (Go figure!), and is called Deltec Homes. The company is located in Asheville, NC. You can look at their website at: [www.deltechomes.com](http://www.deltechomes.com) if you're interested. Now it is a matter of sitting down at the drawing board, working out the details on paper, and waiting on God's provision.

### **Want to help?...**

We always have chores/projects that we are working on and would be glad to have your help. Some

projects are low skill level and only require a strong back and a godly attitude. Other projects definitely have a high skill level, but still need a godly attitude. We have eight full hook up RV sites at the Haven if you want to "camp," and we only require that you work half a day (twelve hours is a half day), eight days a week, or something like that. Some of the chores/projects are: Cut grass

weed flower beds

trim shrubs

clear brush

clean rooms

paint barn roof

repair/service mowers, vehicles, etc.

finish laying block on pavilion chimney

rock work on pavilion chimney

rock post/rail fence around rec. field

build maintenance/equipment shed

renovate barn/chapel

We are also trying to get a small bulldozer from Phenix City, AL to the Haven. We have a goose neck trailer to haul it on, but nothing reliable enough to pull for that distance. In addition we are looking for a backhoe and small dump truck in good condition, Cheap!

### **Thanks...**

Thank you for taking the time to read this rather lengthy epistle. I hope you are feeling a little more connected with us now. We appreciate all your prayers, calls, cards, visits, and chocolate! I am in the process of switching e-mail accounts and if you're interested in staying in touch, please do me a huge favor by responding to [b.e.dingle@gmail.com](mailto:b.e.dingle@gmail.com). Just say something like "put me on the newsletter list" or whatever and I won't have to type in your address. Finally, please, please, PLEASE, only send personal notes. I get forwarded a lot of junk "if you love Jesus you'll send this to at least 10 people" mail as well as "luck" & lots of hoax mail. It just saves a lot of time deleting all that stuff from 400 + people. Thank you again for your interest in this ministry! Blessings!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Trusting JESUS,

Bill

Prov.3:5-6

[www.ichthusministries.com](http://www.ichthusministries.com)

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