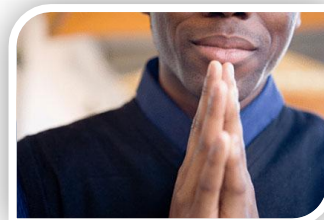




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EDITORIAL PERSPECTIVE | *BOL's 2012 Agenda*

## Creating a Culture of Outreach & Stewardship Is an *Urgent* Priority!



**I**N KEEPING WITH THE THEME OF OUR RECENT Personal Ministry Revival, “*Inside-Out*,” BOL has a prime opportunity to embrace three initiatives to top its 2012 agenda: ***Spiritual Growth, Personal Evangelism, and Stewardship***. These critical priorities are specifically aligned with the inside-out principle, which says whatever is happening on the inside will naturally express itself outwardly.

So when our relationship with God is deepening and maturing inwardly, it’s going to naturally manifest itself outwardly by sharing our faith and by being faithful stewards over the precious time, talents, treasure and (body) temples that God has entrusted to us.

BOL is moving with intentional resolve to recapture the momentum that started in the last quarter of 2011, when the Lord impressed upon us the urgent need to create a **culture of outreach and service, beginning with our own network of family and friends**. That message was brought out so emphatically by both Pastor **Roger Frazier** and the Inside-Out revival speaker, Pastor **Furman Fordham**.

The wake-up call came profoundly through the realization that if each BOL member brought in just **one** soul this year—preferably a friend or loved one—the congregation would instantly double to 600 members. Imagine the resources—talents, gifts, prayer warriors, and funding—that would be accessible to strengthen and expand BOL’s ministries and outreach efforts. Not to mention the fact that 300 new souls would be preparing to enter God’s kingdom. Then imagine the ripple effect of doubling that number when those new souls bring in someone else.

Modern culture is reminding the church of the age-old power of social networking and the power of relationships and fellowshiping. What this says to the various ministry leaders of BOL is that they should be much more intentional to incorporate evangelism into **everything** they do. So Pafs would invite their friends and cousins to join the club—explore new adventures and learn about God. Men’s and women’s ministry members would invite friends and family to their excursions and activities. People overall will more likely

attend a ballgame, or a prayer tea, or a museum exhibit before attending a worship service. And if they have a good time and enjoy hanging out with us, they just might accept an invitation to worship down the road. The same applies to Music, Youth and Health ministries, and virtually every organization at BOL. Community Services and Personal Ministries already provide organized outreach opportunities, but *do we support them?*

In the area of spiritual growth, Pastor McPhaul has called us to a 40-day commitment to fast and pray in an intentional effort to deepen our relationship with God this year. This focuses on the “inside” nurturing that we simply **must** do. A related article on page 2 addresses how BOL members are prioritizing *daily* communion with God.

**I**n the critical area of **stewardship**, Health Ministries has seized the “new year resolution season” to encourage us to make robust health a personal priority with intentional resolve. Last week’s revealing “*Forks Over Knives*” presentation was only the prelude to a series of presentations planned that will empower us to achieve optimal health and the more abundant life that God desires for us. Today’s AY, for example, addresses head-on the fastest-growing health threat for Americans—Type-2 diabetes—and how to reverse it. Here is yet another opportunity to share empowering information with our friends and family network.

With respect to our **treasure**, it is no secret that BOL is in great financial need to meet budget each month and to make essential upgrades to the church property. It’s not from a lack of financial **capacity** within the congregation—but one of **will**. A few members (slightly over 1/3) are carrying the financial load that should be shared by all. But for whatever reason, “all” are not doing their share in a systematic way. This outward lack speaks volumes to an inward lack of faith that God will meet our needs when we are faithful stewards.

In light of all that’s been touched upon above, the questions we must answer honestly are: “*What does my outward self tell me—really—about my inward condition?*” “*Have I been intentional in reaching out to my friends and family?*” “*How tight is my daily communion with God?*” “*Am I the faithful steward that God has empowered me to be?*” I’m not that proud of all of my answers. Are you?—THE EDITOR

# spending *quality*

## time with **God** | *BOLers share their devotional practices*



One popular new year resolution that many Christians make is to engage in daily devotion and communion with God. For many, it's a resolution they've managed to keep. For others, it's more hit and miss. And then for others, it's just, well, miss. In talking to BOL members who manage to engage in daily devotion, it requires discipline and commitment, especially for those with jobs and young children who **start** their day in quality time with God before dawn.

Their devotional formats vary—ranging from a simple devotional reading and prayer while still in bed, to structured worship formats, assembling the entire family in the family room to sing, read, share, and pray. They read scripture and inspirational/devotional books and study the Sabbath School Lesson and Ellen White's writings. Some saints dial in to prayerlines, while others download devotional apps on their Kindles and smart phones. Many engage God throughout the day, reading and praying before breakfast, during lunch and after dinner.



**Benita Knight** shared that she sets her alarm for 5 a.m. every morning (including weekends) to start her season

of prayer. "I ask God to allow the Holy Spirit to refresh me on that day and to restore and heal my mind and body," she says. "I pray for opened ears to hear God's voice to guide me through the day. I also intercede on behalf of others, especially those who are dear and close to my heart—that they may find favor in God's eyes and enjoy a more intimate walk with Him." At work, Benita sorts through her e-mails and is blessed by devotional messages

that people send to her. "I close my office door and ask God to move supernaturally in my thought processes and affect all that I do to bring glory to Him."

Before bedtime, Benita's boys, **Meshack** and **Kafil**, must read to her from their Children's Bible for 20 minutes every evening. Then they discuss the passage and pray before going to bed.

Another member reviews the Sabbath School Lesson and Ellen White writings and devotionals on his smart phone every day while riding public transit to work. While the Metro may not be the most conducive environment for studying, he says it works for him in order to jumpstart his day spiritually.



**Vinnie & Adria Chea** have their "couples" devotion via their laptop while still in bed in the morning. But

the evening is devoted to family worship each evening at 9 p.m.



**Dee Pendergrass** engages in private time with God even before her early morning workout. She begins her prayer ritual each morning at 5 a.m.,

followed by a review of the Sabbath School Lesson. "I also read the accompanying E.G. White notes for that day's lesson, and I end my devotion by reading from an inspirational book. Doing this requires discipline, but it's *always* worth it. It sets an uplifting tone for my day."

One member confessed that daily devotion is a challenge and that he struggles to get in three days of consistent study and prayer. "I'm talking about *quality* devotion, not the token reading of a 5-minute thought for the day," he explains. "I work long hours and get to bed very late. So it's

really tough to get up early and be alert enough to really focus on worship. So I try to carve out time during lunch when I can detach from work and engage in meditation and prayer. That works only if I don't have a lunch appointment. I think I'm just too busy for my own spiritual good, and that needs to change."

The bottom line is to find a way to jumpstart the day, recharge at midday, and end the day with a quality connection with God. It will require some discipline—especially at first—but, much like physical exercise, the benefits will be evident throughout the day in your spiritual development and in your relationships with others. Before starting His day of ministry, Jesus Himself arose early each morning to commune with His Father and receive instructions for that day. And Jeremiah reminds us that God's blessings and compassions are "*new every morning, great is Thy faithfulness*" (*Lamentations 3:23*).

**Pastor Mac** outlined a number of benefits from "carving out time" for daily devotion:

"You can experience the transforming power that comes only through intimate communion with God. A vibrant devotional life makes Christianity more meaningful, personal and real instead of the repetitive, rote repetition of a corporate religion. A daily review of the Word will prove profitable in the sanctification process needed by every born-again child of God. Finally, a daily devotional regimen reminds the enemy that we know where our help comes from. It comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth."

So if you don't already commune, start. If you've started, continue. If you're continuing, super-size it. Watch the difference in your spiritual journey in 2012 and beyond! ✪



## Community Services *fed, clothed* and *ministered* to a record 6,000 persons in 2011

One of the biggest blessings in 2011 was the celebration of the first anniversary of the BOL FoodBank. It was the fulfillment of a longtime vision of Community Services Leader **Antonette Simpson**, who vowed to open a food bank as soon as BOL acquired its own facility. The bank was opened within months after BOL settled in at its current campus. On the first and third Thursdays of the month, Antonette and her small team of volunteers distributed tons of groceries and fresh food to hundreds of families.

Word about the FoodBank spread quickly throughout the community since its inception, and the lines of waiting "customers" to this day wrap around the church campus, indicating how severely people are impacted by the lingering economic recession. Over 800 persons are served each month. The successful operation was recognized last year with a *Certificate of Merit* from the Los Angeles Regional Food Bank for passing its annual monitoring and inspection visit.



The FoodBank is just the tip of the success iceberg for the BOL Community Services Department. In 2011, the department distributed food, clothing, household goods and more to over 6,000 people. According to Antonette, Community Services provided:

- cooked meals weekly and monthly Bible studies to some 30 residents at Good Shepherd Manor;
- cooked meals and monthly praise and worship to residents at Pacific Rim Apartments;
- Thanksgiving meals and gift cards to over 200 needy persons and families in Watts;
- monthly praise and worship as well as Thanksgiving and Christmas celebrations (with gift cards) for residents at the two assisted living centers in Culver City;
- Christmas celebration (feast for a king) and Wal\*Mart gift cards for Good Shepherd Bible study students;
- Christmas celebration in Watts, including food and a toy giveaway for 80 children.



"The Lord truly blessed our efforts over the past year," noted Antonette. "We were able to accomplish quite a bit in service to the community with just a handful of devoted volunteers and by the generosity of donors. We were able to accomplish all this without spending one dime from our Community Services annual budget. God willing we will be able to do more in 2012."

In order to do more going forward, **Community Services urgently needs more volunteers** who can help unload heavy crates of food from delivery trucks, and set up and assist during food distribution days. The department also needs volunteers to bring praise and worship to the various senior and residential homes, where people hunger for both physical and spiritual food. Please see Antonette to see how you can help and get involved in community outreach. ✉



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# LIFE of BREATH



## Repeat Conference Flagball Champs!

Congrats to Team BOL, who defeated the **Tamarind Tigers** in a nail-biting, victory last Sunday to win the GLAR Flagball League Championship for the second consecutive year. Our team was the dark-horse winner, prevailing over the odds-favorite Tigers. Kudos to the team and its co-captains **Shomari "ShoTime" Davis** and **Mike Paul**. Team BOL consists of:

- James Boozer, Sr.
- James Boozer, Jr.
- Ron Brathwaite
- Hasani McLean-Davis
- Shomari Davis
- Herman Fenison
- Reed Garwood
- Jeffrey Hall
- Joshua Jacobs
- Nathan Lewis
- Allen Lindsay
- Rodney Pamphile
- Michael Paul
- Jesse Rugless
- Andrew Summerfield
- Austin Summerfield
- Warren Todd
- Justin Wilson



### BOL Member to Lead Bar Association

**Damon Brown, Esq.**, will be installed on Feb. 4 as president of the John M. Langston Bar Association, which is California's oldest and largest bar association of African-American attorneys and judges. *Congratulations!*



## 2011 ~ THE YEAR IN PICTURES

BOL will remember 2011 as a year of rich blessings, including the **Excellence** CD launch, incredible **Youth Days**, the **Pathfinders'** conference award, the official launch of **Adventurers, Domestic Violence Month** by Women's Ministries, the incredible **Mothers' and Fathers' Day** celebrations, **Unusual Suspects** AY, the rollout of The **MOB** (Men of Breath), **Community Services** record achievements, **Super Bowl Men's Breakfast**, the **Women's Prayer Tea** and **Prayer Breakfast**, honored our **grads**, revealed our new **Youth Room** and **Visitor Center**, launched Health Ministries' **GET FIT** series, **Gen-X Art Exhibit**, the **Personal Ministries Revival**, the **Just Jesus** Praise Service, **Children's Ministries Day**, the **Fall Church Retreat**, the launch of our new **Media Ministry**, and our dual **Christmas** services. We honored members and said farewell to **Portia Boykin** (Ecuador), **Linette Rubio** (Andrews University), **Otyvee Dyer** (North Carolina), **Yris Glasgow** (Arkansas), and **Sheron Petrie** (Redding). We celebrated marriage (**Allison Sease**) and births (**Brooke Cotton** and **Mason Brown**), and we laid our dear brother, **Tyler Stevens**, to his rest. Praise the Lord for His goodness, blessings, and mercies! ✕

