

Connecting Point Magazine

VOLUME 13 | FALL, 2017 | WHERE GOD'S ANSWERS MEET MAN'S QUESTIONS



Change of Season

Little in life stays the same. How do we as believers negotiate the changing seasons in our lives and in the world around us?

In This Edition:

- *From the Editor* / pg. 2
- *Seasons* / pg. 3
- *Homesick* / pg. 6
- *Monthly Meeting with the Prof* / pg. 8
- *Devotional Moment* / pg. 9
- *Media, Morality, and Ministry* / pg. 10
- *A New Ministry Venture* / pg. 11

A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF RANDY BUNCH MINISTRIES AND WEST KERN CHRISTIAN CENTER

From the Editor

Changes In Our World and in Our Lives



Dr. Randy & Maria Bunch

As I have gotten older, I have learned a great lesson about life. Life is not static, but fluid. Seasons come and seasons go. So often, those people, places and things we think are going to be permanent fixtures in our lives, prove not to be so. There is very little in our lives that is not subject to change. Even we change; hopefully for the better. When I attended my 30 year class reunion a few years ago, I was one of those voted "Most Changed." Both inwardly and outwardly, there is little about me that has not dramatically changed in 30 plus years. I would imagine the same could be said for most of us, even if we're fortunate enough to have kept in shape and aged well. No one is immune from the effects of time.

Of course, our world has changed greatly as well. In the time I have been in ministry, our nation has gone through a lot of changes. Some of those changes have been for the better, and many have certainly been for the worse. I could never have anticipated the technological changes we have experienced anymore than I could have some of the social and cultural changes. The same will be said in another 30 years when we look back on the time in which we live now. Change is the only constant in life, thus we need to learn to adapt and address the changes in our lives and in our world with solid biblical answers that will enable us to personally thrive, as well as minister to those overwhelmed by the changes that present a challenge to them.

In this edition of *Connecting Point Magazine*, we will explore some basic realities about the changes we all experience, including that ultimate transition we will all face at the end of this life. Most important to remember is that a life in Christ should always be marked by a hope that no change can diminish and a joy that no challenge can overcome.

Contents

From the Editor /2

Changes In Our World and In Our Lives

Seasons /3

An Excerpt from *Immutable: Changeless Truth for a Changing World*

Homesick /6

By Dr. Randy Bunch

Monthly Meeting with the Prof /8

Join us for coffee and lively discussion

Devotional Moment /9

Lights

Media, Morality, and Ministry / 10

Dr. Randy Bunch

New Ministry Venture /11

Connecting Point Communications



"Brothers and sisters, I myself don't think I've reached it, but I do this one thing: I forget about the things behind me and reach out for the things ahead of me. (Philippians 3:13 Common English Bible New Testament)

Seasons Continued...

Often as we start our journey, we never think about how transitory many aspects of life really are. We assume that the people, places, and things in our lives today are permanent fixtures in the backdrop of our life. Most don't live with a day-to-day awareness, particularly in youth, that many of the things we enjoy in life today have an expiration date and will one day be gone. Friends move, jobs change, and new opportunities take us to different places from where we started.

In fact, the inconstancy of life is one of its most constant features. Change happens all around us, all the time. The sooner we embrace this as normal and necessary to life, the sooner we are able to transition from one season of life to the next with grace and anticipation for the new adventure that awaits. The fear of change is common, almost universal, and usually has something to do with our desire to hang on to what we have, our reluctance to adapt or to learn new things, and a general uncertainty of the future.

However, change is necessary in the process of life. We don't want change merely for change's sake, but we do need to understand that moving forward in the plan of God will often mean saying farewell to one season of our lives and embracing another. While we instinctively want to hold on to those who played a major role in a prior season, the impracticality of maintaining the same closeness often means they move into more of a background role in our lives, as new relationships and

involvements relative to the new season we are entering come into the foreground.

Such a life, moving with the purposes of God, becomes a rich tapestry of layered experience and relationships that deepen our wisdom and understanding of life. Our myopic views open to a

Learning to cooperate with the changing seasons, rather than resisting them, is essential to our success and enjoyment of the journey. Life is not static but fluid, and change will come regardless of our reluctance or acceptance, so we must learn to stay adaptable.

broader understanding of the larger world, enabling us to become more versatile and relate more widely. In my own experience, I have found that each new season I have entered has benefitted from the collective experience and wisdom of the previous seasons, making my contribution greater as I continue

to move forward in my life's journey. Our value to the world around us, and those whom we serve, deepens as our own interior borders are extended through our growth, breaking us loose from our prior confines and maturing us in ways we could never have anticipated. As we look into the reservoir of our experience, there is so much more to draw from and pass on to the generation that must take the baton from us.

Learning to cooperate with the changing seasons, rather than resisting them, is essential to our success and enjoyment of the journey. Life is not static but fluid, and change will come regardless of our reluctance or acceptance, so we must learn to stay adaptable.

Sometimes change will come naturally, as a normal consequence of life, while at other times we will have to be more intentional about making changes, as we learn to cooperate with the transition from one season to the next. Sometimes change is initiated by God, as He moves us into position to serve His ongoing purpose for our lives.

The truth is that change keeps something alive and young in us that can otherwise be lulled to sleep by the all too familiar rhythms of a comfortable season that fails to present new challenges. God's not done with you yet, which likely means more new seasons are still ahead of you, along with a still richer life from which you will have even more wisdom and experience to share with others.

SUMMIT BIBLE COLLEGE

EQUIPPING CHRISTIAN LEADERS TO HELP THOSE IN NEED



*Feel like God has something for you to do?
He does! Begin the journey of a lifetime!*

- ▶ *Why not today?*
- ▶ *If not, why not?*
- ▶ *If not now, when?*

*There's no time like the present!
Contact Summit Bible College for a free
catalogue!*

*Call or go online today!
www.summitbiblecollege.com
661-328-1151*



IMMUTABLE

Changeless Truth for a Changing World



A Collection of Devotional Essays

Randy Lane Bunch

"Now, perhaps more than ever, the Church must rise to the challenge of communicating the gospel to a nation adrift, without moorings or moral compass. This cannot be done through argument alone, but through a demonstration of the life and love of God lived out through the Church as a witness to the world."

Author, Randy Lane Bunch

This collection of devotional essays by Dr. Randy Bunch, will inspire, challenge, and inform you. The simple message of the gospel is truth for the ages and the answer for all mankind. While this was once taken for granted in our nation, it is not so any longer. The strident message of relative morality promoted by our increasingly secular culture has presented a new challenge to the church in America.

Part apologetics, part Bible teaching, and part homespun tales with a message to warm the heart and inspire faith, IMMUTABLE: Changeless Truth for a Changing World will help you to start thinking about how to engage the culture with the timeless truths of God's Word. You can order online from Amazon, Barnes & Noble, Apple iBooks, or go to the book website at randylanebunch.org! Get your copy today!



Amazon
Paperback or
Ebook formats



Barnes &
Noble Book
Sellers



Apple iBooks
for all Apple
devices

Homesick

by Dr. Randy Bunch

My wife and I often discuss where we want to live when we retire. Neither of us have a solid idea, but it doesn't keep us from listening to others as they talk about the various places to which they have retired, buying houses in favorable markets where cheaper real estate prices enable them to have a fair amount of space to themselves: something they might have never dreamed of in California. Having spent a fair amount of time in the east, I tell my wife often about places like Virginia and New England, where I have either traveled or lived, and about the beauty of such places, which I find hard to capture in words. There are,

in fact, so many beautiful places in this nation to live, and yet, none of them is without a downside.

I spent sixteen years in New England: first as a visitor for six and then as a resident of Vermont for ten. It's hard to describe the beauty of the Green Mountain State to one who has never been there. It's not just the Fall colors. They are amazing, of course, but beyond that, how does one capture the view of a mountain covered in the morning mist, chilly and breathtakingly beautiful in its autumn splendor, or the snow-covered trees at Christmas time, or the beautiful Blue Jays and Cardinals who make their

reappearance in Spring, while the last of the winter snow still clings to the branches on which they alight? All that beauty, however, is off-set with a very long winter with short, dark days that can genuinely wear away at the soul. Many suffer from varying degrees of depression from the lack of sunlight and the oppressive sense of darkness in which one rises in the morning and again returns home in after work.

I also love Virginia with its blooming Dogwood trees whose flowering leaves fall like snow as you drive down its roads and lanes. The history is so rich that one can truly see and feel the era of our nation's founding.



Homesick Continued...

I remember preaching once in Fredericksburg when, after the service, the Pastor took us by the house in which George Washington's sister had lived. It's all so beautiful and historic. I never had the opportunity to live there, but it would be a top contender for me.

Above all these, if I had my way, I would possibly live out of country in a city like London. I only had the opportunity to spend three days there, but I definitely left behind a part of my heart. It had always been a dream of mine to see it, and the short time I was there did nothing to diminish my desire for more. I would love to travel the English countryside, staying in the ubiquitous little Bed & Breakfasts that offer a night's lodging and a morning meal that is said to hold you for much of the day.

However, whenever my wife and I discuss these various places, there is always one drawback. We have no family in any of these places. All our family is elsewhere, and the thought of just going somewhere for the sake of being somewhere different does not hold the same appeal if you're there apart from loved ones. It sometimes makes me wonder if we'll ever really get anywhere outside of Kern County, or even Taft! Besides, all who know best are aware of the fact that home is not a geographical location. It's a person or a people with whom you share a special bond.

There is one place I am eager to go one day. I have never been there, but the reports are beyond

description. It so happens that both my wife and I have family there, and I know that they are all eagerly looking forward to seeing us one day. They cannot come to us, but we can go to them. We both have real estate there as well. In fact, the home we have there outshines anything we could purchase, even in the best real estate markets anywhere in the United States or abroad. Best of all, someone has gone ahead of us to prepare for our arrival. I don't know when we'll make it there, but I do know that our arrival is guaranteed, and that once there we will never call another place home.

Being a Bible teacher, my wife asks me questions about heaven a lot. "Will her cats be there?" is foremost on her mind most of the time. When I told her we would both have a mansion there, she wanted to know why I needed my own place. She definitely doesn't seem to care for that arrangement at all, and I'm sure something will have to be done about it as soon as we get there. I often don't really know what to tell my wife when she asks some of her questions, and I realize that to a great degree, we really don't know all we would like to know about where we are going to spend eternity. What God has seen fit to reveal to us in His Word is evidently sufficient, but I'm not worried. I'm not worried (though I admit to some curiosity) about what kind of furniture will be in the house or how much square footage there may be. I don't worry about the neighbors or the

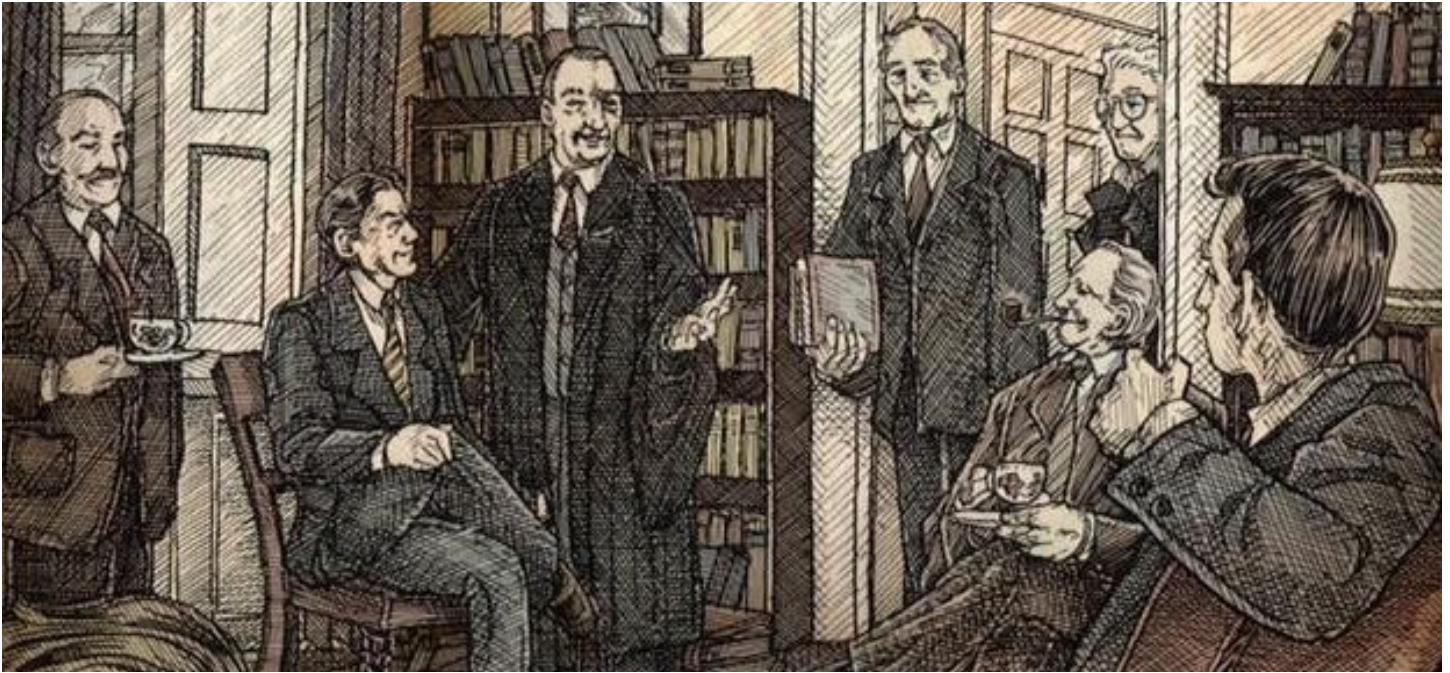
neighborhood, and best of all, I never have to worry if I'll be lonely there.

In heaven, everyone is family. In heaven, there are no final partings. In fact, in heaven there is nothing that will ever hurt or destroy. There will be no sorrow or sickness or dying. All those things will have passed away. I don't even think my wife will be too worried about the living arrangements when we get there. In fact, I don't think I'll be the man who occupies her focus when we get there, for there is one who has a rightful claim on all our affections and who will eclipse all others when it comes to our attention and devotion. I will see Jesus in heaven. I tear up even writing it. I wonder what that meeting will be like. Will it seem familiar? Will it be filled with an awe that makes me fall to my knees? I just don't know. But I am certain of this. In heaven, we will never be homesick again.

This isn't a very theological article, per se. I have no great point to make, except this: our world has so much sorrow. This has been a difficult week for our nation, and for some families it has been an impossibly challenging time of trying to make sense out of such senselessness and waste. I just wanted us to remember that for those who share this hope in Christ, those days of sorrow are numbered and will one day give way to a new life in which sorrow and sadness will have no place, and the only tears shed will be tears of joy. *(This article was written after the Las Vegas tragedy)*

Monthly Meeting *With the Prof!*

Monthly Meeting with the Prof is a new venture. This is not a lecture or seminar, but an opportunity for anyone and everyone to enter into the conversation, ask questions, or simply listen. Meet new friends, enjoy stimulating conversation, and learn from others as we share our thoughts and opinions on relevant issues facing believers today.



I absolutely love teaching the students at Summit Bible College. It is one of the singular joys of my life! There is a hunger in so many of the students, and I can often tell there are questions left on the table that never get answered and conversations that cannot always take place in the context of a classroom. Besides this, I would simply like to get to know my students better than time allows in the classroom.

All these reasons and more have sparked a vision in my heart to have a monthly morning meeting with students, alumni, and their friends. This is not a lecture, but a time of discussion on the topics that most interest all of us. The subject matter may range from current events or worldview issues to talks about the end times or apologetics. No question is really off-limits, given that it is appropriate for a mixed group. It is an opportunity for fellowship and good discussion, not monopolized by a lecturer, but facilitated to give everyone the opportunity to give input or simply listen, should they prefer to simply get their feet wet and enjoy some breakfast treats in the process.

To be honest, this is something I have longed to do since reading years ago about the famous group

organized by C. S. Lewis and attended regularly by other literary luminaries like J. R. R. Tolkien. This informal meeting of peers and colleagues, known as the "Inklings," became a fellowship of those with a profound love of learning which grew into deep friendships over time. I hope something similar happens with our group as well.

I want to emphasize again that this is NOT for students or alumni only, but for any and all who are interested in having lively, biblically based discussion about topics relevant to those of us who are navigating the challenges of life in today's world.

Please let me know what you think! You can email me at info@wkccconnect.org, or simply fill out the contact form on the "Connect" page on my personal website, randylanebunch.org. Share with your friends, or anyone you think might be interested in joining us for our time of discussion and fellowship!

Join us on the first Friday of every month at the classroom at Summit Bible College, 2525 M Street in Bakersfield at 6:00 am. You will be most welcome. We hope to see you there!

Devotional Moment

Lights

"Do all things without complaining and disputing, that you may become blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, holding fast the word of life, so that I may rejoice in the day of Christ that I have not run in vain or labored in vain." (Philippians 2:14-16)

As I have said many times before, "This is not your Grandmother's America." The world has up and changed on us! Things that would have made most of us blush a decade or so again are now standard fare on prime time television. To say we have lost our innocence is an understatement, and parents wanting to preserve the innocence of their small children have an all but impossible task on their hands. There is a temptation to throw one's hands in the air and simply capitulate to the seemingly overwhelming influences of our modern culture.

I admit to having felt this very sense of futility many times myself. One's attempts to teach, write, preach, or otherwise influence the hearts of men toward a biblical worldview feel like trying to shout out a warning in the midst of a hurricane in which one's voice is simply blow back in one's face with little affect on the outside world. However, I am convinced that any and all such defeatist attitudes are a violation of our missional mandate to be lights in the world.

After all, it's not as if we are in this alone. Before Jesus left, He assured the disciples that He would send the promised Holy Spirit to empower them to take the message of the gospel to the world's end. That same Spirit is with us, empowering believers today just as He did 2,000 years ago when the Church turned the known world upside down and veritably shook the empire of Rome to its foundations.

I think the problem with those of us in the West is that we've had it so easy for so long that we forgot that the whole purpose for which we are here is to be lights in a

dark world. We've never really had to handle opposition in the way believers in other parts of the world have, and our first real brushes with a culture that is pushing back have revealed our spiritual flabbiness and undeveloped resolve.

The reactions from some in the Church to the assault on our biblical beliefs have been interesting to say the least. For example, on the issue of same-sex marriage, we've seen a number of prominent Christian "leaders" capitulate to the pressure being applied by saying we should change our position and accept gay relationships as normative. This is alarming on several levels.

First of all, if God's prescription for human relationships is to be taken seriously, then we are setting people up for failure by trying to sanction what God has condemned. If repentance precedes forgiveness, then we are not loving the sinner by telling them they can choose to ignore their sin since our society has decided to rewrite the rules. Secondly, if there are those in the Church who have yielded to such little pressure so quickly, what will we do should the price for our faith far exceed the small price of cultural marginalization we may be experiencing now.

No, we are not to hide from the challenges of our present culture, nor fear those who do not share our faith. Love for the lost will overcome our fear of their disfavor. Don't believe the lie that everyone is against us. There are many who are eager for change and will walk into the light of truth if we are faithful enough to hold it forth rather than hide it under a bushel.

Media, Morality, and Ministry

by Dr. Randy Bunch

Whether you love it or hate it, technology is not going anywhere. If anything, it will become more and more a part of our daily lives as progress creates more opportunities for application and integration. The Church must have a response both to the moral challenges media presents as well as the seemingly boundless opportunities for spreading the gospel.



When God opened new doors of ministry for the apostle Paul, travel was limited to the speed of the horse. Today, information travels at the speed of light. I have held video conferences with pastors and friends in nations like India and Pakistan in real time that would have been impossible or, at the least difficult and costly, just a few short years ago.

Not only can we talk or FaceTime on our cell phones, but social media venues like YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, and the rest, have made communication instant and available to practically everyone. While the ramifications of this availability to information will continue to be a subject of debate for years to come, and problems with information credibility continue (the term "fake news" is now a part of the American lexicon), the opportunities are undeniable.

Online education has made it possible for people in remote parts of the world to have access to some of the finest instruction available. The ability to collaborate with team members in other parts of the nation through shared networks is now taken for granted. Best of all, the gospel can be communicated around the world and even find access to in places that were at one time

completely closed. This magazine, when rendered into a PDF, is a relatively small media file which can be sent via email to anyone with internet access, and a small flash drive can contain literally thousands of volumes of Christian teaching.

While there are certainly necessary conversations to be had about the deterioration of interpersonal skills due to the ubiquitous nature of the smart phone, this is not a case where the genie can be put back into the bottle. Technology is here to stay, so we must adapt, allowing good Christian character and biblical principles to direct our consumption of the media we view, being wise in how to utilize it for our outreach efforts.

Like anything, media can be over-used, costing us the intimacy that only personal connection can provide. Still, we must learn to navigate these waters and become, as the Master encouraged, "wise as serpents and harmless as doves" (Matthew 10:16). It's a challenge for ministry leaders, believers in general, and particularly parents, who are tasked with monitoring and regulating their children's exposure to the easily accessed digital world. Again, the world has changed, but it is up to us to determine what we make of it.

Connecting Point

Communications

media services made affordable to churches and ministries



It was recently brought to my attention that I have been doing various kinds of media ministry for a long time now: ads, web development, magazine production, blog writing, video production, and more. These are services that many local churches and ministries are in need of but often simply do not have the personnel or expertise to supply.

These services can also be very costly. In fact, they can be prohibitively expensive for many smaller churches struggling to meet their monthly budget. For these and other reasons, we are launching *Connecting Point Communications*. This service will be a means whereby pastors and ministry leaders can have personalized media services made to fit their ministry vision and needs.

Whether you need a magazine to serve as the flagship publication for your ministry, a website to help you advertise your church, or a video series published to YouTube, *Connecting Point Communications* can assist you in fulfilling your media goals. You've already seen the magazine, but you may not have seen some of our websites, such as the one for our own church, wkconnect.org, or my personal website, randylanebunch.org. I have been creating websites for both my own use and for friends for years, and I will be happy to assist you in creating a website that is right for you.



On the Set of The Caitlin Hashim Show

Also important today is video production. Whether you want a YouTube or Vimeo channel or to simply post a welcome video to your website, *Connecting Point Communications* can assist you. We will work with you to create a media statement that matches your goals and reflects the vision of your ministry. Just look up *The Caitlin Hashim Show* on YouTube to see some of the work we've done in video production.

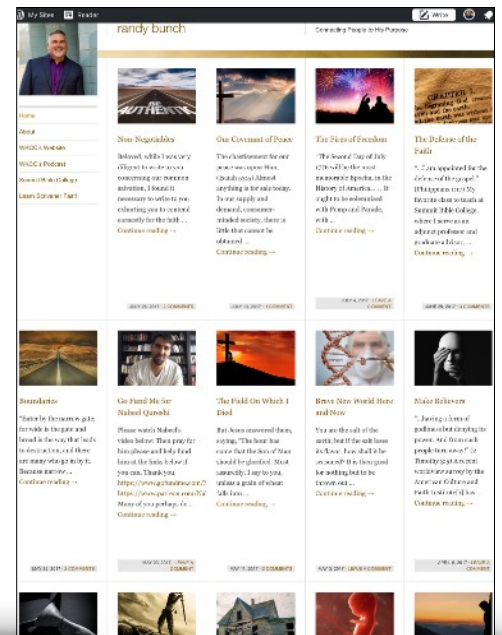
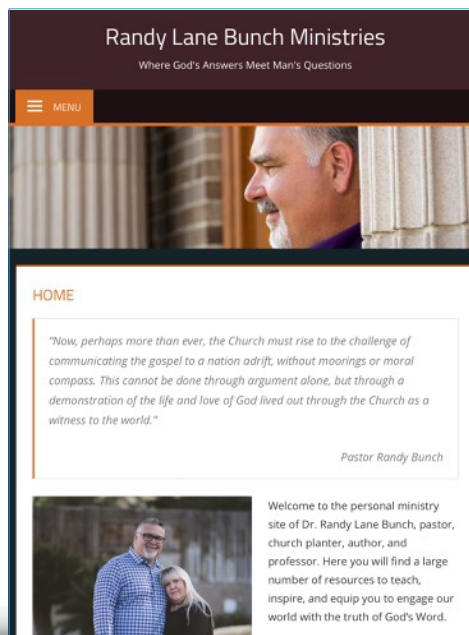
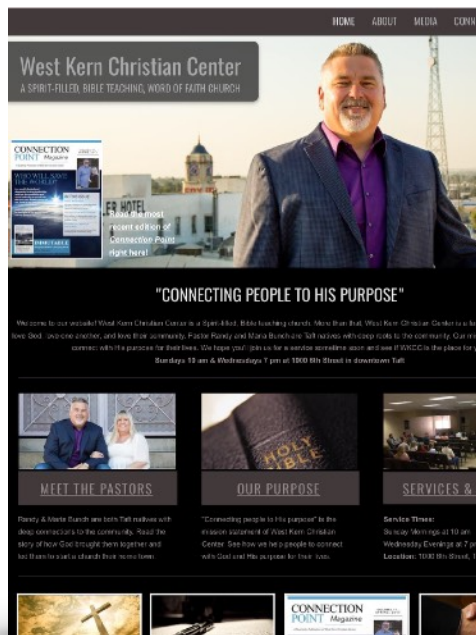
You can contact us at info@wkconnect.org or simply call (661) 623-5001 to discuss how *Connecting Point Communications* can be of assistance to you. We look forward to serving you and your ministry!



The Heights, Summit Bible College Alumni Magazine

Connecting Point MediaResources

From the beginning it has been our vision to provide resource rich websites and materials that will minister to the needs of God's people. From these sites you can access our podcast, discover our radio program air dates and times, as well as read our blog, access our Healing School materials and much, much more. The best part? It's all free of charge!



If you're wanting to connect with West Kern Christian Center, our website is a great way to begin! Get to know our pastors, our doctrine, our location and service times, as well as a host of other relevant info!

Also, take time to avail yourself to all the free resources on the site. If you'd like to be added to our mailing list, you can fill out a contact form on the Contact page. To access the website, log on to wkconnect.org.

Randy Lane Bunch Ministries new site contains the WKCC podcast, Dr. Randy's blog, Connecting Point Magazine and more! This is Dr. Randy's newest website, designed to provide a rich, comprehensive media ministry experience. The resources are free and updated regularly.

Also, if you would like to purchase Dr. Randy's books, you may do so by clicking on the links provided. Just go to randylanebunch.org.

Writing has become a huge passion for Pastor Randy, and Word Press has provided a perfect platform for keeping his frequently updated blog available to those who want to follow him.

Just go to the website and click the "Follow" button to follow Pastor Randy, and an article will arrive in your inbox every time a new one is posted to the blog. To access Pastor's Blog, log on at randylanebunch.wordpress.com.

Dr. Randy is the Pastor of West Kern Christian Center, a Spirit-filled, Bible teaching church, located at 1000 6th Street in Taft, California. Our services are contemporary and our dress is casual. Whether you're a "lifer" or you've never been to church in your whole life, we believe you'll be comfortable among our warm and friendly church family. Join us! You will be very welcome, and we know that God will meet you here. He always does. He's just like that!

For more information:
Website: www.wkconnect.org
Email: info@wkconnect.org
Phone: (661) 623-5001

**"God places the lonely in families;
he sets the prisoners free and gives them joy." (Psalm 68:6)**