

Annual Report of the State Representative

R. Craig Golden

October 19, 2009

Zedekiah, the last king of Judah, was **twenty-one** years old when he began to reign over God's people. He did that which was evil, humbled not himself, rebelled and "*stiffened his neck, and hardened his heart from turning unto the Lord God of Israel*" (2 Chronicles 36:11-13). Within eleven years, the temple was burned, the city walls broken down and the people carried away as slaves into captivity. The "**twenty-one**" year that was associated with Zedekiah had no good omens while the **twenty-one** year that we had as State Rep was truly blessed of God. Year number **twenty-one**, although similar to many others, had some significant blessings of God that made **twenty-one** extra special.

1. In year **twenty-one**, we used the love gift given to us by the Fellowship at the 2008 Fall Conference in recognition of our twentieth year of service as State Rep and Wife and visited Switzerland, Germany and Austria during September 2-13. We went with 41 others from eleven states hosted by World Wide Country Tours. The Alps were awesome. It was truly a dream trip. We shared with the group how the churches in New York paid our way in full. We will always remember this unique trip and the churches that made it possible. Shirley and I are so grateful and appreciative to the Fellowship for honoring us this way. **THANK YOU FROM THE BOTTOM OF OUR HEARTS.**
2. In year **twenty-one**, we built an attached garage to our house. This was a huge project for us but one that was accomplished debt free for which we praise the Lord. We always felt a garage was a luxury, but now that we have it, we think it more of a necessity and wonder how we got along without it for twenty years. We thank the Lord, the contractor (Jim Hendrick) and all those who complimented on how nice it looks. It added value to our home while adding comfort to our lives especially as we leave our home on rainy days. We won't miss cleaning snow off our car in the winter on early Sunday mornings heading out for ministry. We thank God for meeting our needs and even our wants.
3. In year **twenty-one**, we experienced some low points but rejoice that the Lord gave strength, encouragement and fortitude as we persevered through some ministry challenges. With the country's economy faltering, we felt that it mainly affected our Fellowship with lower attendance in several of our meetings, but praise the Lord that every activity planned was meaningful and blessed of God. Although year **twenty-one** might not have been one of our best, now that it is over, we can also say that it really wasn't our worst. It was a year where we saw the sustaining hand of God on our lives and His ministry. And that in itself makes year **twenty-one** very special. Every year doesn't have to top the preceding one for it to be used of God. As we reflect, we can see God's goodness during year **twenty-one**.
4. In year **twenty-one**, we stayed safe (no accidents), healthy (no hospitals), stable (both mentally and financially), happy (laughter is like medicine), secure (sleep well), rich (in many ways), contented and overall just blessed of God. We worked hard, took vacations and enjoyed our camper. We walked two miles a day, drove a daily average of 65 miles and rode on buses, trains, planes, cable cars and a camel. To sum up year **twenty-one**, I'll rephrase an often quoted verse (Psalm 118:24) "*This is the year (**twenty-one**) which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.*"

Mission Statement:

The Empire State Fellowship endeavors to **assist** independent Bible-believing Baptist Churches to *exalt* God's glory, *expound* God's Word, *exhort* God's people and *expand* God's church.

Statistical Report of my Twenty-first Year:

- + Spoke in 41 churches and at the following: two prayer meetings and Valley Classics at Newark Valley, Missionary Conference at Dunkirk, Harvest Banquet at Forestville, Men's Breakfast at Binghamton (Park Avenue), Installation Services for Elijah Beltz (Rome); Mike Paris and Glenn Richard (Ithaca) and Ron Miller (Dryden).
- + Preached/taught 112 times.
- + Ministered to 4277 people.
- + Assisted numerous pulpit committees 31 times.
- + Processed 28 resumes.
- + Participated in three installation services, two ordination councils/services, and one building dedication.
- + Traveled 13,601 miles at the Fellowship's expense.
- + Edited 52 issues of the "Fellowship News" in the Baptist Voice and three "Empire State Baptists."
- + Wrote ten monthly pastor's letters/Fellowship News.
- + Organized 15 activities which 4734* attended.
- + Oversaw 32 mailings with 146,196 literature items.
- + Attended five pastors/wives luncheons, BBC/S Alumni Banquet/Homecoming, two Minister's Enrichment Days, GARBC Conference in Elyria, Ohio, Baptist Church Planters Banquet, lunch for Constitutional Freedom, Hand Bell Choir of Appalachian Bible College.
- + Sponsored three Senior Saints Trips (222 attended - 12 days): Pioneer Valley, MA, Creation Museum, Petersburg, KY, and Pigeon Forge, TN.
- + Toured Switzerland, Germany and Austria for our twentieth year anniversary appreciation gift.
- + Mowed my lawn 26 times.
- + Attended nine funerals or calling hours, and a Defensive Driving Course.
- + Involved in six committee meetings and three Council of Ten sessions.

* Blue Print Seminar (93), Fall (300) Shop Talk #28 (28), Youth Sponsors Training (47), Holiday Getaway (152), Winter (275), Men's Adventure (697), Youth Seminars (1532), Shop Talk #29 (48), Spring (275), Talents For Christ (78 contestants and 150 spectators), Shop Talk #30 (37), Ladies' Advance (559), Connect (60), The Gathering (403).

Goals for My Twenty-second Year:

1. Exhibit more compassion in serving God and fellow comrades.
2. Enlist 30 pastors/churches to be on Craig's List 30/5 (Share Your Talents).
3. Endeavor to revamp Connect to make it more relevant for young adults.
4. Encourage pastors by phoning/e-mailing them.
5. Exemplify a hard working/Christ honoring life.
6. Endure the "agony" of turning seventy on June 25th.
7. Enjoy another year of doing the greatest job on earth.
8. Economize both personally and organizationally.
9. Enthusiastically fulfill all my responsibilities during my 22nd year.
10. Excite other Christians to actively serve in their local churches.

Sincerely yours,

R. Craig Golden
State Representative