

MISSIONS & MINISTRY

The Newsletter of The Blue River-
Kansas City Baptist Association

In this newsletter:

Page 01

BRKC's Hammer leaves a
Kansas City Baptist Legacy

Page 02

Multiethnic Church
Planting Center

Page 03

Ministry Rewind: Pastor
Larry Heenan



BRKC'S HAMMER LEAVES A KANSAS CITY BAPTIST LEGACY, TAKES ON NEW MINISTRY

**By Michael R. Smith, Reprinted with permission by
The Pathway**

As 2022 draws to a close Rodney Hammer, executive director of the Blue River-Kansas City Baptist Association (BRKC), prepares to leave that work to move full time in 2023 into leading an organization he founded at the association - Restoration House.

Restoration House, rebranded this year as REHOPE, ministers to adult and children survivors of sexual trafficking. It was spun out of the association and is now a stand-alone ministry.

"It's been a joy," Hammer says, of serving the association.....

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MULTIETHNIC CHURCH PLANTING CENTER

By Luis Mendoza, MECPC Director

Ministering to Newcomers

Thousands of people coming from Cuba, Nicaragua, Venezuela, and Colombia have come to the United States in the last ten months. Some of those people have come to the Kansas City area. They have left their country for distinct reasons; some were being persecuted for the dictators of their own countries, others were tired of the economic situation and most of them are just looking for an opportunity to accomplish their financial, educational, and personal goals. To achieve what we call the American Dream. The concept that if you work hard and make a lot of sacrifices, you can become a successful person in this country of opportunities. Nonetheless, the road to achieving the "American Dream" is anything but easy for these newcomers. In fact, the road is filled with obstacles and difficulties. For starters, those who have decided to move to the Kansas City area find the language is a significant barrier. We are grateful that at this point in the history of immigration, many employers hire people who do not necessarily speak the English language.



But language is not the only hurdle these people have to overcome in order to achieve success in this generous country.....

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MINISTRY REWIND

Over the last few months we have had several long-time pastors retire after many years of faithfully serving the Lord and their church. We have asked if they would be gracious enough to share some of their wisdom and experiences with us in the following 4 questions:

1. How and when did your ministry begin?
2. As you reflect on your service what are some of the highlights?
3. What were some of the greatest challenges?
4. Is there any advice you would give to someone beginning their ministry?

Next we have Pastor Larry Heenan. This past year he retired from Spring Valley Baptist Church after 28 years. Here is what he had to share with us:

Question number one.

"How and when did your ministry begin? "

During the crippling recession of 1981-82, I found myself out of employment. This long season of struggle to provide for my family became a great tool in God's hand. It forced my wife, Paula, and I into a season of intense soul searching. We confessed every known sin and asked

God to make us aware of any hidden sin. We also asked God to help us know what He wanted for our lives. He certainly had our attention, and to His glory, He was faithful to us, sending us enough "odd jobs" to meet our monthly financial obligations.

At this same time, Paula and I were involved in a "Master Life" discipleship class that God used to shape our lives. We grew exponentially through our Master Life small group. On one particular afternoon, I had decided to press the question, and asked, "God, what do you want for our lives?" I was asking on the strength of James 5:16, "Therefore, confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another so that you may be healed. A prayer of a righteous person, when it is brought about, can accomplish much.".....



[Read Pastor
Larry's full story
here](#)