

THEN JESUS SAID, "COME TO ME, ALL YOU WHO ARE WEARY & BURDENED,
AND I WILL GIVE YOU REST."

-Matthew 11:28

OUR STORY....

While serving as a youth minister during the summer of 2012, Chris Embler found himself on the porch of the EAMC Youth Cottage in Topsail Beach, praying for the summer program and what the Lord would have him share. While praying, Chris noticed a parade coming from downtown Topsail Beach towards the south end of the island - moving at a turtle's pace. There were school buses, people walking, and a police escort. He soon realized there was a pool in the back of a pick up truck that was hauling a turtle. A team of professionals and volunteers from the Karen Beasley Sea Turtle Hospital had rescued an injured turtle from its environment and nursed it back to health. Hundreds of people were cheering on the now healthy turtle as it was released back to its environment.

As Chris observed all of this, the Lord spoke to his heart..."This turtle is just one of my creations. What about my people who serve in Christian ministry who have been injured? Who will take them from their Christian ministry environment and love on them and care for them and release them back to serve in the capacity that I have called them?" Chris pondered this in his heart.

Soon after, at a weekly Bible study meeting, a new gentleman, Jamin Simmons, shared testimony of a man who had been raised from the dead on his farm. It wasn't until many months later, while packing shoe boxes for Operation Christmas Child at Samaritan's Purse in Boone, NC, that Chris ran into Jamin again. Chris nudged his wife, Rachel, and said, "That's the guy! He's the one who had the man raised from the dead on his farm." Chris and Rachel talked with Jamin and his wife, Pam, and the Emblers were invited "to come and see" what the Lord was doing in their local community. In January of 2013, they visited the Simmons and were able to meet the man who was raised from the dead. They also met others who were spiritually raised from the death after witnessing this God sized miracle. While visiting, Jamin kept talking about a house he bought on Ocracoke. He and Pam were praying together about how they could use the property, Berkley Manor, to glorify the Lord. While the couples visited the property to pray over the house, the Holy Spirit prompted Chris to tell Jamin and Pam the story of the rescued turtle in Topsail Beach. Jamin and Pam were immediately moved and offered Berkley Manor for the first GAIN retreat. The Simmons even financed the first couple of retreats while continuing to offer the Berkley to the ministry. Berkley Manor was sold in 2017, but the Simmons and their property were important vessels, along with other brothers sisters in Christ on Ocracoke, that and the Lord put in place to open the doors for the ministry that is GAIN today.

The first retreat was in spring of 2013. On that first retreat, Chris shared testimony of what the Lord had done, how He had used the turtle release to ignite a ministry and how He orchestrated the inaugural retreat and its location. One of the participants of that first retreat was an artist, who was moved by the testimony and sketched, on a napkin, a turtle...which is the GAIN logo we still use today!

January 2012
Faith Walkers Missions was incorporated



Summer 2012
God spoke to Chris's heart while watching a turtle release

January 2013
The Berkley Manor was offered as a gift - a place to host retreats



Spring 2013
The first GAIN retreat was hosted at Berkley Manor - and the turtle logo was created

November 2015
The first GAIN retreat was hosted at Topsail Beach, NC



November 2017
GAIN sponsored the first couple to attend Weekend to Remember

Fall 2019
GAIN hosted the First Women's Retreat in Emerald Isle, NC



RETREATS 2019

Christian ministers and their families are under immense attack by Satan on a day-to-day basis. There is a dire need in the Body of Christ for encouraging and refreshing those who have been called by Christ to further His Kingdom through full-time Christian service. It is the heartfelt passion of the GAIN ministry team to provide a tranquil environment, free from pressures and distractions, that encourages pastors, spouses, and their families to refocus on their "first love," each other, and their purpose in ministry.

All participants at a GAIN retreat receive an ALL EXPENSES paid stay including meals, lodging, and activities. There are several evening worship services, counseling, and two small-group sessions where individuals can worship, share, pray, and encourage one another. We listen to specific desires for each family and work to make those hopes a reality. The retreat allows ministers and their families to use the time as the Lord directs.

The 2019 GAIN retreats were hosted at Glade Valley B & B in Glade Valley, NC. Nearly 30 members of our Servant Team joined together to pour out God's love and grace on 10 participant families during last two weeks of July. Participants took advantage of counseling sessions (financial, personal, and couples') as well as ministry sessions that



involved art, worship music, prayer times, and devotions. In addition to receiving "soul care," these families in ministry enjoyed the opportunity to select activities from counseling and art, to horseback riding, hiking, river tubing, visiting Tweetsie Railroad, trail biking, golfing, massages, pedicures and manicures.



HERE'S WHAT PARTICIPANTS HAD TO SAY ABOUT THIS YEAR'S SUMMER RETREATS:

Often in ministry, we are a better friend to people than they are to us. The servant team pours it out. It's so pure. They keep saying. It's just Jesus. The love, the maturity, the gifts, it's overwhelming. We can be ourselves, be free, no judgment, no enemies, no one trying to trick us. Y'all aren't looking for anything in return.

-PASTOR

You have given us a glimpse of what the church should look like. Gifts God has given us to reach out and give to one another. I have tears of joy just in thinking about what God did in the breakout session. I was able to give God the heavy burden and trust Him with the situation that had been weighing me down.

-WIFE OF CHRISTIAN COUNSELOR

AGAPE TABLE

In partnership with Tim's Gift (a ministry in Clinton, NC), we hosted 4 Agape Tables during 2019. These dinners provide an opportunity for husbands and wives who are busy in ministry to have a time to fellowship with other couples in ministry. The food is always yummy, but the prayer and testimony time that follows the meal encourages everyone who attends and spurs them on in continued service to the Lord.



HERE'S HOW ONE PASTOR DESCRIBED THE AGAPE TABLE:

"I always sleep so well after we have those pastors meals (and I don't think it's the food). I believe it is the Christian fellowship-a Jesus thing!"

WEEKEND TO REMEMBER

The Weekend to Remember is a Marriage Getaway hosted by FamilyLife. According to the event website, "Our two-and-a-half day romantic weekend entices you to invest in and strengthen your marriage - no matter how firm or fragile.... Couples attend Weekend to Remember because they're ready to invest in their marriage and intentionally move towards oneness. We help you understand God's blueprint for marriage so you can create a legacy of greatness."



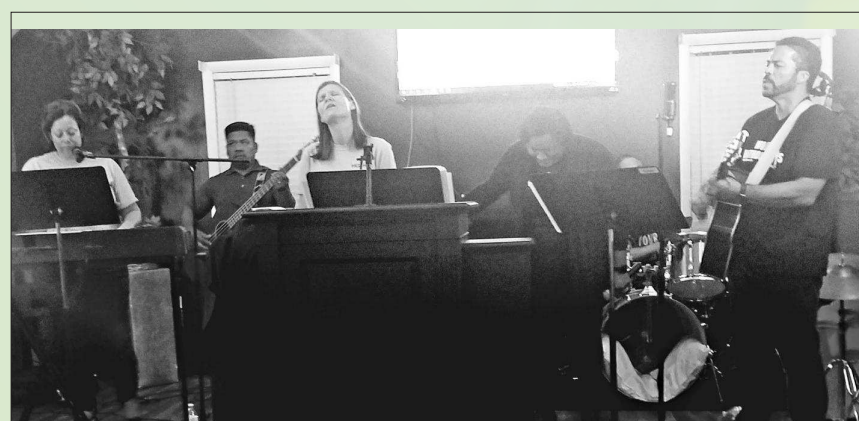
As a ministry we sponsored 6 of our former GAIN retreat participant couples to attend this event in 2019.

A PASTOR'S WIFE WROTE:

I don't even know how to put in words how the conference was! It was phenomenal! A great weekend to open our eyes to our own marriage relationship! A great weekend of growing closer to one another! So many good tips and advice for having a successful marriage! Very inspirational and definitely makes us want to work harder at our relationship and our family as a whole! It was so great for us to have time for just the two of us. So thank you for making this opportunity possible!

NIGHT OF WORSHIP

We hosted our first NOW (Night of Worship) in September in Clinton, NC. Our servant team provided a delicious meal with meat from Southern Smoke and Susan Oxendine assembled a worship team to lead us all into a time of worship, devotion, testimony and prayer. After a sweet time of fellowship in September, we offered a 2nd NOW in November, and we hope to continue NOW in Clinton and in other locations in 2020.



A PASTOR COMMENTED ABOUT NOW:

"Thank you for creating the space for us to worship without distraction...a place to rest in God's presence."

A YEAR IN REVIEW



THANK YOU

Where to begin?! We are so thankful for the countless ways that we were able to serve the Shepherds in the Body of Christ as well as their families in 2019. The board of directors and the GAIN servant team are a blessing beyond measure to us, to this ministry, and to countless families in ministry. A wise advisor told us years ago that God is the provider of all resources (time, money, and people), so start praying that He would provide people in addition to the finances for the ministry. As we began to ask the Lord, His Holy Spirit began to prompt people to love on pastors and their families through GAIN. During 2019, in addition to a servant team to serve on retreats, God has given us a faithful prayer team of 25 people, 8-10 people to help stuff envelopes, run errands, & gather supplies, more than 100 financial donors, and 2 new couples to serve on the board of directors.

In September, more than 20 former GAIN participants gathered in Smithfield to watch the movie *Overcomer*. This story encouraged us all to remember who we are in Christ and that we are more than conquerors through Him who loves us. (Romans 8:37)



Thanks to several donors, we offered two additional opportunities to former participants in 2019. Two individuals donated college football tickets this fall allowing two fathers to spend the afternoon/evening with their sons, and another pastor to deepen a relationship with a member of his congregation.



Here's a testimony of what this outing meant to one father/son: "What a special night the two had. With Billy's new role at Adventures in Missions and the extra hours he's needed to put in, this was such a sweet and unexpected blessing for the two of them."

Another individual sponsored a team of pastors for Tim's Gift Annual Golf Tournament. Four North Carolina pastors came together for fun and fellowship and a morning of golf.



When this newsletter arrives in your home, Rachel Emblar will be finishing up her 5th month as Faith Walkers Missions' first paid employee! Thank you so much for your support! Your gifts and prayers have made this possible!! Night of Worship and the Women's Retreat are two new events that she was able to help organize as our board sees the need to focus on strengthening relationships and encouraging former GAIN participants as well as continuing to reach out to new participants.

Ann Collier, a founding member of Faith Walkers Missions, will be stepping down from the Board of Directors in 2020 after 8 years of serving with the ministry. She has served as our treasurer since 2012. We are so thankful for her service and her heart for the Lord. Ann hopes to be more involved on the retreats or at NOW when it's hosted in Clinton.

Join us in finishing well what God intended for 2019 and praying for all that God has in 2020!



WOMEN'S RETREAT

The GAIN servant team began to see a need for a Women's Retreat for pastors' wives who needed to get away and be reminded of how loved they are by the Father. So we began praying and planning for the first ever GAIN Women's Retreat. We opened this weekend to former GAIN retreat participants. Eight women came from Ohio, Pennsylvania, and North Carolina to join our Servant Team in Emerald Isle to seek the Lord through worship, devotion, art, prayer and Biblical counseling. Speakers and leaders reminded us of who God is, who He says we are; and they encouraged us to replace the lies of the enemy with the Truth of God's Word. Nine different GAIN retreats were represented among the participants and servant team.



ONE WOMEN SHARED THIS TESTIMONY WHEN SHE RETURNED HOME:

"I'm full of hope these days thanks to this ministry and the beautiful people God has so carefully orchestrated together."

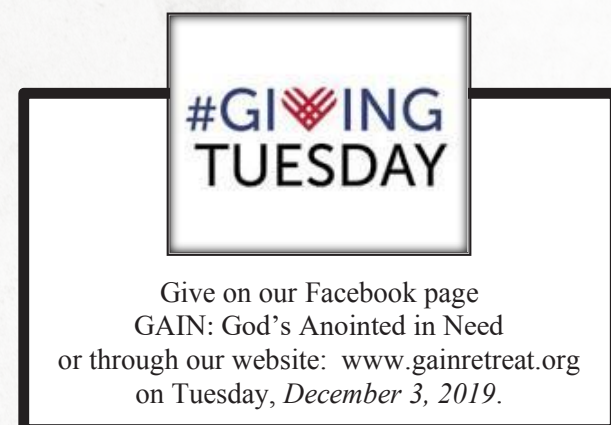
GRACE PLACE

We were so excited about the property options that we had before us this year, but the one that we thought was "it" did not meet some critical requirements to adequately provide for families in ministry and the GAIN retreats. The Board continues to pray and to search for a retreat facility or land where we can build a facility. We have a "set aside" account where we are still receiving donations to make the Grace Place a reality. Thank you for joining us on this journey.

...YOUR SUPPORT MATTERS

This ministry exists by **the grace of Jesus Christ** and is financially supported by His hands and feet within the Body of Christ. The financial component for funding these retreats comes from generous disciples of Christ who see this as a worthy cause in the Kingdom ministry. The GAIN retreats require approximately **\$3,600 per family per week**.

<p>GAIN has hosted 22 retreats Served 110 participants at 5 locations SINCE 2013...</p>	A MONTHLY PLEDGE		A ONE-TIME GIFT
	\$35 /month	Will cover the cost for one woman to attend GAIN Women's Retreat	\$420
	\$45 /month	Will cover the cost of one couple to attend Weekend to Remember	\$540
	\$100/month	Will cover GAIN speakers' travel expenses	\$1,200
	\$300/month	Will cover cost for one family to attend GAIN retreat	\$3,600
	\$1,500	Will cover cost for an entire GAIN retreat	\$18,000



2020 EVENTS

GAIN Retreat Dates: Look for our summer location and retreat dates on the website and Facebook page by early January.

Deeper Touch Events: NOW (Night of Worship), Agape Table, and a Women's Retreat are all in the plans for the coming year as well! We already have a number of couples signed up to attend the Weekend to Remember.

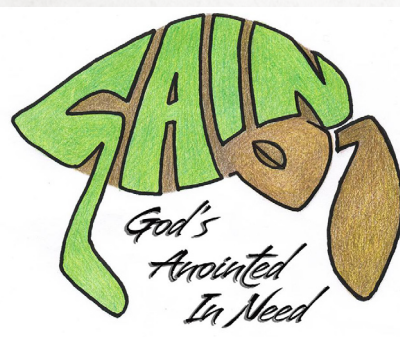


GAIN Speaking Team: Beginning in January 2020, Ricky Bishop (retired pastor) will join Chris Embler on the GAIN Speaking Team. The Bishops have already been a great asset to the GAIN Servant Team, so we're overjoyed that Ricky will be stepping into this role as well. Both Ricky & Chris will be available to share with churches and small groups about GAIN or to filling on a Sunday morning for a pastor who is out of the pulpit. If you would like to have Ricky or Chris come to share with your group, please contact us at gainretreats@gmail.com.

Quarterly Newsletter: The Board of Directors decided to begin producing our newsletter quarterly instead of just once per year. Look for a newsletter in February with the 2020 Event Dates and important updates with the ministry.

OTHER WAYS TO CONTRIBUTE IN 2020:

- **Extra/Unused Event Tickets:** If you or anyone you know has tickets for an event that are not going to be used, please consider donating them to GAIN. We will be happy to use them to encourage families in ministry.
- **Housing:** Individuals, couples, and families in ministry often contact us because they need to get away for a little bit. Pastors need time away to seek the Lord, couples need time to focus on their marriage, and families often can't afford to take a vacation. If you have a second home and you'd be willing to share it with someone in ministry, even for just a weekend, please contact us.
- **Bookkeeper:** Our new treasurer will continue to serve on the Board of Directors, but we are in need of a volunteer bookkeeper. Please be in prayer for a volunteer bookkeeper. The role of treasurer has shifted significantly over the past 2 years to include lots of bookkeeping as well as treasurer responsibilities, so we hope to separate the positions.
- **Servant Team:** Serve at an event (Agape, NOW, GAIN retreat, Women's Retreat, etc.)
- **Prayer Team:** Pray for the ministry, an event, or special prayer requests.
- **Administrative Team:** Help with newsletter mailings, filing, writing notes, etc.
- **Financial Partners:** Give financially to support the ministry and its events.



Please make your checks payable to: **Faith Walkers Missions** (in the memo line please indicate GAIN) your contribution is tax deductible

Mail to:
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