

THOMAS TRIBUNE

Spring 2018 Edition



Tim & Sherry Thomas

THERE IS NO TIME TO PRAY

When I used to train churches on how to conduct handbook time for the *Ultimate Adventure** version of T&T (Truth & Training) I would encourage them to start their time with a brief prayer as a method of drawing the clubber's attention from whatever activity that had previously been doing to God and His Word. At the same time, I would discourage them from asking for and praying for individual requests because there just wasn't enough time.

The handbook leader usually has 5-8 clubbers, each on a different section from up to four different books and sadly, often comes unprepared. The leader had to listen to the prepared clubbers recite their verses while at the same time help others learn. While it is true that sometimes the reason the clubber was unprepared was due to their own choices or those of their families, sometimes it is because there is not an engaged or caring adult at home to help and encourage them. Even spending five minutes of prayer time would cause their time to run out before they could give individual attention to each child.

One of my favorite parts of the new *Mission*: series of T&T, that started rolling out in 2016, is not only is there time for prayer, it is that prayer is now an integral part of handbook time. In fact, to help the leader stay focused on the clubber rather than the handbook, Awana renamed handbook time to small-group. Each handbook features boxes for clubbers to record their own requests and to write the requests of their friends. Leaders also have a space in their books to track the children's requests.

Even though it was not on the agenda. during our recent round of On Target informational and training meetings, prayer and praying for clubbers came up several times. Below are a few ideas that I would like

to share with you to help you be more effective in praying with and praying for your clubbers.

1. Make a Prayer Box so a clubber who has a need, but does not feel comfortable sharing it, can ask for anonymously.
2. Create a Master List of requests (without names) to be shared with the other leaders, the church's prayer team, and perhaps the congregation.
3. Send the clubber a handwritten postcard, from their small group leader, to encourage them and to let them know that they are loved and that you are praying for them. This is especially important over the summer months.

Today's children are dealing with issues mostly unheard of a generation ago. We need to support them by uplifting them in prayer.

*3rd-6th (or 5th) grade curriculum from 2001-2015.

LOOK *hope* IN THE EYES
AWANA MINISTRY CONFERENCE
SAVE THE DATE

CONNECT	OCTOBER 6 MILWAUKEE
LEARN	OCTOBER 20 MADISON
REFRESH	NOVEMBER 3 CHILTON

MINISTRY UPDATE

In our last newsletter, I stated that 6 churches had decided to start using Awana. Since then two more have joined in, bring the total to eight starts for fiscal year 18/19 (July 1 through June 30). Some started last fall, some started in January, and a few have not yet started their clubs. In the next few weeks, we will be connecting with these churches to help them successfully move into their second year. In previous editions of the Thomas Tribune, I explained that we spend a significant amount of our time with churches during their first three years of running Awana endeavoring to build healthy relationships that we pray will lead to stronger starts that will result in a long-term partnership with the local church and Awana. One of the highlights of this past year was attending a baptismal service at Seventh-Day Baptist Church (SDBC) in Milton. Several Awana clubbers have trusted Christ recently and wanted to be baptized. The leadership of SDBC thought it would be special to plan the service near Easter and to specifically schedule it be during Awana so the clubbers families could attend and so the other children could see what takes place when a new believer is baptized. On Wednesday, March 21, Pastor Nic Crandall baptized seven precious children and Awana Minister Director (a.k.a. commander) Angie Mullen presented the Gospel.



THOMAS TRAVELS

This summer is shaping up to be quite busy, with lots of travel. It starts with a few days in Nevada with several of the Awana missionary teams discussing issues affecting the local church today. In early June, I will be attending support raising training in Florida. Then, later in June, I will be speaking to junior and senior high students at Camp Awana Honors Camp. In total, I will be gone 32 out of 34 days from May 21 through June 23.

While I will be away for 5 weeks, not every one of those days will be directly related to ministry. In between, Sherry and I will be in Atlanta, Georgia attending a quinceanera for our niece, Lana; in Pensacola, Florida visiting with Sherry's sister and catching up with some old friends; in central Florida visiting with our eldest son, David, his wife Sarah, and our granddaughters, Alanna and Lillian. On the way back, we will be stopping in Huntsville, AL to see Sherry's mom, Viola. Lastly, we plan to stop in southern, Indiana to spend a few hours with the last of my surviving aunts and uncles. Tom Akers is 93 years-old and a World War 2 veteran.

Please pray for us as we drive over 3000 miles over three weeks.

FAMILY UPDATE

This past weekend we moved Kyle, and his family, into our house. In July, Kyle's will be deploying to Kuwait, 10 months, with his Army Reserve unit. During that time, Lenie and girls will be living with us.

Please pray for Kyle as he serves our country abroad and for his family during this extended separation.




To keep current with the Awana ministry in southern and eastern Wisconsin, please like our Facebook page: www.fb.com/awanaswi



Previous issues of the Thomas Tribune and other news are available from our website: awanaswi.org/newsletters.html

Tim & Sherry Thomas are missionaries with Awana, serving in Wisconsin. Their sending church is Deltona Alliance Church of Deltona, Florida.

None of this would be possible without prayer and financial partners. Would you please pledge to pray for us during 2018? If so, please let us know by sending us a card, letter, or email. Would you also prayerfully consider becoming a financial partner by pledging a monthly or quarterly gift of any amount to help us stay on the field? If so, please visit the support page of our website or contact us for more information.

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