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Take a Risk!

A monthly publication from Risk Takers *for* Christ

Risk Takers *for* Christ
...moving believers from the sidelines to the front lines

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CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP ALLIANCE™

Glading Appointed Florida State Minister

by Rev. Dale Glading, President

It started with a phone call from a brother-in-Christ…

When I ran for the U.S. House of Representatives in 2010, Scot ran for free-holder on the same ticket and we have remained friends ever since. We hadn't spoken in several months and so, his phone call was a bit of a surprise… and so was its content.



"I have a friend who is involved with an organization called 'Capitol Commission' and I think you would be a perfect fit," Scot told me. "I would like your permission to give them your name."

I told Scot that I wasn't looking for a new position, but I also didn't want to stand in God's way if He was preparing to do something special in my life. And so, I gave him permission and then promptly forgot about it until I received a phone call a few days later from Brad Harbaugh, the president of Capitol Commission.

Nothing like hearing directly from the top!

Brad and I had a wonderful hour-long conversation as he told me about how Capitol Commission, an organization that has been around since 2009, has a goal of placing a state minister in every state capital in the country for the purpose of ministering to the elected officials there. Coincidentally - or rather, providentially - their annual meeting, called "the Gathering", was scheduled for the following week and Brad invited me to attend.

Deanna and I discussed the opportunity and prayed hard about it. I also spoke with our RTC board members as well as several close Christian friends whose advice and counsel I deeply value. The consensus was to attend the Gathering in Baltimore to learn more about the organization and see how God led.

"In the meantime, I'm going to pray that God gives you an unmistakable sign," said one of my longtime spiritual mentors as we ended our phone call in prayer. Five minutes later, I walked into a restaurant to have lunch with a local pastor… and I started laughing out loud.

"What's so funny?" the pastor asked.

I quickly told him about my phone call and the ministry opportunity being offered me with Capitol Commission… and then pointed at the shirt he was wearing. It had a logo that read, "Florida House on Capitol Hill."

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Glading Appointed Florida State Minister

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"God sure has a great sense of humor," I said.

And so, off I went to Baltimore to attend the Gathering, where I met more than a dozen other state ministers and several board members. Over the three days I spent in Baltimore - and one day touring the U.S. Capitol in Washington D.C. - God confirmed in my heart that He was calling me to this exciting new ministry opportunity.

Actually, I shouldn't have been the least bit surprised because for several years, I have been praying for God to give me one last "ministry mountain" to climb - just like Caleb, one of my biblical heroes - and to make it the most spiritually impactful assignment of my life.

However, one final hurdle remained before I could say "Yes" to this new call.

"I love ministering to broken people – like inmates, at-risk youth from fatherless families, and the homeless", I told Deanna when I got back from the Gathering. "I'm not the least bit impressed with famous people, let alone politicians."

Within a couple of minutes, I sensed the Holy Spirit impressing two things upon my heart, both in the form of a question. The first was, "Who are you to tell Me where I should send you to minister?" And the second was, "Don't you realize that these people (the elected officials in Tallahassee) are just as broken as the people you've already been ministering to?"

Chastised, there was but one last thing for me to do… and that was to surrender to God's will for my life by accepting this new call. **And so, I applied for the position of Florida State Minister and was approved within a week!**

Please know that - at least for now - this is only a seasonal position because the Florida legislature only meets for 60 consecutive days from March 2 through April 30, 2027. There are also committee hearings throughout January and February, so I will only be required to be in Tallahassee for those four months. As of now, Deanna and I plan to commute back to our home in Fort Pierce every other weekend to preach at our church and visit my 97-year-old mother.

That means that I will remain as president of Risk Takers for Christ and pastor of Midway Bible Fellowship for the foreseeable future but will delegate some of my ministry responsibilities during the months we are in Tallahassee. For instance, I have hired two of the most faithful and responsible young men from our Living H2O Initiative to run the program in my absence during the winter months and will also be seeking a local minister to fill the pulpit on the Sunday mornings that I will be away.

As a result, it is imperative that Risk Takers for Christ maintain at least the same level of financial support as before since we will be taking on new employees. Meanwhile, my RTC compensation will be decreased in direct correlation to my reduced responsibilities.

I will also have to raise new prayer and financial support for my new position as FL State Minister with Capitol Commission. I anticipate our financial needs for the time we will be in Tallahassee will average $3,500/month for housing, transportation, and a small stipend (plus an additional $2,500 one-time expense to establish a satellite office there). If God leads you to become part of our support team - either on a monthly or one-time basis - here is how you can come alongside Deanna and me in this exciting new ministry endeavor.

· Go to capitolcom.org/donate
· Click on the **Donate** button
· Scroll down to **Give Online**
· Choose **Recurring** or **One-time**
· Select **Active State Ministry** from the fund box
· Select **Florida - Dale Glading** as the subfund

Donations can be made here via credit card or bank ACH drafts. You can also send a check to: **Capitol Commission, PO Box 96721, Charlotte, NC 28296-6721**. Please note "Florida" or "Dale Glading" on the memo line. Just like your gifts to Risk Takers for Christ, all donations to Capitol Commission are 100% tax-deductible.

Most of all, Deanna and I covet your prayers as we embark on this exciting new ministry adventure!



SW Florida Prison Project Reaps Eternal Rewards

by Rev. Dale Glading, President

We haven't conducted an overnight prison ministry trip in almost 10 years, well before the COVID pandemic, so it was good to get "back in the saddle" so to speak.

Since three different prisons in southwest Florida were anxious to have our RTC basketball team play and minister at their institution, we decided to lump them together instead of making three separate trips. That meant leaving Fort Pierce on Friday, November 6th at 9 a.m. and not returning until 7:30 p.m. the following day.



In the intervening 34.5 hours, we played three basketball games, preached the gospel three times, and spent eight hours in our rental van. We also ate three meals, held team devotions, did some laundry, and caught a few hours' sleep.

When I planned this trip, I thought we would have at least eight players and possibly as many as ten, plus a couple of non-playing volunteers to help carry our equipment and distribute gospel literature. Unfortunately, the closer we got to the actual dates, our team members started dropping like flies.

Both of our nonplaying volunteers had family commitments and two of our players couldn't get off work. OK, no problem, that still left us with eight players, right? Wrong!

Our area received 10 inches of rain a few days before the trip and so, our 6'5" center - who is a dispatcher for a trucking company - got called into work. Then, the night before the trip, another player had to rush his wife to the emergency room with stomach pains. Yet another player didn't get his paperwork completed in time and was denied access; and then our leading scorer was told by his boss that he could have Saturday off, but he had to work on Friday.

And so, 10 players became eight… and then became six… and eventually became four… and at age 67, I was the fourth player!

With three prisons anticipating our visit - and scores of inmates looking forward to our games - cancelling was never an option. Thankfully, the first prison, Charlotte Correctional Institution in Punta Gorda, had suggested that we play 3-on-3, so I figured we would still be O.K. However, once we arrived at the facility, they changed their minds and we wound up playing 5-on-5 with a couple of inmates joining our squad.

Guess what? Despite trailing 9-0 in the first few minutes, we closed the gap to three by halftime and went on to win by nine! Best of all, my son Chris did an awesome job sharing his personal testimony and I was privileged to preach. My message was about Noah and the Great Flood, and I invited the inmates who were there - as well as the assistant warden, the captain, and the correctional officers in attendance - to "come into the ark - which represents Jesus Christ - for salvation".

After dinner at Culver's, we checked into our hotel, and I led our team devotions before spending a few hours washing our players' uniforms. We were up at 5:30 a.m. the next morning and on the road a short time later in order to get to our next destination, DeSoto CI in Arcadia. Once there, we were joined by Marty Gradijan, our top scorer, who drove two hours from Vero Beach that morning. How's that for dedication!

Since we now had five players, we declined the prison's offer of several inmate subs, which probably wasn't a good idea because they had 20 fresh players that they kept substituting in and out of the game. As a result, our three-point halftime lead soon evaporated into a six-point loss as we simply ran out of gas. However, the gospel went forth in a powerful way as I used the sinking of the Titanic to convey the twin truths that God is not a respecter of persons and that the people on the ship weren't divided by class (First, Second, Third, and Steerage), but rather by "Saved and Unsaved."

Without time for lunch, our players ate a few snacks in our van as we drove to our third prison, Avon Park CI. Once again, we fell behind early, 11-1, but narrowed the deficit to three by halftime. Chris testified again and my final message was about Ty Cobb, Mickey Mantle, and the thief on the cross… all of whom trusted Christ on their "death beds". Digging deep and fighting both injuries and nausea, our depleted team managed to pull out a dramatic 61-60 nailbiter.

Our players enjoyed a victory dinner at a local pizzeria and then drove home, physically exhausted but spiritually exhilarated. Countless inmate lives were changed for eternity on this trip and YOU were part of that spiritual harvest through your prayers and financial support!

One More Ministry Mountain to Climb

by Rev. Dale Glading, President

At age 67, I lead a successful parachurch ministry to prisoners and at-risk youth and pastor a small but thriving church. I also have a beautiful bride of 41 years who I love more every day, as well as three adult children, three in-law children, and six precious grandkids. Best of all, they all live within 10 miles of Deanna and me, so we get to see them as often as we like.

We even live in a 55 & over community that has about 20 lakes and a 9-hole par-3 golf course, so I can fish and play golf 365 days per year for free.

So, why on earth would I accept a position to serve with Capitol Commission as their State Minister to the Florida Legislature, especially when it means commuting back and forth from Tallahassee every other weekend from January through April?

The easy answer is because I firmly believe that God opened this new ministry door for me and He wanted me to walk through it… and so I did. But on an even deeper level, I also didn't want to become a "sleepy traveler" as Charles Spurgeon referenced in today's quote.

You see, at my age, it would be very easy to say that I've served the Lord as a full-time missionary for 33 years and as a prison minister for 39, and now it's time for a break. After all, my family and I have made a lot of sacrifices - physically, emotionally, spiritually, and financially - over the years by following God's call on my life. And so, it would be very tempting to just put things on spiritual autopilot and coast through my "Golden Years" until God calls me home.

But that is not the way I am wired nor is it how God would have any true believer to behave. There are souls to be saved and God's kingdom on earth to be built, strengthened, and expanded… and I desperately want to be a part of that building project!

Here is why Charles Spurgeon, the "Prince of Preachers", warned against taking the easy road in life…

"When is the Christian most liable to sleep? Is it not when his temporal circumstances are prosperous? Have you not found it so? When you had daily troubles to take to the throne of grace, were you not more awake than you are now? Another dangerous time is when all goes pleasantly in spiritual matters."

"Depend upon it - it is in easy places that men shut their eyes and wander into the dreamy land of forgetfulness. Old Erskine wisely remarked, 'I like a roaring devil better than a sleeping devil.' There is no temptation half so dangerous as not being tempted. The distressed soul does not sleep; it is after we enter into peaceful confidence and full assurance that we are in danger of slumbering. The disciples fell asleep after they had seen Jesus transfigured on the mountaintop. Take heed, joyful Christian, easy days are close neighbors to temptations: Be as happy as you will - only be watchful!"

And so, like Caleb, one of my biblical heroes, I am looking for another "ministry mountain" to climb. Caleb was 85 when to asked Joshua to "Give me that mountain!" so how can I sit on the sidelines at the tender young age of 67?

"Now behold, as the LORD promised, He has kept me alive these forty-five years since He spoke this word to Moses, while Israel wandered in the wilderness. So here I am today, eighty-five years old, still as strong today as I was the day Moses sent me out. As my strength was then, so it is now for war, for going out, and for coming in." Joshua 14:10-11 (BSB)

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