

Larry Stockstill Hands Pastoral Torch to Son

Pastor Larry Stockstill is throwing his mantle to the next generation.

On Sunday, Stockstill told Bethany World Prayer Center's south campus that he would hand the pastoral baton to his son, Jonathan.

Jonathan is the worship leader at the Baton Rouge-based church and also heads the Christian band Deluge. But when Oct. 2, 2011 rolls around, Jonathan and his wife, Angie, will take on another assignment: lead pastors of Bethany World Prayer Center.

"Jonathan and I fasted together for 21 days in January to confirm what our board of overseers and our family was sensing as a direction from the Lord," Stockstill told the congregation. "Since 2006, my life has become focused more and more on the Remnant movement for pastors and the Surge movement for worldwide church planting."

Stockstill unofficially started taking over some of the lead pastor duties in January, including administrative, pastoral and weekend responsibilities. The father and son will work side by side for the next six months until an official ceremony in October.

The Stockstills believe that the transfer of values from father to son is the missing ingredient in character development in today's generation—and they are serving as an example of how to sow seeds of righteousness from one generation to the next.

Indeed, the Stockstills have passed the baton of integrity and righteousness in their family for more than 125 years, from

1885 to 2011. The story began with Joel Ernest Stockstill, who led his son, Roy, to Christ. Roy founded Bethany World Prayer Center in 1963. He served as senior pastor of the church for 20 years. Then he handed the church over to his son, Larry Stockstill, in 1983. Stockstill faithfully led the church for the next 28 years. Stockstill's older son, Joel, is a pastor at Bethany's north campus.

Stockstill and Joel will remain on Bethany's staff as teaching pastors, filling in for weekend and midweek services, doing video teachings for small groups, and fulfilling other teaching opportunities. Stockstill will lead the Surge missions vision of Bethany and develop the Remnant leadership vision. Joel will continue to develop a nationwide 220 youth movement and focus on building an apostolic church planting and oversight movement for North American churches.

"We are excited about the shift in our leadership team to encompass our local, national, and international vision," Stockstill says. "Not only will the next generation receive the leadership they deserve, but the vision of Bethany will multiply exponentially across the Baton Rouge area, the United States, and the entire world."

You can read more about the Stockstills in the Fall 2010 edition of Ministry Today magazine.