

Behind The Billboard: Jesus Signs Are Man's Message To Motorists

BY JESSE BOGAN

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WILDWOOD, Mo. — There's no phone number on the billboards. No address. Not even an exit to turn off the highway. Only the name "JESUS" emblazoned in giant, block letters, like a cowboy's prize belt buckle.

The green and white billboards were designed to look like road signs that people are already trained to associate with directions. They seek salvation for high-speed motorists amid other paid advertisements pushing Big Macs and trips to the Pleasure Zone.

And they are Bryan Brand's answer to a call from God.

Brand, 67, is a millionaire who lives on a horse farm in Wildwood, Mo. He's helped raise about 100 Jesus billboards, primarily in the Midwest, since the late

1990s, and distributed countless banners, bumper stickers and yard signs with the same simple logo.

His faith journey, while peculiar, has been traveled by others before. Some go door-to-door with leaflets, or construct giant crosses on mountainsides.

Yet Brand said his own efforts haven't satisfied God's call.

The easy part is spending thousands of dollars on the road signs and their quick campaign for converts. Building true disciples for Jesus, however, is slow trench work. It takes years to reach people already sitting in the pews.

And that effort is now consuming Brand.

Today, in Brand's study in Wildwood, there's a framed picture beside his desk of Jesus sitting down with a businessman.

Brand made his fortune at an investment firm called Brand Asset Manage-

ment Group in Chesterfield, Mo., that he started from scratch. He promised God that if he helped Brand in his business he'd help God in his. He said he nearly went bankrupt when he gave up buying and selling securities on commission, instead charging clients fees, because he said that's what Jesus would have done.

Then one day he and his wife Vicki were sitting in church when a visiting minister read a verse from a modern translation of the Bible that proclaimed: "Write My answer in large clear letters on a billboard, so that a runner can read it and tell everyone else."

They responded by founding "Jesus Name Project," a nonprofit organization that promoted the billboards. As per the Lord's wishes, he said, any details other than the name "Jesus" would lessen the impact. He wept at the initial sight of the first sign that went up near Six Flags St. Louis on Interstate 44.

"It looked so big and beautiful," Brand recalled. "I couldn't safely see to drive."

But there's disagreement on whether the signs are effective.

Just about anyone who has driven across the Midwest has seen "Hell is real." Other faith-based signs champion slogans that range from, "If you die today, where will you spend eternity?" to "Jesus Saves."

But displaying one word — Jesus — seems to create more noise.

"These billboards show how powerful brand promotions have become to every aspect of American life," Kathryn Lofton, an assistant professor of American and religious studies at Yale, wrote in an email.

There are other monuments in the mix. Like giant crosses, small crosses and groups of crosses.

"Where people have gotten used to seeing crosses, they are a little less used

to seeing great big names of Jesus," said Thomas J. Davis, a professor at the Center for the Study of Religion and American Culture at Indiana University. "There is a specificity there now."

Free thinking groups have responded with their own campaigns, for instance in Indianapolis where there have been billboards that say: "You don't need God — to hope, to care, to love, to live."

Center for Inquiry president Ronald Lindsay said in an email that Jesus billboards "will resonate only with those who already believe that Jesus is the simple, uncomplicated answer to everything."

Though catchy, Davis said, people will become accustomed to the Jesus signs and won't pay much attention to them anymore, like crosses on churches.

"It will become part of the landscape," he said.

AREA CHURCH EVENTS

St. Boniface Falls Supper Planned For Sunday

FREEMAN — The annual St. Boniface Fall Supper will be held at St. Boniface Catholic Church, 28703 444th Ave., Freeman, at 4:30-7:30 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 9.

The menu will include roasted chicken from Central Catering, Swedish and BBQ meatballs, au gratin potatoes, corn, salads, desserts, buns and beverages. There will be a raffle for handcrafted items, processed beef and pork, cash and miscellaneous items.

For more information, contact Eileen Hora at 605-660-2645 or puhldvm@hotmail.com.

Scotland UCC To Host Belgian Waffle Fundraiser

SCOTLAND — The Scotland United Church of Christ will host a Belgian Waffle Fundraiser on Sunday, Oct. 16, running from 10:30 a.m.-1 p.m.

The all-you-can-eat menu will include Belgian waffles and sausage. Carry-overs are available.

The proceeds will go toward updating the church and parsonage kitchens.

For more information, contact Sharon Orth at 605-583-2971 or sorth@gwtc.net.

Methodist Church Soup Kitchen Set For Oct. 19

The First United Methodist Church will be holding a soup kitchen and country store event on Wednesday, Oct. 19 from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. at 207 W. 11th St. in Yankton.

Homemade taverns, soups and pies will be served as part of the soup kitchen. Homemade baked goods, jams, jellies, canned goods, fresh vegetables, crafts and home-sewn items will be available in the country store.

Altar Soc. To Host Soup Dinner Oct. 30

DANTE — The St. Mary's Altar Society will host a soup dinner at the CCD Center in Dante on Sunday, Oct. 30, running from 10:30 a.m.-1 p.m.

The menu will include homemade soups, taverns, hot dogs, chili dogs, chicken salad sandwiches, kolache, pies and desserts. There will be other games and activities, as well. Also, Assumption Centennial Cookbooks will be available for purchase.

Reception For Rev. Schulte Scheduled For Sunday

The congregation of the United Church of Christ (Cong'l) is hosting a reception immediately after 10:00 a.m. services on Sunday morning Oct. 9 for The Rev. Joe Schulte, who has been the pastor here for the past five years. Pastor Schulte and his wife Beth, will be leaving our community next week as he has accepted a call to a parish in Michigan. We will miss them but wish them God's speed in their new church and community. If you have become a friend of the Schultes during their time in Yankton, you are cordially invited to come and worship with us on Sunday and attend this farewell reception.

SHARE The Season Holiday Packages Available

Bring home a SHARE food package and celebrate the season with a nutritious holiday meal. SHARE's holiday food packages will help you save precious time and money to focus on what really is important; celebrating the season with loved ones.

SHARE's Holiday Dinner Packages comes with all of the fixings for a family of six.

As you can see, by the list below, each dinner package is a complete wholesome meal.

SHARE's Thanksgiving Dinner Package features a 10-12 pound turkey, stuffing, potatoes, gravy and dinner rolls. A fresh produce assortment will include celery, apples, oranges and sweet potatoes. Top it off with a traditional dessert, pumpkin pie.

Beginning Oct. 22, orders can be placed through your local volunteer site or online (see contact information below) The order deadline for this package is Friday, Nov. 4 for pickup on Saturday, Nov. 19 at most SHARE sites.

SHARE's Christmas Dinner Package features a delicious 6 lb. boneless, honey ham, potatoes, gravy and dinner rolls. A fresh produce assortment will include broccoli, celery, carrots, apples and oranges. A delicious apple pie will complete the meal. Beginning Nov. 19, orders can be placed through your local volunteer site or online (see contact information below) The order deadline for this package is Friday, Dec. 2 for pickup on Saturday, Dec. 17 at most SHARE sites.

Bring home a SHARE holiday meal this year. Save time – save money and let the festivities, or orders can be placed by contacting your local SHARE volunteer Aves Sejnoha at 605-664-1117 or SHARE's main office at 800-344-1107.

Local churches, businesses and other organizations are also invited to participate. SHARE welcomes organizations that would like to make cash

donations or give SHARE gift certificates so deserving local families can enjoy a delicious holiday meal. Everyone can join with SHARE to save time, money and pass on the tradition of the holidays.

These packages can be picked up at Peace Presbyterian Church. Dates to be announced.

MORTGAGE BURNING PLANNED



A mortgage burning ceremony will be held in conjunction with Kingsway Christian Church's 3rd anniversary in their new building. The mortgage burning will be a part of the morning worship service on Sunday, October 9, which begins at 10:15 a.m.

By God's grace, the church has paid off their building loan within 3 years of purchasing it. The first service held in their current building was on Oct. 5, 2008. The church moved to this new location on the corner of 19th & Burleigh from their previous location at 6th & Capital.

A fellowship meal will be held following the worship service.

Other opportunities at the church include Sunday School for all ages at 9:00 a.m., a Wednesday evening kids program and adult Bible Study at 7:00p.m., and the video-based Bible Study "That the World May Know" on Monday at 6:45 p.m.

CHURCH SCHEDULES

Abundant Life

ABUNDANT LIFE MINISTRIES, 517 Burleigh, Lawrence and Barbara Hladky, pastors, 665-0889. SAT 7pm Praise and worship celebration, SUN. 10am Worship. WED. 7pm Worship. Teens prayer daily 10am.

Alliance of Renewal Churches

LIVING WATER CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP, Sun. 10am Yankton Middle School (2000 Mulberry) Weds. 7pm Prayer. David Olson, pastor. (605)260-2138.

Assembly of God

ASSEMBLY OF GOD, 801 W. 25th, Jeff Mantz, pastor. 665-6362 (office). SUN. 10am Worship Celebration. WED. 6:30pm Midweek service and Bible study for all ages.

Baptist

ANTIOCH BAPTIST CHURCH, 221 W. 3rd, Kevin Caskey, pastor, 665-0066. SUN. 9:30am Sunday School, 10:45pm Preaching Service, 4pm Afternoon Service. THU. 7pm Preaching & Prayer Service.

BETHEL BAPTIST CHURCH, 303 Ohio St., Wakonda. Mike Lindsay, pastor. (605)759-5020. SUNDAY Worship. 11:00a.m. evening 6:00pm WEDNESDAY Bible Study 12noon.

HARVEST INDEPENDENT BAPTIST, 100 W. 3rd, Mission Hill. Pastor Nathan Martin, 668-0708 (ch.) 665-1481 (home). SUN. 9:30am SS. 10:30am Worship. 5:30pm Worship. WED. 7:00pm Worship.

YANKTON BAPTIST CHURCH, SBC, Pastor Matt Green, 607 East 15th St., Yankton, 665-7587. SUN. 9:30am Bible study, SS; 10:45am Worship. WED. 7pm Midweek service.

Baptist

CALVARY BAPTIST CHURCH, 2407 Broadway. Yankton. (605)665-5594. Rev. Jon Cooke, Pastor Jeremy Nelson, and Laura Kotalik. www.cbchurch.com SAT-URDAY Oct. 8 8:00 AM Men's Prayer Breakfast SUNDAY Oct. 9 8:30 AM Intercessory Prayer Time 9:00 AM Music, Baptism & Testimony Welcome Celebration for Pastor Rick Slattery between services 10:45 AM Worship Service MESSAGE: Hosea Series "Signs of Spiritual Neglect" Part III Sunday School for children (2 year old - 6th grade only) 6:00 PM Dave Ramsey Financial Peace University MONDAY Oct. 10 9:00 AM Ladies Shop Time (Prayer Time) 7:00 PM Divorce Care/DC4K 7:30 PM Service broadcast on Channels 3 & 98 TUESDAY Oct. 11 WEDNESDAY Oct. 12 6:45 AM Men's Prayer Time 9:00 AM Joy In the Morning 5:45 PM Wednesday Night Meal 6:00 PM Intercessory Prayer 6:30 PM TORCH Bible Study 6:30 PM AWANA 6:30 PM 7 & 8 Grade Youth Group (large group) 7:00 PM 9-12 Grade Youth Group (large group) 7:00 PM Adult Bible Study THURSDAY Oct. 13 10:00 AM Preschool Storytime Noon Missions Prayer Time 5:00 PM Senior Connection Harvest Dinner 7:00 PM Fire by Night 7:00 PM Celebrate Recovery 7:00 PM Crusin' 24/7 FRIDAY Oct. 7 11:30 AM Mid Day Meal 6:00 PM Movie & Theology Marathon Night.

Bible Church

GRACE BIBLE CHURCH, Meeting at Pierson Ranch recreation area 10:30am Sundays. From Memorial Day through Labor Day. Call Pastor Joel Finck for more information. (605)760-4701.

Catholic

HOLY FAMILY CHURCH OF CEDAR COUNTY (Sts. Peter & Paul), Bow Valley, NE. Rev. Eric Olsen (402)357-2400. Mass: Saturdays 5pm.

HOLY FAMILY CHURCH OF CEDAR COUNTY (Immaculate Conception), St. Helena, NE. Rev. Eric Olsen. (402)357-2400. Mass: Sundays at 9am.

HOLY FAMILY CHURCH OF CEDAR COUNTY (Sacred Heart), Wymore, NE. Rev. Eric Olsen. (402)357-2400. Mass times: Saturdays at 8pm, Sundays at 11am.

MOUNT MARTY COLLEGE, Peace Chapel, MMC campus. SUN. 10am Mass with the Sisters in the Bishop Marty Chapel. Public is welcome to attend.

Catholic

SACRED HEART, 509 Capital, Yankton. Rev. Mark Lichter pastor. 665-3655 (office). SAT. 4:30pm Mass. SUN. 8am, 9:30am, 11am Mass. THUR. 12:30pm, 2:30pm and 7:30pm Confessions.

ST. AGNES PARISH: SIGEL, rural Utica. SUN. 9am Mass, confessions 1/2 hour before Mass.

ST. ANDREW'S CATHOLIC CHURCH, Bloomfield, NE. Fr. Michael Schmitz SUN. Mass: 10:30am; TUE. Mass: 8am; THUR. Mass: 7pm. Confessions: THUR. 6:30-6:55pm.

ST. BENEDICT CATHOLIC CHURCH, 1500 St. Benedict Drive, Yankton, Father Ken Lulf, 664-6214 (church). Masses: SAT. 5pm. SUN. 8:30am & 10:30am.

ST. BONIFACE CATHOLIC CHURCH, Menominee, Neb., Rev. David Fulton, pastor. SUN. 8:30am Mass.

ST. BONIFACE CHURCH, rural Freeman. OCTOBER WEEKEND Mass Sundays 10:30 a.m. or call Rev. Mathew Vazhappily. (605)583-4318.

ST. COLUMBA CHURCH, rural Irene. OCTOBER WEEKEND Mass Sundays 9:00 a.m. or call Rev. Mathew Vazhappily. (605)583-4318.

ST. GEORGE CHURCH, Scotland, SD. Rev. Mathew Vazhappily. OCTOBER WEEKEND Mass Saturdays 7 p.m. or call (605)583-4318.

ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST CATHOLIC, Lesterville. SUN. 10:30am Mass.

ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST CATHOLIC, Fordyce, Neb. Rev. David Fulton. SUN. 10:30am Mass.

ST. JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC CHURCH, Constance, Neb., Fr. David Fulton, pastor. SAT. Mass: 7:30pm.

ST. PATRICK'S CATHOLIC, Wakonda, Rev. Scott Trayner, 624-2697. SUN. 8:30am Mass.

ST. ROSE OF LIMA, Crofton, Neb. Fr. Michael Schmitz. SAT. Mass: 8:00am & 5:30pm. SUN. Mass: 8:30am. WED/FRI Masses: 8:15am. Confessions: WED. 11am-11:30am. SAT. 5-5:20pm.

ST. WENCESLAUS, Tabor, (605)463-2336. Rev. Joseph Puthenkulathil, SAT. 7pm Mass. SUN. 8:30am Mass.

Catholic

THE HOUSE OF MARY SHRINE, 6-mi. W. Yankton, Hwy.52. Masses: Monday 8:30 through October. Masses Saturday 9:00 every Saturday. Rosary Sunday 4:00. Rosary 4:00. Open 7 days a week for prayer. thehouseofmaryshrine.org

Charismatic

YAHWEH-SHALOM CHARISMATIC, St. Benedict Catholic Church. MON. 7:30pm prayer meeting

Christian

KINGSWAY CHRISTIAN CHURCH, 19th & Burleigh, 665-6317. Joseph Mason, Pastor. 9am-SS; Worship 10:15am. Wed.-6pm-Kids games; 7pm Kids for Christ & Adult Bible Study.

Church of Christ

CHURCH OF CHRIST, 1114 West 12th, Yankton. 665-6379. SUN. 9:30am Bible study; classes for all ages. 10:30am Worship.

Church of Jesus Christ

CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST LATTER-DAY SAINTS, 2300 Douglas, Yankton. Randy Campbell, (605)565-2016. Family History Ctr 665-0901. SUN. 10am Sacrament meeting.

Episcopal

CHRIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH, 517 Douglas, Yankton. Rev. James Pearson, (605)665-2456. Sunday October 2 9:00 Serenity 10:15 The Holy Eucharist and Sunday School Wednesday October 5 Noon The Holy Eucharist.

Evangelical

Cornerstone Evangelical Church, Pastor Oliver Omanson, Stewart Elementary School; Morning Service 10:30 a.m. Wednesday College Bible Study 1306 Maple Street. Mike Stevens 665-8750.

EMMANUEL CHURCH YHS Theater, 1801 Summit, Worship Service 10:00 am www.emmanuelyankton.com (605)665-0044.

CHRIST THE KING LUTHERAN CHURCH: 305 W. 25th, Yankton, 665-8848. Rev. Dani Jo Ninke. SUN: 8:30am & 10am Worship, SS-9:45am.

PRINCE OF PEACE, Wisconsin Synod, 201 East 25th St., Pastor Werre, 665-4793. Sat. 6pm Worship.

Lutheran

TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH, 403 Broadway, Yankton, 665-7415. Saturday-5:30p.m. Worship; Sunday-8:15a.m./10:45a.m. Worship; 9 a.m.-Breakfast; Classes-9:30a.m.

TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH, Hartington/Crofton, NE. Justin Wiese, interim pastor; (402)254-6606. SUN. 9am Worship (Hartington), 10am SS (Hartington), 11am Worship (Crofton).

Lutheran

FAITH UNITED LUTHERAN, 44874 303rd St., Volin SD 57072. (605)267-2277. SUN. Worship Services 9:30am. Children's Education WED. Evening (WOW) 6:30-7:30pm.

FIRST AMERICAN LUTHERAN CHURCH, AFLC 300 S. Carpenter St., Tripp. (605)935-6941 9:30am Sunday School; SUN. 10:45 Worship firsthope@santel.net

GAYVILLE-BERGEN LUTHERAN Pastor Ralph Egbert. (605)267-4342 (church) Sunday: Bergen Worship-9:00am, SS-10:15am GLC SS- 9:15am, GLC Worship-10:30am.

HOPE LUTHERAN CHURCH, AFLC 200 South Wilson, Delmont. (605)935-6941. SUN. 9am Worship. 10am Sunday school. firsthope@santel.net

Martinus Lutheran Church, Utica. Pastor Dean Schroeder Sunday Divine Service 10:30am (605)589-3195 www.MartinusLutheran.org

OUR REDEEMER LUTHERAN, rural Irene. 263-3724. SUN. 9am Worship.

OUR SAVIOR'S LUTHERAN, LCMC/NALC, Menno. Interim Past 9:00am with brunch to follow; Sunday School 10:20a.m. Questions call (605)987-5256

OUR SAVIOR'S LUTHERAN, LCMC, 12th and Elm, Springfield, Rev. Kenneth Johnson, pastor. SUN. 8am Worship. 9am SS. THUR. 7pm Adult Bible study.

South Dakota Lutheran Church Missouri Synod, MAIN STREET LIVING television program, 10a.m. (CST) on KALT-NBC; and 11a.m. (CST) on KAUN-PAX; and 10a.m. (MST) on KKRA-PAX.

St. John Lutheran Church, Tyn-dall. Pastor Dean Schroeder. Sunday Divine Service: 8:30am (605)589-3195. www.StJohnsTyndallLCMS.org

ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH (LCMS), 1009 Jackson. David Gunderson, Pastor. SUN. 8am Worship, 9:15am Education Hour, 10:30am Worship.

TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH, Hartington/Crofton, NE. Justin Wiese, interim pastor; (402)254-6606. SUN. 9am Worship (Hartington), 10am SS (Hartington), 11am Worship (Crofton).

Lutheran

TRONDHJEM LUTHERAN CHURCH (AFLC), rural Volin. 263-3841. SUN. 9:15am; 10:30am Worship.

Non-Denominational

FAITH ALIVE, 501 Cedar St., Yankton. 665-4797. Contemporary Worship & Family Values. SUN. 10am service. WED. 7pm Care-Cells "Small Groups For Building Relationships" Various Locations.

GLORY CHRISTIAN CENTER, 901 E 11th St. Yankton. Gail Ryken, pastor, 665-2369. SUN. 10am Service. WED. 6pm Prayer. GC School, call (605)665-1988.

Presbyterian

PEACE PRESBYTERIAN (PC/USA), 206 E. 31st. 665-0448. Rev. Dr. Nelson Stone & Rev. Marilyn Stone. Sun-10am worship, Coffee to follow. SS for kids 10:30am. Aired at 8pm Fri. on Ch. 3 & 98.

Reformed

RIVERVIEW REFORMED, 17th St. & Burleigh, Rev. Rodney Veldhuizen, pastor. 665-9024. SUN. 9:30am Worship, 10:15am SS. WED. Youth group & adult choir.

Seventh-Day

SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST, 722 Locust St., Yankton, 665-1032. SAT. 9:30am Sabbath School, 11am Worship. 665-4496, 665-4881. Pastor George Shaver Home phone (605)369-5496.

United Church

CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST, Newcastle, Neb., 303 Highway 12, Rev. Gary Kimm, pastor. SAT. 6PM Church school, 7PM Worship. Second THUR. 2PM Ladies Aid.

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST, 301 W. Franklin, Hartington, NE. (402) 254-6563 or 664-5310. Rev. Gary Kimm, pastor. SUN. 8:15am Church school, 9am Worship.

PILGRIM CONGREGATIONAL UCC, 103 S. Elm St., Coleridge, Neb., (402) 283-4824 or 664-5310. Rev. Gary Kimm, pastor. SUN. 9:30am Church School, 10:30am Worship.

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST, (Congregational) 210 West 5th St., Yankton. (605)665-7320 Rev. Joe Schulte, Pastor. SUN.-10am Worship, 11am-Fellowship, 11:05am Church Schl. Nursery Provided.

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