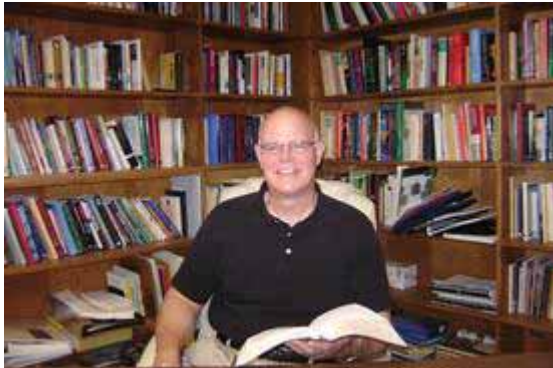


A MISSOURI CITIZEN

Bob Spradling
Pastor
Maywood Baptist Church
Independence Resident



Bob and his family have been in Independence for 25 years, with him serving as the pastor of Maywood Baptist Church. Spradling says it was God's will for him to be there. He feels he is a good match between western Independence and the church that he pastors, and is very connected with the community.

Originally from Cape Girardeau, Bob moved to New Orleans at the age of 21 to go to seminary. He lived in New Orleans and other Louisiana cities for 10 years before moving back to southeast Missouri in the early '80s. He was the pastor of First Baptist Church in Charleston, Mo for four years before moving to Independence with his wife. He married his wife in 1979 in Louisiana. She was an army captain in the nurse corp. As the pastor of Maywood Baptist Church, Spradling has 350 to 450 regular attendees at church and over 1000 members.

One of the biggest projects that Spradling has been involved in was the unification of western Independence and Sugar Creek into the Independence School District. The areas had been a part of the Kansas City School District and the students in these areas were not performing well. The Independence School District has been accredited with distinction for the past four years. Of all the schools with such a distinction, the ISD has the highest free and reduced lunch numbers.

Spradling worked with a team, including Independence Mayor Don Reimal, school superintendant Jim Hinson and attorney Steve Mauer of Bryan Cave. MO State Senator Victor Callahan authored the legislation and directed the campaign. Spradling met with a coalition of ten other churches to work cooperatively in assisting the efforts. His church served as the unofficial headquarters of those

supporting the merger, with his staff offering administrative help. The effort was so successful that a book was written about it and is in publication now. (The title has not been determined at this point.)

As a result of this unification, the district inherited the six schools, which were in great disrepair. Some 3,000 plus volunteers worked in these schools one entire weekend in July 2008.

His church adopted Korte Elementary. They completed an Extreme School Makeover during which they painted the entire building, cleaned the interior and did landscaping. There were five other churches involved in at Korte and numerous others throughout the effort. During the makeover, there were more than 400 volunteers in the building. Spradling and his team joined 1,000 other volunteers this summer for Project Shine, in which they completed all of the cleanup work and expanded the effort to other schools.

This is one of many community cleanup projects that Spradling has been involved in.

He credits a quote from Robert Lupton as his motto in helping the community: "The best thing I can give somebody is a good neighbor." – Lupton

From a church perspective, he says the church has often been in a community but not with the community. He is always looking for ways to be a good neighbor to the community he lives in.