



**By Jan Schultz**

***The Imperial Republican***

Here only a few weeks, the new pastor at the Berean Fundamental Church says Imperial already has an "at home feel" to him and his family.

Tyler Harrison, who preached at his second service as pastor last Sunday, moved here with his family from the St. Louis area. This is his first position as a pastor.

He said Imperial reminds him a lot of the town in which he spent some of his early years, Broken Arrow, Okla., where, at the age of three, he moved with his family from Albuquerque when his father took a new job.

While he was in the sixth or seventh grade, the family moved to Raleigh, N.C., where he attended high school. He graduated from Metho-dist University in Fayetteville, N.C., in 1998 with a Bachelor's Degree in criminal justice.

Harrison said he felt God's call to the ministry at the age of 15, "but I had a plan of my own," he said.

That included baseball and a desire for a professional career. As a left-hand pitcher, he found success at Methodist University, even playing in the Division II College World Series in 1996.

"My obedience to God wasn't what it should've been" and he was not following God's direction, Harrison admitted.

"Eventually, he put me in a place to get my attention and finally submit to him," he said.

But, before that, he tried a career in criminal justice, but said, "The amount of danger versus the pay wasn't worth it."

He worked two years in the information technology field, and also had the opportunity at the same time for an associate pastor position at Eden Community Church in Eureka, Mo., outside of St. Louis. He is licensed by that church, where he spent the past three years.

Harrison was laid off from his I.T. job this past January, however. He said he and his wife prayed about their next step, hoping to determine if full-time ministry was what he was supposed to do.

"Then, the doors opened up," he said.

The Berean Church in Imperial was looking for a pastor, and had acquired his resume. After hours on the phone with church elders here, he made a "coming in view of a call" visit in September. While here, he preached at the Sunday service, a vote was taken the next week at the church, and "Here we came."

Harrison said, "God lined up the pieces and it all fell into place."

He said he was raised in a "very good Christian home," and the church has always been part of his life. He's taught Sunday School and has been a vocalist on praise teams.

He said he has a lot of "on the job training."

After being here just a few weeks, Harrison said he and his family are enjoying Imperial, both the quiet evenings and the many activities going on.

He and his wife, Krystal, have four children, daughters Kyra, 10, Taylor, 8, and Amery, 6; and

son Brayden, who is four.

The children are home schooled, and Krystal does 99% of the teaching, he said. He helps out with special projects and as "substitute teacher."

Besides baseball, he lists his interests as all athletics, time for his kids and family activities.