

APRIL/MAY 2003

CBF *fellowship!*

COOPERATIVE BAPTIST FELLOWSHIP

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Connecticut Church Touches its Community with Love

WILTON BAPTIST CHURCH in Connecticut began in 1967 as an oasis for Southerners who were being transferred to offices in New York City and the surrounding metropolitan area. Today, the congregation — diverse in geography, ethnicity and previous religious experience — is reaching out with the living waters of the Gospel to its neighbors and to a dry and thirsty world.

"Missions has been a distinctive of the congregation for many years," says Bob Guffey, who has been pastor at Wilton Baptist Church (WBC) since 1999. "You might say it is in our 'DNA,' to use a term some church consultants like to use. The church has assisted with direct missions participation with churches around the world, with an outstanding ministry to homeless people in New York City, with drug and alcohol abuse rehabilitation ministries and with Habitat for Humanity."

Guffey, who presently serves as moderator of Baptist Fellowship Northeast, says WBC has a volunteer coordinator of hunger ministries to help the congregation be more personally aware and involved with regional and global hunger needs. The church is also partnering with The French-Speaking Baptist Church in Stamford, Conn., to purchase land in Haiti on which to build an

orphanage, school, church and dormitories.

Next summer, Associate Pastor Jason Coker will lead a mission trip for adults and youth

to the Mississippi Delta as part of Partners in Hope: CBF's Rural Poverty Initiative.

A native Mississippian, Coker says, "We don't see ourselves as going down to help 'poor' people. We see ourselves partnering with people who are making the impossible possible. We are partnering with people who are fostering dreams and making those dreams happen for a population that has never dreamed or had forgotten how to dream."

In missions closer to home, the Wilton congregation supports and works with Ana and David D'Amico, CBF global missions field personnel to the [continues p. 2]



Easter morning finds Lily Dean preparing to add her contribution to the flower cross at Wilton Baptist Church.

Courtesy of WBC

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United Nations diplomatic community, and with Ronnie Adams, CBF field personnel who ministers through Rauschenbusch Metro Ministries in New York City's Hell's Kitchen neighborhood. "Our children have become quite enthusiastic about collecting and creating items for Ronnie to give to homeless and transient persons in ministry. They see themselves as helping reach out and make a difference in the lives of others," Guffey says.

Explaining that one area of growth for the church in recent years has been to reexamine the needs of their community and surrounding towns, Guffey says more than 100,000 people live within a six-mile radius of the church.

"Many of those are children and teens," he says. "Many of their parents are wage earners among the very elite in the United States. They are at the pinnacle of their careers, yet have

found themselves wanting something more meaningful in their lives. We are in the third year of a three-year initiative to reach out to those in our area who may be rich in material things but are in poverty in spiritual things."

In order to reach families and individuals in the area for Christ, the church has added staff

and expanded programs. "We are not a large church," Guffey explains, "but the congregation has taken some large steps in faith and been open to God's Spirit to stretch us in vision, purpose, prayer, programming and financial stewardship."

Two years ago, as a part of the renewed community outreach effort, the church began an annual event,

To Wilton With Love

"BEING BAPTIST in the Northeast carries with the name some baggage, some good and some bad," says **Bob Guffey**, pastor of Wilton Baptist Church in Wilton, Conn. So three years ago, in order to build a bridge of genuine welcome and hospitality to its community, the church began *To Wilton With Love*, which Guffey calls "a ministry of neighborly caring with no strings attached."

He says the idea for *To Wilton With Love* came from a similar outreach event done several years ago by First Baptist, Shreveport, La., along with some inspiration from the CBF resource *Hospitality Evangelism*.

Each April, usually around Easter, individual members and Sunday School classes have reached out to the community in various ways including: delivering baskets of baked treats; giving flowers and notes of encouragement to local school faculties and staffs; taking gifts to the employees of supermarkets; and providing fire and police departments with "Blessing Bags" made by the children and lunches prepared by the youth.

Church members have also gone door-to-door to the homes nearest the church with an introduction and a gift of flowers. In addition, Guffey says, "We have hosted Saturday brunches for moms and their pre-teen daughters with the goal of enhancing communication and conversation for them

as they enter the 'white water rapids' years of adolescence."

The success of *To Wilton With Love* has been surprising to Wilton's congregation and the community alike, according to Guffey, who says, "I believe the best result has been the cumulative effect of getting us out of the church and into the community and awakening good will and receptivity on the part of the community."

To order CBF's free flier "Hospitality Evangelism: Sharing the Bread of Life" that gives an overview of a month-long evangelism emphasis, contact the CBF Resource Link at (888) 801-4223 or the CBF e-Store at www.cbfonline.org.



Members deliver "Blessing Bags" decorated by the church's children to local fire and police departments during *To Wilton With Love*.

To Wilton With Love, through which they have ministered to their neighbors. Guffey says the event "has enabled us to establish a proactive presence in the community and has been a work of hospitality evangelism to demonstrate that the Lord Jesus Christ cares about the lives of every person. Our theme verse has been John 15:15, 'I have called you friends ...'" f!

Contact Wilton Baptist Church at (203) 762-2429 or bob@wiltonbaptist.org.

For more information about the Fellowship's Missional Church Initiative, contact **Bo Prosser** at (770) 220-1600 or bprosser@cbfnet.org or **Terry Hamrick** at (770) 220-1600 or thamrick@cbfnet.org. CBF has a "Missional Journey Guide" resource available (\$29.95 for workbook, CD-rom and binder; \$19.95 for workbook only, plus shipping). Order from the CBF Resource Link at (888) 801-4223 or the CBF e-Store at www.cbfonline.org.

By contributing writer Gay Campbell, Atlanta

Student.Go: Summer Missions Program Provides Lifelong Results

FOR MANY YEARS, Fellowship missions staff had recognized the need for a summer missions program for college students. Campus ministers, pastors, students and others from CBF life had been asking for an option for students that would reflect the focus and values of CBF global missions.

Three years ago, a brainstorming session with a small group of global missions and Passport staff members developed the concept of Student.Go – a program providing hands-on summer and semester missions experiences for college and seminary students. Now the joint venture has proven to be a ministry success story.

“This is an extension of an already established partnership between Passport and CBF,” explains John Mitchell, who serves as Mission Exchange (MX) director and summer team coordinator for Passport, Inc. (MX assigns youth and college missions groups to short-term projects in established ministry settings. For more information, contact (800) 769-0210 or <mx@passportcamps.org>.)

Mitchell co-coordinates Student.Go with Amy Derrick, CBF associate coordinator for Global Service Corps, Envoy and student missions. “We are working very strongly with CBF field personnel and partner ministries to connect with them, attempting to focus our sights on ministries that work with the ‘most neglected,’” Mitchell explains.

Mary Edinger of Kentucky experienced the difference six weeks can make at the Arab-American Friendship Center in Dearborn, Mich. Edinger served alongside CBF global missions field personnel Nomie Derani, women’s director at the center, teaching English as a Second Language (ESL) from May until July 2002.

Joshua Bobbitt, also from Kentucky, served in 2002 with Student.Go in Greenville, Miss., as part of Partners in Hope: CBF’s Rural Poverty Initiative. Bobbitt helped newly-started Harvest Fellowship Church become a working part



Courtesy of Mary Edinger

Mary Edinger (above) interacts with children at the Arab-American Friendship Center in Michigan. Joshua Bobbitt (right) stands in front of the parsonage of Harvest Fellowship Church in Mississippi.



Jim Newton photo

of the community. “Going down there and seeing the work of God go on in such a different context was extremely enlightening,” Bobbitt says.

This year CBF will provide a \$1,000 stipend for each Student.Go participant. Host sites will provide room, board and transportation. *fi*

Use the envelope enclosed in this *fellowship!* issue to help fund projects like Student.Go by contributing to CBF’s general missions and ministries budget.

CBF’s missions education curriculum will highlight Student.Go in the May 2003 unit. (Annual subscription: adult and youth, \$19.95; children and preschool, \$79.95) To order, contact the CBF Resource Link at (888) 801-4223.

By staff writer Jo Upton

Student.Go Fast Facts

Christy Turner, Global Service Corps and Next Generation advocate with the CBF Resource Center in Raleigh, N.C., works with **Amy Derrick** and **John Mitchell** to make Student.Go a reality. Following are the steps necessary for participation:

- Students review the list of Student.Go requests in the early fall. Copies are distributed to campus ministers, church student ministers, and state/regional CBF leadership. Opportunities are also available

at CBF global missions displays at many students conferences and campus missions weeks. Online version can be found at www.destinationmissions.net.

- Students contact Student.Go personnel by phone, e-mail or in person for more information regarding positions. Turner visits many campuses each fall to promote the program.
- Students complete application materials available at www.destinationmissions.net. Materials must be submitted by mid-February.

- Applications are reviewed, students are interviewed and references checked. Assignments are made in mid-March.
 - Students attend Student.Go orientation mid-May before beginning their assignments.
- For further information, contact the CBF Resource Center, Raleigh, at (877) 856-9288 or <student.go@cbfonline.org> or go to Missions/Involvement/Student Opportunities at www.cbfonline.org.**

“...Whom shall I send and who will go for us? And I said, ‘Here am I, send me!’”

(Isaiah 6:8, NRSV)

Brooklyn Church Seeks to Help Transform Community

BETTYE AND KEN BOGAN started Brooklyn’s Greater Restoration Baptist Church six years ago in an area where churches are often overlooked or viewed with skepticism.

“Since Brooklyn is known as the borough of churches, starting another church was the last thing that people really wanted,” Bettye says. But the Crowne Heights neighborhood soon learned that Greater Restoration wanted to serve and minister to others.

Many neighborhood residents face poverty and unemployment. The neighborhood has one of the lowest literacy rates in New York City.

Greater Restoration, located in a storefront building, seeks to help transform its neighborhood by offering an

after-school, homework assistance program; housing a K-6 Christian academy for students who have performed poorly in public schools; and operating children’s summer day camps.

The church reaches out to senior adults with disabilities by providing accessible facilities and opportunities for service, study and fellowship. Greater Restoration assists with community development projects and helps people needing counseling, prayer and referrals, in addition to providing regular Bible study and worship opportunities.

As part of *MissionConnect*—the focus of CBF’s 2002-03 Offering for Global Missions spring emphasis—individuals can connect directly with Greater Restoration and other congregations that exemplify the Offering

theme of “Living the Call ... Within Communities and Beyond.”

MissionConnect features North American-based ministries and describes ways to connect with the mission sites to help provide needed ministry resources.

“Living the call is just doing the simple things that Christ did, meeting people where they are hurting,” says Bettye Bogan.



Staff photo

Children in Greater Restoration Baptist Church’s after-school program celebrate the end of a semester with volunteers Lisa Weaver (left) and Eva Walton of First Baptist Church, Cornelia, Ga.

Contributions to the Offering for Global Missions help support the Fellowship’s partnership with Greater Restoration, enabling missions teams and volunteers from CBF-affiliated churches and organizations to serve there. Soon CBF will appoint a Global Service Corps worker to help the small congregation create a housing project ministry. Global Service Corps missions field personnel serve one- to three-year assignments.

Support for the Offering also helps ensure that field personnel will be able to serve among the most neglected in Brooklyn and around the world. “If we had the funds, we have job descriptions that would allow places for about 70 more units to be involved in full-time missions work with Cooperative Baptist Fellowship,” says Barbara Baldridge, CBF global missions co-coordinator. This year’s offering goal is \$6.1 million.

The partnership between the Fellowship and Greater Restoration has helped foster racial reconciliation in an ethnically diverse neighborhood. As residents see primarily Anglo volunteers working alongside primarily African-American Greater Restoration members, it helps them realize that “when you are in Christ, color doesn’t matter; love is what matters,” Bettye says.

“One of our core values is reconciliation,” Ken agrees. “We’re trying to be a church that really shows people what the kingdom of God is about.” *fi*

For more information about Greater Restoration’s ministry, contact Ken Bogan at (718) 735-4102 or <grestorationbc@aol.com>.

MissionConnect Resources

Learn more about living the call with the following free Offering resources:

- *MissionConnect* brochure
- *MissionConnect* CD-ROM
- *Living the Call Within*

Communities ... and Beyond video

- Offering for Global Missions leader guide, bulletin insert, poster and envelopes (*envelopes free for quantities of 300 or less*).

- Order from the CBF Resource Link at (888) 801-4223 or the CBF e-Store at www.cbfonline.org.

For additional information about *MissionConnect*, contact the CBF Offering for Global Missions Promotion Office at (770) 220-1653 or go to *Missions/Involvement/Offering* at www.cbfonline.org.

CBF Churches Make Choices Regarding Denominational Affiliations

CHOOSING TO AFFILIATE EXCLUSIVELY with CBF wasn't an easy choice for First Baptist Church in Newland, N.C., but it was an obvious choice. "We were simply looking for a positive atmosphere in which we could participate with others in sharing the Gospel and doing the Great Commission," says Bill Jones, pastor at First Baptist for 20 years.

The church started looking at its affiliation options last fall. It formed a five-member denominational affiliations study committee that worked closely with its 12-member deacon



body. The entire congregation was included in discussions through a series of Wednesday night forums.

"We discussed the advantages and disadvantages of affiliations with the Southern Baptist Convention, the local association and state convention,"

Jones recalls. "Also, we looked at other

options for affiliation. We found that CBF is way ahead of everybody in that it is a group organized around what we want to be: accepting diversity and celebrating the priesthood of the believer,

"MY FEAR IS THAT our church would not be nearly as missional as we are now had CBF not evolved in the early 1990s."

— GEORGE MASON, PASTOR OF WILSHIRE BAPTIST CHURCH, DALLAS

local church autonomy, evangelism through relationships and endeavors, theological education that is free-thinking and unity of purpose."

For Wilshire Baptist Church in Dallas, the transition to the Fellowship was also a natural move. "In our case, it was easier than for most because we had many members involved in the moderate Baptist struggle that led to the creation of CBF," says George Mason, pastor for 14 years at Wilshire, a fully CBF-supporting congregation.

"My fear is that our church would not be nearly as missional as we are now had CBF not evolved in the early 1990s," Mason says. "For many churches, as denominational conflict has arisen, the choice has not been SBC or CBF but rather a diminished missions commitment. To avoid the conflict, often these churches have poured money back into their own programs rather than into missions, and I think that has been the greater tragedy of the controversy."

Like Wilshire, Northside Baptist Church in Clinton, Miss., was "a CBF church before there was a CBF," says Stan Wilson, pastor of the church since July 2002. "We like CBF because it's both lay- and clergy-led. We like the percentage of money that goes to missions. We are excited about the seminaries that CBF contributes to. We like the fact that it encourages diversity and openness." *f!*

CBF has compiled a "Denominational Relations Packet" of resources for pastors and denominational relations committees of churches considering such issues. This information is available from CBF state and regional offices. For a listing, go to Community/ State/Regional Network at www.cbfonline.org.

By contributing writer Sue Poss, Greenville, S.C.

Church Honors Missions Supporters

THE HARDEST THING that First Baptist Church, Newland, N.C., faced in cutting its Southern Baptist ties was leaving its 85-year tradition of giving to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering and Annie Armstrong Easter Offering.

"Then we recognized that nobody here had known Lottie Moon or Annie Armstrong," says pastor **Bill Jones**. "So we renamed our offering in honor of two

of our members who have been very avid missions supporters."

The Christmas offering is now the (Miss) **Beatrice Banner** Christmas Offering for Global Missions, and the Easter offering is the **Rufus Henley** Offering at Easter.

"This was an easy way for us to identify with people who have given, prayed for and supported missions all their lives at this church," Jones says.

Companions in Christ Changes Spiritual Perspectives of Participants

AMY BUTLER, associate pastor at Saint Charles Avenue Baptist Church in New Orleans, was looking for a small-group curriculum to build community when a minister friend told her about *Companions in Christ*.

Butler looked into *Companions*, and read in *fellowship!* that CBF was involved in a pilot program. She arranged to have Saint Charles Avenue included.

General Assembly Devotional Guide

Building on the theme for this year's General Assembly, the Fellowship, in partnership with Upper Room Ministries, will present a devotional book titled, *Being the Presence of Christ: 40 Days of Prayer*.

The book will be distributed to everyone who attends the Assembly, and features devotions from more than a dozen Fellowship leaders as well as plenary session leaders. The season of prayer begins on Thursday, June 26, and continues into August. The resource invites readers to practice the presence of God in Christ through devotional reading, reflection and action.

Butler participated in the *Companions* training program at CBF's General Assembly last year, but she wasn't sure it "would fly" due to the expected time commitment from participants — 28 weeks, two hours per week, with 30 minutes of daily preparation. All doubts disappeared when she held an informational meeting at the church and more than 45 people attended — a remarkable percentage from a church that averages 120 members in

worship services.

Butler told attendees that the program would be limited to a dozen members, then announced the group would be formed on a "first-come, first-served basis."

"I had people phoning me at 6 a.m. the next morning and sending e-mails to be included in the group!" she recalls.

"This has been an incredible experience," Butler says. "We have people making major life changes as a result of this program, including one decision to go to the mission field."

Butler's group consists of eight women and six men, ranging in age from 28 to 73.



Sharon Potts Carroll takes part in a *Companions in Christ* group at Saint Charles Avenue Baptist Church.

Amy Butler photo

Companions Connections

Pilot Groups

SIXTEEN *COMPANIONS* pilot projects contain 54 groups with 483 individuals.

Participating churches and groups include: **Broadway Baptist Church**, Fort Worth, Texas; **CBF of South Carolina** (clergy groups); **Cullowhee Baptist Church**, Cullowhee, N.C.; **Cumberland Baptist Church**, Knoxville, Tenn.; **FBC Asheville**, N.C.; **FBC Athens**, Ga.; **FBC Chattanooga**, Tenn.; **FBC Knoxville**, Tenn.; **FBC Southern Pines**, N.C.; **Kirkwood Baptist Church**, Kirkwood,

Mo.; **Lake Shore Baptist Church**, Waco, Texas; **Providence Baptist Church**, Charleston, S.C.; **Saint Charles Avenue Baptist Church**, New Orleans; **Second-Ponce de Leon Baptist Church**, Atlanta; **South Main Baptist Church**, Houston; and **Viewmont Baptist Church**, Hickory, N.C.

Training Events

To receive training for leading *Companions in Christ*, plan to attend a regional event: June 25: **St. John's Baptist Church**, Charlotte, N.C. July 12: **Lake Shore Baptist Church**, Waco, Texas

Aug. 2: **FBC Chattanooga**, Tenn. Aug. 16: **FBC Athens**, Ga.

Cost: \$100 per person, \$85 for each additional person from a church/group (\$75 early bird registration four weeks in advance)

To register for these or other one-day training events, go to www.companionsinchrist.org.

For more information, click on the *Companions in Christ* button at www.cbfonline.org or contact Eileen Campbell-Reed at eileen.cr@mindspring.com.

As part of the group, child psychologist Jane Bellando appreciates the practical spirituality of *Companions*. "It is a wonderful way to systematically study the idea of community, prayer and Scripture," Bellando says, adding that the materials leave you "open to God's call."

Group closeness is also important to Bellando. "It creates bonds when you are able to ask someone, 'What is your view of God and how has that changed over your lifetime?'"

Group member Lou Irwin, a clinical social worker and pastoral counselor, agrees: "I've been involved with many of the spiritual disciplines for years, but having a community to do it with has been very enriching." He believes that varying viewpoints are "one of the strengths of the resource." *f!*

For more information about *Companions in Christ*, go to www.companionsinchrist.org, or call Upper Room

Companions for Clergy: Back to the Basics

GINA MCCARVER BROCK, associate minister for youth at First Baptist Church, Greenville, S.C., is taking part in an all-clergy pilot group of *Companions in Christ*. The six members take turns leading the group – sharing experiences and exploring spiritual practices.

Brock says she "wanted time to

sit down and talk about what happens in everyday life with God and to hear the experiences of other pastors." *Companions* group worship has provided Brock with this and more.

"I highly recommend this program," she says. "It provides spiritual discipline and an opportunity to revisit some of the basics – prayer and spending time with God – making a positive change within us and the community."

Ministries at (800) 972-0433. *Companions* resources are available from the CBF Resource Link at (888) 801-4223 or the CBF e-Store at www.cbfonline.org.

By staff writer Jo Upton

Assembly Workshops Offer Practical Ministry Insights

AT THE 2003 GENERAL ASSEMBLY, CBF will offer more than 100 workshops to help individuals catch a vision of the mission God has given every Christian: to be the presence of Christ.

Following is a preview of some of the workshops available this year in Charlotte, N.C., June 26-28.

Under Served and Over Looked: Ministry to the Disabled

Presented by **Connie and Sid Carpenter**. Using humor and their first-hand experience from parenting children with disabilities, the Carpenters discuss how to minister among what they call an "unevangelized people group" in every church — people with disabilities. There are 52 million people in the United States with disabilities. Ninety percent of these people, or nearly 47 million, are unchurched. Only 5 percent of

churches are ministering to this group. The Carpenters, members of Providence Baptist Church in Charlotte, will discuss barriers that exist in architecture, communication and attitudes.

ChristHeart: Experiencing the Presence of Jesus

Presented by **Jeanie Miley**. Using the power of imagination in prayer, workshop participants will enter into the Gospel stories to discover and experience the nature of the heart of Christ. Questions for reflection, guided meditation and group discussion will encourage the practice of the presence of Christ and equip participants to be the presence of Christ. Miley, author of *ChristHeart*, *Becoming Fire*, and *Ancient Psalms for Contemporary Pilgrims: A Prayerbook*, is a speaker, retreat leader and columnist for CBF's Web site.

For more information on workshops at this year's General Assembly, see insert in this issue of *fellowship!*.

Brian McLaren to Lead Congregational Leadership Institute

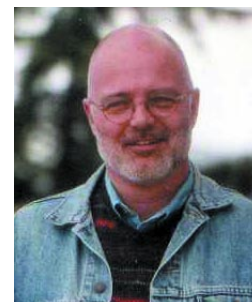
Brian McLaren, founding pastor at Cedar Ridge Community Church in Spencerville, Md., will lead CBF's Congregational Leadership Institute June 26 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

McLaren will discuss "The Church on the Other Side," answering the questions: How does the church make the transition to viability and effectiveness in the 21st century? What strategies are needed in moving toward accomplishing God's mission? and What kind of leaders are needed to guide this transition?

McLaren is author of *The Church on the Other Side*, *Finding Faith*, *A New Kind of Christian*, *More Ready Than You Realize* and *The Story We Find Ourselves In*.

Registration for the Leadership Institute is \$45 for one person, \$40 each for three or more from the same church, and \$40 each for full-time students. Registration deadline is May 15.

For more information, contact **Mary McCoy** at (770) 220-1637 or mmccoy@cbfnet.org. For a printer friendly version of the 2003 Congregational Leadership Institute flier and registration form, click on the General Assembly 2003 button at www.cbfonline.org and go to the Leadership Institute portion.



McLaren

Texas Church Embarks on Adopt-A-People Journey

HOW DO YOU IMPROVE on a good thing? Adopt-A-People (AAP) coordinators recently set out to answer that question.

After analyzing data from adoptive churches, the missions field and state coordinators, plans are underway to strengthen and revitalize AAP, says Tom Ogburn, CBF associate coordinator for partnership missions. "When it's effective, it touches the life of the church and changes the lives of people forever," he notes.

Southmont Baptist Church in Denton, Texas, has experienced that kind of change.

When Southmont first adopted an unevangelized people group (UPG) in Southeast Asia four years ago, they began a process that has transformed their missions ministry.

"It didn't happen overnight," says Pastor Larry Reynolds. "It's an education process. We trained and learned about a different group in another part of the world."

A leadership team helps keep the church connected to its UPG in Southeast Asia. The education process greatly accelerated when a staff member felt the call to missions and ended up serving with Southmont's adopted people group. The church keeps in close contact with these CBF missions field personnel, who cannot be identified for security reasons.

"We get a news article every month from them, and e-mail updates with incidents, vignettes and pictures of that society," Reynolds says. "That personal contact puts a face on missions."

In addition to information from CBF field personnel, Southmont keeps a people group display in the church foyer.

Two of the most recent projects used to educate people about the UPG were a church-wide banquet and a prayer walk.

At the banquet, the congregation tasted its people group's food, heard typical music and viewed a video about the culture from the CBF missions team. The prayer walk took that cultural experience a step further. Displays of a mosque, market, schoolroom and home demonstrated UPG life.

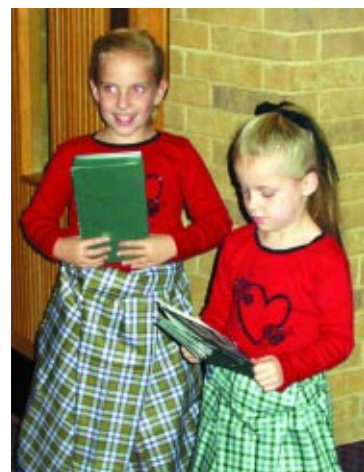
For Reynolds, the prayer walk brought back memories of his own recent trip to Southeast Asia with a CBF group. That journey impacted the way he looks at missions. "It made me realize that the needs there, when you see them, become real. You put faces with names and situations which

were abstract – they become flesh and blood."

AAP has changed the way Southmont looks at missions.

"It's made our church much more mission conscious," Reynolds says. "It has made our people aware that we can impact another part of the world through prayer, giving and sending people, and going ourselves as well. AAP is not a thing you do: it's a kind of journey you go on. It becomes the fabric of who you are." *f!*

Contact Southmont at (940) 566-3313.



Callie (left) and Courtney Lovejoy pass out programs for a banquet about the church's unevangelized people group.

Courtesy of Southmont

Enhancing Adopt-A-People

AS A RESULT OF A MAJOR EVALUATION, Adopt-A-People (AAP) is enhancing its resources to strengthen its ministry. AAP matches congregations who "adopt" an unevangelized people group (UPG) by praying for that group and assisting CBF missions teams serving among them.

"In this evaluation process, it was very evident that the church wanted to partner with the field and the field wanted to partner with the church," says Tom Ogburn, CBF associate coordinator for partnership missions. "The question is: How do we do that more effectively?"

Ogburn outlines some of the steps to help strengthen and revitalize AAP:

1. Help local churches strengthen their AAP leadership team.
2. Provide additional training and resources:
 - new Web site: www.adoptapeople.net,
 - workshops at CBF's 2003 General Assembly (see insert),
 - model materials that can help churches be more effective.
3. Strengthen the ties between local churches and field personnel serving with UPGs. AAP has more than 125 adoptive churches.

For more information, contact Tom Ogburn in the CBF Resource Center, Dallas, at (800) 782-2451 or <togburn@cbfnet.org>.

Fellowship Endorses 27 Chaplains, Pastoral Counselors

AT ITS FEBRUARY COUNCIL on Endorsement meeting, CBF endorsed 27 chaplains and pastoral counselors, bringing the total number of those endorsed by the Fellowship to 295.

"God is using us, and frankly, surprising us in the area of chaplaincy and pastoral counseling," says CBF Coordinator Daniel Vestal. "The future is nothing short of awesome."

A chaplain or pastoral counselor must be endorsed by the faith group of their choosing for certification by a certifying body and to be employed by federal and state governments, such as military and prison chaplains. Endorsement is also required by many health care organizations and other agencies where individuals serve as chaplains and pastoral counselors. They can be endorsed by only one endorsing body.

The Fellowship maintains an endorsement process that includes a detailed application, faith statement, verification of education, references, biographical information, letter of support from a local church and interview.

"Endorsement is an official declaration of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship through the CBF Council on Endorsement that a person has met the qualifications of the employing or certifying agency," says George Pickle, associate coordinator for chaplaincy and pastoral counseling. "Endorsed chaplains and pastoral counselors are an extension of the ministry of CBF. These ministers in specialized

settings represent the presence of Christ all over the world."

In preparation for the upcoming CBF General Assembly in Charlotte, N.C., June 26-28, Pickle announced a luncheon for chaplains and pastoral counselors from 12:15 to



Hinson

1:45 p.m., Thursday, June 26, at the Charlotte Convention Center. Following the luncheon, E. Glenn Hinson of the Baptist Seminary of Kentucky will lead a workshop on spiritual formation from 2 to 3:15 p.m.

On Friday, June 27, two ministry workshops will appeal to chaplains and pastoral counselors. Dan Bagby of the Baptist Theological Seminary at Richmond will lead a session on "Pastoral Care With Difficult People" at 11 a.m., and Elizabeth Thompson, director of the Samaritan Counseling Center in Denver, Colo., and Pickle will lead a session at 3:30 p.m. Chaplains and pastoral counselors will also be recognized during the Friday morning general session at 9 a.m. *f!*

For more information about CBF chaplaincy and pastoral counseling or to register for the luncheon, contact George Pickle at (770) 220-1617 or <gpickle@cbfnet.org>. Information is also available under Community/Chaplaincy at www.cbfonline.org.

By Lance Wallace, CBF Communications

New CBF Chaplains, Pastoral Counselors

Hospital Chaplains: Rebecca Andrews, Baylor Health Care System, Dallas; Karen F. Black, Baylor Health Care System, Dallas; Jennifer L. Bordenet, Valley Baptist Health System, Harlingen, Texas; Jack E. Brown, Department of Veterans Affairs, Dublin, Ga.; Mark A. Elder, Baylor Health Care System, Dallas; Priscilla H. Howick, St. Luke's Hospital and Mayo Clinic, Jacksonville, Fla.; Wayne N. Lanham, Central Health, Lynchburg, Va.; Linda L. Strange, Denton Regional Medical Center, Denton, Texas; Dianne D. Swaim, Department of Veterans Affairs, Little Rock, Ark.; Edward C. Waldrop, Department of Veterans Affairs, Lynchburg, Va.; O. Chappell Wilson, Georgia Association for Pastoral

Care/Verdery Center, Decatur, Ga.

Military Chaplains: Charles C. Baldwin, U.S. Air Force Chaplain Service, Bolling AFB, Washington, D.C.; Geoffrey H. Fuller, U.S. Army Chaplain Candidate Program, Richmond, Va.; Benjamin A. Jamison, U.S. Army Chaplain Candidate Program, Blacksburg, Va.; Melody S. Kidd, U.S. Army, Kodak, Tenn.; D. Gary Malone, Virginia Army National Guard, Richmond, Va.; Sunny Mitchell, U.S. Navy Chaplain Candidate Program, Atlanta; Karen J. Rector, U.S. Navy Chaplain Candidate Program; Lexington, Ky.; M. Alan Rogers, U.S. Navy Chaplain Candidate Program, Abilene, Texas; Harold D. Roller, U.S. Army, Ft. Jackson, S.C.; Michael

E. Shea, U.S. Navy Chaplain Candidate Program, part-time chaplain, Mars Hill Retirement Center, Mars Hill, N.C.; Loren C. Turnage, Civil Air Patrol, U.S. Air Force, Norman, Okla.;

Pastoral Counselors: Glynn R. Ford, Pastoral Counseling of Northern Virginia, Fairfax, Va.; Andrew H. Gee, Georgia Association for Pastoral Care/Verdery Center, Decatur, Ga.; Robert D. Whitten, Pastoral Counseling of Northern Virginia, Fairfax, Va.

Prison Chaplains: Bruce F. Guile, Missouri Department of Corrections, Jefferson City, Mo.

Professionals: James E. Tille, Fellow, American Association of Pastoral Counselors, Fairfax, Va.

Coordinating Council Approves Historic Agreement with Hispanic Partners

THE FELLOWSHIP'S COORDINATING COUNCIL recently ratified a historic, new partnership agreement with the Hispanic Baptist Theological School and the Hispanic Baptist Convention of Texas, which represents 1,100 Hispanic Baptist churches.

The landmark agreement calls for the Fellowship and the Hispanic convention to start 400 Hispanic churches in the United States during the next eight years, and for CBF and the Hispanic seminary to train 400 new Hispanic Baptist pastors and church leaders.

"The Hispanic population in this country continues to grow, and I don't want to offend you, but studies show that our Anglo Baptist brothers are aging," said Antonio Estrada, president of the Hispanic Baptist Convention of Texas. "That's why this is so important. We have a future together."

Estrada, Micaela Camacho of the Hispanic convention, Rudy Camacho of the Baptist General Convention of Texas, Javier Elizondo of the Hispanic seminary, and Bernie Moraga of CBF's Hispanic network all described the partnership's benefits.

"Our students need to know the kind of Baptist that CBF is, and CBF needs to know our students," said Elizondo, academic dean for the seminary.

Through the partnership, the Hispanic theology school will provide training and leadership development for Hispanic pastors and churches, as well as continuing educational opportunities for those already serving. The seminary also will lead conferences on how to reach Hispanics.

The Coordinating Council voted unanimously to ratify



Lance Wallace photo

Javier Elizondo (l-r) of the Hispanic Baptist Theological School; Daniel Vestal, CBF Coordinator; and Antonio Estrada, president of the Hispanic Baptist Convention of Texas, announce a historic partnership among the three groups.

the church planting partnership and recommend

its approval to the full CBF membership.

"God brings people together for a reason," said Moraga, coordinator of the CBF Hispanic network. "Who knows? Maybe God brought us together for a divine appointment."

The Fellowship has long maintained a network of

Vestal Encourages Council to 'be the Presence of Christ'

CBF COORDINATOR **Daniel Vestal** challenged CBF's Coordinating Council to even higher levels of cooperation as the Fellowship endeavors to fulfill its vision – being the presence of Christ in the world.

"As we look toward the General Assembly in Charlotte," Vestal said, "and as we seek to know how to be the presence of Christ, I want to focus our hearts on one thing – let's be the presence of Christ *together*."

In his opening address to the group, Vestal asked for more cooperation because he believes that while the Fellowship will

continue to grow, it will never represent the majority in Baptist life.

"We're going to be a minority, and I've come to terms with that," Vestal said. "It's not a bad deal to be a minority. Fundamentalism is not going to go away. We will continue to be caricatured, criticized and maligned. Jesus said to rejoice when someone speaks evil about you. We are a labeled and sometimes libeled group. Let's get over it."

Thanks to a contribution from an individual donor, Vestal's book *It's Time: an Urgent Call to Christian Mission*, is being distributed

to 8,000 people in an effort to share the mission and vision of CBF. Vestal believes this will also help prepare hearts for the General Assembly.

Books are also available for \$9.95 each from the CBF Resource Link at (888) 801-4223 or the CBF e-Store at www.cbfonline.org. Shipping will be charged.

A free, 12-page study guide for Vestal's book is available online at Resources/Study Guides at www.cbfonline.org.

Hispanic churches and has partnered on several projects among Hispanic Baptists. This agreement represents a formalizing of long-standing relationships.

“This partnership can be a win-win for everybody,” said Bill Bruster, CBF coordinator of networks and partnerships. *f!*

For more information about the partnership or Hispanic ministries, contact your CBF state or regional office. For a listing, go to Community/State/Regional Network at www.cbfonline.org. Or contact Bill Bruster at (972) 242-5977 or bbruster@cbfnet.org or Bernie Moraga at (505) 247-4781.

By Lance Wallace, CBF Communications

Council Approves 2003-04 Budget, Enacts Belt-tightening for Current Budget

CBF'S COORDINATING COUNCIL voted to adopt a \$17.9 million budget for fiscal year 2003-04 and approved several new strategies to solidify the Fellowship's finances during the current economic downturn.

CBF Moderator Phill Martin of Dallas reported to the Council that midway through the Fellowship's fiscal year, total revenue is up, and contributions from churches and individuals are slightly down from the previous year. He also reported that contributions from individuals and churches are lagging behind the budget by 16 percent.

In response to the lag in undesignated contributions for operating expenses, the CBF Resource Center staff has made spending cuts amounting to more than \$1.6 million. Even with the cuts, Finance Committee Chairman Philip Wise of Lubbock said CBF is projected to come up short by an additional \$1 million. The current year budget is \$19.5 million. Receipts are projected to come in at about \$16.9 million.

“Two years ago we set an overly optimistic budget,” Wise said. “This fiscal year's budget was still a stretch for us, but

not as ambitious as the year before.”

The Council also changed its approach to the fiscal 2003-04 budget, approving a \$17.9 million budget, an 8 percent reduction.

Martin appointed a task force to provide recommendations to the CBF Advisory Council in May related to the Fellowship's priorities, partners, missions and staffing. Task force members include Nelson Rodriguez of Texas, Candice McKibben of Florida, Tim Brendle of Virginia, Charles Cantrell of Missouri and Moderator-elect Cynthia Holmes of Missouri as an ex officio member. Chuck Moates of Georgia will serve as chair.

“We still have to be fiscally responsible and must be prepared if further cuts become necessary,” Martin said.

Total revenue for July through December reached \$8.5 million, with \$6.29 million coming from churches and individuals. The remainder came from a grant from the Lilly Endowment Inc., resource sales and other earnings. While total revenue increased by 24.5 percent compared to the same period last year, contributions from churches and individuals declined by 6 percent. The CBF fiscal year begins July 1.

One of the efforts on the revenue side is a new work group that CBF Coordinator Daniel Vestal has appointed from CBF staff.

In other business, Martin announced the Nominating Committee's intent to offer at the General Assembly Bob Setzer Jr., pastor of First Baptist Church of Christ in Macon, Ga., as the nominee for moderator-elect and Susan Crumpler, an engineer in Cincinnati, as the nominee for recorder.

The Council approved a new structure for the Council on Endorsement for CBF's endorsement of chaplains and pastoral counselors. *f!*

CBF Mid-Year Contributions

July-December	2001-02	2002-03	+/-
Contributing Churches	1,409	1,385	-24/1.7%
Church Contributions	\$5,361,405	\$5,040,425	-6.0%
Contributing Individuals	2,168	2,238	70/3.2%
Individual Contributions	\$1,326,055	\$1,252,358	-5.6%
CBF Ministries (undesignated)	\$4,170,826	\$4,146,873	-0.57%
Designated Giving*	\$2,218,010	\$3,950,736	78.12%
TOTAL CONTRIBUTIONS	\$6,388,836	\$8,097,609	26.75%
Resources & Earnings	\$453,562	\$422,365	-6.88%
TOTAL REVENUES	\$6,842,398	\$8,519,974	24.52%

* includes Offering for Global Missions and Lilly Endowment grant

CBF Partners with Buckner for Ministry to Most Neglected Children, Families

THE FELLOWSHIP AND Buckner Baptist Benevolences recently signed an agreement entering into a partnership which leaders of both entities say will enlarge the scope of their ministry and missions efforts.

The agreement, known as KidsHeart, calls for Buckner to provide avenues of missions service for CBF volunteers both domestically and internationally, as well as social ministry training for CBF congregations.

The Fellowship will provide resources and volunteers for Buckner-led mission efforts to children in several countries and work done through Buckner along the Texas-Mexico border. For the initial two years of the partnership, CBF also has committed \$120,000 for Buckner ministries, funding work in three regions along the Rio Grande and aiding children living in a Kenyan orphanage.

CBF Coordinator Daniel Vestal says the agreement "makes Buckner one of three touch point ministries for CBF, along with Habitat for Humanity and World Vision.

"The KidsHeart agreement sends a strong message that the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship stands for missions and ministry, whether that be through a local congregation serving their community through relief ministries, (through) churches serving some of the most neglected people in the United States or through individuals traveling to another country to share Christ's love with an orphan child," Vestal says.



Russ Dilday photo

Buckner Baptist Benevolences President Ken Hall (seated at left) and CBF Coordinator Daniel Vestal (seated at right) officially signed the KidsHeart agreement at the Progreso Community Center. Others pictured are (from l-r): CBF Texas interim coordinator Judy Battles, Buckner Children and Family Services Rio Grande Valley Administrator Tommy Speed, Buckner Trustee Esther Fraire, Buckner Vice President Felipe Garza, CBF Moderator-Elect Cynthia Holmes, CBF Texas Moderator Bob Newell, and CBF Associate Coordinator for Partnership Missions Tom Ogburn.

Buckner President Ken Hall calls KidsHeart a "working" ministry partnership "that will provide ministry to the most neglected children and families in the United States

and in other countries. Whether it is restoring family unity, providing humanitarian aid to overseas orphanages, offering services to those living in poverty or assisting churches in fulfilling their mandate to serve others, KidsHeart will be the hands and heart of Christ for countless Christians seeking to serve." *fi!*

For more information, contact Tom Ogburn at (800) 782-2451 or <togburn@cbfnet.org>.

By Russ Dilday, Buckner News Service

Class Notes

▶ **Baptist Theological Seminary at Richmond.** The BTSR Shoestring Players' revival of "Godspell" featured students and faculty from BTSR and Union Theological Seminary-Presbyterian School of Christian Education.

Stephen Brachlow, BTSR professor of spirituality, directed the third annual production. **Sheila Russ**, a BTSR student, served as stage manager and assistant director for the show.

▶ **Baptist Studies Program, Candler School of Theology, Emory University.** CBF of Georgia has awarded scholarships to two students in the Baptist studies program at Candler. The recipients, **Mary Catherine Foster** and **Jeremy Lewis**, are both from Atlanta.

▶ **Campbell University Divinity School.** The university recently held an appreciation lunch-

eon for **Jean** and **Wayne Ham** of Snyder Memorial Baptist Church in Fayetteville, N.C., for their support of the divinity school and the university for the past 30 years. Wayne is the minister of education and is retiring after 32 years of service to the church. His wife, Jean, has been his partner during those 32 years in addition to her own ministry in the media center. The Hams established the **Evelyn Truluck** and **C. Woodrow Ham** Scholarship in the divinity school.

▶ **Central Baptist Theological Seminary.** Central will award honorary degrees to **Roy Medley**, general secretary of American Baptist Churches in the USA, and **Keith Parks**, former CBF global missions coordinator and special projects researcher with the Baptist General Convention of Texas. Medley will be the speaker for Central's commencement, which is scheduled for May 17.

Vision and Passion: The Needs of 21st Century Baptists

BAPTIST CHRISTIANS FACE many of the same challenges that everyone else does: living with economic uncertainty, globalization and the information revolution. We also share the challenges of all Christian faith groups in interpreting the Gospel to an ever-changing world. However, there are some encouraging signs.

Recently, I was in the office of George Gallup in Princeton, N.J. He told me that all the data shows we are



living in the midst of a spiritual awakening in North America. People are weary of the rat race and are yearning for transcendence, for mystery, and for spiritual meaning and purpose. What a time for our witness.

As I see it, Baptists face at least four great challenges moving into the new millennium.

“NOTHING SHORT OF A burning heart will suffice for our day: a passion for the holy, a passion for the love of God and love of neighbor, a passion for the Gospel, and a passion for the world.”

— CBF COORDINATOR DANIEL VESTAL

How do we help others to faith in Christ and then help them to grow in Christ-likeness?

How do we nurture authentic community within congregations and beyond congregations?

How do we discover, encourage and develop effective congregational leaders?

How do we engage in global missions in an incarnational and contextual way?

How do we do all these things as Baptists who believe in biblical principles that continue to shape and form us?

Let me be so bold as to say that nothing short of a revolution in our understanding of the church will suffice. No longer can the church see itself as a vendor of religious goods and services, a chaplain to society, a caretaker to the culture or an accumulation of programs. We simply cannot continue to do things as usual and expect to survive — much less be fruitful. The biblical phrase is so important: “Where there is no vision, the people perish.” We need a fresh **vision** of what Jesus Christ intends the church to be and do.

Darrel Guder, in his book, *Missional Church: A Vision for the Sending of the Church in North America*, writes, “The crises are many and complex: diminishing numbers, clergy burn-out, the loss of youth, the end of denominational loyalty, Biblical illiteracy, division in the ranks, the electronic church and its various corruptions, the irrelevance of traditional forms of worship, the loss of genuine spirituality, the widespread confusion about both the purpose and message of the Church of Jesus Christ.”

The typical North American response is to analyze the problem and find a methodological solution. Arrange all the components of the church landscape differently and many assume that the problems can be solved. Or, use the best demographic, psychological or sociological insight to design the church for success in our changing context. All it takes, it would seem, is money, talent, time and commitment.

Baptists share the conviction of a growing consensus of Christians in North America that the real issues in the crisis of the Christian church are spiritual and theological.

“Where there is no vision, the people perish” — and nothing is more important today than a fresh vision of the church as a missional community, created and sent by Jesus Christ to serve, represent and proclaim the Kingdom of God.

Equally important for Baptists in the new millennium is **passion**. Recently, I have been reading Roberta Bondi and her conversation on prayer with the early desert fathers and mothers. She tells of Abba Joseph who had a disciple confess to him, “I pray, I fast, I study, but I am still plagued by selfishness and sin. What shall I do?” Joseph’s response is, “Why not become fire?”

It was Jeremiah who said, “I cannot be silent because the word of God is like a fire burning in my bones.” It was the disciples on the Emmaus road who said after the encounter with the risen Jesus, “Did not our hearts burn within us as He opened the Scriptures unto us?”

Let me be so bold as to suggest that nothing short of a burning heart will suffice for our day: a passion for the holy, a passion for the love of God and love of neighbor, a passion for the Gospel and a passion for the world.

Vision and passion — these are the needs of the 21st century Baptist. *f!*

By CBF Coordinator Daniel Vestal

Fellowship Roundup

News from CBF's states, regions and national offices

ALABAMA

THE "SOWING SEEDS OF HOPE" partnership between AlabamaCBF and Perry County, Ala., has been adopted by Samford University. A recent Step Sing fundraiser show brought in \$5,000 for Sowing Seeds of Hope, a 25-year commitment by the residents of Perry County and AlabamaCBF to improve life in the impoverished county.

FLORIDA

FLORIDA CBF has announced its new officers for 2003-04: **Colleen Beatty**, First Baptist Church, Vero Beach, recording secretary; **Richard Brown**, Leesburg, past moderator; **Jean Kenlan Willingham**, First Baptist Church, St. Petersburg, first vice moderator; **Ken Meyers**, Hendricks Avenue Baptist Church, Jacksonville, second vice moderator; **Bill Smith**, First Baptist Church, Fort Myers, moderator; **Bud Strawn**, First Baptist Church, St. Petersburg, treasurer; and **Gary Poe**, Palm Beach Atlantic College, historian.

GEORGIA

CBF OF GEORGIA has moved to 2465 Hillcrest Avenue, Macon, GA, 31204. The telephone number is (478) 742-1191. The mailing address remains P.O. Box 4343, Macon, GA, 31208.

More than 725 youth and chaperones registered for the 2003 March Mission Madness, an annual youth weekend. On March 21-23, Madison Baptist Church hosted MMM North, and on March 28-30, Claxton First Baptist hosted MMM South.

Mercer University's McAfee School of Theology students **Dixie Ford** of Hiram and **Kim Heath** of Macon have been awarded CBF of Georgia scholarships.

Jimmy Lewis, CBF of Georgia missions coordinator, and **Devita Parnell**, associate coordinator for congregational life, attended a capstone class at McAfee School of Theology. They presented to the graduating students opportunities to connect with CBF of Georgia and fulfill ministry goals and plans.

MISSOURI

ON MAY 3, a day of ecumenical service projects called "Rebuilding Together" will take place throughout the St. Louis area. For more information, contact **Leslie Limbaugh**, (314) 429-1800. On May 5, Olive Branch Baptist Church in Sedalia will host a "Fellowship Gathering" that will include dinner and updates on CBF life. For more information, contact **Sam Young**, (660) 826-8463.

NATIONAL

CBF ANNOUNCED that **George Pickle**, associate coordinator for chaplaincy and pastoral counseling at CBF, will shift from being a contract employee to permanent status. Pickle was originally hired in the fall of 2001 on a two-year contract.

Partners in Hope, CBF's Rural Poverty Initiative, will mark a transition of leadership this summer when **Tom Ogburn**, associate coordinator for partnership missions, turns over the national coordination to **Tom Prevost**, associate coordinator for covenants and career selection. Effective July 1, Prevost will assume leadership for the second, intermediate stage of development of CBF's effort among 20 of the poorest U.S. counties. Prevost will also continue to lead career missionary selection from his office in Mississippi.

Registration is open for PASSPORT 2003, a summer camp min-

Coming Attractions

April 22

When Religion Becomes Evil

Mercer University Center for Baptist Studies
Macon, Ga.

Speaker: Charles Kimball

Cost: \$25

Contact: Greg Thompson (478) 301-5467,
<thompson_mg@mercer.edu>

April 25

Clayborn Landers Preaching Lectures

Central Seminary
Kansas City, Kan.

Speaker: David J. Schlafer

Theme: Playing with Fire: Preaching Work as Kindling Art

Contact: Shirley Wallace (913) 371-5313,
ext. 111

April 29-30

Developing Christian Leaders for a Postmodern World

Grand Canyon University
Phoenix, Ariz.

Speaker: Leonard Sweet

Worship Leader: Darrell Adams

Sponsors: Grand Canyon University,
CBF West

Contact: Tom Wiles (602) 589-2498,
<twiles@grand-canyon.edu>

May 22-24

Baptists on the Frontier

University of Mary Hardin-Baylor
Belton, Texas

Cost: \$60, member; \$70, non-member

Program: Meeting of Baptist History and Heritage Society

Contact: Registration form at
www.baptisthistory.org

For a complete schedule of events, go to Community/Calendar at www.cbfonline.org.

istry. Most camps begin in early June and run consecutively for 6 to 8 weeks. Cost per person is \$225. For more information, go to www.passportcamps.org.

CBF global missions welcomes two new arrivals. **Emily** was born to missions field personnel **Melin** and **Ron** Sept. 19, 2002. They serve in

Asia and cannot be identified due to security concerns. **Gabriela Newell**, daughter of **Ben** and **Leonora Newell**, was born Jan. 2, 2002. The Newells work with the Rural Poverty Initiative in Arkansas.

■ NORTH CAROLINA

THE WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA Baptist Network will celebrate its founding April 27 at Arden First Baptist Church. The event will include education, fellowship, missions planning and worship.

■ SOUTH CAROLINA

CBF OF SOUTH CAROLINA has recently created a Justice Committee, co-chaired by **Bob Taylor** of Myrtle Beach and **Brenda Kneece** of Columbia. The committee is sponsoring a trip to Washington, D.C., June 9-11 for the Call to Renewal conference, which will address poverty, racism, family and community.

■ TENNESSEE

NEW CHURCH START PROJECTS sponsored by Tennessee CBF will be launched with the arrival of two new church planters. **Greg Mumpower** will start a new church in the northwest part of Knox County. **Patricia Dover-Bedwell** will begin developing a church plant in the southeast part of Hamilton County. These projects are part of the Tennessee Horizons initiative of TCBF to begin churches across the state. For more information, contact **Ircel Harrison** at (888) 661-8223 or <coordinator@tncbf.org>.

■ CBF global missions advocate **Pat Anderson** of Lakeland, Fla., and composer and musician **Kyle Matthews** of Nashville will lead the TCBF General Assembly. Scheduled for April 25-26 at King's Cross Church in Tullahoma, the theme of the assembly is "Becoming a Blessing."

■ TEXAS

THE CBF TEXAS State Council recently met in Austin in conjunction

with the Baptist General Convention of Texas Christian Life Commission meeting and participated in Christian Citizenship Day. Approximately 40 people attended a workshop led by **Suzii Paynter** of the CLC to get oriented on legislative priorities and bills that had been introduced. Council member **Juandelle Lacy Roberts** of Midland met with Lt. Governor **David Dewhurst** and Speaker of the House **Tom Craddick**.

■ VIRGINIA

CBF OF VIRGINIA celebrated its 10th anniversary at its General Assembly March 14-15 at Churchland Baptist Church in Chesapeake. CBF of Virginia commissioned its first missionaries, **Greg and Sue Smith**, to develop a catalytic ministry among Hispanics. An anonymous church made a challenge gift of \$100,000 annually for five years to fund the missionary couple, and CBF of Virginia is seeking to answer the challenge from its 255 partner churches with \$125,000 for the Hispanic ministry, partnerships with CBF field personnel, church starts, Global Service Corps, partnership missions grants and associational missions grants.

CBF Field Personnel Take Precautions

CBF GLOBAL MISSIONS leaders are temporarily restricting the travel of overseas personnel in light of war and the threat of terrorism.

According to Gary Baldrige, CBF global missions co-coordinator, all international travel by the Fellowship's 150 missions field personnel now must be approved ahead of time. Travel within and into Muslim areas is limited. And all non-essential travel is being evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Additionally, all trips by missions volunteers have been suspended.

No field personnel are being recalled. However, one family stationed in the Middle East will return

home to begin a stateside assignment early. The missions workers are assigned to a hospital that Baldrige said is "just as vulnerable as the one in Yemen" where three Southern Baptist missions workers were murdered by a terrorist in December. One CBF nurse practitioner will remain at the hospital to work with missions personnel from other agencies. (ABP)

Health Center Awarded Grant

FELLOWSHIP MINISTRY partner the Open Door Health Center has received funding for its diabetes self-management initiative in Homestead, Fla.

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation recently approved a \$125,000 grant for the Miami Dade Area Health Education Center Program Inc., which will channel funding to Open Door, a free clinic operating out of the CBF- and CBF of Florida-funded Open House Ministry Center.

"During the past two years, the Open Door Health Center has provided free medical services to thousands of needy individuals, trained hundreds of students from different medical fields and become a site of hope for many," said Nilda Soto, medical director for Open Door. *f!*

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Fellowship Ready for Ministry to War Victims in Iraq

CBF HAS CONDUCTED advance planning for ministry to the thousands of refugees and other displaced people whose lives have been disrupted by war. CBF global missions administrators have also initiated security procedures for global missions field personnel impacted by war.

CBF global missions field staff have been meeting with partner CBF state and regional organizations, churches and groups such as the Baptist World Alliance and World Vision in recent months to determine the most effective way to minister in Iraq. The Fellowship is ready to receive funds for the Iraqi relief effort.

"We have been pre-positioning ourselves so that we can be responsive to the tremendous fallout of human suffering that the war will bring," says David Harding, emergency response coordinator for CBF global missions. "We intend to assist in meeting immediate needs like food and shelter but also directing funds with a long-term perspective on how to restore people to productive living in the future once the war is over."

From 1991 to 1996, CBF global missions field personnel worked in Northern Iraq until President Saddam Hussein

forced western aid agencies from the area. Should there be a regime change in Baghdad, the Fellowship is preparing to renew humanitarian aid in Northern Iraq through a number of anticipated construction, agricultural and technological infrastructure projects.

"The war affects approximately 50 percent of our 150 global missions field personnel. We anticipate that at least a few of our personnel in the Middle East/North Africa and Southeast Asia will leave their residence during the most intense periods of the war, and almost all will change their daily routines in some way," says Gary Baldrige, CBF global missions co-coordinator.



CBF will assist Kurdish refugees and other displaced people affected by war.

Field personnel photo

Statement on War in Iraq

CBF COORDINATOR **Daniel Vestal** issued the following response to the beginning of hostilities in Iraq:

"The overwhelming sense many people have about this war is sadness and confusion. Why is there not the leadership to build consensus among nations to remove Saddam Hussein from power? Why cannot the world community find the collective wisdom and will to disarm Saddam Hussein without war? Because there seems to be no clear answer to these questions, we are left with a global crisis of violence and destruction.

"One of the voices in the biblical witness is

lament – the sober questioning of actions that produce pain. It is the unsatisfied struggle with why there is senseless brutality and death. It is the anguished cry of human beings experiencing evil and suffering. Today, it is this voice that we sound. As people who believe in a loving God and as followers of the One who is called the Prince of Peace, we confess our loud lament in the midst of this war and the circumstances that have caused it.

"We continue to pray for peace, protection for lives at risk, for leaders around the world and for a quick resolution to this conflict. May God have mercy on those in harm's way."

Each field team has evacuation plans that are reviewed regularly. *f!*

To contribute to the Iraqi relief effort through CBF, make checks payable to CBF, marked "CBF Relief and Development Fund #17000," specify "Iraq," and send to CBF, P.O. Box 101699, Atlanta, GA 30392.

*By Lance Wallace,
CBF Communications*



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