

Will terror in Europe halt ministry?

CHRISTIANS WHO SERVE those fleeing wars in the Middle East say they are determined to show God's love.

BY ERIK TRYGGESTAD | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

Tragedy upon tragedy in this sad world needing salvation.” Those are the words Arlin Hendrix, a missionary in Lyon, France, used to describe his feelings after a terrorist attack about five hours to the south, in the seaside city of Nice.

There, 31-year-old, Tunisian-born Mohamed Lahouaiej Bouhlef drove a rented truck weighing 20 tons into crowds gathered for Bastille Day, an annual celebration of the French Revolution. At least 84 people died, with 202 more injured, some critically. The Islamic State claimed responsibility for the attack.

Hours later, the predominantly Muslim nation of Turkey — a gateway to Europe for thousands fleeing conflicts in the Middle East — endured an attempted military coup.

Days later, an axe-wielding, 17-year-old refugee from Afghanistan attacked passengers on a train in Germany.

Has the tension and fear changed the resolve of the Church of Christ members who serve the refugees?

Absolutely not, said Eleni Merlirrytos, a member of the Omonia Church of Christ in Athens, Greece.

“On the contrary, as we see the satanic forces attack innocent people, the more committed we feel to flood the world with
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MORE FROM EUROPE

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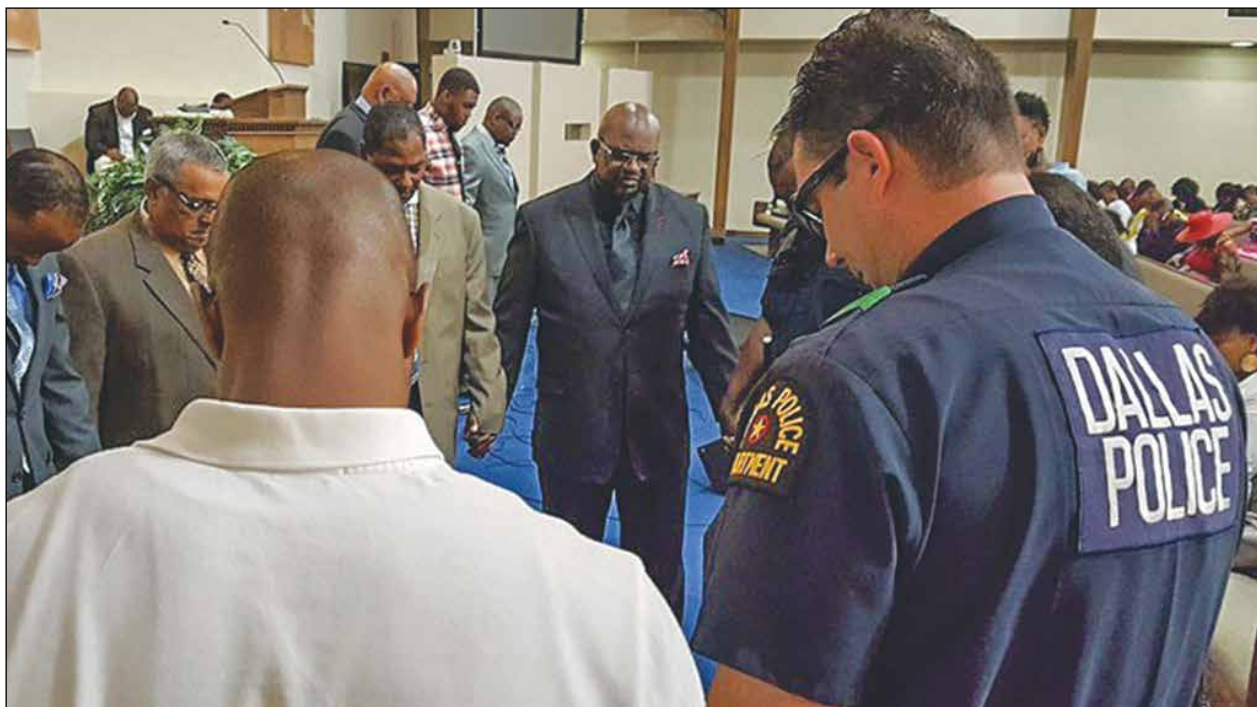


PHOTO PROVIDED BY CHURCH OF CHRIST AT MOUNTAIN VIEW

Dallas Police Department officers pray with minister J.K. Hamilton, center, and the Church of Christ at Mountain View after a sniper claimed the lives of five officers during a protest march. Three of the slain officers were stationed across the street from the church's building and participated in a prayer service with the congregation last year. **RELATED STORY**, Page 12

In Dallas, a somber Sunday

AFTER SNIPER KILLS five officers, church members look to God for comfort and guidance

BY BOBBY ROSS JR. | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

DALLAS — A young mother on her way into worship hugged a Dallas police officer providing parking lot security at the Prestoncrest Church of Christ.

Any other Sunday, the scene would not have seemed so poignant.

But on this recent Lord's Day, emotions were raw. Anxiety was high.

“It has been a very rough week for us in Dallas, unlike anything we've had in a while,” Prestoncrest minister Gordon Dabbs told his congregation before leading a special prayer.

Members of Churches of Christ — like Americans in general — are trying to make sense of the

violence and racial tension that have shaken the nation.

That week started with outrage over the latest police shootings of young black men — this time in Louisiana and Minnesota.

Then on the night of July 7, a protest over those shootings turned violent when a sniper opened fire, killing five Dallas officers and wounding nine other officers and two civilians.

After the massacre in downtown Dallas, ministers such as Dabbs scrapped originally planned Sunday sermons and came up with new ones. Dabbs decided to focus on “what it means to be salt and light for Jesus in the midst of a divided and angry culture.”

“While we may feel overwhelmed,
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BOBBY ROSS JR.

A Prestoncrest Church of Christ member hugs Dallas police officer Andrew Knoebel, who provides security for the church with officer Kenny Dietrich.

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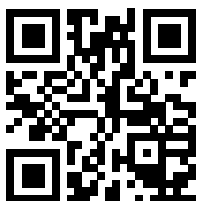
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Gesture of love to an Orlando victim's family

ORLANDO, Fla.

“It’s been a while, man,” said my friend Jose Luis Cintrón, who lives in Fort Worth, Texas.

Thirty years, to be exact.

Sadly, I called after all these years because my friend just lost his nephew, Peter “Ommy” Gonzalez-

Cruz, in the mass shooting that claimed 49 lives at a gay nightclub in Orlando.

Back in 1986 — my senior year at Keller High School, north

of Fort Worth — Cintrón and I were part of a tight-knit group of friends that included his twin brother, Tony, and my brother, Scott.

We roamed the same school hallways. We worked together at a McDonald’s restaurant. On our off nights, we hung out — seeing movies like “Top Gun” and “Ferris Bueller’s Day Off,” playing co-ed softball and cruising in our super-cool cars, such as the gray 1980 Ford Pinto with manual transmission that Scott and I shared.

“Those were fun days,” Cintrón said as we reminisced before talking about his family’s unfathomable loss.

Through the magic of Facebook, my friend and I reconnected online a few years ago.

Both of us still share a passion for the Texas Rangers. We used to listen

See **VICTIM**, Page 4

House church: faith beyond brick and mortar

BY KATIE JONES | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

OKLAHOMA CITY — For some Christians, going to church means going into their own living room.

That’s where 26 souls gathered for worship on a recent Sunday — in this city of no fewer than 475 church buildings. They sang “A Common Love” and passed unleavened communion bread — homemade, gluten-free, honey-sweetened.

Then the 14 children eagerly lined up beside china-filled cabinets and a refrigerator adorned with artwork to load

their plates with doughnuts and casseroles — a breakfast-for-dinner meal.

Later they gathered on couches and chairs for more singing and discussed the topic “What’s a person worth?” Then they drank the cup of communion and closed in prayer.

The small community of Christians represents a growing trend in the U.S., according to the Barna Group. In a typical week, about 20 million adults attend a house church gathering, the faith-based research group found. Over a month, that number doubles to about

See **HOUSE CHURCH**, Page 10



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY KATIE JONES

House churches can provide in-depth Bible study and close relationships, advocates say.

In Orlando, a call for more openness, less fear

AFTER GAY NIGHTCLUB MASSACRE claims 49 lives, showing love to LGBT community a focus at Christian meeting in Florida.

BY BOBBY ROSS JR. | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

ORLANDO, Fla.

Sally Gary couldn’t come to Orlando and fail to visit the site of the gay nightclub massacre where 49 people died.

The founder of CenterPeace, a Dallas-based ministry that provides support and resources for people who experience same-sex attraction, said she felt compelled to pay her respects.

“I can’t imagine being here and not paying homage to the brothers and sisters who lost their lives there,” said Gary, a member of the Highland Oaks Church of Christ in Dallas.

Months before the nightclub attack, Gary accepted an invitation to speak at the Equip Conference in Orlando — a biennial event formerly known as the Spiritual Growth Workshop.

The nation’s worst mass shooting provided “a very in-your-face reminder” of the urgency for churches to become more open and less fearful in discussing LGBT issues, Gary said.

Her message to the crowds that filled her three sessions: The person experiencing same-sex attraction isn’t a guy in a rainbow-colored bikini marching in a gay pride parade.

“It’s me,” said Gary, who grew up in the Tenth and Broad Street Church of Christ in Wichita Falls, Texas, and earned bachelor’s and master’s degrees

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BOBBY ROSS JR.

Larry Cline, codirector of the Equip Conference in Orlando, Fla., prays with Sally Gary of the CenterPeace ministry before she speaks on a Christian response to gays and lesbians.



Gary

VICTIM: 'That's what hurts the most, the way he was taken from us'

FROM PAGE 3

to the late-night play-by-play as we mopped floors, cleaned grills and tried, unsuccessfully, to wash onion and pickle smells off our fingers.

Now, we often trade comments on our favorite team's ups and downs. We don't, however, engage in a lot of serious talk.

That changed after a gunman named Omar Mateen, who pledged allegiance to the Islamic State, opened fire on the Pulse nightclub on June 12.

"My nephew was at that club last night, Bobby," Cintrón shared on my Facebook page the Sunday of the shooting. "My sister has not heard from him yet. She went to one of the three hospitals where the injured were taken, but they told her he was not at that one. Praying while waiting for an update."



Cintrón

After a tragedy such as the Orlando massacre, so many of us want to preach. We want to defend gun ownership or rail against it. We want to debate whether Islam is an inherently violent religion or not. We want to argue over what the Bible says — or doesn't say — about homosexuality.

Too often, we forget to focus on the victims and their loved ones.

In this case, my friend helped me do that.

For 12 hours, Bernadette Cruz — my friend's sister — feared the

worst but held out hope that her son somehow might be alive.

But Cruz finally learned from authorities that her 22-year-old son had died from a single bullet to the head. He still had vital signs when taken from the club to a hospital, but he was brain dead, my friend said.

"That was the most painful process," Cintrón said of the excruciating wait for any information at all on his nephew's whereabouts or condition.

Cintrón burst into tears at the news.

"I understand that we all have to go someday, but he didn't deserve that. None of them deserved that," my friend said. "That's what hurts the most, the way he was taken from us."

Gonzalez-Cruz hadn't planned to go to the club that night. He and a female friend had spent the day at the beach. He was home relaxing when his best friend, Gilberto Ramon Silva Menendez, 25, stopped by and urged him to go to Pulse because it was a Latin theme night, Cintrón said. Gonzalez-Cruz's friend lost his life, too, in the terrorist attack.

Asked what his nephew was like, Cintrón replied: "He was the life of the party, man. He would make everybody laugh. He was also into fashion, you know. He would not let his mom go out in the street looking bad. If she didn't have her hair brushed or looking good, he would not let her go out of the house."

Gonzalez-Cruz worked at a UPS store, where he was popular with customers. He helped his mother with rent and other bills and was saving money to help send his



PHOTO PROVIDED BY FAMILY

Orlando victim Peter "Ommy" Gonzalez-Cruz, with grandmother Marianela Cruz.

11-year-old brother, Gabriel Omar, to college someday. After Gonzalez-Cruz's death, UPS pledged to fulfill his dream and pay for his brother's future education.

Weeks later, Cintrón struggles with the senselessness of his loved one's death. "He was just starting to live his life," my friend said of his nephew. "He had a good life ahead of him."

Dan Cooper preaches for the Pitman Church of Christ in Sewell, N.J., south of Philadelphia.

After the Orlando attack — 1,000 miles from the Pitman church building — Cooper sought to help.

"Absolutely no political motivation ... only the compassion of Jesus," he wrote on Facebook. "Looking to send

a check to support families following the massacre and time of horrendous loss in Orlando. ... Any suggestions?"

I mentioned that my high school friend had lost his nephew.

Within days, the Pitman church sent a \$500 check in care of Cintrón to benefit Gonzalez-Cruz's mother.

The gift came with no strings attached. It benefited a family with no connections, as far as I know, to Churches of Christ.

Pitman church members gave the money purely as an act of love.

"While we still do not understand the motives of the shooter and maybe never will, we do understand that dozens of families and hundreds of people have had their world turned upside down," Cooper wrote in the church bulletin.

My friend described the New Jersey's congregation gesture as "awesome." The same day the check arrived, he wrote a thank-you note, which Cooper shared with me.

"My sister has been very strong since the loss of her son Peter Ommy," Cintrón said in the note, "but she is going through the stages, and some days are better than others. Prayers are welcome, because I am a firm believer that God heals through prayers. May God continue blessing you, your church and its members, always!"

Amen, my friend.

It's about time we got the old gang together again. Perhaps next time the Rangers are in town?

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AUGUST 2016

ALABAMA

BIRMINGHAM — A Barney head pops out of the dark and lunges at the teenage girls entering the basement. Their initial laughter turns to panic as Darby Risner, a 15-year-old member of the Roebuck Parkway Church of Christ, realizes the giant purple-and-white mask won't come off her head.

After multiple attempts to pull the Barney head off Risner, a group of her friends took a trip to a fire station for urgent assistance. The firefighters burst into laughter when they saw the walking Barney-girl but finally pried off the mask after an hour of Risner's imprisonment.

"Through all of it, it was really painful," Risner said of the recent experience, which went viral online, and added that she has no intention of putting the mask back on.



PHOTO PROVIDED

Darby Risner with firefighters who were helping to take the mask off.

KENTUCKY

WILLIAMSTOWN — A life-size Noah's Ark, designed and sponsored by Answers in Genesis, opened to visitors in early July. The \$100 million Ark Encounter required 12 years of planning.

"I think it's a great thing for the kingdom of God and the community in general," said Eric Nease, children's minister for the Sherman Church of Christ in Dry Ridge, Ky., about 20 minutes from the 800-acre theme park. "I believe the main objective is to bring out the Christian message, which is the truth of God's Word — the Bible."

Thousands gravitated to the attraction on its opening day, July 7.

OKLAHOMA

OKLAHOMA CITY — David Parrett, a member of the Memorial Road Church of Christ, played a key role in Coastal Carolina University's win over Texas Tech University



PHOTOS BY BELINDA LARSEN, BUTLER COUNTY TIMES-GAZETTE (KAN.)

Kansas children put on 'The Armor of God' at Bible Boot Camp

Children at the Augusta Church of Christ in Kansas carry flags as part of "The Armor of God" Bible Boot Camp. The Vacation Bible School theme was based on Ephesians 6:11-18, reported Belinda Larsen of the *Butler County Times-Gazette*.

Lessons centered on putting on the full armor of God and taking a stand against evil, said Larsen, a member of the Augusta church. Soldiers in the Lord's army have the Sword of the Spirit, the Helmet of Salvation, the Breastplate of Righteousness, the Belt of Truth and feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the Gospel of Peace, the newspaper noted.

"We have dedicated members who work hard each year on the Vacation Bible School session," Larsen said.



to reach the College World Series championship round.

The part-time catcher, who entered the game with a batting average of .130, went 2-for-4 to propel the team to a 7-5 victory in Omaha, Neb.

**Parrett**

"He's the most fit guy, the hardest-working guy, the most positive young man," coach Gary Gilmore said of Parrett, son of Oklahoma Christian University alumni, to MLB.com.

After the game, Parrett said, "This group of guys doesn't want to say goodbye to each other yet, so living for tomorrow and playing today has been awesome."

The team went on to claim the first NCAA title in the program's history.

TENNESSEE

NASHVILLE — Western Hills Church of Christ members stepped out of their red-and-tan church building on a recent Sunday and took the Gospel to the community.

The 300-member congregation split into groups to cook breakfast for homeless men and women, visit people in nursing homes, do yard work for senior citizens, deliver food to shut-ins and children in need and replenish a local food pantry.

"What a wonderful day when the church left the building," Charline Greer, the church's secretary, said in a report describing the work day.

WEST VIRGINIA

BELLE — Flash floods ravaged central and southeast West Virginia, leaving churches rushing to help communities clean up and rebuild.

Plastic totes and bleach topped the list of most-wanted items as the floodwaters receded, Joseph Pauley and Matthew Benefield reported.

Pauley, minister for the Belle Church of Christ, and Benefield, who preaches at the North Beckley Church of Christ, focused on supplying physical needs such as food, water, totes and bleach as well as an emotional support system.



PHOTO PROVIDED BY CHURCHES OF CHRIST DISASTER RELIEF EFFORT

Churches helped after recent flooding devastated parts of West Virginia.

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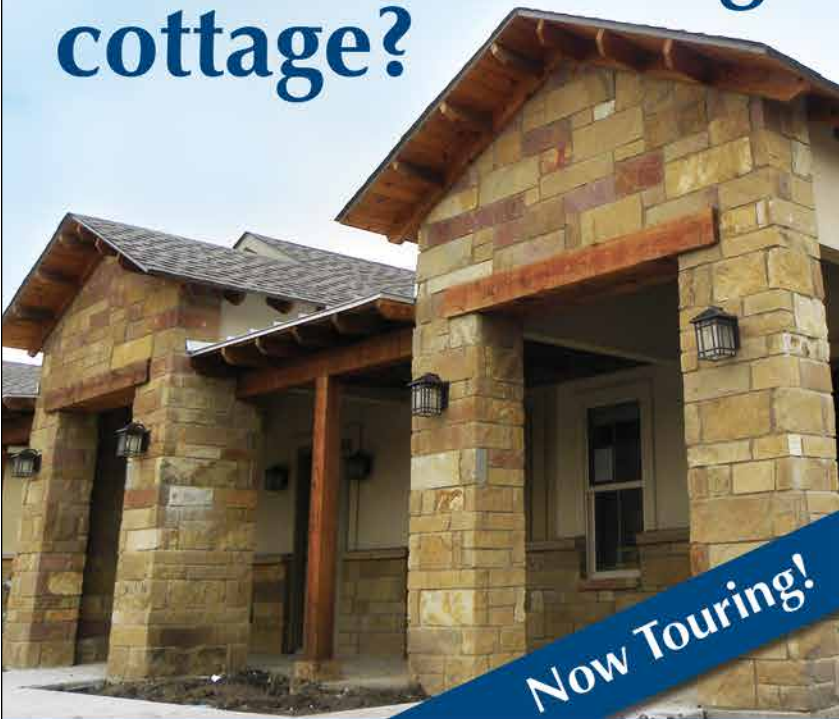
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St. Louis Metropolitan Church of Christ members and children gather outside the congregation’s temporary meeting place, between a corner grocery and a hair salon.



Minister Christopher Mitchell preaches on “The Transformative Truth of Trouble” on a recent Sunday, with his text from Romans 8:28-29.



Church members pray during a recent Sunday morning assembly.

After fire, light still shines

ST. LOUIS CHURCH *that ‘lost everything’ seeks God’s guidance – and funding*

BY BOBBY ROSS JR. | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

ST. LOUIS

A fire destroyed the leased storefront facility where the St. Louis Metropolitan Church of Christ met for more than a decade. But amid the charred debris, an imprint of a cross remained on a wall — a symbol of hope. “God let us know he’s still in control,” member Tywana Thomas said. The church — which has 23 people on its roll — has clung to that assurance since the Jan. 27 fire. The blaze ignited when the building’s owner fell asleep while cooking. Total losses — all uninsured — totaled \$30,000 for a congregation already struggling financially, minister Christopher Mitchell said. “I’m still grieving,” member Angelina Petty said. “We lost everything. We didn’t lose our faith, but we lost every physical thing.” Among the items lost: chairs, song books, Bibles, audiovisual equipment and computers. Leaders of other St. Louis-area Churches of Christ “have really done a wonderful job ... to help get us on our feet,” said Mitchell, a graduate of Southwestern Christian College in Terrell, Texas. “It’s still a struggle, but not as difficult as it was. We’re getting better.” Specific congregations mentioned by the preacher include the Central Church of Christ in St. Louis; the Ferguson Heights Church of Christ in Ferguson, Mo.; the North Hills Church of Christ in St. Louis;



PHOTOS BY BOBBY ROSS JR.

Plywood covers the front of the church’s former meeting place, which went up in flames Jan. 27.

the Maryland Heights Church of Christ in Missouri; and the Centerville Church of Christ in Illinois. Nearly six months after the fire, the church meets temporarily in a wedding banquet hall between a corner grocery and a barber and beauty shop. Leaders pray for God’s guidance in developing a permanent vision — and funding — for sharing Jesus with their inner-city community. The St. Louis-area Florissant Church of Christ provided the initial funding for the urban church plant, which launched in 2003. “The success at this juncture lies in the realm of God being with us,” Mitchell said, “and holding together that nucleus of people who are dedicated and called to ... the work in St. Louis, which is so desperately needed at this time.”

HOW TO HELP: For more information, contact minister Christopher Mitchell at (314) 704-1598.

Thousands gather to Reach the lost

INTERNATIONAL CHURCHES OF CHRIST look toward a promising future while acknowledging sins of the past.

ST. LOUIS

In the Dome at America's Center, where football fans once gathered to watch the St. Louis Rams, more than 18,000 souls sang praises to the Lord — including an uplifting, a cappella rendition of “On Zion’s Glorious Summit.”

The North American Discipleship Summit, REACH2016, a gathering of the International Churches of Christ, brought together “a numerous host redeemed by blood” (as the song notes) from 173 congregations and 66 nations. Other Summits are taking place this year in Asia, Africa, South America and Australia. The fellowship, known as the ICOC, has roots in Churches of Christ, though our fellowships parted

Road Notes



Lynn McMillon

ways in the late-1980s.

My wife, Joy, and I attended this year’s Summit at the gracious invitation of Roger Lamb, president and editor of *Disciples Today*, the online magazine of the ICOC.

We found a noticeably diverse audience — in terms of ethnicity, nationality, age and socioeconomic levels. More than half of the participants were singles, college-age adults, teens and children. Attendees paid from \$100 to \$225 to defray expenses, depending on age group and date of registration.

You don’t do a lot of handshaking at ICOC conferences, we learned. Everybody hugs here — yes, everybody.

For two full days, we heard a wide variety of speakers in classes and large, combined sessions on the theme “Reach.” Each had a pervasive emphasis on Scripture, stressing the need to reach out to the unsaved and to live in obedience to God’s Word. Nearly every session emphasized the importance of baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

One unique part of the conference was “Upside Down,” a Broadway-style musical written by ICOC mem-



During the ICOC’s REACH2016 conference, participants display flags of the states and nations they represent.

bers Steven Johnson and Sherwin Mackintosh and based on the book of Acts, first performed in 1987 in Boston. The performance included an onstage baptism in which characters were immersed — recreating the dramatic conversion stories of the Ethiopian, Simon the magician and Cornelius, to name a few. The audience applauded enthusiastically each time. (I understand the writers’ decision not to recreate the 3,000 baptisms at the Day of Pentecost, however. Had they done so, I’m pretty sure we’d still be there watching the performance.)

We had meaningful discussions with several ICOC evangelists and leaders, including Todd and Patty Assad, Steve and Leigh Kinnard, Larry and Mary Lou Craig, Mike and Anne-Brigitte Taliaferro, Wade and Debbie Cook, Robert and Michelle Carrillo and Randy and Linda Moon.

Nearly every person we talked with — elders, ministers, members — expressed sadness, regret and remorse over what they called the movement’s “sins of the past.” They spoke openly about “God’s discipline” during the crisis of 2001-2003, which saw the fellowship’s near demise. Membership plummeted from a high of 135,000 to about 90,000. But it is rising once again, members say, adding that they feel their fellowship is in a much healthier place.

Gone is a structure of control, they told us. Gone also are the discipling abuses that hurt many members — recounted now by many ex-members.

As we heard the ICOC members’ painfully candid reflections upon their movement, it made us reflect upon our own shortcomings.

Following the pattern they see in Scripture, ICOC congregations now have elders who lead local, autonomous churches and do not assert authority over other congregations. Ninety-six percent of their churches have freely chosen to commit, cooperate and collaborate with each other in missions and benevolence.

There is a strong spirit of sacrifice and generosity among many of the members. From freewill contributions, ICOC congregations operate a ministry called HOPE Worldwide. Nearly 65 percent of the fellowship’s churches support this ministry, which also receives contributions from corporations including Coca-Cola. HOPE Worldwide has an annual budget of more than \$25 million and provides relief to suffering

souls around the globe.

Of course, differences remain between ICOC congregations and our fellowship, what we sometimes call “mainline” Churches of Christ. But these differences aren’t as pronounced as they were years ago. I believe we share the heart of the Gospel — “one body and one Spirit ... one Lord, one faith, one baptism,” as we read in Ephesians 4.

Joy and I were convicted anew by compelling, Bible-based preaching. We were inspired to reach out to people around us who do not know Jesus.

So, on the flight back to Oklahoma City, I did something I might not have normally done on a plane. I responded to

the talkative young person next to me and invited him to church. And I plan to follow up.

We are grateful for the invitation to connect at the Summit and for the chance to learn more about the ICOC — to further *The Christian Chronicle’s* mission to inform, inspire and connect our readers.



PHOTOS BY LYNN McMILLON

Teens listen during one of the HOPE Youth Corps sessions at Reach2016.

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HOUSE CHURCH: 'It's a pretty Scriptural thing to do'

FROM PAGE 3

43 million. Of that number, 19 percent say they attend both a traditional and a house church.

Matt Gambill grew up in Oklahoma City's Churches of Christ. After graduating from a Christian university



Gambill

and marrying, he began to feel that he was missing a connection in the pews.

"For me, there was something off," Gambill said, "so I was a little focused on, 'It's gotta be the building.'" He began

asking, "Is there a way to meet at homes where it's a little more intimate, a little more personal?"

In 2007 he formed a house church with some friends. Later his group joined with other groups and individuals. Now his family worships with a about 20 adults and 20 kids — rotating among three houses.

"Sometimes the meetings are just glorious, and there are other times we're like, 'That was the most awkward or weird time we had together,'" Gambill said, laughing as he described the house church experience. He has consulted with a church planter and attends conferences designed to help house churches grow.

He doesn't consider house churches to be the only way to worship God.

Instead, "we're just trying to practice our faith this way ... part of the larger Christian landscape."

AN ALTERNATIVE TO SCREEN TIME

In an increasingly digitized America — where people spend close to 11 hours per day staring at screens, according to a recent Nielsen report — house churches appeal to those seeking closer connections with fellow believers and God.

"People actually having intimate-meeting communities are few and far between," said Kent Smith, adjunct



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY KATIE JONES.

In house churches, "you have a smaller number of people, and we live in a fairly transient society," said Tod Vogt of Mission Alive, a church-planting ministry. "So what you gain in intimacy, in relationship ... you lose in organization and stability."

professor of missional formation at Abilene Christian University in Texas. "This move from a walkable world to a virtual world is creating a level of isolation and fragmentation in people that is unprecedented in history."

While house churches can help increase believers' sense of community, they require skill and care to maintain, Smith said.

"The skills that are required have to do with the ability to make decisions together," he said. In small groups, Christians must

commit "to working together and — having engaged in working together — to resolve the inevitable conflict that arises, together."

House churches can be fragile, said Tod Vogt, executive director of Mission Alive, a ministry that

has planted about 30 small congregations across the U.S.

"You have a smaller number of people, and we live in a fairly transient society," Vogt said. "So what you gain in intimacy, in relationship ... you lose in organization and stability."

WHEN OTHER OPTIONS ARE FEW

Across the U.S., several models of house churches exist, influenced by geography and demographics.

• **In Alaska**, some churches meet in homes because no other options

are available. Ruthie Knight moved to Valdez, Alaska — a town on Prince William Sound, population 4,000 — about 17 years ago. The only Church of Christ met in a couple's trailer home at the end of a cul-de-sac.

Knight said she felt comfortable there, stressing that the church isn't the building but the believers inside.

"It's a pretty Scriptural thing to do," she said, referencing first century congregations that met in homes. "There's a small-community kind of feel, and you get to know people a lot better. And when they are in need, you know that immediately. And when they need prayer, you know that, and you know exactly what to focus your prayer on."

The church of seven members now meets in a rented facility in Valdez, where Knight serves as mayor.

• **In Ellicott City, Md.**, 20 to 30 Christians meet with a home congregation, the Howard County Church of Christ — one of only two Churches of Christ in the county.

Elizabeth Ray, one of the members, said that being part of a small congregation keeps her accountable.

"I definitely was the person who, some Sundays, would play on my phone during church because I was bored," Ray said. "Or I would tell myself that I could multitask and listen while scrolling through



Knight

Facebook or playing a game.

"But now I can't get away with that, and it forces me to pay attention — which is definitely a good thing."

SPIRITUAL GROWTH OUTSIDE AUDITORIUMS

In Oklahoma City and other communities with large, brick-and-mortar church buildings, house churches can allow Christians the chance for fellowship and discipling, church planters told *The Christian Chronicle*.

• **In York, Neb.**, Kerry Holton and his wife, Becky, launched a house church after they noticed that many of the students they taught at York College — a school associated with Churches of Christ — weren't attending Sunday worship with them at the nearby East Hill Church of Christ.

"We studied and discussed the Scriptures, we worshiped together, and we ate lunch together every Sunday," Kerry Holton said. "Before long, there were more in our dining and living rooms than we could comfortably handle. It was a great and fruitful experience."

When the Holtons moved from small-town Nebraska to Chicago, they launched a house church-planting ministry "to reach college-age and young adults, in particular, who wanted God in their lives, who were willing to say yes to Jesus, but who had for whatever reason rejected organized religion," Kerry Holton said. He later launched Connect3Ministries, an effort to equip believers to engage their communities with the message of Christ.

• **In Nashville, Tenn.**, Larry Musick sees value in a hybrid approach to house-church fellowship. He has participated in house churches and small groups for more than 30 years — in states including Texas and Pennsylvania.

Currently, he's part of a small group that meets on Sunday afternoons for lunch and fellowship. The group's 10 Christians attend five different churches in the Nashville area and range in age from baby boomers to millennials.

They have lively discussions about controversial topics — the Black Lives Matter movement, how Christians can help the homeless

Old story
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SEE MORE REPORTS about the pros and cons of various approaches to reaching a changing society with a changeless message. Find "Old Story, New Century" under the "Series" tab at www.christianchronicle.org.

Tiny churches, big hearts



Katie Jones, *The Christian Chronicle's* editorial intern, has a special connection to one of the house churches featured in this report. At age 11, she and her family moved to Valdez, Alaska, and worshiped with a five-member congregation that met in a couple's trailer home. Eventually, the church rented space in a strip mall. She remembers a youth group from Soldotna, Alaska, making an eight-hour drive to help the church move locations, construct a sign and knock doors in their community of 4,000 people. Ten years later, while preparing this report for the *Chronicle*, she again visited a house church — this time in Oklahoma City. "And I fell in love with it," she writes in a personal column about the experience.

READ THE COLUMN and share your house church stories at www.christianchronicle.org.

and refugees, and how Christians can engage with Nashville's gay and transgender communities. While he values the time he spends in worship services and Bible classes, "these smaller gatherings offer opportunities for spiritual growth and fellowship that simply cannot easily occur in a church auditorium," Musick said.

HOUSE CHURCHES AND DISCIPLE-MAKERS
Workers with church-planting ministries see house churches as more than an alternative to congregations that meet under steeples. Through one-on-one training, house churches can produce leaders who give birth to multiple congregations. "What we want to do is form disciple-makers and church planters," said Seth Bouchelle, who lives in New York and works with Global City Mission Initiative.



Bouchelle

Bouchelle, who grew up in Churches of Christ and graduated from Abilene Christian University, works with immigrant communities in New York — from Albanians to Koreans to Pakistanis — and helps them form small congregations among the city's 8.4 million souls. Rarely are they "house churches," he said, as the city's tiny apartments necessitate meeting in coffee shops, diners and public parks. Since immigrants tend to be transitory, having the skills to plant new churches can lead to future communities of faith in other cities — and other countries, Bouchelle said,

noting a recent example of a South Korean native who returned to his home country and planted a church in its capital, Seoul. In Colorado, Hobby Chapin and his family work to plant churches in Brighton, about 30 minutes northeast of Denver. They started working with Mission Alive in 2006 and now partner with LK10, a community of believers that takes its name from the 10th chapter of Luke. Chapin, the son of a third-generation preacher for Churches of Christ, seeks "people of peace," following the model established by Jesus when he sent out 72 disciples in Luke 10. Chapin helps train the people he finds to share Jesus in their communities. In 2009, Chapin baptized Jason Lillich, who grew up going to church but spent many years "running from God," he told the *Chronicle*. Being part of a house church helped strengthen his faith and deepen his relationship with his heavenly Father. He's not sure that would have happened inside a brick-and-mortar church building.

"In a larger church we still gravitate toward those we are comfortable around," Lillich said. "You do things corporately in the church, and then you don't see them for another week." Daily interactions — getting together to pray with believers from his house church and other house churches Chapin works with — played a role in Lillich's decision to be baptized, he said. In other churches, he added, "people have a tendency to save things until Sunday."

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After Sunday worship, members of the Church of Christ at Mountain View march.

Church marches to police station — not to protest but to mourn

THREE OF FIVE SLAIN OFFICERS had prayed with members of the Mountain View Church of Christ, which works to heal racial tension in Dallas.

BY KATIE JONES | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

After the shooting deaths of five Dallas police officers during a protest march, members of the Church of Christ at Mountain View grieved not only for their city but also for men they had come to know and respect.

The 700-soul, predominantly black congregation meets across the street from the city's Southwest Patrol Division, where three of the slain officers — Lorne Ahrens, Michael Krol and Patrick Zammarripa — were stationed. Last year, the officers participated in a prayer service at the church building, minister J.K. Hamilton said.

"When there were some initial acts of injustice and initial police shootings — citizens dying by the hand of police — we wanted to develop a relationship with the department for education about the procedure and protocol on being stopped," Hamilton said.

That desire led to increased interaction between the church and police. In recent months, the station's chief offered church members the chance to ride along with

officers, giving them a "peek behind the curtain ... another perspective on law enforcement," Hamilton said.

In the days before the July 7 protest in Dallas, as people across the country expressed anger and frustration after back-to-back police shootings in Louisiana and Minnesota,

Hamilton prepared to preach on how Christians should battle injustices in a godly way.

"The Kingdom is not of this

world," he said. "Christians are not of this world. We don't fight like the world fights."

After learning of the officers' deaths, church members once again invited the police to join them for prayers. After Sunday worship, they marched to the patrol station — not to protest but to join the police in mourning.

"There's a pull for Christians — especially among African-Americans — there's a pull to choose a side," Hamilton said. "Society will pressure you ... to pick a side. Either you're going to be on the side of law enforcement or you're going to be on the side of African-Americans who were treated unjustly.

"Well, the solution to that is, God says, 'You stay on my side. And when you stay on my side, you love whom I love. You give grace to who I give grace to.'"

In Baton Rouge, 'we need to stand united'

After three police officers are killed just blocks from a Church of Christ on a Sunday morning, ministers speak out against injustice. Read the story at www.christianchronicle.org.



Hamilton

DALLAS: 'If Paul were here ... he would say Christian lives matter'

FROM PAGE 1

we know that the God that we have gathered to worship is never overwhelmed," he told Prestoncrest members, citing Psalm 46:1: "God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble."

Rather than a normal sermon, Dabbs organized a panel discussion of Prestoncrest members that included Dallas City Council member Adam McGough, Project In-vizible co-founder Oliver Johnson and fellow minister Gary Cochran.

Part of the problem, McGough said, is that Americans have forgotten how to listen to each other.

"When you're watching our news outlets and our politicians, it's all about who's talking and making the next, best point," he said.

Oliver agreed: "If we don't actively listen to each other, we can't really talk and exchange ideas and understand each other's perspective. And it destroys the conversation."

McGough advocated listening to God first and then developing real plans to tackle society's ills.

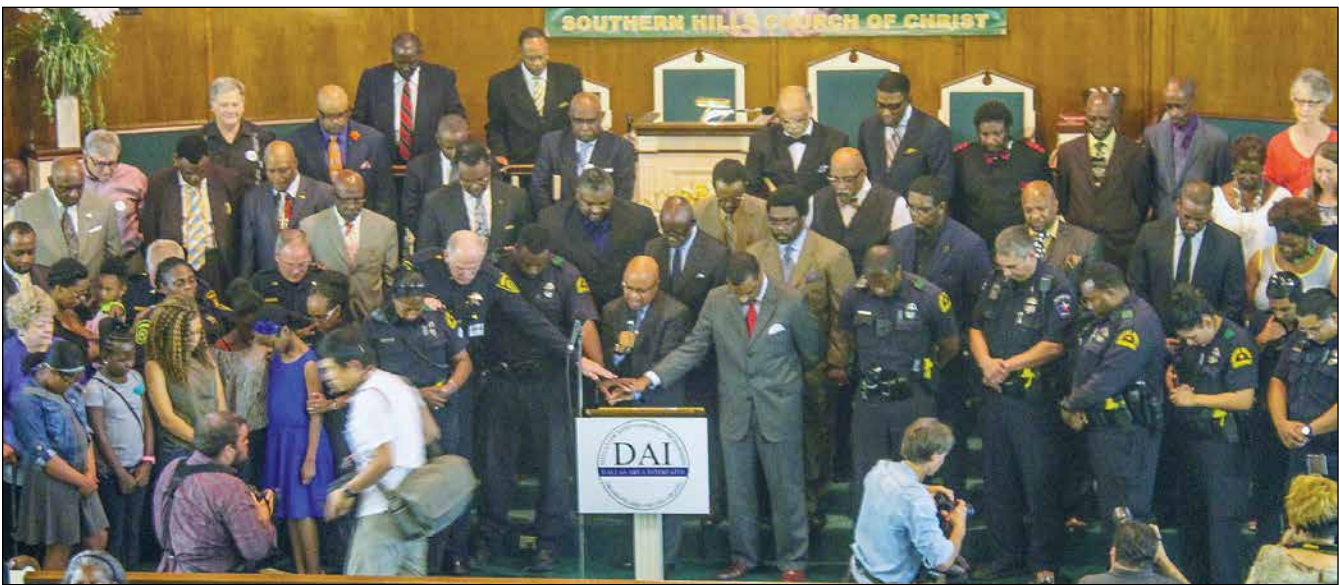
"When we serve in our Christian walk, often we have a compulsion to give a dollar to the panhandler," the councilman said. "We work on a coat drive or a turkey drive — wonderful, great things — but we're not moving the needle strategically."

Cochran suggested that the solution starts with forming authentic relationships with people outside church members' normal comfort zones.

"Jesus was incarnate. He had a great place to hang out, but he didn't," Cochran said. "He chose to come to a very dirty place — a place with hurt and pain — and said, 'I want to provide you with a glimpse of heaven.'"

'HOPE IN A HOSTILE COUNTRY'

At the Cedar Crest Church of Christ in Dallas, minister Jon W. Morrison spoke that Sunday morning on "Holding On to Hope in



Carl Sherman prays for law enforcement officers and young people at a citywide service at the Southern Hills Church of Christ.

a Hostile Country." Morrison used as his main text Genesis 39:1-6, which describes Joseph's experience as a slave for an Egyptian master.

"While our troubles are often painful and unwelcome, God has a unique way of using the troubles that we endure and the tragedies that we experience to shape us individually and as a nation," Morrison said, seeking to reassure Cedar Crest members.

Later in the sermon, the preacher told the predominantly black congregation: "You may feel disenfranchised economically. You may feel disadvantaged socially. You may feel disqualified politically. You may feel discouraged personally. You may feel discriminated against racially. But God is still with us, and God is still with you."

After the Cedar Crest assembly, members voiced conflicted feelings.

"It's just sad for Dallas that it happened because violence is not the answer," said Christie Moore, 41, mother of a 19-year-old son named Devonte. "I mean, it's heartbreaking."

"But you do notice that something has to change when it comes to the way police do things when they're pulling over people, in particular those

who are black men," Moore added.

Georgia Shelton, 70, said she wonders about the gunman — Micah Johnson, who spent six years in the Army Reserves and deployed to Afghanistan — and "what type of mind he was in to do that."

Shelton said she hates that Dallas police officers were targeted for "something that happened somewhere else."

"The world has gotten so confused now, and then (people) done took the Lord out of their life," said Shelton, a Cedar Crest member for 53 years. "They don't think about the consequences they're going to have to pay. I just think that's so sad, and I hate it for everyone."

A PRAYER FOR OFFICERS

That Sunday night, the Southern Hills Church of Christ in Dallas hosted a previously planned citywide revival service.

As part of that assembly, organizers invited Carl Sherman, a Church of Christ minister and mayor of the Dallas suburb of DeSoto, to lead a special prayer for law enforcement officers.

"If you believe like I do that God is still in control, then you know that, as Joseph said, 'What they meant for evil, God meant for good,'" Sherman said in his opening remarks. "Good will always reign over evil."

A few dozen police officers from Dallas and other area cities attended the service in uniform and were invited on stage.

"Now, blue lives matter, and so do black lives matter," Sherman said in praising the officers for their law enforcement service and "running into the bullets to protect us."

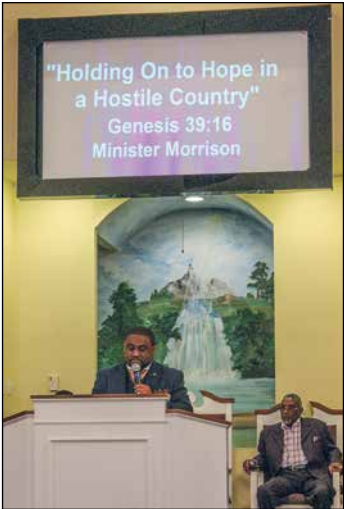
"If Paul were here today, he would say Christian lives matter," the mayor/minister added.

Sherman characterized "over 90 percent" of officers as good.

However, the father of three black sons and two daughters added: "It's not the good cops that I'm afraid of. I pray to God that this nation will recognize that it's only because of video that we've been able to see what many have cried about for many years."



Dallas member: 'We just kept running'
See a video of Gregory Tease recounting sniper opening fire at www.christianchronicle.org.



PHOTOS BY BOBBY ROSS JR.

Jon W. Morrison preaches on "Holding On to Hope in a Hostile Country" at the Cedar Crest Church of Christ in Dallas.

SPOTLIGHT

Preaching, teaching in Lithuania's language

KAUNAS, Lithuania — Vladimir Rancev has taught Bible courses in locales from Odessa, Ukraine, to San Cristóbal, Mexico.

But now the minister and tour guide is focused on his home nation, Lithuania — specifically, the country's second-largest city, Kaunas, a center of Lithuanian culture and education with a population of about 400,000.

In August 2014 Rancev began making regular visits to Kaunas — several times per month — “because I consider it my duty to preach the Gospel there,” he said. “I also believe that it is very important to preach and teach the Gospel in people's own language.”

He has participated in mission trips to other nations — as far away as Mexico — and has visited and preached for the Enterprise Boulevard Church of Christ in Lake Charles, La., which sends members to Lithuania to assist in the work there. The church recently became Rancev's supporting congregation as he seeks to move into full-time ministry, said church member Douglas Berry.

In addition to working with a small number of believers in Kaunas, Rancev plans to offer English lessons to those interested as a means of introducing them to the Gospel.

WEBSITE: www.blvdchurchofchrist.org



PHOTO PROVIDED

Vladimir Rancev, center, shares a laugh with fellow minister Ilia Amosov, left, and Alexey Yakovlev at Camp Ruta, a church-run camp in Lithuania.



PHOTO PROVIDED BY MANI PAGIDIPALLI

Indian Christians baptize, plant churches in hard-to-reach Bihar

In India, believers line up to witness a baptism — one of 74 during a recent weekend, said Dr. Mani Pagidipalli, a Christian physician and evangelist in the country's Andhra Pradesh state. The baptisms, which resulted from the work of preacher-training students, also resulted in the birth of four new Churches of Christ — two in Bihar, a state in northern India. Bihar has a large Muslim population and has been the site of attacks against Christians by radical Hindus. Thirty-three of the newly baptized believers came from Muslim backgrounds, Pagidipalli said. The evangelist thanked the preaching students and praised “the open hearts and minds of these tender souls.”

CHAD

BISSO — More than 130 people gathered in this Central African village for a recent gospel meeting, joined by 16 evangelists from the region.

The village lacks potable water and adequate healthcare facilities. The evangelists and some attendees traveled by bus to reach the village. Two Chadian church members paid for the transportation of about 20 participants.

“At the end, God protected all the travelers,” church members wrote in a report of the meeting. “Everybody went back home safely.”

In addition to strengthening the local Church of Christ in Bisso, the meeting yielded five baptisms, participants said.

MALI

BAMAKO — In this West African, predominantly Muslim nation, new souls are coming to Christ through campaigns of old-fashioned door knocking, says Peter Ofori.

Ofori, a native of Ghana, works with four other evangelists in Mali to introduce people in the nation of 15.3 million souls to Jesus.

“So far, two backsliding families have been gained back to the Lord,” Ofori said of a recent door-knocking campaign. “New contacts are registered (for Bible studies), from which we are expecting good results.”



PHOTO PROVIDED

Bob Young, right, with fellow speakers at the national conference in Peru.

PERU

LIMA — About 100 Christians gathered in this South American capital for a national conference, hosted by the Lucyana Church of Christ. The

conference focused on the Pastoral Epistles, Paul's letters to Timothy and Titus. Bob Young, a longtime missionary to Latin America, taught several sessions and preached on the conference's final night.

Young visits Latin America six to 10 times each year. During his trip to Peru, he spent a day at the International Bible Institute in Lima.

“Efforts such as the Bible Institute represent the maturing of the churches,” Young said, “as they accept the responsibility to evangelize in their own nation.”

RWANDA

MUSANZE — Doyle Kee, a minister in Geneva, Switzerland, joined six fellow European Christians for a six-day seminar in this East African town. The evangelists ministered to leaders from a network of churches known as the Church of the Rock. The churches' leaders embraced teachings about the New Testament church, Kee said, and two attendees were baptized.

In mourning city of Nice, France, believers find ‘real spiritual hunger’

BY ERIK TRYGGESTAD | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

Nice, a city of retirees and tourists on the French Riviera, is reeling after the Bastille Day attack that claimed 84 lives.

“A number of people have been in denial about the violence of Islamists living in France,” said Bren White, a former missionary to France who now oversees Operation French World, which focuses on church planting in French-speaking nations.

“Now fear is setting in,” said White, a member of the Laurel Church of Christ in Maryland. “Some people are taking courage. Some are opening up to message of Christ in a fresh way.”

There currently are no Churches of Christ in Nice, though the city once was home to a congregation of about 15 souls, planted by missionary Maurice Hall in the 1970s, White said. The closest congregation is in Marseille, two hours west of Nice.

Yann Opsitch, a French native and language professor at Abilene Christian University in Texas, compared the seaside city to Santa Barbara, Calif. Normally, he said,

Nice is “a beautiful place on the very blue Mediterranean” where people experience “a kind of daily enjoyment of the quiet, retiree life.”

White and his wife, Cheryl, visited Nice in 2007 to assess the possibility of restarting a Church of Christ there.

“We determined that a couple of young couples could probably get a congregation restarted in just a few years with focused, onsite effort,” he said. “There seemed to be some real spiritual hunger in the local population.”

As French Christians mourn the losses, they petition God on behalf of their nation.

“Words cannot describe the incredible pain of losing loved ones, friends and neighbors in such atrocious circumstances,” Opsitch said. “May we be a blessing to this beautiful town and its kind citizens. This can begin with our prayers.”

WEBSITE: www.ofwmissions.com



Opsitch

EUROPE: Attacks highlight need to serve refugees

FROM PAGE 1

the message of love and reconciliation of our Lord Jesus Christ,” said Melirrytos, whose husband, Alexander, ministers for the Omonia church. Eleni Melirrytos herself is the granddaughter of a refugee from Turkey, forced to flee to Greece from the Ottoman Empire in the 1920s.

Members of the Omonia church have opened their building to refugees from Syria and other Middle Eastern, predominantly Muslims nations. They cook meals, conduct English conversational classes and study the Bible with those interested.

“One refugee family told us they were taught that God lives in heaven,” Eleni Melirrytos said in a recent Dialogue with *The Christian Chronicle*. One member of the family told her that “you have shown us that God lives in our heart — and that has changed everything.”

In November, members of

Churches of Christ in Europe who serve refugees will gather in Athens for a Refugee Ministry Workshop, said Bill McDonough, a longtime missionary in Europe and Southeast Asia and director of the Arkansas-based nonprofit Partners in Progress.

In addition to participating in seminars on the specifics of relief ministries, attendees will meet with and serve meals to refugees in Athens. Dino Roussos, minister for the Glyfada Church of Christ in Athens, is organizing the program.

The latest attacks in Europe emphasize the need for such workshops, McDonough said.

In times such as these, Eleni Melirrytos added, Christians’ concerns for comfort and safety “need to be replaced with the urgency to infect people with the love of God.”

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Responsibilities: 1.) Food preparation; involving cutting and chopping of vegetables and meats. Measuring of flours, sugars, spices, milk, eggs, etc. for recipes as directed by the Kitchen Manager's 'Prep List'. 2.) Checking in and putting away food deliveries, as required. 3.) Maintaining kitchen inventory and stock levels. 4.) Laundering, folding, and storing towels and dish rags. 5.) Cooking and baking as directed by the Kitchen Manager. 6.) Stocking of Beverage Stations. 7.) Serve food. 8.) Constant sanitation of counters, kitchen preparation tables, Beverage Stations and food disposal areas. 9.) Washing of dishes, glasses, silverware, pots and pans used throughout the day. 10.) Put away all washed items. 11.) Remove trash and food waste from kitchen, as required. 12.) Join the Camp Yamhill team in the completion of miscellaneous projects, improvements, and maintenance, as directed by the Operations Manager, when groups are not on-site and during the reduced hour "off-season". 13.) Hours will vary, and are not always capable of being scheduled within a forty hour work week. 14.) Other duties as assigned by Operations and Kitchen Managers.

Personal Skills and Attributes: 1.) Willing to serve. 2.) Disciplined and self motivated. 3.) Strong ability to understand verbal and written communication. 4.) Outward behavior and appearance conducive to the position of Camp Assistant Cook.

Useful Prior Experience: Food handling experience.

Occupational Skills and Certifications, Capable of Acquiring: Oregon State Food Handlers License.

Physical Qualifications: Camp Yamhill operates as a youth camp and adult retreat center, and is located in a rural wilderness environment. The weather and terrain, as well as the living and operating conditions, are often hard and unforgiving. The successful applicant must be in excellent general health, with excellent (or corrected) vision, manual dexterity, hand eye-coordination, and strength. They must be capable of the following actions; pushing, pulling, grabbing, climbing and dead-lifting up to 80 pounds.

Religious and Moral Requirements: Camp Yamhill has a long and successful history operating as a Christian retreat for youth and adults. The successful applicant will be an active and faithful member of churches of Christ, with a reputation to match. They will supply positive recommendations regarding these qualities from local church leaders, and will pass a criminal background check.

(503)662.3710, manager@campyamhill.org
www.campyamhill.org



ABILENE CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

acu.edu

College of Arts and Sciences

Dr. Gregory Straughn, Dean
ACU Box 29210, Abilene, Texas 79699-9210

The **Department of Art and Design** invites applications for a nine-month, tenure-track position as assistant or associate professor beginning Fall 2016 to serve as program director and teach in its CIDA-accredited interior design program. Candidates are expected to have a terminal degree in interior design or architecture. Proficiency in computer design technology and demonstrated potential for teaching and scholarly endeavors is expected. Applicants must have strong communication skills and interest in the development of students. Preference will be given to applicants who have professional design experience, involvement in professional organizations, and who are NCIDQ credentialed. A portfolio of student and/or professional work may be requested. Information about the department is available at acu.edu/art and blogs.acu.edu/artanddesign.

The **Department of Political Science and Criminal Justice** invites applications for a tenure-track position in criminal justice beginning Fall 2016, offering excellent opportunities to contribute to the growing criminal justice program at ACU. The department and its pre-law program have a history of teaching, scholarship and service spanning more than 40 years. A master's degree in criminal justice or a related field is required, and a terminal degree is desired. Applicants should have strong skills in teaching, scholarship and mentoring students. Information about the department is available at acu.edu/politicalscience.

School of Information Technology and Computing

Dr. Brad Crisp, Dean, College of Business Administration
ACU Box 29353, Abilene, Texas 79699-9353

The **School of Information Technology and Computing (SITC)** invites applicants for an instructor or tenure-track faculty position beginning Fall 2016. SITC is a growing academic unit within the College of Business Administration and offers majors in computer science, digital entertainment technology (DET), information systems and information technology. The undergraduate computer science / computing theory and information technology programs are accredited by the Computing Accreditation Commission of ABET. The DET is an interdisciplinary major catering to students interested in game design, film production and animation. ACU's program was recently ranked 27th in the *Princeton Review's* top 50 game design programs in the nation. The SITC invites applications from faculty who can contribute to any of its programs,

with preference for those who have specific expertise related to digital entertainment and information technology. Faculty responsibilities include engaging with undergraduate students and colleagues in teaching, research and service. A terminal degree in a field related to the teaching discipline is preferred; a master's degree is acceptable if combined with significant professional experience and commitment to ongoing professional development. Information about the school is available at acu.edu/sitc.

Brown Library

Dr. Mark McCallon, Associate Dean for Library and Information Services, ACU Box 29208, Abilene, Texas 79699-9208

ACU's **Brown Library** invites applications for the position of digital design librarian. Candidates are expected to have demonstrated skill and leadership in creating user experiences through graphic design and interface development for websites and applications. Successful experience in leading or participating on teams to develop digital media for teaching and publication is preferred. To receive consideration, submit an application by Aug. 15, 2016. Information about Brown Library is available at acu.edu/library.

See acu.edu/academics/provost/positions.html for complete descriptions of these positions. In a letter to the appropriate dean or chair, applicants should address their qualifications for the position. They should include in the application a statement of how faith informs their teaching; a discussion of their spiritual journey; a curriculum vita; transcripts of all undergraduate and graduate work; and names, addresses and phone numbers of five references. Review of applicants will begin immediately and continue until the position is filled. Nominations of and applications from qualified women and minorities are especially encouraged.

ACU is affiliated with the fellowship of the Churches of Christ. All applicants must be professing Christians and be active, faithful members of a congregation of the Churches of Christ and deeply committed to service in Christian higher education. The mission of ACU is to educate students for Christian service and leadership throughout the world. ACU does not unlawfully discriminate in employment opportunities.



‘We rescue broken women’

FORMER PROSTITUTE RETURNS *to the streets – to pray and serve with Tennessee ministry.*

STORY, PHOTOS BY TED PARKS | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

CHATTANOOGA, Tenn.

‘T *here’s a girl. I think it was Rachel.”*

Pulling to the side of the road, three women in a sport-utility vehicle, Catrina Cabe, Kim Tomshack and Cindi Arendale, get out and open the hatchback. They embrace Rachel, a blonde woman in her mid-30s, and ask if there’s anything she needs. Clothes? A sandwich?

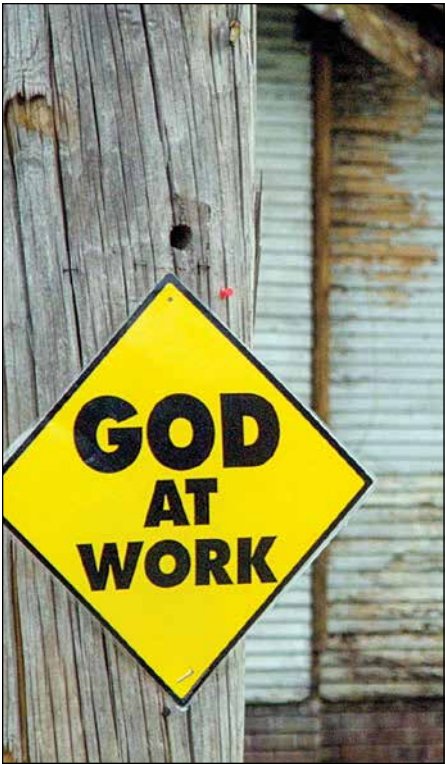
The blighted, broken buildings around them, near Main and Willow in southeast Chattanooga, reflect the lives of the women who walk these streets. The neighborhood, including a nearby gas station for tractor-trailer rigs, is a hub of prostitution.

The three women are members of the Mountain Creek Church of Christ, which meets in a northern suburb of Chattanooga, about 25 minutes away. Rachel says that the care she receives from them — especially Cabe — reminds her of the need to turn her life around. And that it *is* possible.

After all, Cabe explains, she and Rachel used to walk these streets together.

CONTINUED

The tattered shell of an abandoned building in southeast Chattanooga holds haunting memories for Catrina Cabe, who leads a ministry called Cry for the Broken.



A sign put up by Cry for the Broken conveys the ministry's hope for the neighborhood.



In a supply room at the Mountain Creek Church of Christ's building, Catrina Cabe sits next to items that volunteers with Cry for the Broken use in hygiene bags for the street.



Kim Tomshack, Cindi Arendale, Hannah Shrum and Catrina Cabe pray before distributing sandwiches and personal care items in the Willow neighborhood, communicating compassion on the street. "I wanted to show those women love in the way they understand love," Cabe says.

CONTINUED
On Willow and in a nearby, roach-infested flophouse where men took her, Cabe was known as "La-La."
"It's like a corner of hell," she remembers. "I felt invisible out here. I felt like the walking dead. I felt like I didn't exist to the rest of the world."
Now she leads a ministry called Cry for the Broken that takes her back to these streets.
"I'm out here, basically, looking for myself," Cabe says. "I'm looking for that other girl like me."

FROM PROSTITUTION TO SALVATION

The church members stop at a deserted, two-story building. Inside are rows of columns with peeling turquoise paint and graffitied walls with gaping holes. Outside, window gratings with broken panes line the facade.
"I used to think about hanging myself every day, right up there," Cabe says, pointing to a landing on the second floor, where a lone incandescent bulb still dangles. "Me and that light bulb, we made it."
Cabe grew up just south of Chattanooga in Ringgold, Ga. She ran away from home at age 13.
"I engaged in what is called 'survival sex'" for food and a place to stay, she says. But she also studied, and by

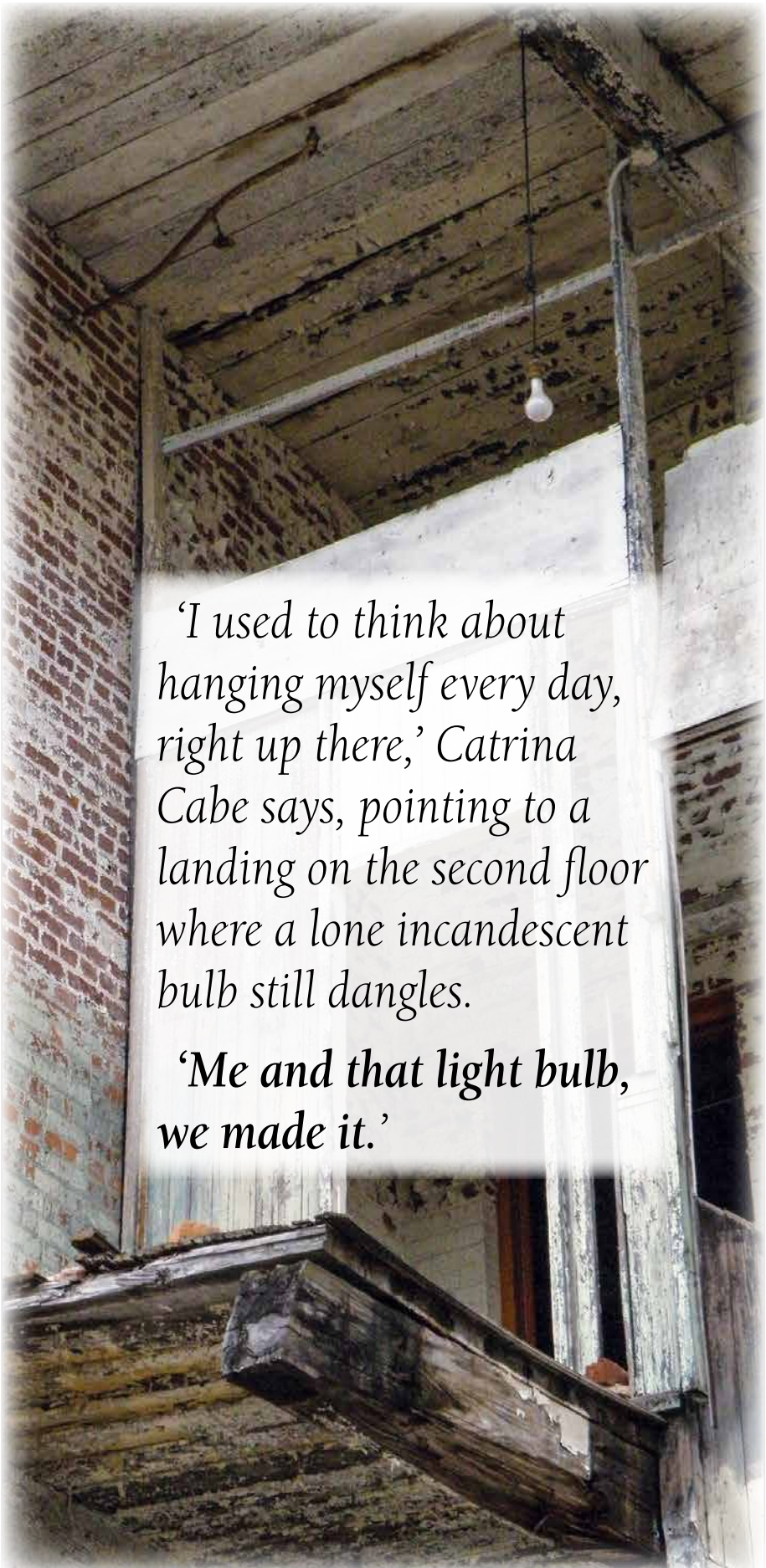
age 18 she had earned her GED high school equivalency degree and had a job. Waitressing at an omelet shop in Princeton, W.Va., she hoped to buy a car. She worked for a couple of weeks but saw no way to afford one.
"There were these women who would come in every night with these stacks and stacks of money," she remembers. "I found out that they worked at the strip club up the street."
Cabe quit the omelet shop and started dancing at the club. She worked as a dancer in five states over a period of eight years. Her dreams faded as she became a self-described "needle junkie," developing an addiction to opiate drugs. Then came meth. Then crack cocaine.
"My crack pipe was my pimp," she says. Her addiction controlled her life. Prostitution fueled her habit. Crack produces an intense high for three minutes, she explains. "You can stay high for 15 minutes for \$20." Then it's time to look for another \$20 customer.
She was in and out of jail. During one stint in Chattanooga's Silverdale Corrections Facility, she met Arendale and Tomshack at a Bible study.
Assigned to drug court — a program allowing inmates to serve part of their sentence in substance-rehabilitation programs — Cabe learned the skills

she needed to leave drugs behind. Now she has "a belly-button birthday" and "a sobriety birthday," she explains. She considers July 6, 2010, as the day her life off drugs began.
A new life in Christ followed. Cabe met her husband, Justin, after graduating from drug court. The couple was baptized at the Mountain Creek church on Easter Sunday, 2015.
A year later, focusing on the hanging light bulb above her, Cabe reflects on how easily her life could have ended here.
"Salvation to me doesn't just mean that I get to go to heaven," Cabe says. "It saves me from myself."
A HEART-SOFTENING MINISTRY
Launched in February 2015, Cry for the Broken serves prostitutes on the streets and ministers to women at Silverdale. Church members also serve at the Chattanooga Community Kitchen. They sometimes encounter the same women in all three places.
Every other Saturday, Cabe and her coworkers drive through the Willow Street neighborhoods.
"We go out into the highways and the hedges, and we do what we feel like Jesus would do if he were here," Cabe says. "We rescue broken women."
Cabe knows what to look for —

dishevelled women, without a purse, sometimes shoeless.
"They're looking into the cars desperately for somebody that they know or somebody that will lock eyes with them," she says. "People who aren't looking for prostitutes don't look at them."
The church members offer the women hygiene bags with toothbrushes, soap, lotion and body wash. They also give out peanut butter sandwiches — and undergarments.
Women on the street have few places to wash clothes, Cabe explains. If they stay in a place other prostitutes have been, they might find clothes that, even if not clean, are a better option than what they're wearing.
"Clothes become disposable," Cabe said. "Clothes get recycled throughout the prostitution world."
Don Hedrick, an elder of the Mountain Creek church, says the ministry "has caused a flurry of activity" among its members. Widows prepare sandwiches. The youth group packs the hygiene bags.
"People are so insulated and isolated from this kind of thing," Hedrick says. "Now they see poor kids, they see hungry kids. They don't see prostitutes."
"I think it really has impacted their hearts," he adds. "You've heard the

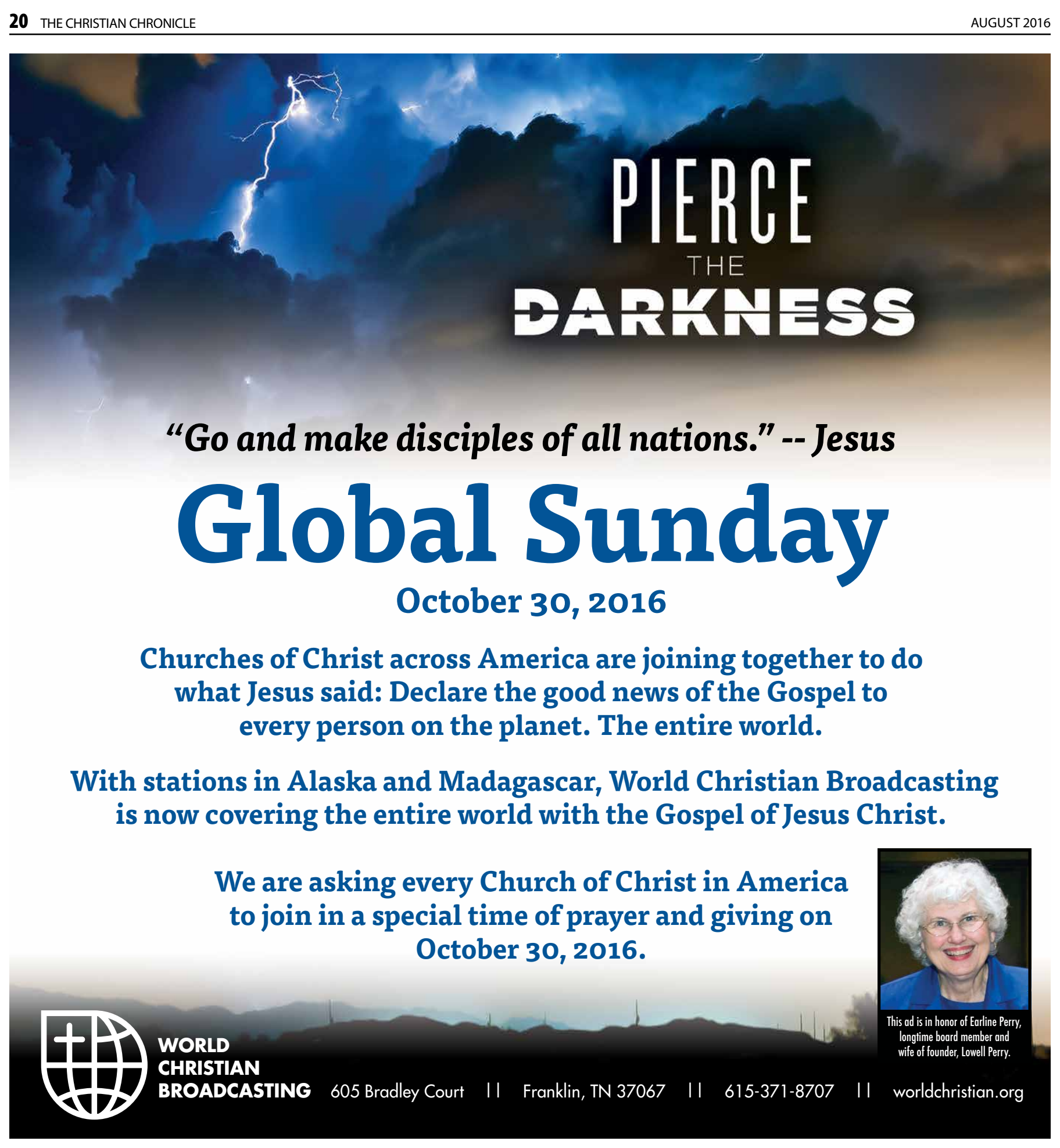
expression, 'hard-hearted.' Well I think this has been a softener."
'PLEASE JUST KEEP HER ... SAFE TONIGHT'
Back in the SUV, the three Christian women find Latania. Again, they open the hatchback and help her select clothes. Cabe pulls a card from a hygiene bag.
"If you want off these streets," Cabe says, "and you want to go somewhere safe, and you want to change everything — only if you want to, I'm not pushing you — hold onto that card."
Noticing Latania is sleeveless, Arendale takes off her jacket and gives it to her. Then the women pray.
"Please, just wrap your loving arms around her, and let her know that you care about her and we care about her," Arendale asks God.
"Please just keep her ... safe tonight."
Cabe gave a big stack of the cards to Chattanooga police, in hopes that they would offer them to any prostitutes they stop and question.
Lt. Eddy Chamberlin — whom Cabe called to wish happy birthday on the way to Willow — says that Cry for the Broken provides a lasting solution to problems conventional policing struggles to address.
"We can't arrest our way out of a lot of the problems," Chamberlin says.

"We have to start looking at other ways to problem-solve. And one of the best ... is to bring the experts in."
"Each one of these women means something. They have value. And to be able to help rescue them, that really makes an impact."
Cabe's own experience tells her that women on the street need love — not the cheap kind for sale, but the unconditional kind that affirms them as women made in God's image.
"These women don't get touched unless they're being paid," Cabe says. "They don't have anybody in their life that just loves them for them."
"If you think of a prostitute," Arendale echoes, "if you first see them as a person, ... there's a little girl in there."
Rachel, the blonde woman Cabe knows from her days as a prostitute, says she longs to leave her current life behind and join the Christian women.
"It breaks my heart, really," Rachel says, "because I'm not with them out here ministering. But it gives me hope."
As for Cabe, "She's an inspiration to me," Rachel says. "One day I see myself in her shoes."
Cabe replies, "I see you that way, too."
FOR MORE INFORMATION, see mtncreekcoc.com or search for "Cry for the Broken" on Facebook.



'I used to think about hanging myself every day, right up there,' Catrina Cabe says, pointing to a landing on the second floor where a lone incandescent bulb still dangles.

'Me and that light bulb, we made it.'



PIERCE THE DARKNESS

“Go and make disciples of all nations.” -- Jesus

Global Sunday

October 30, 2016

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'IF THIS IS NOT THE TIME to be Good Samaritans, then when?' asks a Christian woman caring for refugees in Greece

'We must cast out fear with perfect love'

BY LYNN McMILLON | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

Eleni Melirrytos is all about hospitality. A gifted cook and hostess extraordinaire, the longtime Christian in the historic city of Athens, Greece, teaches classes for fellow believers on the effective use of hospitality in service to the Lord of Hosts.

In the past year, Melirrytos and fellow members of the Omonia Church of Christ have faced the challenge of hosting refugees from the Middle East as they flee the region's brutal conflicts. The church itself is a multicultural family that includes natives of Greece, the U.S., the Philippines, Nigeria, Egypt, Ukraine, Bulgaria, Russia and more. Now the church feeds and cares for people from countries including Syria, Afghanistan, Iraq and Iran.

The refugees have a special place in the heart of Melirrytos, herself the granddaughter of a refugee from Turkey who fled in the midst of the 1920 genocide by the Ottoman Empire.

Melirrytos' mother grew up in Greece and became a Christian after studying a Bible given to her as a gift. Years later, Melirrytos taught the Gospel to her husband, Alexander, a former ship's captain who has ministered for the Omonia church for 26 years. The couple raised two children, Orestis and Danae.

Recently, Melirrytos shared with *The Christian Chronicle* her experiences as she and her church family serve as hosts for the hurting.

How did you get involved with refugee relief?

The Omonia Church of Christ in Athens was blessed by being in the right place in this critical time.

From the beginning of the refugee exodus and entry into the Greek islands and the mainland, the Omonia Christians have asked God to bring to us those who need help, a kind word, a warm hug and, above all, God's love.

Mytilene is the main island to receive refugees as they cross from Turkey to Greece. From there a man called and told us that a family with a 9-year-old boy made it to Athens and asked us to visit them and see how we could help. It was not long until each family brought to us another family

— until our church building was filled with the most loving, kind and peaceful people we have ever met.

How do you feel about working with Muslim refugees?

God is blessing us by bringing all these people to our doorsteps. They are not a threat. They are wonderful, kind people who need our help.

If this is not the time to be Good Samaritans, then when? We will regret it if we do not move away from misconceptions and bias and do not reach out to touch these people with God's love.

Above all, we will answer to God, who will ask us what we did with our resources, with his forgiveness and with his sacrificial love and mercy.

How do you make contact with the refugees?

Often, they find us.

The church building is open every day to provide English language classes, creative play for the children, counseling and Bible study. One day there were Afghani mothers with 16 children asking to come. When we asked them how they found out about this church, they said, "Someone told us on the bus."

We have loved getting to know the mothers — only one father survived; the other two died in the war — and these wonderful, sweet, beautiful children. Most of the children we've met speak English and are very well-mannered. They would put to shame many Western teenagers.

One by one, these families get asylum from countries in western and northern Europe — Spain, Portugal, Germany, Estonia — and God sends us more. We receive messages and calls from them as they move. One family told us, "We are in the Netherlands. We say hi to you and your church."

"Thank God. Thank Greece. We spent the best, happiest time with the Omonia church. We miss you. Come and visit us soon. We love you with the love of God."



PHOTO PROVIDED

At the Athens airport, Eleni Melirrytos, center, and husband Alexander, top left, get hugs from refugees preparing to depart for a new life in northern Europe.

What do you do for the refugees?

Our little building turns into a community haven during the week.

We gather early and buy groceries in the central market. Then we all come together and start cooking. Most of our Syrian ladies have taken over the Omonia church kitchen. They are the bosses and know every detail of how to manage the kitchen. It's not easy for me to give up of being the kitchen boss, but to watch them take charge of what they and their families eat is a huge joy.

After lunch, we have available English conversational classes. Young volunteers spend time playing creative games with the children — and there are a lot of them. We also make time for personal counseling.

When our Syrian friends come into the Omonia building they feel at home. The women cook, talk, laugh like nothing is wrong in this upside-down world. We close the kitchen door for them to remove their scarves so we can see their beautiful hair. They feel safe and trust us. The men quietly take orders from the women. They set up the dining area and run out to get last-minute things.

God must smile at this picture when he looks down. Nobody is afraid; nobody feels unwanted.

At the end of the day we leave with wings of hope and joy, and they leave with a sense of dignity and worth, which is not the norm in the camps.

We take them to the hospitals when needed. Recently a young Syrian woman miscarried her first baby. We stayed with her and her sweet husband and prayed for them. We shared that babies do not get lost. They have a name, and they are in heaven. The couple was comforted.

Do any of the refugees attend church services and activities?

Yes. We now have 25 to 30 refugees attending Sunday worship, and last month about 70 came to church activities. They are very open to the story of Jesus and understand the impact Jesus can have on their lives.

They love to hear about the living hope, the comfort, the joy and the peace Jesus has for everyone who comes to him. They love to hear the prodigal son story and ask if it is a real story. We respond, "Yes, it is a true story — your story and my story."

They ask about eternity, about the trinity. We have Arabic Bibles that Servant Group International, based in Nashville, Tenn., provides. We also have Christian Arabic-language material to share.

We do not call them refugees. They are much more than that. Their present status does not describe who they really are. They are people God loves. And they want

See **REFUGEES**, Page 22

Two books every minister should have!

The Funeral and Wedding Handbook

and

The Great Omission

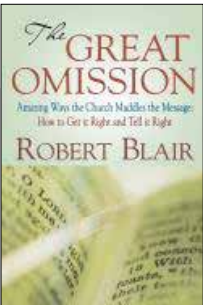
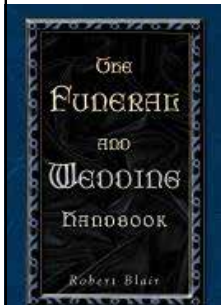
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REFUGEES: Syrians find home in church

FROM PAGE 21

us to tell them about God's love.

We often remind them that we are not trying to buy their faith with food or clothes. We are trying to touch them with Jesus' love and hope and to help them heal from the wounds created by war, by this confused and horrible world. We are here to administer the love of God. He is the one who provides change.

How do these refugees react to the care they receive from Christians?

They respond with gratitude, love and kindness. They say that when they come into the church building they are coming home to Syria. This is the greatest compliment to our limited efforts.

We are in love with them, and we are totally convinced that God will continue to shelter them and bring them to the next step of knowing him.

One refugee family told us they were taught that God lives in heaven, "but you have shown us that God lives in our hearts — and that has changed everything."

Many of them have told us they believe Jesus is the son of God, that he was resurrected and is now in heaven.

What touches you most about this situation?

The way they are open to this new reality of their lives among the Christians at Omonia.

We did not know these people four months ago. We were somewhat afraid and ignorant as to how to approach them, but it took only moments to find out that the key to handle their wounded and fragile hearts was God's love.

God has bonded us with an amazing love and warmth that cannot be described. These people are open to the love story of Jesus, his amazing work on the cross to take away sin forever and the possibility of eternity in heaven. I have never been happier sharing his grace and mercy.

As they get asylum and move to

where the United Nations places them, it is pure joy to see how excited they are. But there are many tears as they kiss us goodbye.

Recently a family with four children left for Portugal. There were not just tears, but sobbing. They would not let our hands go and their little, wonderful children could not kiss us enough. Their oldest son, about age 5, kissed my hand and then placed it to his forehead. It symbolized him giving us respect and then receiving our blessing.

Words are not enough to describe these moments.

What can followers of Christ do to help?

We first need to build awareness that God is calling us to share that the Gospel is for all, regardless of religion, regardless of birthplace.

We must cast out fear with perfect love. We may never know in this

life if someone we will see in heaven is there because we took the risk of reaching out. We must forget the prejudice — filtered through media and other sources — that poisons us against good and kind people

Pray for them and for us. And visit us. Money

is not the primary need. It is you. We need people to put their lives on pause for a month — or a year or two — and come extend hands and hearts to those who are so desperately seeking

to be loved as God loved us. Jesus put his life with the Father on pause to come to earth and be with us.

We handle their hearts gently. They have been wounded, betrayed and abused by this horrible war. They need to be handled like precious crystal — because this is simply how God sees them. He tasted death for them, and nobody can debate his work on the cross for all displaced people.

FOR MORE INFORMATION about helping refugees in Europe, email Emelirry@aol.com and see www.christianchronicle.org.



PHOTO PROVIDED

On the island of Mytilene, Eleni Melirrytos waves an orange jacket from the top of a car, attempting to signal an incoming boat of refugees traveling from Turkey.



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CHRISTIAN CAMPS

CENTRAL FLORIDA BIBLE CAMP

EUSTIS, Fla. — Eugene Kessinger wore many hats during his 72 years of life. He was a husband, a grandfather, an elder of the Mount Dora Church of Christ and Santa. On June 13, he replaced those hats with a halo.



Kessinger

Kessinger died after a roofing accident at the Central Florida Bible Camp. In his attempts to catch a friend who fell off a ladder above him, Kessinger broke his friend's fall and suffered a blood clot in his brain for three weeks before joining the Lord.

His wife, Carol Kessinger, said that "hearing about all the lives he touched now after he's gone gives me what I need to continue on."

HIGHER EDUCATION

FAULKNER UNIVERSITY

MONTGOMERY, Ala. — John Tyson, who most recently served as president of Rochester College in



Tyson

Michigan, is joining Faulkner University as vice president for advancement.

"John is a principled leader with a missional perspective," Faulkner President Mike Williams said. "Beyond John's professional accomplishments ... his life has been filled with kingdom pursuits that extend beyond his work in Christian education."

LIPSCOMB UNIVERSITY

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — Lipscomb University is adding a new facility in downtown Nashville, investing more than \$3 million in renovations to the 20,100-square-foot ground floor of the 4th and Commerce garage.

The building will be patterned after another off-campus facility in nearby Franklin — Spark: Lipscomb's Idea Center. Lipscomb expects renovations to be completed by January.



BRAD MONTAGUE

Excited to be at Mid-South Youth Camp in West Tennessee

Young people show their enthusiasm at Mid-South Youth Camp in West Tennessee. The 77-acre camp, owned by Freed-Hardeman University in Henderson, Tenn., is a quarter mile west of Highway 45 South and three miles north of Henderson.

OKLAHOMA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

OKLAHOMA CITY — Oklahoma Christian University will launch a children's ministry certification program this fall. The program, which can be completed in less than a year, is the only children's ministry certificate program of its kind within Churches of Christ, organizers said.

"There is a huge need for basic training in children's ministry," said Charles Rix, interim dean of OC's College of Biblical Studies. "A lot of people volunteer to help in children's ministry, but there isn't much out there to provide training. We have the resources to make them better teachers so they can serve families, the church and their communities."

The program's first phase starts in September and features 10 modules that participants can complete online and at their own pace.

MINISTRY TRAINING

MISSIONS RESOURCE NETWORK

BEDFORD, Texas — Missions Resource Network has entered into a partnership with KC University, formerly known as Korea Christian University, in Seoul. The university will be a global launch site where disciples are made and equipped, said Mark Hooper, director of Asia missions.

The two entities will partner in reaching the large percentage of students on campus who are not Christ followers, working with Seoul-area churches toward more involvement in missions, working with international students to return to their homelands as disciple-makers and writing a missions curriculum that "has a practical component using disciple-making movement principles," Hooper said.

SENIOR LIVING

CHURCH OF CHRIST CARE CENTER

CLINTON TOWNSHIP, Mich. — Church of Christ Care Center's annual picnic attracts hundreds of residents, family member and children.

The recent picnic drew 22 teens from Rochester College's Elevate youth leadership training event, spokesman Doug Edwards said.



DOUG EDWARDS

Carolyn McMichael and her daughter-in-law, Jeanne Embry, enjoy the picnic.

ORLANDO: God 'loves sinners, and he hates sin,' minister says



BOBBY ROSS JR.

Attendees walk among the exhibits at the Equip Conference in Orlando. More than 2,000 church members from 14 states and six nations came to the biennial workshop.



BOBBY ROSS JR.

Codirector Phil Barnes, right, minister for the Orange Avenue Church of Christ in Eustis, Fla., northwest of Orlando, hugs an Equip Conference attendee.

FROM PAGE 3

from Abilene Christian University.

Members of Churches of Christ generally believe that God reserves sex for marriage between one man and one woman.

That understanding of what the Bible teaches presents challenges as Christians respond to the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community, Equip codirector Larry Cline said.

"We need to teach so clearly what

Scripture says about same-sex marriage — and that's being compromised, and our young people are misunderstanding it or not taking a biblical approach on it," said Cline, minister for the Hardin Valley Church of Christ in Knoxville, Tenn.

"So we feel like we need to come across harder on that, and sometimes that can come across with a contemptuous attitude and be read as having a lack of compassion," he added. "It's a delicate balance, that's for sure."

Gary, author of the memoir "Loves God, Likes Girls," described the shame and humiliation she felt as a girl experiencing same-sex attraction.

Part of the problem is that many

Christians don't understand same-sex attraction, so they fear it, she said.

Fear drives the kind of hatred that prompts a person — in this case a gunman named Omar Mateen, who pledged his allegiance to the Islamic State terrorist group — to open fire at a gay nightclub, she suggested.

"Where it becomes even more personal to me," Gary told *The Christian Chronicle*, "is that could have been so many of my friends 30 years ago. Friends whose families had turned them away — and I'm talking about young men that I was in Christian college with — whose families said, 'We will have no more of you.' ... Friends who were written out of their families' wills."

The sadness felt by the LGBT community at this time needs to be heard and acknowledged by Christians, Gary said.

"When people are hurting, we need love and support," she said. "It also provides us an opportunity to show Jesus in a way that may do a lot of repair to the damage that's been done in the name of Jesus."

Gil Vollmering Jr., an elder of the North Davis Church of Christ in Arlington, Texas, decided at the last minute to come to Equip.

Vollmering has a personal reason

for feeling a connection with the Orlando victims: Four years ago, his son, Connor Vollmering, then 15, came out as gay to his youth group.

"It was a painful, hurtful time," said Gil Vollmering Jr., who has reconciled with his son.

"I used to think I knew a lot," said the father, who is part of a CenterPeace parent support group in Dallas-Fort Worth. "And I realize the more I read, the more I study

... the more I don't know. So my whole attitude has shifted to one of humility before Scripture."

Connor Vollmering is a sophomore at the University of North Texas. He said he was disappointed

in the response he received from his former church family, where both his father and grandfather, Gil Vollmering Sr., serve as elders.

"No one wanted to have a conversation with me," Connor Vollmering told the *Chronicle*. "Everyone kind of just chewed me up and spit me out."

The 19-year-old said he wasn't looking for affirmation of a gay lifestyle but rather acceptance from people he considered his friends. "I

think affirming and accepting are two very different things," Connor Vollmering said. "I would never expect a strong-rooted Church of Christ person to be affirming," which he views as celebrating his gay identity.

But the youth group and other church members could have accepted him as a person, even if they preferred a different lifestyle, he said. "Instead of forcing your views on someone, just be open-minded and listen to their views. Be loving, kind, generous. Still have a friendship. Once you form a strong friendship, you can begin having sophisticated theological debates."

In the days after the June 12 massacre, members of Churches of Christ brought flowers — and prayers — to a memorial site for the victims.

The West Orange Church of Christ in Winter Garden, Fla., offered its 600-seat auditorium and reception room free of charge to any victim's family needing a place for a loved one's funeral.

When the independent Westboro Baptist Church of Topeka, Kan., said God sent the shooter and picketed funerals with anti-gay posters, members of the South Seminole Church of Christ in Winter Park, Fla., staged



Cline



Gil Vollmering



South Seminole Church of Christ members carry signs stressing God's love after the Westboro Baptist Church of Topeka, Kan., picketed funerals with anti-gay posters.

a counterdemonstration. The Church of Christ group's signs cited God's love and Scriptures such as 2 Peter 3:9: "God is patient, not willing that any should perish, but all would come to repentance."

However, even the belief that the gay lifestyle falls outside God's design for mankind can draw rebuke in a society increasingly open to same-sex couples, said some church members interviewed at Equip.

"We're trying to just keep preaching the message that God is love. He loves sinners, and he hates sin," said Nathan Wheeler, minister for the Pine Castle Church of Christ in Orlando, whose wife, Cheryl, was among those who went to the memorial site to pray and sing.

CenterPeace's Gary said she strives to meet people where they are — just like Jesus did when he interacted with tax collectors and other sinners.

Men and women must work out their own salvation with fear and

trembling, she said, but they can't do that outside a trusted community of believers.

"Whatever it takes to help someone reconnect with God, that's what the ministry of CenterPeace is all about," Gary said. "It's helping

people reconnect in such a way that they can figure out what it means to be a Christ-follower."

CenterPeace is organizing the upcoming E3 Conference to "equip, encourage and empower" church leaders to address issues of sexuality. That

event is scheduled for Oct. 27-29 at the Highland Oaks church building.

After her presentations at Equip, Gary drove downtown to the Pulse nightclub.

"I stood outside with other respectful visitors," she wrote on Instagram, "not wanting to gawk at a crime scene but to sincerely pay our respect to those who died."

EXPANDED STORY: www.christianchronicle.org



Cheryl and Nathan Wheeler

'UNDERSTANDING ISLAM' CLASSES DRAW CROWDS

Christians eager to learn more about jihad, ordinary Muslims

BY BOBBY ROSS JR. | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

ORLANDO, Fla. — Months ago, organizers of a biennial Christian conference in Florida invited longtime minister James Moore to tackle questions ranging from the meaning of jihad to how to interact with ordinary Muslims.

Interest in the subject intensified, though, after a gunman who pledged allegiance to the Islamic State terrorist group opened fire at a gay nightclub not far from the Rosen Centre Hotel, where 2,000 members of Churches of Christ from 14 states and six nations gathered.

Suddenly — and sadly — Moore's breakout sessions on "Understanding Islam" became much more timely.

"ISIS is on everybody's mind," said Moore, using another term for the Islamic State as he spoke at the recent Equip Conference — formerly known as the Spiritual Growth Workshop.

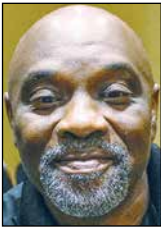
"Islam is a big subject, and we could spend from now until Jesus comes talking about Islam," he told a crowd of about 200 who came to one of his sessions — which were moved to a larger banquet hall to accommodate the size of the audiences.

After Omar Mateen fatally shot 49 people and wounded 53 others at the Pulse nightclub on June 12, Christians such as Alina Wyder felt a need to become better educated on Islam.

"I often hear the term 'radical Islam,' so I wanted to learn more about how there are different sects in Islam and if that's really true," said Wyder, a member of the University City Church of Christ in Gainesville, Fla.

"I hear about how there are peaceful Muslims, and it's really hard to understand because all you see in the news all the time are bombings," she added. "And we know the terrible things that are going on with ISIS, so I just wanted to understand it better."

Like Wyder, Bonita Haltiwanger, a member of the Maricamp Road Church of Christ in Ocala, Fla., said she knows far too little about what Muslims believe. "The timing of this is perfect because I have personally



Hill

been thinking, 'Why? What's going on?'" Haltiwanger said. "I'm anxious to learn more."

The Orlando massacre — the nation's worst mass shooting — highlighted the urgency

to reach people for Jesus, said Frank Hill, associate minister for the Lem Turner Circle Church of Christ in Jacksonville, Fla.

Be they Muslims or men or women who struggle with same-sex attraction — another breakout topic on the Equip Conference's agenda for months — the Gospel is for all people, Hill said. "It just shows us that the world really needs Jesus, and that's the only way we're going to change people in our society," he said. "You've got to get the word out about Jesus."

'ONE PERSON WITH EVIL INTENT'

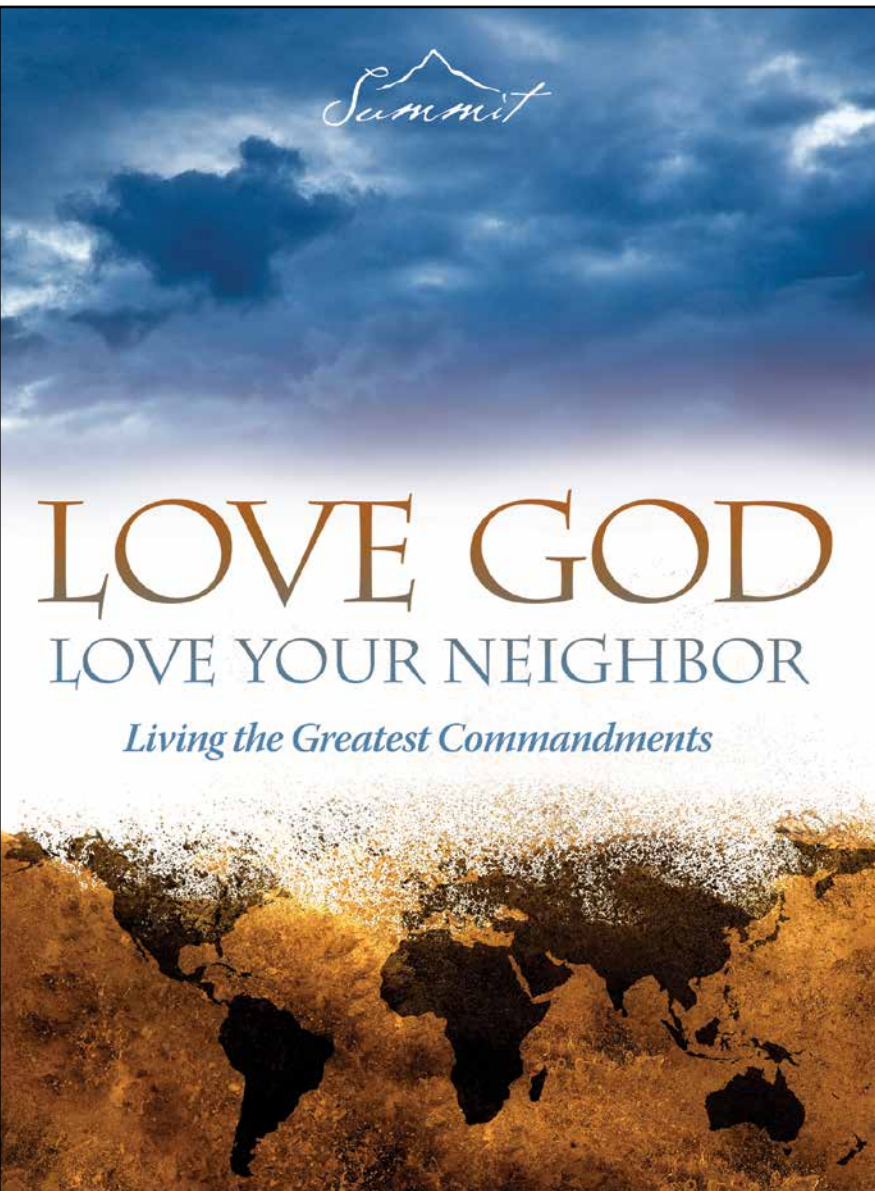
Before the massacre, Equip Conference organizers touted Orlando as a "jackpot of family fun" — a tourist destination with amusement park themes ranging from Mickey Mouse's ears to Harry Potter's wand.

They invited Christians to come and enjoy family entertainment while strengthening ties with God's family and equipping themselves to "be a part of God's work redeeming this lost world."

After the tragedy, the focus became more intense.

"This beautiful, vibrant city was shocked at the action of one person with evil intent," Equip codirector Phil Barnes wrote in an email to attendees. "This is more proof that there is a real need in this world for

See ISLAM, Page 26



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ISLAM: 'We have the hope in Jesus'

FROM PAGE 25

the love of God as expressed through his son Jesus Christ," said Barnes, minister for the Orange Avenue Church of Christ in Eustis, Fla., northwest of Orlando. "More than ever, the purpose of Equip is confirmed, to learn how to go into a world where sin is the norm, not the exception, and share the Gospel of Jesus Christ."

Codirector Larry Cline, minister for the Hardin Valley Church of Christ in Knoxville, Tenn., works with Barnes to organize Equip, which features nightly keynote speakers as well as dozens of breakout sessions on specific areas of evangelism and missions.

The event draws Christians from throughout Florida as well as nearby states — and beyond.

Moore, who has read 60 books on Islam and researched hundreds of Internet pages on the subject, brings both an expertise and a loving spirit to that conversation, Cline said.

"I'm glad that James is the one doing the class because he has a very sympathetic, compassionate heart," said Cline, who formerly preached for the Holly Hill Church of Christ in Daytona Beach, Fla., for 18 years.

SHARING JESUS WITH MUSLIMS

Christians can bash Islam and talk bad about Muslims, Moore told the church members who came to hear him. But that's not the best or wisest approach, said Moore, an Orange Avenue church member who serves as president of Mount Dora Christian Academy and Mount Dora Children's Home, both northwest of Orlando.

"We need to understand Islam so we can better understand the news, better understand our enemies, better understand what's being taught and the philosophy behind it, where it came from and why it's the fastest-growing religion in the world," Moore told *The Christian Chronicle*.

"And we need to understand Islam," he added, "so that we can more effectively share the Gospel with them. Muslims around the world are coming to Christ, and we have the hope in Jesus Christ and the assurance that they are looking for."

Moore distributed handouts on "Sharing Your Faith With a Muslim," "Considering Muslim Cultures and



BOBBY ROSS JR.

Longtime minister James Moore speaks on "Understanding Islam" at the Equip Conference — formerly known as the Spiritual Growth Workshop — in Orlando, Fla.

Customs" and "The Beliefs and Practices of Islam," noting that he couldn't cover all the intricacies in 45-minute presentations.

Among his ideas for sharing one's Christian faith: Be a friend to a Muslim. Be considerate and humble. Be prayerful. Ask thought-provoking questions. Listen attentively. Don't create unnecessary barriers. Don't hesitate to quote the Bible. Reference the Quran, the Muslim holy book. Emphasize Jesus.

Like Moore, Wissam Al-Aethawi, an Iraqi refugee and Church of Christ missionary to the heavily Arab population of Dearborn, Mich., cites a need for Christians to become more focused on sharing the Gospel with Muslims.

For that to happen, however, many Christians must change their attitudes about Muslims, said Al-Aethawi, a former Muslim who was not a part of the Equip Conference.

"People confuse religion with people," Al-Aethawi said, differentiating between disputing Islam and failing to love Muslims. "Many Christians are not defined by God's word but by pride and insecurity."

EXPANDED STORY: www.christianchronicle.org

NEWSMAKERS

AWARDED: Gerald and Katie Fears, the 2016 Distinguished Alumnus Award by Crowley's Ridge College in Paragould, Ark., for their service to church, the community and the college. The couple worships with the Skaggs Church of Christ in Pocahontas, Ark., where Gerald Fears has preached for 36 years.

APPOINTED: Three representatives of Lipscomb University in Nashville, Tenn., to the Nashville Council on Gender Equity — **Laura Delgado**, program director of the Pionero Scholars Program, College of Education; **Phyllis Hildreth**, academic director, Institute for Conflict Management; and **Linda Peek Schacht**, founding director of the Nelson and Sue Andrews Institute for Civic Leadership.

Kent Gallaher to Tennessee's Science Standards Recommendation Committee by Tennessee House Speaker Beth Harwell. Gallaher is director of Lipscomb's biomolecular science graduate program.



Gallaher

NAMED: **Barry Wheeler**, head volleyball coach, Crowley's Ridge College. **Ray Eldridge**, chair of the Baccalaureate/Graduate Degree Board of Commissioners for the Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programs at Lipscomb University.

NEW ELDERS: **Jack Paulk**, **Bud O'Neal** and **Johnnie Simpson**, the Moss Bluff Church of Christ in Florida.

NEW MINISTERS: **Rob Melton**, minister for the Keenesburg Church of Christ in Colorado. **Jimmie Whaley Jr.**, minister for the Church of Christ at Sunset Boulevard in West Columbia, S.C. **Kyle Holton**, youth and family minister for the Forsythe Church of Christ in Monroe, La.



Whaley

Milestones

Showcasing the moments of your life and the lives of loved ones.

Birthdays

Charles and Peggy Moore
90th and 87th birthdays
71st Anniversary



Charles and Peggy Moore had lots to celebrate in the month of July. Charles celebrated his 90th birthday on July 7. Peggy celebrated her 87th birthday on July 18, and they celebrated their 71st wedding anniversary later in the month. What an exciting time!

Charles began preaching in 1950 in Loving, N.M. He and Peggy served with churches in New Mexico, Oklahoma and Montana until 1963 when, supported by the College Church of Christ in Abilene, Texas, they moved to Newark, Del., to work with the small group meeting there. They continued with the Newark Church of Christ for almost 50 years until retirement. During that time, Charles served for a number of years as an adjunct professor at Northeastern Christian Junior College and superintendent of Aletheia School in Newark. Charles preached at Newark on July 24.

The Moores have seven children, 20 grandchildren, 20 great-grandchildren, and one great-great-grandchild. Charles and Peggy live with daughter Rebecca and her husband Mark at 4794 Bayfields Rd., Harwood, MD 20776. Phone: 410-980-0105. Email: chasmo1115@gmail.com.

97th: **Trudie Wright**, Livingston, Texas. **96th:** **Mary Avella Wallace Bruce**, Union City, Tenn.

Anniversaries

Donald and Jewel Canady, 70 years

Donald and Jewel were married on July 5, 1946, at the home of Carroll Bailey, a local evangelist and friend in El Dorado, Ark. Donald is the son of the late Emon and Ruth Tatum Canady. Jewel is the daughter of the late Bud and Ada Sumners Goodson. They were never blessed with children but have been a very special blessing to many nieces and nephews. Donald retired after working 47 years in the local banking industry. Jewel retired from Southwestern Bell after 42 years of service. They spent their early years of marriage as members of the Block and Hardy Church of Christ.



On Aug. 21, 1955, they were among 83 people present as charter members of the College Avenue Church of Christ in El Dorado and are active members there today. Donald has served as treasurer and a Bible school teacher, and Jewel taught first grade in Sunday school for more than 25 years.

Thomas and Dorothy Olbricht, 65 years

Thomas and Dorothy Olbricht celebrated their 65th wedding anniversary on June 8, 2016.

The celebration was held at the Nashua, N.H., Church of Christ after services on Sunday, June 12.

Landon Saunders, David Fleer and John York were there to celebrate with



the rest of congregation.

The Olbrichts live in Exeter, N.H., and have five children, 12 grandchildren, and one great-grandchild.

Tom Olbricht has been a minister in the Churches of Christ for almost 50 years, serving as an elder for the past 20. For nearly 45 years he has taught or administered at the University of Iowa, Harding University, the University of Dubuque, Pennsylvania State University and Pepperdine University, teaching more than 2,000 students who have gone on to become ministers, missionaries or university professors. A scholars conference was created in 1981 under the direction of Dr. Thomas H. Olbricht, Distinguished Professor Emeritus, Pepperdine University, and has since been hosted by several universities associated with Churches of Christ. The conference calls together scholars from a wide variety of disciplines in the liberal arts, sciences, business, law, education and medicine to develop their own academic research and to reflect on the integration of scholarship and faith.

Kevin and Shirley Ramsey, 60 years

Kevin and Shirley (Orange) Ramsey will celebrate 60 years of marriage on Aug. 18, 2016. They were married in Youngstown, Ohio, in 1956 after meeting at Youngstown State College in 1953, where Kevin graduated with an accounting degree. He also earned a juris doctorate from the University of Akron.

Kevin served in the Army and

continued on page 33

EDITORIAL

Christians must practice intentional neighboring

Do our neighbors go to church? Do we know if our neighbors go to church?

Do we even know our neighbors?

As we rush from church events to work, as we engage with family, friends and strangers through social media, it's easy for us to lose sight of the souls next door.

Often, we're more willing to take the Gospel to faraway lands than down the block.

This month we report on Christians who worship in homes. Some do so because there are no other options. Others have lots of options but long for a close-knit sense of community. We learned that even those of us who live in Bible Belt communities with giant congregations can't

'Whether our churches meet in living rooms or large auditoriums, we must make time to know and love our neighbors.'

assume that everyone goes to church. Count the number of cars at IHOP on Sunday mornings if you want proof, one church planter advised.

We also learned that starting and maintaining a house church isn't easy. It takes more than inviting people to worship. Rather, church planters call for "intentional neighboring." We must make a prayerful effort to get to know those who live around us. We must get involved in

their lives. We must let them see Christ in us.

This process can take months — even years — but it can yield believers of strong faith who may one day plant new congregations.

Whether our churches meet in living rooms or large auditoriums, we must make time to know and love our neighbors. Not only does this have the potential to multiply churches, but this practice helps show the manifold wisdom of God to the rulers and authorities of this world, as Paul challenges us in Ephesians 3:10.

We saw this happen recently in Dallas, when members of the Church of Christ at Mountain View marched to a nearby police station to mourn with their neighbors after the shooting deaths of five officers, as we report on Page 12. You see, the church members had taken the time to get to know the police and didn't see them as the enemy. As protests raged and racial tensions flared across our country, these brothers and sisters joined hands with their neighbors and showed the nation what the Kingdom of God looks like.

We praise our Father for these people of peace — and pray for more.



JIM MILLER

Jessica Miller gets a close-up view of locks attached to the Pont des Arts pedestrian bridge over the Seine River in Paris. Couples scratch their names into the locks, attach them to the bridge and toss the keys into the river.

A stopover in France, on the way to eternity

"Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own."

— Matthew 6:34, New International Version

My heart froze in my chest when I saw **"Pray for France"** pop up on my Facebook feed.

Not again!

I had just returned from the bliss of a mission trip to the European nation of Lithuania, where my 15-year-old daughter, Jessica, and I assisted at Camp Ruta, a church-run camp for children.

We changed planes in Paris on the way there and arranged for a layover so we could see the city. We befriended minister Roland Mohsen and his wife, Anna. They helped us set up hotel reservations and met us at the airport, a wonderful blessing as we arrived very late — Christian hospitality amplified!

We took part with them in a beautiful church assembly in a simple, small auditorium — a former farmhouse built in 1750. There were 22 nations represented, and the mix included Africans and Haitians, Chinese and Californians. Tourists visited from a non-institutional Church of Christ and a progressive congregation.

The singing was melodic and the prayers were enthusiastic. Friendly locals helped us find the right song numbers in our French hymnals and encouraged us with hugs and conversations. We didn't want it to end.

In the aftermath of last November's terrorist attacks, France was diligently patrolled. The European Cup was in swing. Police searched bags as people went into stores and restaurants.

Armed officers patrolled the streets.

Yet, not long after we returned, a murderous truck driver took lives in Nice. I think of the many sweet brothers and sisters we met in Paris. What if they had been harmed? I read the victim list — a father and his son from Texas, a security officer from Switzerland, a student from Russia.

Our experience in France amplifies the sense of loss, and we mourn for the families suffering in Nice and other troubled cities — including Istanbul, Turkey, where we also stopped and toured on our way to Ukraine.

The Bible reminds us that a righteous and innocent Abel was dispatched with a stone. A compassionate and trusting Tamar was abused by her brother while serving him. And a young Stephen, known for serving hungry widows, was

stoned to death.

Life is not fair, and never has been.

When will it end? I study my Bible. I know the answer. It doesn't end until *the* end. Revelation 22:14 tells of that the believers will wash their robes and enter the gates of the eternal city.

It *will* happen. This life is a just a stopover on our way to the beautiful hereafter

Until then, I dwell in the words of Jesus, who assures us that he is with us always, "to the very end of the age." (Matthew 28:20)

For now, there are sick people to minister to, homeless and brokenhearted to serve and other believers to encourage. God is good!

In the Word



Jim Miller

JIM MILLER and his family live in Lillian, Ala., and worship with the Gateway Church of Christ in Pensacola, Fla.

TV journalist joins *The Christian Chronicle*



Chellie Mills Ison joins *The Christian Chronicle* in the newly created role of Digital Media Reporter. Ison has 11 years of television reporting experience and multiple awards, including an Emmy. Most recently, she was a reporter, anchor and producer for KFOR-TV, the NBC affiliate for Oklahoma City. On Sunday mornings she produced and anchored the station's two-and-a-half-hour broadcast — and still managed to make it to second service at the Memorial Road Church of Christ, where she and her husband, Nathan, are dedicated members. Ison will help us in our mission to inform, inspire and unite Churches of Christ around the world through our website and our social media outlets, including Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. See her work online at www.christianchronicle.org and contact her at chellie@christianchronicle.org.

FROM OUR READERS

Thoughts on one-cup congregations

In the July issue of *The Christian Chronicle*, a brother in Christ affirmed that he and some 500 congregations among us cannot have full fellowship with churches who use multiple cups to serve the fruit of the vine in the Lord's Supper (Dialogue, Page 15).

This separation is regrettable because there is no theological or doctrinal emphasis in the Scriptures given to the container or to the number of containers used to serve the Lord's Supper. During the Passover meal with its four cups of wine, Jesus took one of those cups and pronounced the words of institution (Luke 22:17, 22; 1 Corinthians 11:25).

"The cup" that is drunk in his memory is the contents, not the container, because we cannot drink the container (Matthew 26:27-29). We "drink the cup" which is the fruit of the vine inside the container (1 Corinthians 11:25). When Jesus took "a cup of wine" he said, "This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood." He gives the wine theological significance; he gives no significance to its metal or stoneware container. "The cup of blessing" is not the container but the contents that represent "participation in the blood of Christ" (1 Corinthians 10:18, 21).

Jesus said about the contents of one of the containers at the table, "Divide it among yourselves" (Luke 22:17). Individual cups are a way of dividing the contents and doing what

Jesus said. Whether the contents are divided by everyone sipping from one large container or everyone sipping from small, individual cups, the contents and their meaning are still the same. When God does not specify a way to do what he commands, we are free to use whatever method fulfills the command — unless it opposes some other Scripture.

Let us all work and worship together for the unity for which Jesus prayed in John 17:20-22.



Calvin Warpula

CALVIN WARPULA is minister for the Pittsfield Church of Christ in Illinois.

I do not believe that the vast majority (of *Christian Chronicle* readers) knew why the one-cup brethren hold to their particular (though admittedly ancient) understanding concerning communion. I appreciate their theological concern — especially the idea that "individual communion" is self-contradictory. This interview is very informative in that way.

Nick Gill | Frankfort, Ky.

While I don't agree with the conclusion that our one-cup brothers and sisters have arrived at, I respect their right to believe it.

Surely this is not a salvation issue, and hopefully those that would separate us on this matter will mature and grow in love and understanding. I have wonderful relationships with some of the one-cup group and have never had them tell me that they view me as lost.

Dale Isom | Wilkesboro, N.C.

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- Great Is The Lord
- I Sing Praises To Your Name
- My Tribute (To God Be The Glory)
- We Shall Rise
- In Moments Like These
- The Greatest Commands
- Rejoice In The Lord Always
- Spirit Of The Living God
- How Majestic Is Your Name
- Jesus Is Lord (Interlude)
- He
- Come Into His Presence
- Highest Place
- Yes, I'll Live In Glory
- Adoration (Worship The Lord)
- And Many More Songs

2 ETERNAL HYMNS OF PRAISE

- Oh, The Depth Of The Riches
- Lead Me To Calvary
- Each Step I Take
- Let Us Break Bread Together
- His Grace Reaches Me
- The Love Of God (Highfield)
- The Love Of God (Lehman)
- Amazing Grace
- Only In Thee
- He's My King
- Where No One Stands Alone
- Won't It Be Wonderful There
- Grace Greater Than Our Sin
- Follow Me
- A Wonderful Savior/Precious Lord, Take My Hand
- His Eye Is On The Sparrow
- He Lives
- Peace In The Valley
- Heaven Came Down/Paradise Valley
- God's Family
- Crown Him With Many Crowns
- God Is The Fountain
- Because He Lives
- And Many More Songs

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- Come Ye Disconsolate
- Old Rugged Cross
- Only In Thee
- Safe In The Arms Of Jesus
- The Garden Of Prayer
- In The Sweet By And By
- Never Grow Old
- An Empty Mansion
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- The Lord In Zion Reigneth
- Unsearchable Riches
- Blessed Assurance
- Nearer The Cross
- Rescue The Perishing
- Tell Me The Story Of Jesus
- Thou My Everlasting Portion
- Will You Come
- When Jesus Comes
- Pass Me Not
- Hide Me, O My Savior
- Jesus, Keep Me Near The Cross
- Meet Me There (Interlude)
- To God Be The Glory
- Take The World, But Give Me Jesus
- I Shall Know Him
- Hold Thou My Hand
- Savior, More Than Life To Me
- And Many More Songs

5 TEACH ME LORD TO WAIT

- Bind Us Together
- I Love You With The Love Of The Lord
- I Will Call Upon The Lord
- I Want To Know Christ
- God's Family
- A Common Love
- Morning Has Broken
- This Is The Day
- Humble Yourselves
- I Am Crucified With Christ
- I Love You Lord
- If That Isn't Love
- There's Something About That Name
- God Is So Good
- We Are One In The Bond Of Love
- How Excellent Is Thy Name
- We Bow Down
- Unto Thee O Lord
- Glorify Thy Name
- His Name Is Wonderful
- Majesty
- Teach Me Lord To Wait
- As The Deer
- There's a Sweet, Sweet Spirit
- Jesus Name Above All Names
- He
- Seek Ye First
- Holy Is The Lord
- And Many More Songs

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FOR LEARNING. FOR FAITH. FOR LIFE.

‘I Am Strong’ – repurposed pain for God’s glory

If God is good, why do I have this pain in my life, this disappointment?
...
If I believe, why have I not been healed or delivered from this suffering?
...
Does my pain mean God is mad at me? Is he punishing me?
...
How could God possibly bring any good from this unthinkable evil?

In 30-plus years of ministry, I have encountered many people in pain — in hospital rooms, courthouses, cemeteries, church foyers, or my office. Often they ask one or more of these questions. In the introduction to “**I Am Strong: Finding God’s Peace and Strength in Life’s Darkest Moments**,” bestselling author and California minister John Dickerson promises to engage the reader as he ponders the questions that accompany pain, loss and grief.

He does so through narrative. Most chapters begin with a story of someone in pain — a fellow sufferer. Often the chapter ends by returning to the same story. In chapter two, “Thorns of Our Flesh,” Dickerson shares his own story of suffering a stroke at age 27 as he preached for his congregation of 120 people. Later he shares a heart-wrenching story about his son, Jack, in the hospital emergency room.

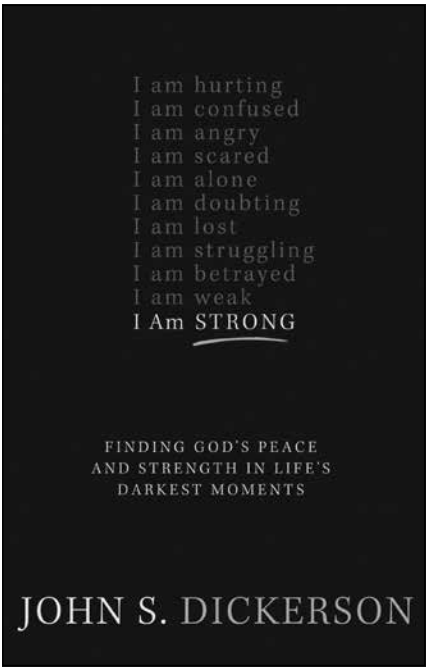
In addition to personal narratives, two stories weave the book together. In the same chapter in which he tells of his stroke, Dickerson introduces the reader to Paul’s thorn in the flesh, which the apostle mentions in 2 Corinthians 12. The thorn — and Paul’s response to it — become major theological themes throughout the book.

Paul “grew into seeing his pain as opportunity,” Dickerson writes. “He saw his pain for what it was — a literal once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to join Christ in surrendering a suffering so God can use it to heal others.” Dickerson injects theology into his stories — and in between his stories. He masterfully shows a progression of theology, especially in the life of Paul, who describes himself in 2 Corinthians “as a man impaled with tormenting pain.” Through Paul, Dickerson shows how the theology of pain can mature from a focus on self to a focus on God’s purpose and the good of the other.

In a different approach to the theology of pain, Dickerson uses the story of Rocky Flats, a facility near Denver used during the Cold War years of the 1950s for the production of nuclear weapons. “Rocky Flats employed about 5,000 workers per shift,” Dickerson writes. “They milled about in 800 separate buildings.”



Terry Kitson



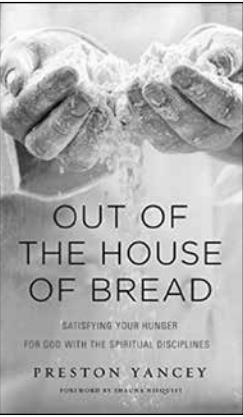
★★★★★
John S. Dickerson. **I Am Strong: Finding God’s Peace and Strength in Life’s Darkest Moments.** Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 2016. 224 pages. \$16.99.

Years later, U.S. health officials and the FBI investigated Rocky Flats for violations of workplace safety. Dickerson shares the story of one worker’s struggle with cancer that resulted from those violations. For the rest of the book, Rocky Flats serves as an analogy for a fallen world. “We live, according to Scripture, on a planet where every molecule and mountain are contaminated by a

similar, but much more deadly, radiation,” Dickerson writes. “God calls this radiation sin.” Pain and suffering result from the nuclear fallout of sin, he adds, beginning with Adam and Eve’s choice in the Garden of Eden. Pain and suffering are common experiences throughout humanity and were shared by Jesus, the incarnate God, Dickerson writes. The author takes us to Bethany, Gethsemane and Calvary to drive home this point. “To what end did Jesus suffer?” one might ask. “His suffering was part of the path that led to his finish line — God’s glory and man’s restoration.” Our suffering, therefore, is a shared experience with Jesus and the apostle Paul. Like them, Dickerson writes, we can find purpose in suffering — an opportunity to glorify God and assist in restoring humanity. “We join in Christ’s sufferings when we stop seeing our pain as something to endure,” Dickerson concludes, “and begin seeing our pain as something to be repurposed for the glory of God and for the good of others.” As I counsel Christians in crisis, I have a handful of books that I recommend. I have added “I Am Strong” to that list.

TERRY KITSON serves as preaching minister for the Central Church of Christ in Topeka, Kan. He hosts an annual grief support group named Making It Through the Holidays.

NEW AND NOTEWORTHY



CHRISTIAN LIVING
Preston Yancey. **Out of the House of Bread: Satisfying Your Hunger for God with the Spiritual Disciplines.** Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 2016. 176 pages. \$18.99.

Readers who love to bake will eat up this book up. Yancey, a writer, painter, speaker

and (of course) baker, begins with a recipe for homemade bread — both regular and gluten free — before jumping into the book’s three parts: “In Yourself,” “In the World” and “At the Table.” Full of conversation starters, each of the 10 chapters ends with a spiritual discipline, practice and questions for reflection.



FOR SOLDIERS
Tom Seals. **God’s Word for Warriors: Returning Home Following Deployment.** Nashville, Tenn.: WestBow Press, 2016. 130 pages. Softcover \$11.95, hardcover \$28.95.

Seals, an associate professor of Bible at Lipscomb University in Nashville, served in the

U.S. Marine Corps for more than eight years. This book, inspired by a class he teaches, seeks to help soldiers returning from deployment to establish a growing, deepening relationship with God, family and fellow believers. Reconnection after deployment, Seals writes, must have a spiritual or faith component.



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To inquire or ask for more information, email Greg Winnett, Vice Chairperson of the Agape Board of Directors, who is chairing the search committee: winnett3@comcast.net

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Jul. 28-Aug. 1 Asia Mission Forum. Melaka, Malaysia. www.ppcoc.org.
Aug. 13-14 Back to School Bash. (620) 276-2500, gcchurchofchrist@cox.net, www.gccchurchofchrist.com.
Aug. 18-20 CAPSTONE. Eating Disorders. Miramar Beach, Fla., www.theseedconference.com.
Aug. 20 We're Every Woman. Minneapolis. (612) 618-7955.
Aug. 20-21 Houston Area Wide Campaign for Christ. Benton Baugh, bbaugh@thearray.org.
Aug. 23 Arkansas Ministers and Wives Day, Harding University. (501) 279-4449, ChurchRelations@harding.edu.
Aug. 27 Chickasha, Okla., Area Wide Elder's Workshop, OC ThinkTank. Southern Oaks Church of Christ. (405) 224-1821.
Aug. 27 Fundraising Dinner, Emmy Lou Harris. Heritage Christian University. Pat Moon, (256) 766-6610.
Sep. 2-4 PeacePrints Parent Retreat. Strawn, Texas. centerpeaceinc@gmail.com.
Sep. 2-5 50th Anniversary, Jubilee Homecoming, Stamford Church of Christ. Stamford, Conn. (203) 322-3711, scchurchoffice@gmail.com.
Sep. 9-11 National Ministers' Wives Conference. Little Rock, Ark. (870) 665-2500, www.ministerswivesconference.com/.
Sep. 12 Colors of Honduras. Predisan. (678) 800-2512, lfletcher@predisan.org, www.predisan.org/dallas.
Sep. 16-18 Midwest Women's Conference. www.mwccc2016.com.
Sep. 18-20 ACU Summit. (325) 674-2000, acu.edu/summit.
Sep. 20-23 National Christian Camping Workshop. Michigan Christian Youth Camp. Attica, Mich. www.naccamps.org.
Sep. 21-25 Old Fashioned Tent Revival and Homecoming. Poteau Church of Christ, Oklahoma. (918) 647-4873.
Sep. 23-25 100th Anniversary. Church of Christ in Tulare, Calif. (559) 967-0913, jpcoppngr@aol.com.
Sep. 25 83rd Anniversary. California Avenue Church of Christ. Bakersfield, Calif. (661) 496-0475, isonnyjr@gmail.com, www.thelordsway.com/bakerst.
Sep. 25-28 Harding Lectureship. Searcy, Ark. (501) 279-4449, lectureship@harding.edu.

FULL CALENDAR, www.christianchronicle.org

Milestones

(continued from page 27)

retired from the Timken Company as the corporate treasurer, corporate secretary and vice president of finance. Shirley graduated with a bachelor's in education from Youngstown State College and earned a master's in education from Westminster College. She taught grade school and then lovingly reared their children.



Kevin and Shirley worship with the North Canton Church of Christ in Ohio, where Kevin has taught an adult Bible class since 1963. Shirley taught primary Bible classes for 65 years. They also are active volunteers for the congregation's food and clothing bimonthly giveaway ministries.

Kevin served 40 years on the Ohio Valley University board of trustees, including 26 years as the board president. Shirley is an inaugural member of the Stepping Stones for Ohio Valley University, serving as president of the Canton Chapter in 1981.

Kevin also has served as a member of *The Christian Chronicle* board of trustees for 13 years.

Their children include Janice (Kirby) Sweitzer of Canton, Ohio,

and Kent (Tam) Ramsey of North Canton, Ohio. Their grandchildren are Clint (Emily) Sweitzer, Joel (Annie) Sweitzer, Keith Sweitzer, Jay (Jessica) Ramsey, Mitchell Ramsey, Cecelia Ramsey and Heather Ramsey. They have one great-grandson, Benjamin Ramsey. Their children and grandchildren attended Christian colleges.

Kevin and Shirley's address is 195 Creekside Circle NE, North Canton, Ohio 44720, and their e-mail address is ksramsey@neo.rr.com.

70th:
Eddie and Reba Faye Shewmaker, Paragould, Ark.



65th: Gerald and Mary Nell McCoy, Haskell, Texas. **63rd: Bob and Evelyn Rigdon,** Fort Walton Beach, Fla.

Memorials

Harry Alex "Al" Jones 1949 — 2016

Dr. Al Jones (May 26, 1949 — May 15, 2016) was born in Nashville, Tenn. He attended Freed-Hardeman College, Memphis State University, the University of Tennessee Medical School and Vanderbilt University Medical Center, with residencies in

pediatrics and anesthesiology. Later in his career he participated in 30 medical trips to Guatemala and Nigeria, recruited many coworkers from Laramie, Wy., to go with him, and was a board member of the International Health Care Foundation/African Christian Hospitals in Searcy, Ark. He leaves his wife Peg (Lord), three children: Eric Jones, Elizabeth Jones and Laura Jones, and one granddaughter, Cairo Jones.



Irene Morgan 1929 — 2016

Irene Morgan, 86, of Benton, Ky., passed away on July 13. Morgan and her husband, Bill, helped found the French African Christian Education Foundation and funded the Benin Bible Training Center, which trains African preachers.



Jenet Springer Garner, 84, Florence, Ala., June 12.



Full-Time Minister

The Baker Blvd. Church of Christ is seeking a full-time minister to work with and help grow our congregation. Duties will include preaching, visiting, outreach and participation in our Promise Kids team. We are a 50+ member congregation located in a suburb of Fort Worth, Texas. Learn more about us on our website: www.BBCofC.org. Please submit resumes, references to:

Baker Blvd. Church of Christ
7139 Baker Blvd.
Richland Hills, Texas 76118
(817) 590-0444

Jack Westbrook
jbw61@sbcglobal.net or (817) 201-4403

Seeking Full-Time Minister

The Groton Church of Christ in Groton, Conn., is seeking a full-time minister with a knowledge of God's grace and an open heart to His Word. Please submit resume, cover letter and two sermons (CD or web link) to:

Groton Church of Christ
1018 Route 12, Groton, CT 06340
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The **Velma Church of Christ** is accepting applications for a full-time minister. Our ideal candidate is a humble man with a servant's heart who has a deep desire to preach God's Word and bring all people to Jesus. We offer a 3-bedroom parsonage next to the church building. Please submit a cover letter, resume, photo, and personal references to:

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www.christianchronicle.org/classifieds

Open Minister Position

The **Charleston, Missouri, Church of Christ** is seeking a New Minister. We are searching for someone who is well grounded in the Gospel, good with all ages, and able to work well with the congregation. Please send a resume with references, a number where you can be reached, and an audio tape of or link to a sermon you have recently preached. Thank you for your interest in our congregation.

Charleston Church of Christ
PO Box 524
Charleston, MO 63834

The **East Side Church of Christ in Snyder, Texas**, is seeking to hire a Family Life Minister. The Family Life Minister will oversee the complete ministry to families within the church as well as coordinate outreach and "open-door" activities to welcome the families of our community. This ministry to families involves a complete big-picture ministry that views the discipleship journey of children to adulthood as a complete package. Salary is based on experience. Send an introductory letter, resume and brief statement of theology of ministry to:
eastsidepreacher@yahoo.com.
Learn more at:
www.christianchronicle.org/classifieds

Minister Search - Greenville, Miss.

We are looking for a Pulpit Minister for the Southside Church of Christ, Greenville, Miss. Please submit resume, three professional references, and a sample sermon to be considered for this position. All calls and correspondence related to the filling of this position should be directed to the two people listed below. We are a congregation between 50-100 faithful members, looking for someone who is excited to reach out to the community by sharing the Word. Primary duties include pulpit preaching, teaching Bible classes, promoting Christian fellowship and being evangelistic.

Lorenzo Carter - 662-378-6859, Willie G. Carter - 662-931-5302
lorenzocarter187@msn.com
Attn: Search Committee
713 Adams Drive
Greenville, MS 38703

The view from Vienna: Troubling times won't keep us from our Macedonian call

"For in the day of trouble he will keep me safe in his dwelling; he will hide me in the shelter of his sacred tent and set me high upon a rock."

— Psalm 27:5

VIENNA, Austria

The increased terrorist activity in all parts of the world is very frightening. It is the advance of an uncivilized mindset against all civilizations where respect for life and human reason are fundamental principles.

The history of mankind could almost be written in terms of civilizations struggling against societies with no serious ethical standards — societies relying on brute force.

I have been in Europe since May 16. I came here because I feel called by God to work with the wonderful people at the Danube Church of Christ, a church plant of my home congregation in Oklahoma City.

The church is under the leadership of four men and has a permanent meeting place, centrally located. Several Americans I know and love are a part of this work. After visiting last year, I asked the leaders if I could work with them for the summer months as long as my health allows.

Earlier this year, after terrorist attacks in Belgium, several friends asked me if I still intended to travel to Europe. I reminded them that we live in a metropolitan area where an act of terrorism took innocent lives on U.S. soil — the 1995 bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building.

Of course I am disturbed by the terrible news from Nice, France, not very far from here. However, I am no more disturbed in Vienna than I would be at home.

Living with dangers and threats is nothing new. I lived in coastal California during World War II, where Japanese subs and dirigibles were often spotted. After that came the Korean War, Vietnam, wars in Iraq, Afghanistan. We have all seen loved ones go off to war and face horrors beyond our comprehension.

David, one of God's most faithful, spent much of his life running from

King Saul — and, at the end of his life, escaping from his own sons. Yet David's psalms offer some of the greatest comfort in troublesome times like these.

Psalm 8 is a powerful reminder that everything is in God's power:

Insight
"When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place, what is man that you are mindful of him, the son of man that you care for him? You made him a little lower than the heavenly beings and crowned him with glory and honor."

In Psalm 29, David declares that "the Lord is my Rock" and concludes with this song: *"The Lord is my strength and my shield; my heart trusts in him and I am helped. ... The Lord is the strength of his people, a fortress of salvation for his anointed one. Save your people and bless your inheritance; be their shepherd and carry them forever."*

The apostle Paul became the enemy of the Jewish leaders because God had sent him to teach the Gentiles and bring them into his Kingdom. In every city of Galatia, Paul first went to the Jewish synagogue to teach the message of Jesus. Then he went to the Gentiles.

He followed the same pattern when he answered the Macedonian call and came to Europe.

Later he encouraged the Philippian church by stating his priorities: *"For me to live is Christ and to die is gain."* Later he declares, *"And my God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus."*

The world is a more fearful place than I want it to be for any of us.

I confess my concern for family, but I believe "God is able" to do much more than we can ask or imagine. He lives and cares.

Wait for the Lord; be strong and take heart and wait for the Lord.

— Psalm 27:14

CONTACT: bailey.mcbride@christianchronicle.org



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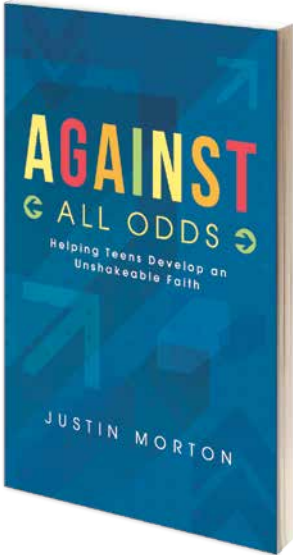
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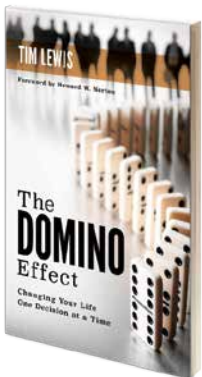
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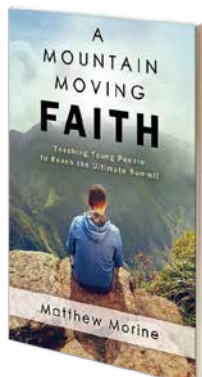


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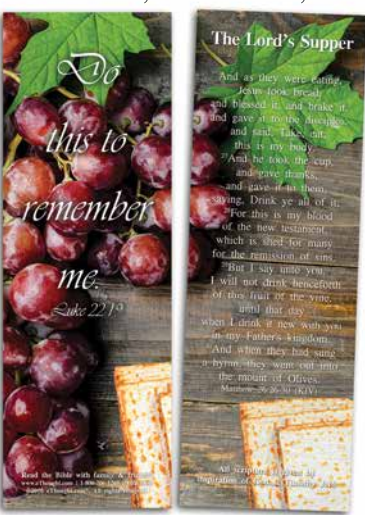
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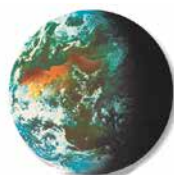
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'We rescue broken women'

A former prostitute returns to the streets — to pray, serve and heal as part of a Tennessee church's ministry. **17**



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