



PHOTO VIA WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

Demonstrators confront Baltimore Police Department officers after Freddie Gray, a 25-year-old black man, suffered a fatal spinal cord injury while in police custody.

The broken soul of Baltimore

AFTER THE RIOTING, church leaders seek to bring spiritual and social renewal to the city

BY BOBBY ROSS JR. | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

BALTIMORE

Derrick Lindsey takes an Amtrak train to work in Washington, D.C.

The federal employee — a member of the Central Church of Christ in Baltimore — couldn't help but notice the reaction of some passengers after his hometown descended into chaos in the wake of Freddie Gray's death.

"When you ride that train, you can see burned-out houses," Lindsey said after a recent Sunday worship assembly. "I saw some passengers who were just coming through, and they saw the burned-out houses."

Riot images fresh in their minds, those passengers linked the burned-out houses to the death of Gray — a 25-year-old black man who suffered a spinal cord injury in police custody.



BOBBY ROSS JR.

Minister Willie L. Rupert Jr. offers the invitation during a Sunday assembly of the Central Church of Christ, a predominantly black congregation in Baltimore.

"No," Lindsey said. "People have ridden past those homes for 40 years, and they've been just like that."

Cries for justice in Gray's case have focused a national spotlight on

Baltimore's long-standing racial and economic disparities.

For Churches of Christ in the Baltimore area, the civil unrest has provided an impetus to seek

spiritual and social renewal in a city where roughly 16,000 vacant buildings blight the landscape, leaders told *The Christian Chronicle*.

Driving through the majority-black city after the rioting, Kevin Bethea, minister for the East Baltimore Church of Christ, passed hundreds of boarded-up row houses.

"Look at that. Sad. *Sad*," the Baltimore native said of the dilapidated homes, which he blames on city officials, slum owners and decades of neglect.

"Imagine the mindset of the young people that live in these neighborhoods, and then you're going to have police drag a guy like they did Freddie Gray," Bethea added. "They already feel abandoned, frustrated, left behind."

Outside a looted and burned CVS pharmacy, Bethea inhaled a whiff of

See **BALTIMORE**, Page 18

Academic Excellence

MORGHAN PARKER

B.S. in Chemistry, 2015
 Faculty Scholarship-Leadership Medal
 Summa Cum Laude with College Honors
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Congratulations to Morghan Parker for receiving FHU's Faculty Scholarship-Leadership Medal! The medal is the highest honor bestowed by the FHU faculty. C. J. Vires, vice president for academics and enrollment management, presented the medal to Morghan, who graduated summa cum laude with a B.S. in Chemistry.

As an FHU student, Morghan served as a supplemental instructor in chemistry, participated in a research project focused on computational chemistry, and completed an undergraduate research experience at the University of Tennessee-Knoxville. She was a member of the Alpha Chi Honor Society, president of the Chemistry Club and an Honors College Scholar who graduated with University Honors. Morghan was equally active in the church and the community, giving of her time to teach children, help the elderly and organize special events. As noted by Vires, "This student has the heart of a servant." Morghan Parker is a shining example of why Freed-Hardeman is a university **WHERE FAITH AND REASON CREATE CHRISTIAN LEADERS.**



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Cats in purses and other funny pulpit moments

Decades ago, James O. Maxwell preached a sermon at the Lawrence and Marder Church of Christ in Dallas on trusting in God.

One woman in the predominantly black congregation became quite emotional.

“Oh, you better hush your mouth!”

the sister proclaimed. “Hush your mouth! You better hush!”

The message touched another sister, and she, too,

started shouting.

Maxwell’s son Shawn, then about 6 years old, listened to the outbursts and nudged his mother, Betty.

“Mama, why won’t Daddy hush?” the boy asked.

Maxwell, a longtime minister who serves as vice president for institutional expansion at Southwestern Christian College in Terrell, Texas, still chuckles as he recounts that experience.

Pulpits are a great place to share the Gospel, lead sinners away from temptation — and find funny stories.

Trey Morgan recalls preaching a gospel meeting for a small country church in Ojo Feliz, N.M.

The first night of the meeting, Morgan noticed that the water in the baptistry had been replaced with a large, baited mousetrap.

The second night, a rat met its utter demise — during Morgan’s sermon.

“The trap went off, and

See **FUNNY**, Page 4

Inside Story



Bobby Ross Jr.



PHOTO PROVIDED BY GAJENDRA DESHAR

Walking Nepal’s long road to recovery

Students from Nepal Center for Biblical Studies in Kathmandu carry bags of relief supplies to a rural village in the Makwanpur district. Nonprofits supported by Churches of Christ and individual congregations with ties to the Himalayan nation are offering assistance to the survivors of massive earthquakes, which have claimed more than 7,000 lives.

Healing Hands International is partnering with the Nepal Center for Biblical Studies and Dr. Mani Pagidipalli, a Christian and physician from India. In a recent message, Pagidipalli said, “Please continue to pray that these wide-open doors will help us build relationships with the Nepalese people and their families, so we can tell them about our Lord.”

MORE PHOTOS, Page 10

A city-sized classroom

IN DALLAS STUDY PROGRAM, *Christian students help those affected by poverty develop solutions — from fixing a bathroom to shutting down drug dens.*

BY KEYI ZHOU | FOR THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

DALLAS — It didn’t seem like the kind of project that would change the world.

But it was a start.

Four students from Abilene Christian University helped kids at St. Anthony Academy, a charter school in south Dallas, organize a talent show. Their goal was to raise money to fix an old bathroom on the academy’s campus.

The ACU students — Tessa Wolford, Taylor Bush, Barrett Corey and Austin Kanady — saw a bigger purpose in the



Wolford

task. If they could help the youths learn to effect change with determination, planning and cooperation, the youths would be capable of greater things.

After all, a group of 11-year-olds — who worked with a previous batch of ACU students — developed a program that identified and shut down three drug dens in their south Dallas neighborhood. Three elementary school students accompanied their ACU peers to India to present their ideas at an international conference.

“I have been searching my whole life,” Wolford said, “for some way to serve others and really be a part of a community that wants to help change

See **CITY**, Page 22

‘We’ve got to lighten up’

CHRISTIAN COMEDY is an emerging film genre, says director of ‘The Secret Handshake,’ shot with assistance from Lipscomb University students.

BY KIMBERLY MAUCK | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

As a marching band plays, a streaking, half-naked boy runs across a field and grabs a flag away from a young woman in the color guard.

Then Hercules himself, Kevin Sorbo, rushes to the girl’s rescue.

And the director yells, “Cut!”

It’s just another day in the graduate program of Lipscomb University’s newly formed College of Entertainment and the Arts.

Josh Link, a student at the Nashville, Tenn., university, earned course credit for

serving as second assistant camera operator for “The Secret Handshake,” starring Sorbo (of TV’s “Hercules: The Legendary Journeys” and last year’s faith-based film “God’s Not Dead”) and singer/songwriter Amy Grant. Five other Lipscomb graduate students also served as interns on the film.

“The whole shoot was a blast,” Link told *The Christian Chronicle* in an email from the Cannes Film Festival

See **COMEDY**, Page 12



Link



ERIN TURNER, LIPSCOMB LUMINATION NETWORK

In Lipscomb University’s Ezell Center, Kevin Sorbo and director Howie Klausner joke between takes for “The Secret Handshake.”

Full-Time Pulpit Minister

The **CHURCH OF CHRIST in Jerusalem, Ark.**, is searching for a full-time pulpit minister. Our preference is a married man soundly dedicated to preaching God's Word and wanting to work with young people. An approachable friendly person is desired to work with the congregation and in the community. Jerusalem is located in north-central Arkansas. The parsonage is a 3/2 brick house with utilities paid except telephone.

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PO Box 5
Jerusalem, AR 72080
larry.kayenicholson@gmail.com
(501) 669-2550

Mike Reid (Elder)
12446 SR 27
Hector, AR 72843
beckie.jreid@yahoo.com
(479) 880-7634

The **Spotsylvania church of Christ of Fredericksburg, Va.**, is looking for a pulpit preacher.

With an average attendance of 80-90, our preference is for a graduate from a church of Christ college or preaching school. Salary is commensurate with experience with a range of \$40k to \$70k. Current pulpit preacher is retiring after 14 years of service. If you are interested in this position, please email your resume and references to:

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Executive Director/Administrator Position

A non-profit assisted living facility, supported by the churches of Christ in southeast Tenn., is seeking an experienced administrator. This facility is an independently owned, 100-bed, assisted-living community. The Executive Director (Administrator) must be a member of the church of Christ and stand firmly in support of biblical principles. The Executive Director is responsible for all aspects of the operations, community relations, and leadership. We offer an attractive salary, bonus and benefits package. A list of qualifications and job requirements will be available at time of interview. Contact R.D. Hughes if interested in learning more.

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To apply, applicants should send a cover letter and resume to:
scocnewminister@gmail.com.

For more information about our congregation, visit our website:
www.smyrnachurchofchrist.org.

Note that no search committee member will be available at the church office to receive phone calls, so please direct all communications through email.

www.christianchronicle.org



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Go online to hear "*Te Bendeciré*," also known as "Blessed Be Your Name," and *mucho más* (much more) from Zurriel Rubio, worship minister for the Spanish ministry of the Bammel Church of Christ in Houston.

See "**Voices-only Wednesday**" and find videos of Rubio's Spanish-language, a cappella arrangements of contemporary praise songs, including "Oceans," "Amazing Grace (My Chains Are Gone)" and Matt Maher's "Lord I Need You."

Also, find links to our award-winning series, "One Nación Under God," discussing the challenges and opportunities to reach Hispanics in the U.S. with the Gospel.

Use your smartphone, tablet or desktop to read the latest headlines from *The Christian Chronicle* and sign up for our weekly email newsletter.

FUNNY: Ministers recall humorous moments

FROM PAGE 3

a rat started flopping, flailing, screeching," said Morgan, minister for the Childress Church of Christ in the Texas Panhandle. "For the next 20 minutes, I tried to preach over sounds of a dying rat just behind me."

Timothy Gunnells, director of university relations for Amridge University in Montgomery, Ala., remembers a thunderstorm knocking out the power at the church where he was preaching.

The auditorium had no windows, so someone lit a candle.

"The back wall was all-white brick, and my rather long and wavy hairstyle cast a shadow on the wall," Gunnells said. "From the second row, a boy who was about 5 yelled out, 'It's the shadow of Elvis!' Needless to say, there was an uproar of laughter throughout the church. I thought it was pretty funny, too."

Speaking of funny sights, John Walker Moore looked into the audience one Sunday and spotted a small cat peeking out of a woman's purse.

"I hope the cat came to a commitment decision, but I wasn't about to push baptism," joked Moore, minister for the East End Church of Christ in East Hampton, N.Y.

Charlie Harrison enjoyed watching one mother's approach to corralling her rowdy children.

She'd stuff marshmallows in their mouths.

"You should try it sometime," said Harrison, minister for the Brunswick Church of Christ in Maine. "Just poke

a jumbo marshmallow in someone's mouth next time they begin to wiggle and want to wag their tongue at you while you are talking."

But he warned: "Do not ever think of trying this on your beloved wife. She's likely to take it the wrong way!"

One time, Roger Dennington made the announcements before Larry Sheehy preached at the Laurel Church of Christ in Mississippi.

Dennington grabbed the handful of announcement items that folks had given him and sat down.

"The sermon was short, and the preacher seemed to depart from his normal, well-prepared and smooth delivery style," said Dennington, now a deacon for the Snellville Church of Christ in Georgia.

After the sermon, Sheehy made a beeline for Dennington. "Do you have my sermon notes?" Sheehy asked.

Maxwell, the Southwestern Christian vice president, shared another funny experience.

He was preaching at the West Broadway Church of Christ in Louisville, Ky., and offered the invitation. Several people responded, but one woman resisted when asked if she had a need for prayer.

"I ain't done nothing!" the woman replied. She just needed to use the restroom behind the pulpit.

Maxwell later wrote a book on preaching ministry and communication in black churches.

His book's title: "Hush Your Mouth!"

CONTACT bobby.ross@christianchronicle.org

SPOTLIGHT

Life-saving teen

EUSTIS, Fla. — Steven Conway has had an exciting few weeks.

Recently, the 18-year-old was baptized at his home congregation, the Orange Avenue Church of Christ.

The weekend after his baptism, the Mount Dora Bible School senior fended off a woman's attacker at a Dollar General store.

Conway doesn't think what he did that Sunday night is such a big deal, but MyFoxOrlando.

com reported that he likely saved a woman's life.

"I helped a woman that needed help" is how he described it.

He and his buddy had just left Bible study when they ran into Dollar General to buy sodas, the television station reported.

Inside the store, Conway heard the cry of a woman who had been stabbed. He pulled the attacker off the woman, who was airlifted to the hospital with non-life-threatening injuries.

RELATED VIDEO: www.christianchronicle.org



Conway

KEITH LANCASTER

Lights, camera, four-part harmony: Alaska members sing praises to God

Singers young and old wave at Acappella's Keith Lancaster, who's taking the picture, during a Praise and Harmony Workshop that preceded the recent Alaska Statewide Lectureship. The Northern Lights Church of Christ in Fairbanks hosted the 2015 lectureship, which drew more than 300 participants. "Most of the lectures that I have experienced are attended by a majority of gray heads and retired people," Lancaster said. "How encouraging to see young families, teens and children so well represented." To read *The Christian Chronicle's* 2014 feature on the lectureship's long history, search for "50 years of Northern exposure" at www.christianchronicle.org.

MINNESOTA

RICHFIELD — Behailu Abebe, a church leader in the East African nation of Ethiopia, spoke recently at the Richfield Church of Christ.

In the adult Bible class, Abebe shared insights into the rapid growth of Churches of Christ in Ethiopia, where village men are trained to be evangelists in their communities.

During the worship assembly, he offered a message on the critical importance of evangelism, Richfield member Terri Hastings said.

Residing in the U.S., Abebe travels to Ethiopia to help and encourage church leaders and workers.



Abebe

NEW JERSEY

TINTON FALLS — The Monmouth Church of Christ hosted a Lyme Disease Educational Seminar featuring U.S. Rep. Chris Smith.

The Republican congressman addressed a group of more than 250 patients, physicians and advocates concerning federal efforts to combat Lyme disease.

The recent event was organized by Monmouth member Doug Kahn and supported by an educational grant given by the Lyme Disease Association, minister Matthew Dowling said.

"Lyme disease is acknowledged as a growing epidemic in the United States, and the Monmouth church was pleased to host the event to address this important community issue," Dowling said.

OKLAHOMA

NORMAN — Gene McKown, a member of the Alameda Church of Christ, is spearheading a project to house the homeless.

In a recent special contribution, the Alameda congregation gave \$27,000 toward the project.

"That money will build one transitional house that will be used by our homeless friends and others who need it," minister Rusty Tugman said.

In all, McKown is raising funds to build 32 transitional houses through the nonprofit Food and Shelter for Friends.

TENNESSEE

SODDY DAISY — You're never too old to confess faith in Jesus.

At age 104, Dollie Morgan recently studied the Bible with her niece

Billie Harris, a member of the Soddy Church of Christ. Morgan also read the book "Muscle and a Shovel."

"God added to his family this 104-year-old lady," said minister Bill Greer, who baptized her.

TEXAS

HAPPY — The "30-Day Challenge" started as an effort to encourage Christians in this small town to read the New Testament.

But the challenge has spread to churches far beyond Happy, minister Rick Bloodworth said.

Next up: a series of four, 30-day challenges to read the Old Testament.

"When it comes to discovering the great Bible truths," Bloodworth said, "there is simply nothing that has the power to convict like putting your own finger on the passage."

FOR 12 YEARS, a tiny Christian school in Texas grew, adding one grade per year. Recently, four seniors received their diplomas.

A first-class graduation

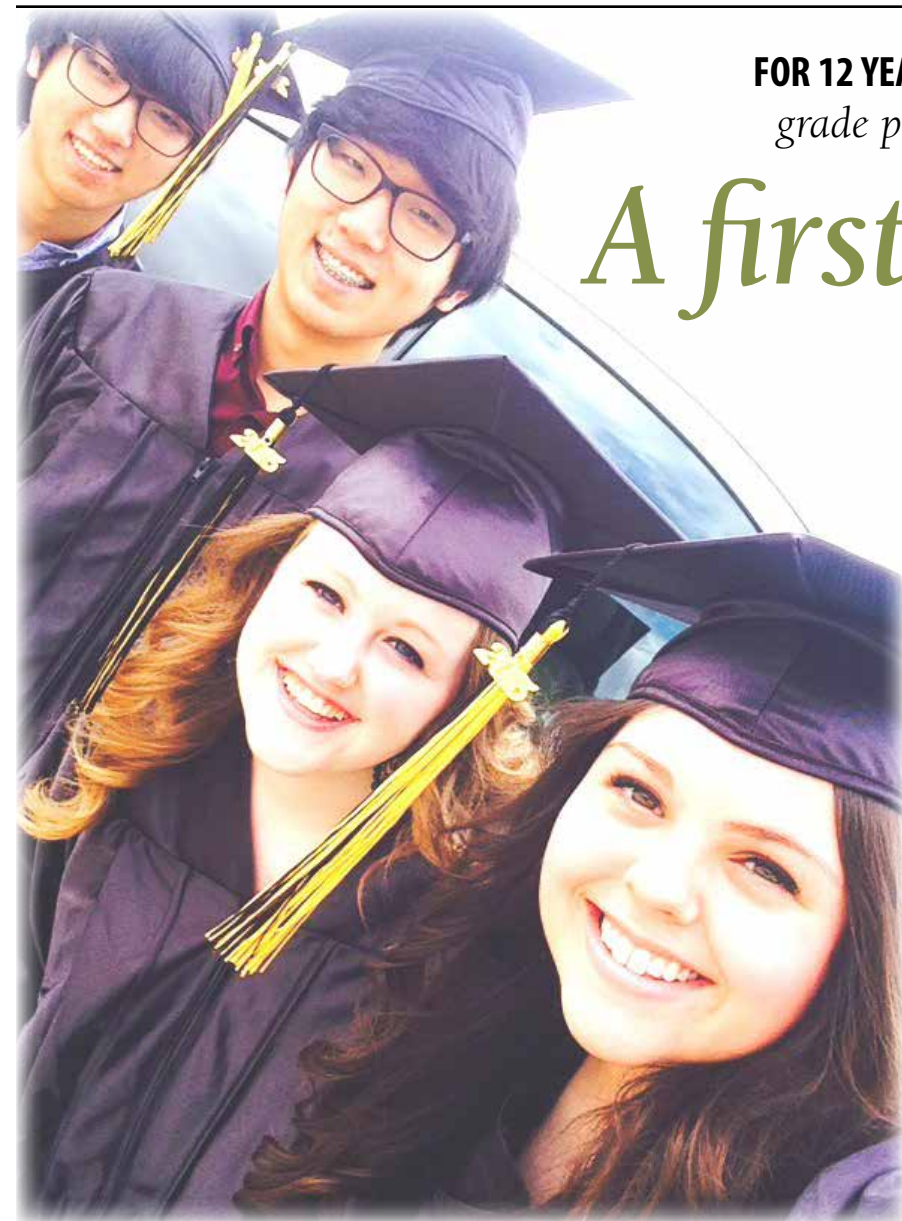


PHOTO PROVIDED BY REBECCA CURRY

Hae Chang Jeon, Hae Keoug Jeon, Kenzie Harkrider and Rachel Doucet are the first four graduates of Cornerstone Christian Academy in Bryan, Texas.

Supporting Christian education

Private schools have lost more than 10 percent of their students nationwide in the past few years, according to the Council for the Advancement of Private Education.

The council is a 17-member group of private school associations that collectively serve more than 6.3 million children.

The decline is so widespread that the National Christian School Association's loss of only .01 percent over the past five years (516 students) was better than all but one other agency in CAPE — the accrediting body for Hebrew Day Schools, whose enrollment went up substantially.

Philip Patterson serves as president of the NCSA, an accrediting body of schools associated

with Churches of Christ. According to Patterson, when the leaders of the Hebrew school movement were asked why they are thriving as every other agency declined, they pointed to one factor: rabbis who believe in the education movement and support it from their positions of leadership.

Patterson sees a lesson for the Churches of Christ.

"I think Christian education in the Churches of Christ will thrive again when we have leadership that supports Christian education on all levels — from the pulpit and within the congregation," Patterson said.

NCSA WEBSITE: www.nationalchristian.org

BRYAN, Texas

It's not every commencement that allows each graduate to speak.

Then again, Cornerstone Christian Academy is not just any school. And the academy's recent awarding of diplomas was not just any graduation ceremony.

More than a dozen years of hard work, prayer and dedication paid off May 21 when the first-ever graduating class of Cornerstone Christian crossed the stage at the Cavitt Street Church of Christ.

The graduates — all four of them — included twin Korean brothers brought to the United States by a Korean congregation.

Cornerstone Christian Academy was founded in 2002 by Linda Ligon, a former principal of Tropical Christian School in Miami. Ligon and her husband, Joe, a retired U.S. Air Force lieutenant colonel, had moved to Texas in 1998 to start a farm and be close to future grandchildren.

Ligon had worked for five schools associated with the Churches of Christ during her husband's military career. She decided to establish a Christian school in the Bryan-College Station area and began looking for a church that would house her dream.

"It seemed obvious to me, it was a strong Christian town in need of another Christian school. I just felt lost without one in the town," said Ligon who still serves on the board and conducts the school's band.

Central Church of Christ in Bryan stepped up to the challenge, and the school opened with seven kindergarten students. Ruthy Rickaway, the kindergarten teacher that first year, has been with Cornerstone Christian ever since.

The school moved to the A&M Church of Christ in 2005 and then to the Cavitt Street church in 2012.

Cornerstone Christian added a grade each year to get to the senior class of 2015. It has been accredited by the Southern Association since the first year. At the time, it was the smallest school ever accredited by that body in Texas.

Today, the school serves 95 students under the leadership of Principal Rebecca Curry, who came to Cornerstone Christian in 2010.

When asked if the school has any plans for a future campus independent of the churches that have housed it, Curry replied, "Absolutely!" The most likely area will be in south College Station, where the community is growing, she added.

All four of the initial graduates started Cornerstone Christian in sixth grade. Brothers Hae Chang Jeon and Hae Keoug Jeon will enter Texas A&M University as sophomores thanks to dual credit classes at Cornerstone Christian and high test scores. Rachel Doucet and Kenzie Harkrider, the class valedictorian, plan to attend Blinn Community College in Bryan.

A full house at the Cavitt Avenue church heard the graduates address the audience and thank parents and teachers.

Doucet expressed the feelings of the tight-knit class when she said, "God knew I needed all these wonderful people to get me through my high school years."

Cornerstone Christian is a member school of the National Christian School Association, an accrediting body of schools associated with Churches of Christ. The association lists 62 member schools serving a combined 31,629 students.

Both numbers are down from historic highs, NCSA President Philip Patterson said.

"I wish more churches would follow the model of these three forward-thinking churches in Bryan who allowed CCA to reach this milestone this year," Patterson said.



Ligon

‘We want to be able to say ... that we did things in our younger years that showed God’s love to everyone’

High school grads on faith in a changing world

BY LYNN McMILLON | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

Only six weeks apart in age, Hannah and Savannah McMillon are cousins who often are mistaken for sisters. They are members of the Memorial Road Church of Christ in Oklahoma City. In May Savannah graduated as a valedictorian of Memorial High School in Edmond, Okla., and Hannah as an Honor Society student at Guthrie High School in Oklahoma.

Both teens are active in their church youth group and have traveled on mission trips. They count their time in the Central American nation of Honduras as a highlight of their faith journeys. Both also have performed in their school choruses.

Hannah has worked with the special education class at her school, describing it as “a really cool experience to be able to bond with those kids and get to know them. They’re some of the most kind-hearted people you could ever meet.” She hopes to attend the University of Central Oklahoma in Edmond, Okla.

Savannah lettered in cross-country, served on the student council and helped lead in a schoolwide fundraiser, “Swine Week,” that netted more than \$700,000 for a foster care program. She will attend Oklahoma Christian University in Oklahoma City.

EDITOR’S NOTE: *If the last name looks familiar, there’s a reason: Both students are granddaughters of Christian Chronicle president and CEO Lynn McMillon and his wife, Joy. See www.christianchronicle.org for a Dialogue with Shelby McMillon, their oldest grandchild, who graduated in 2013.*

What do you consider to be the strongest spiritual influence in your life?

Hannah: The people I’m surrounded by every day make the biggest impact in my spiritual life. Seeing how my family, youth ministers and elders handle different situations has really influenced me.

Being around such positive people who always show love and genuine kindness to those around them at all times makes me think that if Jesus were here that’s how he’d be acting.

Savannah: One of my strongest



KELCY NASH

Hannah and Savannah McMillon grew up in Christian households. In school, “even if I don’t share the same beliefs with my peers, there is a mutual respect,” Savannah said.

spiritual influences is the church community. This year my youth group has broken into small groups in homes on Wednesday nights. It is unbelievably cool to watch my friends imitating the church that Luke describes.

My understanding of the word “church” has changed. I’ve watched as this community has comforted and fed our hearts, and taught us what it means to be devoted to one another.

Are your non-Christian friends interested in becoming Christians?

Hannah: Many of my non-Christian friends like to ask questions about my spiritual life and church. The majority don’t want to give church a try because they think that they will be judged. They often view Christians as people who think their way is right and no other way matters. To me it is very important to share God’s Word, but not in a way that seems as if we are pushing it on people.

Savannah: My non-Christian friends are definitely interested. They are super curious as to why we live

like this. It all seems appealing, living for a purpose. In fact, a lot of them are so curious they begin to seek a potential relationship with Christ.

Although it isn’t always successful, there is definitely an interest.

What are the greatest challenges in your own faith?

Hannah: For me, it’s remembering every day that I’m living for a purpose — to serve God.

I get so wrapped up in my own life, school and social events that I forget the simplest things, like praying or reading my Bible or saying something nice that could make someone’s day. So the greatest challenge for me comes down to just making time for God every day no matter what.

Savannah: The greatest challenge is wanting to organize and plan out what I do. That’s just my personality.

The Lord has to push me to let go of my own plans and surrender to his. I praise God for those hard lessons and working with me on my “Type A” ways so that I can live the life he calls me to.

How do you hope to fulfill your Christian mission in life?

Hannah: I hope to be able to say at the end of each day that I did something that represented Jesus Christ. I want to make an impact on those around me — and my younger siblings. I want to do things in my lifetime that will better other people.

I plan to do mission work throughout my life. Someday, when I have a family of my own, I want to get them involved as well. I want to have a positive attitude in any situation and do my best to lift people up rather than bring people down.

Savannah: My dream is to become a physician’s assistant and use this career to further the Kingdom. The way I most commonly find God is through other people, and I want to serve his people with the love Christ shared with me. In my case, I hope to share that love in the medical field and to heal people emotionally, spiritually and physically.

What would you like older people to understand about you and your generation?

Hannah: We look up to them. I want them to understand we want the best for the generations to come, just like they want the best for us.

We want to be able to make as big of an impact on them on the stuff we do for others as much as they do on us. We want to be able to say when we’re older that we did things in our younger years that showed God’s love to everyone around us.

Savannah: Our generation doesn’t have the best reputation. If I could tell older people one thing, it is that we are all just trying to figure this thing out. The world we are growing up in is a lot different from theirs, and we are having to adjust to the added obstacles it throws at us.

It might be taking us a little longer to catch on, but my peers are some of the most incredible, servant-hearted people who are striving to glorify God.

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PHOTO PROVIDED BY CHURCHES OF CHRIST DISASTER RESPONSE TEAM

Dirty jobs: Churches help after floods, tornadoes

A volunteer with the Florida-based Churches of Christ Disaster Response Team "mucks" out a basement after recent flooding in DeWitt, Neb. Elsewhere, congregations across the nation provided relief after a deadly tornado struck Van, Texas. Ministries helping with that effort included Tennessee-based Churches of Christ Disaster Relief Effort and Texas-based Disaster Assistance CoC. For the latest news, see www.christianchronicle.org.

Christian Chronicle named top Christian newspaper

TORONTO — For the third time in seven years, *The Christian Chronicle* has won recognition as the top national/international newspaper in the "Best of the Christian Press" contest.

The international newspaper for Churches of Christ received the "Best in Class" honor at the recent convention of the Associated Church Press.

The *Chronicle* also won the top prize for 2008 and 2012. In all, the newspaper received nine awards for content published in 2014, including:

- **First place, theme series**, for "One Nación Under God" by Erik Tryggestad, Bobby Ross Jr., Lynn McMillon and Amanda Jordan.
- **First place, feature article**, for "The 'Duck Dynasty' church" by Ross.
- **First place, news story**, for "Worship is our protest" by Ross.
- **First place, photo spread**, for "I'm getting more than I give," from Haiti, by Tryggestad.
- **Second place, feature article**,



MARK ADAMS

The award-winning photo shows Quaylon Hughes and his grandfather, Bob Hughes, wade into a pool of rainwater for baptism.

for "A child molester's son shines a light" by Ross.

- **Second place, in-depth coverage**, for "Persecution and the church" by Tryggestad.

- **Second place, column**, for "Inside Story" by Tryggestad.

- **Third place, single photo**, for "God will make a way — and a baptistery" by Mark Adams.

SPOTLIGHT

Special deliveries

POINT FORTIN, Trinidad and Tobago — A confidentiality agreement restricts Arona Ahmed from talking about her role in the births of Prince George and, more recently, Princess Charlotte in London.

That agreement, evidently, does not extend to her father.

"We never expected that, as a nurse, she would one day deliver the royal baby," Kenneth Mohammed, minister for the Point Fortin Church of Christ, told *Newsday*, a periodical on the Caribbean island of Trinidad.

"God does things beyond our imagination," the minister said.

Ahmed, daughter of Mohammed and his wife, Ena, grew up in Trinidad and Tobago, just north of Venezuela, before moving to England at age 17 to study nursing.

She served as a midwife for Prince William and Kate Middleton, the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge.

Ahmed's family in Trinidad didn't know of her involvement until they saw footage of her on CNN walking out of St. Mary's Hospital in London behind the royal couple after Prince George's birth in 2013.

Ahmed's mother described her as a loving person who dreamed of becoming a nurse and caring for others. After the latest royal delivery, her home congregation offered prayers of thanks.

One church member told *Newsday* that it is important to "train your children well, as you never know what role they would be called upon to play in life."



Arona Ahmed, right, is featured on the front page of *Newsday* in Trinidad.

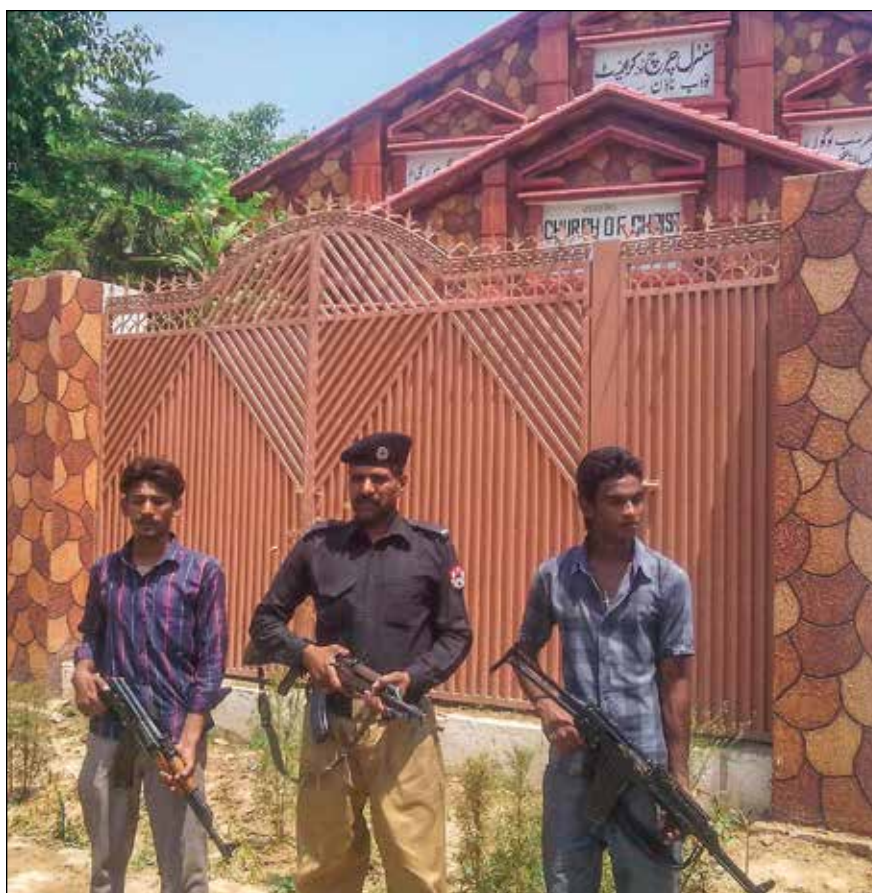


PHOTO PROVIDED BY NAEEM SABIR

Sunday morning in Pakistan

Armed guards stand in front of the meeting place of the Sahiwal Church of Christ in central Pakistan's Punjab province.

"Every Sunday these policemen and volunteers provide security for the worshippers," said Naeem Sabir, minister and director of a preacher training school. Those professing Christianity as their faith comprise less than 3 percent of the predominantly Muslim nation's estimated 180 million people. Persecution is common, and extremist groups target religious minorities, Human Rights Watch reports.

In Sahiwal, government leaders have asked religious leaders to build walls at least 10 feet high around houses of worship, said Sabir, who seeks funds to help complete the project. "Please pray for the security of the church," he said. "We are under threat."

PAPUA NEW GUINEA

PORT MORESBY — Steve Collins, a member of the Warwick Church of Christ in Australia's Queensland state, will lead a small mission team to this South Pacific nation in late June. The team and local Christians will travel into the Waria Valley to minister to Christians there.

Australian missionaries Tom and Rens Bunt helped plant churches in the valley in the 1970s, Collins said.

SWITZERLAND

GENEVA — After a year of preparation, the Geneva Interactive Bible School

is online. The elders of the Geneva Church of Christ see the school as a way to develop and train French-speaking Christians — where they live and work — for ministry.

Justin Smith, a 2012 graduate of Harding University in Searcy, Ark., who grew up in Lausanne, Switzerland, helped develop the online school.

The program launched with a six-hour seminar on Christian apologetics, attended by 52 students from five churches and taught by Max Dauner, a missionary in Marseille, France. See www.etude-biblique.com.

ANGOLA

HUAMBO — A mission team in this southern African nation said farewell to their first church plant.

But not goodbye.

"We will visit and encourage and mentor the leaders," Danny Reese said of the São Luís church, "but our presence on a weekly basis is no longer needed."

The mission team started working with the church in 2012.

"It had a difficult start, with some unhealthy leadership," Reese said.

"Our team tried for months to find mature Christians ... but eventually began working with



KATIE REESE

Members of the São Luís church celebrate with missionaries.

four youths, mentoring them into leaders." See www.angolateam.org.

BRAZIL

RIO DE JANEIRO — The small auditorium of a Church of Christ in this bustling South American city overflowed with visitors on a recent "Friends Day" Sunday, missionary Larry Zinck said.

"As a result, we see even more vividly the need to complete our new worship center," Zinck said, "so that we will have room for all the new people the Lord is sending our way."

More than 150 Christian women also gathered recently for a citywide day of praise, prayer and fellowship, the missionary added.

CHAD

DONO MANGA — Evangelists in this central African nation rejoiced as they dedicated a new medical dispensary and opened a container from the U.S. bearing a water well drilling machine.

Hope Springs International, a nonprofit based in Tennessee, shipped the container and supports the work in Dona Manga, which includes a school for about 650 children, an orphanage, a health center that treats more than 600 patients per month and a church building. See www.hopespringsint.com.

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DON JOHNSON

In a mountain village, Nepalis begin the long process of rebuilding their homes and lives after multiple devastating earthquakes. Churches of Christ are providing aid.

Showing love amid the quakes

KATHMANDU, Nepal — Christians responding to Nepal's devastating April 25 earthquake felt the earth move again on May 12. "Cracked buildings began shaking, and people were screaming and running to the streets," said Gigie Carranza, a church member and

part of a MARCH for Christ medical mission team from the Philippines. The 7.3-magnitude quake claimed more lives and damaged more buildings in the Himalayan nation.

SEE UPDATES and find links to contribute to relief at www.christianchronicle.org.



GIGIE CARRANZA

Dr. Stanley Madiki, a physician from Kakinada, India, examines children in Subidhanagar, a neighborhood of Kathmandu, during a MARCH for Christ medical mission.

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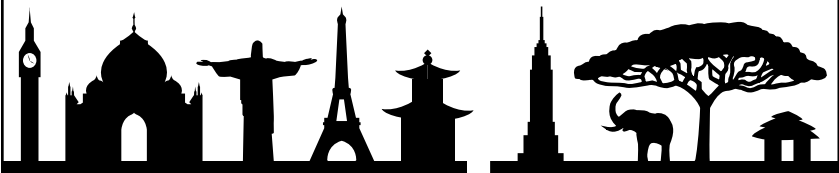
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COMEDY: Film gives students faith-based, hands-on experience

FROM PAGE 3
in France. Link is a member of Ethos Church, a congregation planted in partnership with the Harpeth Hills Church of Christ in Brentwood, Tenn. Shot in the Nashville area and on Lipscomb's campus, the film is a Christian comedy — a new and growing genre, pioneered by films including last year's "Moms' Night Out." "The Secret Handshake" runs in select theaters nationwide throughout the summer and will come to DVD exclusively at Walmart June 2.

FROM RIDICULOUS TO REAL
The film's director, Howie Klausner, has worked as a writer and producer for more than 20 years. His co-writing credits include Clint Eastwood's 2000 film "Space Cowboys."

Since his start in Los Angeles, Klausner has moved to Nashville. He wrote the 2010 faith-based film "The Grace Card." He formed a production company, Town Square Pictures with producer Tim Brown. Klausner and Brown serve on Lipscomb's Film and Creative Media Board.

"Tim and Howie have really helped build our grad program," said Mike Fernandez, dean of Lipscomb's College of Entertainment and the Arts. "A natural, long-term partnership would be beneficial to both our missions."

"Secret Handshake" is a first fruit of that relationship. The film begins on a funny note, with Sorbo's character Roy living what Klausner calls a "ridiculous suburban life," father to three daughters, working at a mildly fulfilling job as a book editor. Klausner himself has three teen daughters. His eldest, Kate, portrays Sorbo's daughter, Ashley. "I can relate to the film because I have three small kids myself," Sorbo told Lipscomb's *Lumination Network* during a visit to campus to film scenes for the movie. "The way he wrote it, I laugh because these are things that have happened to me with my kids. It's easy to connect with."

In the film, Sorbo's character stops laughing when he learns that a boy is stalking his daughter. Amy



ERIN TURNER, LIPSCOMB LUMINATION NETWORK

A camera crew, including Lipscomb students, surrounds Kevin Sorbo during filming of "The Secret Handshake" in the Ezell Center.

Grant plays the boy's mother, whom Sorbo confronts, only to realize that she is recently widowed.

This is where the film leaves the mundane, mildly absurd aspects of suburbia and begins to explore serious biblical truths, Klausner said.

The themes for the film are Solomon's admonition to "train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it" (Proverbs 22:6) and the New Testament command to "visit orphans and widows in their trouble" (James 1:27).

"We need to be on the lookout for orphans and widows, as the Lord told us," Klausner said. "If that means mowing a yard or mentoring a boy, that's what we need to do."

MAKING THE MAINSTREAM LAUGH

For Klausner, this mandate is especially personal. At age 13, his father died, leaving his mother with four children to raise alone.

The film will benefit orphans in Nashville. Lipscomb University hosted a red-carpet premier on campus May 27, with proceeds from ticket sales going to The Family Foundation, a Nashville nonprofit that seeks to nurture boys with absent fathers into successful, Christ-centered manhood, its website states. By participating in the produc-

tion, "I've learned more than I could possibly learn in a classroom," graduate student Wes Speight told *Lumination*. "I've learned a great deal about lighting and how that works. Also, how (film crews) communicate with other departments and how the director communicates with them."

Klausner said he enjoyed working with the students. He sees potential for them to one day make their own feature films. He also sees a future for faith-based comedies.

"We've got to be able to reach out to a mainstream audience, and the easiest way to do that is to laugh," he said. "To cast that wider net, we've got to lighten up."

"I have a pretty good feeling that

Jesus laughed a fair amount. I think we're entering a new era of Christian filmmaking, and I'm grateful."

After he graduates, Josh Link hopes to work on films that target the Christian market, mainstream audiences or both.

"No matter whether I'm on the set of a Christian-genre film or an action/adventure blockbuster, my goal will be the same: treat people with love and respect and make the best possible film I can make," he said. "I thank God for the talents that he's given me. I hope that he allows me to use them in this industry for years to come."

WEBSITE: www.thesecrethandshakemovie.com



Fernandez



TOWN SQUARE PICTURES

Howie Klausner directs Kevin Sorbo and Amy Grant in "The Secret Handshake."



THEY ALL HAVE THEIR STORIES



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Bringing Christ to a Muslim world

WELCOME TO INDONESIA, home to more followers of Islam than any other country – and ripe for the Gospel, workers say

BY ERIK TRYGGESTAD | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

BATAM, Indonesia

The sun rises over the minarets of massive, ornate mosques on a Sunday morning. Light cuts through the steamy, Southeast Asian haze. Locals and tourists from nearby

Singapore dodge fast-moving motorbikes as they make their way to the Batam Centre Mega Mall.

Inside, teenage girls wearing *hijab* head scarves cluster around tables at Starbucks, giggling as they send text messages from their phones.

A few blocks away, off a road of gravel and dirt, Christians trickle

into a small, white building bearing the words “Jemaat Kristus,” or Church of Christ.

Children kick off their shoes at the classroom door. Inside, they stomp their feet and sing “I’m in the Lord’s Army” in the Indonesian language, led by their teacher, Forlandya Simanjatak.

They are very much the minority in Indonesia, a country comprised of 17,508 islands. The world’s fourth most populous nation, nearly 88 percent of its 252 million souls claim Islam as their faith.

CONTINUED



On a Sunday morning, tourists and locals roam the sidewalks of Batam, Indonesia, near the pyramid-shaped *Mesjid Agung Batam* (Great Mosque of Batam).



Children's shoes line the door of a classroom at the Batam Church of Christ.



Forlandya Simanjutak sings songs with children during Bible class at the Batam church. She also teaches courses for women at Batam Bible College.

CONTINUED

Though more than 4,100 miles from the Arabian Peninsula, Indonesia is home to more Muslims than any other nation on earth.

However, "what is good in Indonesia is that we can bring the Gospel to the Muslims," says Herbin Simanjutak, an Indonesian evangelist and administrator for the Batam Bible College. Unlike many nations where Islam is the dominant faith, conversion to Christianity here is legal.

FROM CONVERTS TO DISCIPLES

That doesn't mean conversion is easy, the minister says. Family ties to religion are strong, and leaving your faith tradition — be it Islam, a Christian denomination or other — can mean alienation.

"If I die, who will perform the

funeral?" is a common concern voiced by the parents of converts, says Herbin Simanjutak, who grew up in a Lutheran family before he met Winston Bolt, a missionary from the U.S., and was baptized in 1993.

Despite the challenges, there are untold numbers of spiritual seekers among the islands, says Bolt, who moved to the jungles of Indonesia's Papua region in 1987 after completing studies at Sunset International Bible Institute in Lubbock, Texas. He taught English and the Bible, working among the people of West Java and South Sulawesi.

On a visit to Singapore, Bolt preached for the Pasir Panjang Church of Christ. Its minister, Henry Kong, asked Bolt to plant a church in Batam — a small Indonesian island less than an hour south of Singapore by ferry. The missionary did just that, and in 1998 launched the Batam Bible College with a class of five men to train future preachers.



Herbin Simanjutak



Newly baptized Esther Pasaribu stands between her parents as her father leads a prayer. Pasaribu grew up in the Batam Church of Christ, founded in 1992. The congregation built its own meeting place and has indigenous leaders.

Now the college, a branch campus of Sunset, meets in a 10,000-square-foot facility that houses students from across Indonesia. More than 130 have graduated and assisted in planting 60 Churches of Christ. The school has extension programs throughout the country.

Though he rejoices over the growth he's seen, Bolt laments that few congregations have appointed elders — and that many rely on one-man leadership and foreign support.

Recently he and the Indonesian staff at the Bible college have focused on discipling — training Christians to be active in evangelism. The staff encourages Churches of Christ to launch small-group ministries with the goals of building relationships and raising up indigenous church leaders for the future.

Bolt cites the Great Commission in Matthew 28, where Jesus urges his followers to "go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you."



See more stories from our series on Churches of Christ in Southeast Asia at www.christianchronicle.org.

"We've baptized, but we haven't made disciples. ... There's a word we have in Indonesian that you don't have in English — *sahabat*, your best and closest friend, and that is what disciples become."

NEXT GENERATIONS OF FAITH

As the church service concludes in Batam, Esther Pasaribu walks forward and asks to be baptized. The 17-year-

old grew up in the church here. Two months earlier, her brother Abraham was baptized.

"She believes Jesus is the Savior, and she wants to be saved," Bolt says, smiling as he translates her words to English. "Jesus has continually blessed her," he adds, recalling when her parents made the same baptism request.

Spreading the Gospel in this predominantly Muslim country won't be done through massive campaigns, Bolt says.

Rather than trying to convert every person they see, Christians must "look for the man of peace," he says. "Look for the person that God is calling and focus on him." These individuals can help transform entire communities.

"It's about looking for those people who are searching," he says. "That's why we're here."

SEE VIDEOS of children singing in Bible class in Batam at www.christianchronicle.org.

Indonesia's most-blessed man

BATAM, Indonesia

Winston Bolt wore a scowl on his face as he walked through the door of the Harris Hotel on Sunday morning. "This place is too young for me," he had told me the day before. "Too trendy. Too loud."

As if to emphasize the point, the hotel's staff cranked up the Village People's "Y.M.C.A." and danced with abandon for the delight of their guests at the breakfast buffet — just as brother Bolt arrived to pick me up for church. It's like they knew he was coming. I actually enjoyed the hotel. For one thing, it had electricity — something I don't always get on reporting trips. But the dance party next to the omelette bar wasn't what I expected to find in a predominantly Muslim country. Neither was brother Bolt, for that matter.

When I met the longtime missionary and director of Batam Bible College, I sized him up pretty quickly. Here was a dedicated, slightly curmudgeonly man of God like so many I had met before — following the Macedonian call to Southeast Asia. Nonetheless, I asked him, "So, how did you become a Christian?"

Instead of the narrative I expected, he told me about a walk he once took through a courtyard, where he plucked a leaf bud from a tree. It was simply too complex, too perfect, to happen by chance. For the first time, "I saw God's grand design," he said. The courtyard, by the way, was in the Fulton County jail in Atlanta. He was there for selling guns illegally. "I spent four months in a dungeon — and it was a dungeon," he said. "I literally fought for my life, but that was all right. I was full of hate

anyway." After his jail time, "they should've kept me in prison because I was indicted in Miami for distribution of cocaine, but they let me out."

Standing on Peachtree Street, he had a choice — flee the country or turn himself in.

He chose Miami. There a judge sentenced him to three years in prison and gave him six weeks to report. He used that time to search for God.

He visited the Westwood Lake Church of Christ, where "I heard a man actually preach from the Bible," he said. "Once I realized how

sinful I was, I was deeply ashamed." Four weeks later he was baptized. "I knew when I came out of that water that my sins were forgiven, that I was a free person, and I was crying for joy. And I don't cry."

Twenty-eight months later, he was a free man — spiritually and legally. He talked to everyone he could about Jesus. A long, winding path led him to Indonesia, where he has served as a missionary, trainer of preachers and encourager for 28 years. In 1996 he married Lusi, an Indonesian Christian. They live a simple life in a small house and recently survived a prayerful battle with Lusi's cancer.

At age 71, "I'm probably one of the most blessed people you ever wanna meet," he said, "because I don't want anything. The only thing I want is what the Lord wants. And the Lord wants Indonesia to hear the Gospel." He believes storytelling is a powerful tool in accomplishing this goal. And his story is powerful. It drowns out the noise of prison courtyards and hotel lobbies, proclaiming the simple truth that Jesus saves.

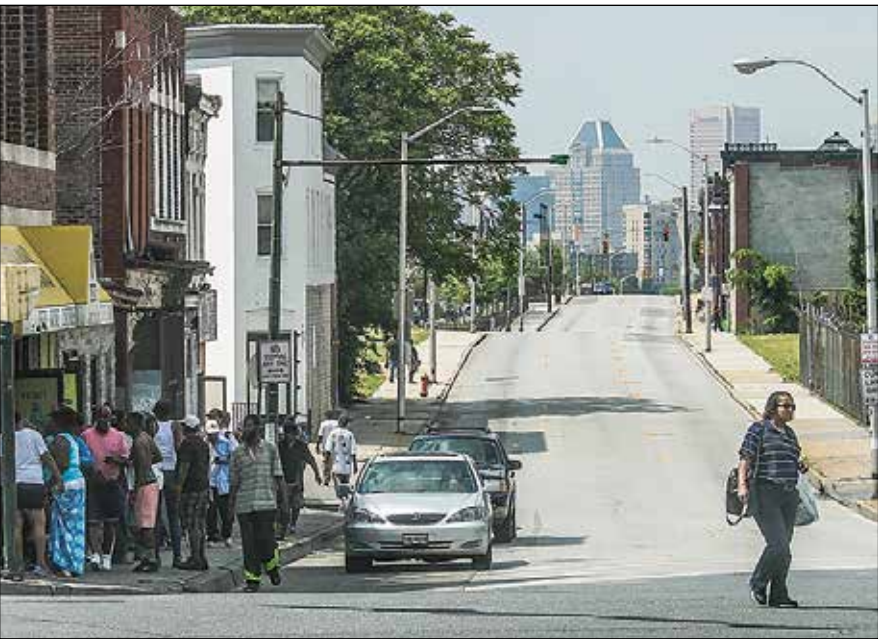
CONTACT erik@christianchronicle.org

Road Notes



Erik Tryggestad

BALTIMORE: ‘We have to be a voice ... for our Lord and Savior’



BOBBY ROSS JR.

Residents line up at a soup kitchen in a poor neighborhood in west Baltimore, where high unemployment and poverty are major problems.

FROM PAGE 1
the smoky air and talked about the need for Christians to step up.
“There’s a lot of hurting people around here that need us, the Lord’s church, to be involved at times that matter most,” the East Baltimore minister said. “We have to be a voice in the community ... for our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.”
Baltimore State’s Attorney Marilyn J. Mosby has charged six officers in Gray’s April 19 death, alleging he endured “a severe and critical neck injury as a result of being handcuffed, shackled by his feet and unrestrained inside (a Baltimore police) wagon.”
Mosby has questioned the legality of Gray’s April 12 arrest, claiming officers found a knife clipped inside his pants only after chasing him without cause. The police union has defended the officers and accused the prosecutor of “political opportunism.”
As weeks of peaceful protests gave way to violence after Gray’s April 27 funeral, Baltimore Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake instituted a citywide curfew. Maryland Gov. Larry Hogan dispatched thousands of National Guard troops and law enforcement officers to the city.
The nation watched as structures such as a high-rise senior housing

complex and community resource center under construction by a Southern Baptist church burned.
But immediately, the Baptist church began rebuilding the \$16 million project.
“Why can’t Churches of Christ do that?” Bethea asked as bulldozers cleared broken concrete and other debris at the senior center site. “We have to have 20 business meetings before we can get started.”
‘THE ANSWERS ARE WITH JESUS’
A black police officer who is a Central church member said he couldn’t help but make spiritual applications as he stood with a shield and a helmet, dodging rocks thrown by rioters.
Central members, led by assistant minister John Wilkie, supported police and the National Guard by providing snacks and bottled water, the officer said. A wide range of clergy members helped calm the situation by standing between authorities and demonstrators.
“The church was a big help,” said the officer, who asked that his name not be used. “This is a time that I feel like the church needs to thrive. People are looking for answers, and the answers aren’t always with the



BOBBY ROSS JR.

Members of the Central Church of Christ in Baltimore hold hands as they stand and pray during a Sunday morning worship assembly.

media. Sometimes, the answers are with Jesus.”
Baltimore, a city of 622,000 residents, is home to six Churches of Christ with a combined membership of less than 1,300, according to a national directory published by 21st Century Christian.
The two largest churches — 525-member Central and 350-member East Baltimore — are predominantly black.
Older Christians still recall Baltimore’s deadly 1968 riots, which followed the assassination of civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr.
Central member Dorothy Williams, who graduated from high school in 1962, said she had no problem with the peaceful demonstrations after Gray’s death.
“That’s what helps you politically to be heard and to be understood,” Williams said.
“But the difference was that they had a small group who came in and

ruined it,” she said of those who engaged in violence and looting.
Fellow Central member Perin Tinsley agreed: “I don’t believe in the violence. That’s where we needed to pray more. We needed to have raised our children a little better. We needed to take the Word of God to the city a little stronger, a little harder.”
‘WHO ARE YOU ALL?’
Amid the unrest in Baltimore, the Mid-Atlantic Fellowship of the Churches of Christ convened an emergency meeting.
“The church has a major role,” said Willie L. Rupert Jr., minister for the Central church. “The only one who has the answer and a system that is fair to all men is Jesus.”
The Mid-Atlantic Fellowship is a regional group designed to strengthen ties among congregations. The group hosts meetings of preachers and organizes a lectureship. Participants from Maryland and the District of Columbia urged police to



PHOTO PROVIDED BY CHOO SMITH

Former Globetrotter Charles “Choo” Smith attends the Central Church of Christ.



Kevin Bethea, minister for the East Baltimore Church of Christ, visits a CVS pharmacy that was looted and burned as protests over Freddie Gray's death turned violent.

review arrest procedures and adopt a friendlier approach.

On the church side, the leaders discussed the need to become more active and visible, said Bethea, the Mid-Atlantic Fellowship's secretary.

"Right now, most Churches of Christ aren't even a voice," Bethea said. "We stay in our four walls and teach and reteach and reteach each other all the time. ... Then when this happens, we try to run into the community, and people say, 'Who are you all?'"

At Central, Lindsey said leaders hope to move beyond an emotional response and confront deeper issues.

Already, the congregation organizes major giveaways of school clothing and educational supplies, he said. Now, the church is expanding its "Learn-n-Fun Summer Camp," which gets kids off the streets and offers recreational activities and spiritual training.

"The blight, the housing issues, the lack of fathers in the community, all those things need to be systematically addressed," Lindsey said. "So we are coming up with some sustainable community plans that we can put in place to help address some of the needs of these young men and women."

'WE ALL HAVE FAILED EACH OTHER'
To Central church member Charles "Choo" Smith, Freddie Gray isn't just a name in the news.

A few years ago, Smith — a former Harlem Globetrotter — renovated a basketball court in Sandtown, the poor, drug-infested Baltimore neighborhood where Gray lived.

Gray took a liking to Smith and protected the court from vandalism, said Smith, who works with thousands of at-risk youths through his Choo Smith Youth Empowerment organization.

"Freddie Gray was an awesome kid who was misguided," Smith told the *Chronicle*. "He never disrespected me. He never *not* showed love to me. There's so many of them like that. They just want a chance, and that's what the good Lord gave us — a chance."

Smith said he refuses to point fingers over Gray's death.

"I think we all have failed each other," Smith said. "I just think we have to start loving each other the way we're supposed to. And some of us who are Christians, we have to stop being in the church and bring the church out into the community."

PREACHER LISTENS TO PROTESTERS AND POLICE

'Jesus is in the streets,' minister says after Freddie Gray's death

BY BOBBY ROSS JR. | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

BALTIMORE — As residents protested the death of Freddie Gray, Lawrence W. Rodgers joined them in the streets.

That's where Rodgers, ministering evangelist for the Westside Church of Christ in Baltimore, believes Jesus would be.

"Jesus is in the streets," said Rodgers, 30, describing where he finds Christ as he pores over the Scriptures. "He is involved."

After Gray's death, area church leaders accompanied Rodgers to nonviolent demonstrations.

Those joining him included Winston Curry, senior minister for the Bowie Church of Christ, south of Baltimore, and K. Rex Butts, former minister for the now-closed Columbia Church of Christ, west of Baltimore.

The ministers' goal: listen to the people — protesters and police — and understand their perspective.

"As I talked to everyone, I noticed that we all struggle ... with seeing one another's humanity," Rodgers said. "We all have a rap sheet with God. The Bible tells us that we have all sinned and come short of the



Rodgers

glory of God. "But despite our rap sheet, God didn't give up on us. God never called us a thug," the minister added. "Instead, what God did was, God sent God's son to die for us, to redeem us, to rehabilitate us, to restore us."

On the protester side, residents voiced a desire to be treated not as animals but as humans who deserve respect, he said. On the police side, officers expressed a devotion to protecting and serving under difficult circumstances.

See **RODGERS**, Page 20



Lawrence W. Rodgers, right, ministering evangelist for the Westside Church of Christ in Baltimore, observes a demonstration after the death of Freddie Gray.

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RODGERS: 'Freddie Gray is a symbol'

FROM PAGE 19

But both sides pointed to systemic problems that they believe contributed to the death of Gray, a 25-year-old black man who suffered a spinal cord injury in police custody.

"So I said to myself, if we realize the problems are systemic, what's really holding up the conversation is not seeing the humanity in one another," Rodgers said.

"So what I try to do is continue to teach the protesters nonviolence," he added. "I encourage them to try to have conversations, proactive dialogues. When I talk to the officers, I encourage the same thing from them regarding having proactive dialogues."

A BRUSH WITH RACIAL PROFILING

As an African-American man, Rodgers — who is married to Bettae and has a 2-year-old daughter named Tatyanna — said he has faced racial profiling by police.

"I've always been a guy who stayed in the books, who loves to study," he said. "I remember times walking to the library (while living in Florida), and the cops pull up behind me, jump out of the car, throw me on the ground, point guns at me and search my book bag."

They didn't arrest him, he said.

They didn't apologize either.

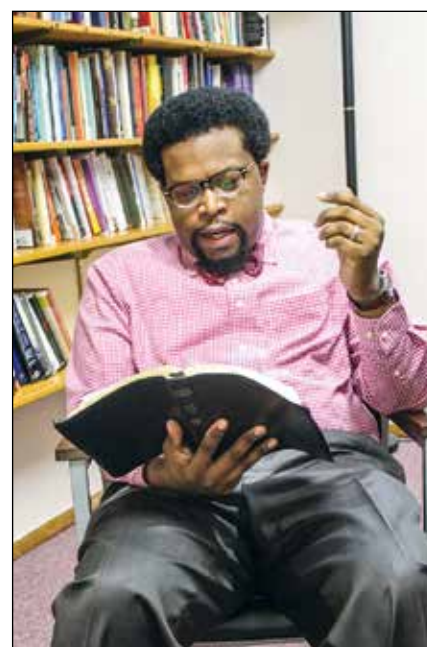
Experiences like his own help Rodgers understand the anger, bitterness and frustration that many feel concerning Gray's death.

"Freddie Gray is a symbol of a collective experience of many people in the community," Rodgers said. "That's not to shed a bad light on all police officers. In fact, I've spent quite a bit of my life getting to know police officers."

A native of Kinston, N.C., Rodgers earned a bachelor's degree in Bible and ministry from the Center for Advanced Ministry Training at Harding University in Searcy, Ark.

The program, which serves older students, honored Rodgers as its outstanding graduate in 2013.

"He was a leader. He was an activist," Gary W. Gregg, the center's associate director, said of Rodgers. "He believed in holding up the African-American culture and fighting for their rights, but he did



BOBBY ROSS JR.

Lawrence W. Rodgers reads from Micah 6:8, which says, "And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God."

it in a very balanced way. He knew the best way to advocate was to be Christ-like."

SEEKING JUSTICE IN A FALLEN WORLD

In Rodgers' two years with the Westside church, he has helped organize a regular community outreach meal and started ministries to combat homelessness, illiteracy and human trafficking.

The bilingual, racially diverse congregation averages Sunday attendance between 170 and 200.

"What can I say about Lawrence? He is a friend and passionate minister of the Gospel," Butts said. "Lawrence loves all people, wants them to know Jesus and wants to help bring racial reconciliation and hope to the poor."

Rodgers said he sees room for Churches of Christ to grow in seeking justice in a fallen world.

"I want to see more ministers willing to have these kind of conversations," he said. "I want to see more ministers willing to talk to prostitutes, willing to talk to drug dealers, willing to talk to politicians ... and try to help create a better environment for people living in the world."



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 August 2015 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 Chemistry and Biochemistry** invites applications for a position in organic chemistry beginning in Fall 2015. The successful candidate will demonstrate a commitment to excellence in teaching and in research appropriate for an undergraduate department. An M.S. in organic chemistry is required, with a Ph.D. and post-doctoral experience preferred. All positions are subject to funding. Searches begin immediately and continue until the position is filled or closed. Information about the department is available at acu.edu/chemistry.

The **Department of Engineering and Physics** invites applications for two or more talented engineers for its new and rapidly growing engineering program. These tenure-track faculty positions offer excellent opportunities to contribute to and substantially shape the new program. Applicants should have especially strong skills in teaching, scholarship and mentoring students. Ideal candidates will have a Ph.D. in mechanical, electrical or another engineering discipline, demonstrated potential to teach effectively in our program's curriculum, and experience in research and scholarship activities appropriate to the discipline. Experience in leading or contributing to the senior design experience will further distinguish a candidate. Candidates having a B.S. and M.S. degree and a license or certification in an engineering discipline and significant experience in industry or consulting also will be considered. Previous involvement with ABET accreditation would be helpful. Expected start date is August 2015. Information about the department is available at acu.edu/engineering.

College of Business Administration

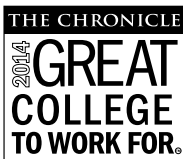
Dr. Rick Lytle, Dean • ACU Box 29300, Abilene, Texas 79699-9300

The **Department of Management Sciences** invites applications and nominations in writing for an instructor or tenure-track faculty position in marketing, beginning in Fall 2015. The candidate will be expected to teach lower- and upper-level marketing courses and others as assigned; mentor students; and accept departmental, college and university committee assignments. To support ACU's mission as a teaching institution the candidate should exhibit excellence as a classroom teacher. The College of Business Administration is accredited by AACSB International and faculty members are expected to maintain a program of intellectual contributions in the form of peer-reviewed academic presentations and publications. A terminal degree in marketing or a related field is preferred; a master's degree combined with significant professional experience in marketing and commitment to ongoing professional development is acceptable. Information about the department is available at acu.edu/coba.

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.



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Romans 12:12

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in praying for
one another!

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KEYI ZHOU

Barrett Corey and Taylor Bush teach a class at St. Anthony Academy in south Dallas.

CITY: Students fight real-world poverty

FROM PAGE 3

the world. And I have finally found it." The partnership between the ACU students and St. Anthony is part of a program that pairs the West Texas university, associated with Churches of Christ, with CitySquare, a 25-year-old, Dallas-based nonprofit that fights the root causes of poverty.

The program, ACU at CitySquare, puts students in real-world situations. A dozen students at a time live in Dallas, meeting on the second floor of CitySquare's 15-story mixed-use development, CityWalk@Akard.

They take courses, research and develop programs centered around three ongoing projects — Design for Change, a program with elementary school children; community development with the Sand Branch neighborhood; and Shame Resilience, a faith-based program for people transitioning from prison back into society.

In Design for Change, ACU students help students at four Dallas schools, including St. Anthony, learn to cooperate. They introduce the concept with simple activities such as a "knot game," which requires students to communicate effectively.

Meia Cole, an eighth-grader at St. Anthony, said the knot game "helped us to become a team. If we don't have a team, we wouldn't be able to finish this project."

During the recent semester, the ACU students learned about the city's history, the dynamics of race relations and the challenges caused by inadequate housing and health care.

They see these problems firsthand in communities including Sand

Branch, a community near the Dallas suburb of Seagoville, Texas.

After the Civil War, the U.S. government gave land in Sand Branch to freed slaves. Many of their descendents remain in the community, which has no running water or trash collection.

Students including Jacquelyne Quinterro and Rachael Kroager worked with people in Sand Branch, formulating plans to bring jobs and development.

As the students concluded the semester and returned to Abilene, they turned over their findings to CitySqaure.

The partnership benefits the nonprofit and the university, said John Siburt, CitySquare's president and chief operations officer. Before joining CitySquare, Siburt served as preaching minister for the Richardson East Church of Christ in Richardson, Texas,

The partnership "illustrates the amazing transformation that happens in our communities when people of faith choose to engage the world instead of escape it," Siburt said.

Michael Harbour, director of operations and finance for the ACU at CitySquare program, said the program also allows students to see the world as their classroom.

"As Christians, we think that education is for the sake of the world," Harbour said. "We are teaching students to use their God-given talent and their university education to make a difference. They do not have to wait until they graduate. They have the power to make a difference now."

SPOTLIGHT

Meeting war heroes

WASHINGTON — The eighth-grade class of Columbia Academy in Tennessee enjoyed a surprise meeting with former U.S. Sen. Robert Dole and war veterans from their home state.

On a recent trip to the nation's capital, the students met the veterans at the World War II Memorial, teacher Ben Diles said.

Columbia Academy is a K-12 school associated with Churches of Christ.



PHOTO PROVIDED BY EMILY LANSDELL

Students visit with Tennessee veterans at the World War II Memorial in Washington.

YOUTH TRAINING

TEXAS BIBLE BOWL

MARBLE FALLS, Texas — Richard Duncan, Samuel Johnson and Caleb Kirkwood — all graduating seniors — were recognized for their years of commitment to the Texas Bible Bowl.

Johnson participated through the League City Church of Christ in Texas. Duncan and Kirkwood attend the McDermott Road Church of Christ in Plano, Texas.

The Texas Bible Bowl, which began with less than 100 participants six years ago, has grown to more than 250, said Paul Hendrickson, preaching minister for the Hawley Church of Christ in Texas.

"Most of the growth has been because young men like these three have taken on the challenge," Hendrickson said. "All three young men have helped prepare and teach classes for their home congregations."

Duncan and Kirkwood will attend Lubbock Christian University in Texas, while Johnson is headed to the University of Texas at San Antonio.

throughout the semester to include service projects, hiking trips, trips to amusement parks and retreats," said campus minister Dustin Humphreys, noting that the ministry's goal is to fulfill the Great Commission.

HIGHER EDUCATION

ABILENE CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

ABILENE, Texas — Abilene Christian plans to change the face of this West Texas city of 120,000.

The university intends to create what it describes as a "signature entryway" on the northeast corner of its property — at the intersections of Ambler Avenue, Interstate 20 and Judge Ely Boulevard.

A final feasibility assessment is ongoing for a 95-acre development featuring shopping, leisure amenities, a hotel and a residential village.

"It would be a place where people would want to live, shop, dine and spend their leisure time," said Tony Chron, one of the developers and a 1976 ACU graduate.

OKLAHOMA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

OKLAHOMA CITY — The keynote speaker at Oklahoma Christian's spring commencement ceremonies was a familiar face.

Stafford North, a distinguished professor of Bible, spoke as the university presented 265 undergraduate degrees and 78 graduate degrees.

North is retiring later this year after 61 years with Oklahoma Christian. He first joined the faculty in 1952 and also served as academic dean and executive vice president.

As an educational technology professor, North made Oklahoma Christian a hub for educators who wanted to learn more about the use of technology in college instruction.

He also has preached throughout the U.S. and abroad since 1948. He has served as an elder of the Memorial Road Church of Christ, next to campus, since 1972.



North

CAMPUS MINISTRY

708 MINISTRIES

JOHNSON CITY — The Central Church of Christ supports 708 Ministries.

The campus ministry — so named because of the church's location at 708 W. Maple St. — reaches out to students from East Tennessee State University, Milligan College, Tusculum College and Northeast State Community College.

The group meets at 7:08 p.m. Tuesdays and at other times for devotionals, Bible studies, game and movie nights and meals.

"We also plan various events



PHOTO PROVIDED BY DUSTIN HUMPHREYS

Students active with 708 Ministries in Johnson City, Tenn., gather for a devo.

Baseball, barbecue and support for Latin American missions

Great Cities Missions board chairman John Todd Cornett, center, poses after throwing a ceremonial first pitch at a recent Texas Rangers game. "Night at the Ballpark" is the largest annual fundraising event for the Texas-based ministry, which recruits and trains missionaries for service in Latin America. The ministry sold 421 tickets — at \$100 each — to the pregame festivities that included a barbecue buffet.

MICHELLE FARIES



Milestones

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

Birthdays

Mary Frances McHam

Mary Frances McHam will celebrate 100 years of life this June.

She was born in Wichita Falls, Texas, on June 23, 1915. She married her sweetheart Donald E. McHam on June 21, 1936. Don and Mary Frances enjoyed 41 years of married life until Jesus called Don home in April of 1977. Don and Mary Frances were charter members of the Richland Hills Church of Christ, where Don served as an elder for many years. After Don's death, Mary Frances moved to Bryan/College Station, Texas, to be close to her children, Meridon (McHam) Warden, Sandie (McHam) Light, Elaine (McHam) Morrison and Bill McHam.

Mary Frances is still an active member at the A&M Church of Christ in College Station, still wearing her high heels, still visiting the sick and shut-ins and still being that same sweet self she has always been.



Her children can honestly say they never see her in a bad mood or hear her say an unkind word about another human being. Everyone would say she always has that sweet smile on her face.

In addition to her four children, she enjoys eight grandchildren (three have gone on to be with Jesus), 20 great-grandchildren and one great-great-grandson.



Richard Overton

You may not have known this interesting little truth, but one of your oldest brothers in Christ is America's oldest-living World War II veteran, Richard Overton. His 109th birthday was celebrated on Mother's Day, May 10, at the Church of Christ in Hyde Park, Austin, Texas.

Richard Overton served in the South Pacific during the war. He has been honored many times in recent years, even being honored by President Obama during a ceremony at the World War II Memorial in Washington. But the greatest honor he has experienced was his baptism into Christ during the summer of 2014. He was 107 years old when he was born again.

Until recently, Richard drove his own pickup truck to worship services every Sunday. Though his mind is still as sharp as a tack, he says he feels weak at times but assures everyone he is fine.

As late as last summer he was still mowing lawns for "widow women" in his neighborhood because, he says, they were too old to do it themselves. We look forward to his 110th birthday in May 2016 and are pretty sure he will be there for it.

100th: Audra Duncan, Oberlin, Kan.
95th: A.F. Fitzhugh, Houston, Texas.; Dee W. Martin, Plano, Texas. 94th: Pearl Holloway Todd, Tulsa, Okla.

Anniversaries

75th: Don and Lucile Chamberlain, Riverdale, Calif. 67th: Don and Virginia Worten, Lubbock, Texas. 65th: Ralph and Gladys Burcham, Edmond, Okla. 64th: Captain and Mrs. Dan E. (La Juan) Fenn, La Jolla, Calif. 63rd: Robert and Carleene Whinery, Dill City, Okla. 60th: LeRoy and Sandra Jones, Mountain View, Okla. 50th: Tommy and Becky Scott, Pearland, Texas.

Farewell Wishes

Art and Jane Neece

On May 9, the Empty Nesters Bible class and the elders and their wives at Memorial Road Church of Christ in Oklahoma City honored longtime members Art and Jane Neece with gifts and a going-away party.



Art and Jane have lived in Edmond, Okla., for the past 40 years, where they raised their sons Greg, Brad, and Doug. They will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary in October. Art retired from Kraft Foods after 35 years and Jane worked in the business office at Oklahoma Christian University for 25 years. They have served in various capacities at church and at Tealridge Retirement Community, participated in Sonlight Singers and worked with Mobile Meals in Edmond.

The Neece's son Doug, his wife Kim, and their four sons live in Albany, Texas, where he serves the Church of Christ

continued

NEWSMAKERS

NAMED: Donny Lee, dean of the Cannon-Clary College of Education at Harding University in Searcy, Ark. Denise Fisher, chair of the department of family and consumer sciences at Harding University.

AWARDED: Brittany Eckerberg was

named Miss Scotts Bluff County and will compete in the Miss Nebraska pageant in June. She is a sophomore at York College in Nebraska, and her platform is "No One Is Invincible — Underage Drinking Prevention."

Trey Van Treeck received the Presidential Scholarship, York College's most prestigious academic financial award. Van Treeck is a senior at at Southwest High School in Lincoln, Neb.

Dwight and Carie Samuel, the 2015 Distinguished Alumnus Award from Crowley's Ridge College in Paragould, Ark. Dwight Samuel is associate minister for the Sunset Church of Christ in Springfield, Mo. Carrie Samuel is a board member for the college, associated with Churches of Christ.



Eckerberg



Van Treeck



WWW.CRC.EDU

Crowley's Ridge College president Ken Hoppe honors Carie and Dwight Samuel with an award.

NEW ELDERS: Jeff Floyd, Jason Garner, James Hill, Chris McKeever and Tom Poteet, the Memorial Road Church of Christ in Oklahoma City.

NEW MINISTERS: Gary Frazier, pulpit minister for the White Rock Church of Christ in Dallas. Andy Johnson, missions minister for the Landmark Church of Christ in Montgomery, Ala.

Entries should be submitted to milestones@christianchronicle.org or call (405) 425-5070. Rates and guidelines are available upon request (credit card preferred).

June 6 OC Think Tank: Houston Area-Wide Elder's Workshop. Memorial Church of Christ, Houston. (713) 464-0271.

June 6-7 50th Anniversary — Garriot Road Church of Christ. Enid, Okla. charity.g@suddenlink.net.

June 9 Teachers Serving Teachers Workshop 2015. Healing Hands International, Nashville, Tenn. www.hhi.org.

June 10-14 Mid-County Church of Christ 50th Anniversary Celebration. Troy, Ohio. www.midcountycoc.org.

June 10-12 42nd Annual Jail and Prison Ministry Workshop. Highland Church of Christ, Memphis, Tenn. www.whyhopeworks.org.

June 11-14 Singles Conference 2015. "By Myself ... but Beside Christ." Orlando, Fla. (407) 296-0155.

June 13 50th Anniversary, Preston Road School of Preaching. Preston Road Church of Christ, Dallas. (903) 987-4107.

June 19-20 30th Annual Northeastern States Men's Retreat. Kent School, Kent, Conn. www.cocmensretreat.com.

June 19-20 Parents of Missionaries Retreat. Homewood Suites, Fayetteville, Ark. missions@MRNet.org.

June 26-27 Adult Third Culture Kid Retreat. Fayetteville, Ark. missions@MRNet.org.

June 27 Woman-to-Woman, The Workshop Part II. Minneapolis. (612) 618-7955.

July 1-3 Lipscomb Summer Celebration Lectureship 2015. Nashville, Tenn. www.lipscomb.edu/summercelebration.

July 4 Black Mesa Bible Camp 50th Anniversary Celebration. Camp Billy Joe, Kenton, Okla. scott7stewart@gmail.com.

July 12-15 The Caribbean Lectureship. Saint Thomas. www.caribbeanlectureship.com.

July 12-17 Harding Summer Honor Choir. Harding University. www.harding.edu/honorchoir.

July 16-18 Homeschool Convention. Dallas. (800)-235-4444.

July 17-19 Greyhounds for Christ Reunion. Portales, N.M. cofc_studentcenter@yucca.net.

FULL CALENDAR: www.christianchronicle.org.

continued

Christ as a deacon, song leader and youth ministry leader. Doug was diagnosed with extensive cancer last fall. Art and Jane immediately thought of how they could be of help in supporting Doug and his family. They didn't think twice about moving in order to do whatever was needed to help this family fight their battle.

We will truly miss this loyal and faithful couple who have worked and served so many people. We bid them a loving farewell with many blessings, and we send our prayers with them.

Memorials

Jeri Paden Fox

Jeri Paden Fox died on May 6, 2015, at the age of 90. She and her husband, Harry Robert Fox, served as missionaries in post-World War II Japan between October 1947 and March 1958.

During the rest of their lives they served churches in California, Oregon and Utah while also conducting numerous home Bible studies designed to increase appreciation for the magnitude of the Gospel of Christ.

Jeri is survived by her husband, Harry Robert Fox; her twin brother, Gerald Paden of Lubbock, Texas; her sister, Pat Whitson of Lakewood, Calif.; four sons, Ken, John, Larry and Jerry of north Utah County; 20 great-grandchildren and 23 great-grandchildren.

Jessica Janette Sikes

Jessica Janette Sikes, 31, of Rochester, Minn., passed from this

Milestones

world into eternity with Jesus on Feb. 14, 2015, surrounded by her family at home.

Jessica was born on Aug. 30, 1983, in Bloomington, Ind. She grew up attending public schools in Culbertson, Neb.; Anson, Texas; and York, Neb. She attended York College, Abilene Christian University and Indiana University.

As a graduate student at Indiana University, she majored in anatomy



while working as a graduate assistant in their cadaver lab and as support staff at a facility for those suffering with schizophrenia.

Jessica spent the majority of her life battling various ailments, including congenital nystagmus and strabismus, along with multiple eye surgeries; extreme light and sound sensitivities; 24/7 migraine type pain for 19-plus years (intracranial hypertension); and colon cancer that spread throughout her body until her liver could no longer do its job.

Jessica's perseverance and tenacity in spite of her physical challenges, blessed those who knew her or knew her story. Jessica made the choice to live her life loving and serving God, her family and others. She lived to give!

Over the past decade, Jessica lived with her parents in both New Jersey and Minnesota. Often confined to her bed, Jessica would buy and sell on the Internet to earn an income, pay her bills and find deals for others. Her resourcefulness, wit, compassion and smile were so attractive to those who knew her. Her understanding of truth and her gift of wisdom made her a wonderful counselor and peacemaker for family and friends.

Jessica was preceded in death by her maternal grandparents, Clayton

and Kathleen Klein, and paternal grandfather, Walter Jack Sikes.

She is survived by a large extended family: her parents, Dr. Steve and Patti (Klein) Sikes of Rochester, Minn. (many may know Steve and Patti as former professors at York College. Currently Steve is the preacher at Rochester Church of Christ and is associated with the Hands of Compassion ministry); her older brother and his wife, Jordan and Jacqueline (Keese) Sikes and their three daughters; her younger brother and his wife, Caleb and Krista (Ward) Sikes of Port Huron, Mich., and their two sons; her younger sister and husband, Crystal and Shane Stinnett of Rochester, Mich.; her paternal grandmother, Robbie Sikes (Mrs. Jack Sikes) of York, Neb.; many aunts and uncles, and more than 100 cousins who are connected to many local Churches of Christ, in the U.S. and abroad, found in Alabama, California, Colorado, Florida, Indiana, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Texas, Washington, Virginia, Bolivia and Ecuador.

People from 14 states attended Jessica's memorial service in Rochester. Memorial gifts are still being accepted through the Rochester Church of Christ, 632 2nd St SW, Rochester, MN 55902.

You may specify whether you would like your gift to go to either or both the Hands of Compassion ministry (hospitality for Christians visiting Mayo Clinic) and the Jessica Sikes' Benefit Fund.

Marguerite Gray, 90, West Monroe, La.

Memorial/Honor Gifts

The Christian Chronicle appreciates and acknowledges generous gifts donated in honor of Ralph and Gladys Burcham and in memory of Amy Carnagey, Joyce McBride and Carl Robison.

Entries should be submitted to milestones@christianchronicle.org or call (405) 425-5070. Rates and guidelines are available upon request (credit card preferred).

EDITORIAL

Praying for rain ... to stop

We've been here time and time again, it seems.

Just months ago we reported on Churches of Christ in the midst of the Ferguson, Mo., protests. Not long after that, a congregation in Oklahoma showed us how to forgive a racist chant. And now Baltimore.

The racially charged headlines come in waves, like the floods that have claimed lives, destroyed homes and washed away roads in Middle America. Gray clouds hang over our offices in Oklahoma as we write these words, threatening to worsen the deluge.

We thank God for the churches responding to these natural and man-made disasters. We recognize that we must formulate long-term strategies to address them. In our cities, we must combat poverty and injustice.

When the storms of life strike, we must provide more than blankets for the victims.

We salute Christians dedicated to long-term recovery — amid cries for justice in Baltimore and cries for help in Tornado Alley.

And we pray for the rain to stop.

In the midst of the recent downpour, however, an Oklahoma preacher told his congregation about the prison epistles of Paul. At the end of his life, the apostle didn't ask for a prison break, but for an outbreak of the Gospel. Paul realized that the ultimate antidote to pain is not its removal, but spiritual growth through pain.

May that be our prayer as we weather the storms today and the storms ahead.

'Paul realized that the ultimate antidote to pain is not its removal, but spiritual growth through pain.'

Working heartily, on the air and everywhere

Bondservants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh, not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but in sincerity of heart, fearing God. And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you serve the Lord Christ. But he who does wrong will be repaid for what he has done, and there is no partiality.

— Colossians 3:22-25, New King James Version

As bondservants of Christ, are we doing whatever we find to do for him *heartily*? The word translated “heartily” literally means “from the soul” — intense service.

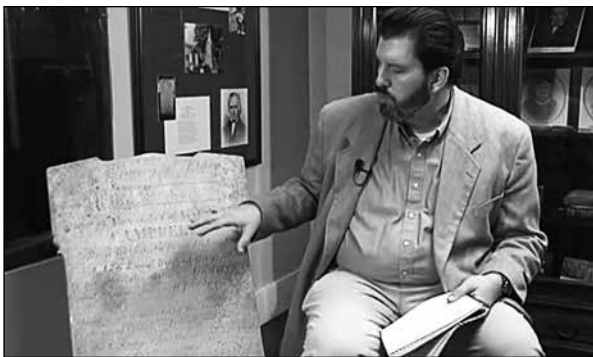
Paul, writing to the church in Colossae, addresses slaves — common in the Roman empire. Paul referred to himself as bondservant of Christ in Romans 1:1, though he was a born Roman citizen as we learn in Acts 22:25-28.

He was not a bondservant of Rome but of Christ. We are all bondservants of Christ because we have been bought with a price. (See 1 Corinthians 6:20.)

Our city, Wadsworth, Ohio, allows churches to produce TV shows at no cost. What an opportunity! But the last thing I wanted was to be on television. When I was given the opportunity, I demurred. There already were excellent programs such as “In Search of the Lord’s Way,” I reasoned. What would happen if I preached on TV? Any person in town could watch the program and then approach me. That would be great — if they liked what I said. What if they did not?

Whatever you do, do it heartily.

On January 10, 2012, our first program aired on WCTV. As it progressed, some encouraged me to approach the Gospel Broadcasting Network about working with them. I hesitated. Phil Sanders of “Search” encouraged me. So did Winford Claiborne, the former host of “The International



WWW.GBNTV.ORG

David R. Kenney points out details on the tombstone of Restoration Movement figure Thomas Campbell during “A.C.: A Historical Account of Alexander Campbell.” The Gospel Broadcasting Network documentary was filmed on location at the Campbell family’s home in Bethany, W.Va. Watch the documentary at www.christianchronicle.org. Search for “Alexander Campbell.”

Gospel Hour.” I value these men so very highly.

Whatever you do, do it heartily.

So, “Light From Above” began airing on GBN on Feb. 5, 2013. Now it is not just the people of Wadsworth. Anyone can see the program at any time.

Not everyone has been given the opportunities I have. However, I am confident the Lord provides opportunities.

What opportunities are we letting pass by? How many Christians are more comfortable with our lights under bushels than on lampstands, as Jesus says in Matthew 5:15?

Whatever you do, do heartily for the Lord. And he will reward you.

DAVID R. KENNEY preaches for the Wadsworth Church of Christ in Ohio. He produces “Light From Above,” available on Gospel Broadcasting Network, gbntv.org.

In the Word



David R. Kenney

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FLORISSANT, Mo.
On a beautiful Sunday, my husband became violently ill. Instantly, one of the nurses noticed the dampness of his skin, shortness of breath and anxiety. She moved him quickly to the church's Health Office. She placed an aspirin under his tongue while taking his blood pressure. It was 198 over 162. A second nurse took information from me, (age, birth date, medications, allergies, insurance, name of doctor), as the first nurse called 911. By the time paramedics arrived, he was ready to be transported — with a complete copy of all information in their hands. Not one minute was wasted. My husband was treated and discharged in a couple of hours. It could have been a very different story, had we not had our Health Care Ministry.

Testimonials like this, told by one of our church members, are among the many reasons that I'm thankful for the 20 years of service provided by my

Views

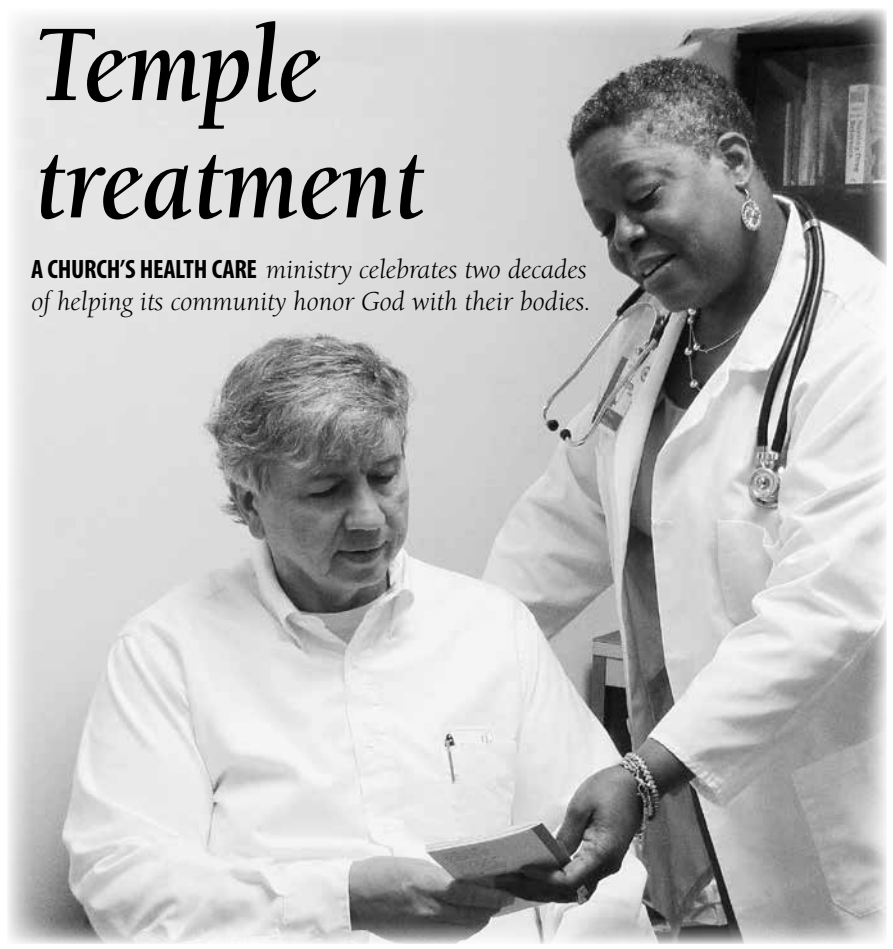


Faye Williams

congregation, the Florissant Church of Christ through our Health Care Ministry. In 1995, my fellow nurse and sister in Christ Ruth Goldsmith and I took the first of many steps to launch this ministry. In the years

since, another nurse, Doris Burks, has taken charge of the work. We wanted to know how the church could make a difference in reducing illness and disease. We wanted to provide emergency aid during worship services when necessary. We also wanted to help in the fight against spiritual diseases that go untreated — sometimes until it is too

Praise for a church that works
I think I could write a book about all the stories of lives transformed by the love of Jesus in the hearts of the family at Southside Church of Christ. (See "Churches That Work," Page 17, May.) I love this church, from the sweet old souls that have watched me grow, fall and get up



Faye Williams gives a pamphlet to a patient at the Florissant church's health care clinic.

late. These include sadness, loneliness, hopelessness, stress and broken hearts. We recognized that the church has the potential to help its members and the community make changes that lead to a healthier lifestyle. We prayed and searched God's Word. We found our mission in 1 Corinthians 6:19-20, *"Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body."* We developed objectives to

(and helped me up) to the little ones that run past me as they play or seek me out just to give me hug. A young woman sitting next to me in HOPE class this past Sunday said she planned to move here when she finishes her program and that she really didn't have any family. I told her, "Well, you do now. Welcome home." David Berry | Fort Worth, Texas

support our mission statement. We sought input from our members through a health survey. Our elders and ministers were 100 percent on board. The survey identified needs and allowed members to give suggestions and volunteer. We learned quickly that it takes a variety of people, committed to sharing the compassionate love and grace of Jesus Christ, to make a ministry a success. Volunteers who don't have a medical background are nonetheless useful — even invaluable. For example, our church has been

This is such a wonderful, uplifting story about a traditional worship atmosphere in Fort Worth. As I read, I thought of our Lord working through the good souls in the area and how he smiles on those who are making a difference. The work that has been done is amazing. Bless all of you. Sherry Geraci | Cincinnati

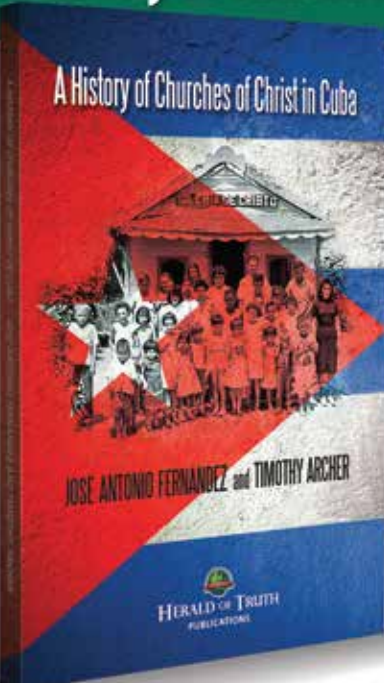
the top donor in our community for the American Red Cross for the past eight years. The welcoming acts of our retirees make our walk-in blood donors come again and again. One of our members made lower back pillows that provide comfort while donating. One of our members, who is a transplant recipient said, "I have received so many transfusions that would not have been possible without blood drives. I am so grateful for everyone who has given the gift of life." Thanks to our elders and minister, we now have our blood drives on Sundays — making donating easier without distracting our services. We started with a limited budget. So when we decided we needed our first defibrillator, our members donated to purchase it. Two decades later, our ministry provides a free flu clinic, blood pressure screening, medication classes and seminars for disease prevention. We educate our community about exercise, nutrition, handling stress, childhood obesity and safety. We assist members with living wills and health care directives. We provide help for living with chronic illness, coping with the aging process and grief associated with loss. We serve as liaisons and advocates, helping our members navigate the maze of insurance billing. We celebrate God's love and compassion in helping us to be stewards of our bodies, living lives that glorify him. It is our honor and privilege to assist anyone interested in starting a Health Care Ministry. What do you need? The heart of Christ, the soul of Christ and, most importantly, the love of Christ for others — and for yourself.

FAYE WILLIAMS, a registered nurse for 42 years, is a member of the Florissant Church of Christ in Missouri where her husband, Stanley, serves as an elder.

Ukrainian church has tenacity
The church in eastern Ukraine does have a lot of wisdom — how they keep worshiping and gathering together after all they've been through. (See "Heroes, Satan and Ukraine," Page 13, May.) Nice report. Jesús Alberto Guzman | Los Mochis, Mexico

LETTERS

A History of Churches of Christ in Cuba



JOSE ANTONIO FERNANDEZ and TIMOTHY ARCHER

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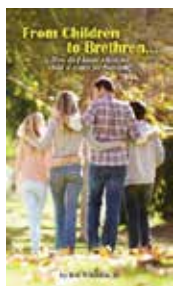
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- ACTS 16:15 -

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A journey from brokenness to ministry

Heartbreak and healing, trauma and recovery, brokenness and hope. These dual themes run throughout **"The Color of Grace: How One Woman's Brokenness Brought Healing and Hope to Child Survivors of War."**

Bethany Haley, a member of Otter Creek Church of Christ in Brentwood, Tenn., weaves together her own story of recovery, as she pieces her life back together after divorce and trauma, and the recovery of African children who have endured unspeakable evil.

Her memoir tells of the genesis of Exile International, a nonprofit that seeks to bring healing to former child soldiers through comprehensive rehabilitative care.

With a doctorate in counseling psychology, a master's in clinical social work and 15 years of counseling experience, this is a task that Haley is well suited for in many ways.

But we cannot fully appreciate what she does until we understand the "why."

It's easy for those of us in Churches of Christ to identify with Haley. Raised in the church, she attended Freed-Hardeman University in Henderson, Tenn.,

where she met her future husband. But her seemingly perfect world crumbled. After 10 years, her marriage ended. In Colorado, she was treated for post-traumatic stress disorder. Her brokenness is clear

as she details her path to healing — learning to rely on the grace of God.

She eventually found herself on a mission trip to provide care to women and children of the Democratic Republic of Congo who had been emotionally wounded by the country's decades-long conflict. Some were child soldiers. Others were

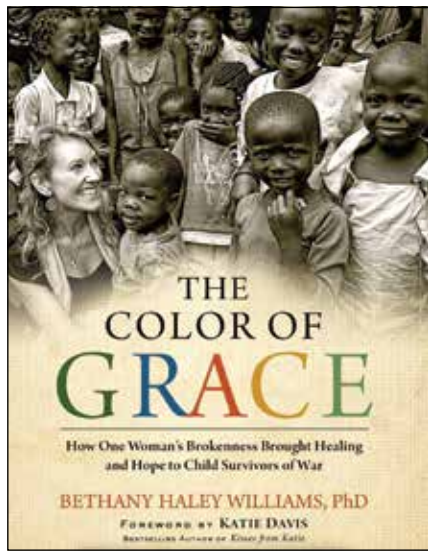
sex slaves. Their stories touched a place deep within her that she couldn't ignore.

She shares the story of Gabriel, abducted as a child and made to commit terrible acts of violence. There's also Rebecca, forced at the age of 7 to participate in the killing of her own mother before spending the next two years in captivity.

This is not an easy read. There are times when the evil feels like too much to take. But there also is hope, such as the story of Dennis, who escaped with his siblings after witnessing the abduction of his parents and dismemberment of his



Lauren Bookout



★★★★★
Bethany Haley. **The Color of Grace: How One Woman's Brokenness Brought Healing and Hope to Child Survivors of War.** New York: Howard Books, 2015. 352 pages. \$24.99

brother. "When we came back, we continued to fast for God's deliverance," Dennis says. "I thank God we were saved. I thank God for that."

The inherent humility of a child who has faced horrors most adults can't imagine — and knows only to thank God for salvation — causes us to reevaluate our own lives.

Haley writes, "If these children can endure it, how can I not be strong enough to hear it?" She demonstrates remarkable self-awareness. She doesn't shy away from acknowledging her flaws and mistakes but refuses to let them define her. She is aware of her strengths, but she simply offers them up to be used by the one who gave them for his purpose. In doing so, she invites us to do the same.

In a 2011 speech, Haley described an inability to sleep because the world isn't helping them. She can only conclude that the world doesn't know. "I ask you to see them," she said, "because they deserve to be seen."

It seems impossible to read this memoir and not feel compelled to find some way to be a part of the healing process. The true beauty of this book is how it compels us to find our own passion and ways to be used.

"When your greatest heartbreak becomes your greatest ministry, grace has come full circle," Haley writes. She has experienced this in her own life and invites us to find it in ours.

LAUREN BOOKOUT is the founder of KatharosNOW, a blog geared toward high school and college-age girls. She is a member of the Jackson Street Church of Christ in Monroe, La., where her husband, Travis, serves as minister.

NEW AND NOTEWORTHY

REFLECTION

Laura J. Boggess. **Playdates with God: Having a Childlike Faith in a Grownup World.** Abilene, Texas: Leafwood Publishers, 2014. 208 pages. \$14.99.



In the style of Ann Voskamp's poetic bestseller "One Thousand Perfect Gifts," Boggess shares how she let go of her list-making, controlling checklist faith and learned how to take leaps of faith. Doing so helped her husband make the decision to become a Christian — answering 12 years of prayer — and helped her enjoy her relationship with God.

HISTORY

N.T. Wright. **Simply Good News: Why the Gospel is News and What Makes it Good.** New York: HarperOne, 2015. 208 pages. \$24.99.



How would first-century people have received the Gospel, had an apostle come preaching it in their streets and places of worship? That's what Wright, one of today's leading New Testament theologians, sets out to illustrate.

He contends that many churches present the Gospel as good advice, not a celebratory exclamation that "The war is over!" Everyone should know and care about this, he writes.

CHRISTIAN LIVING

Brant Hansen. **Unoffendable: How Just One Change Can Make All of Life Better.** Nashville, Tenn.: Worthy Publishing, 2015. 224 pages. \$15.99.



Christians have no right to be angry with anyone, Hansen contends. The radio host works for CURE International, a Christian network of hospitals that serves the poor. He encourages readers to practice daily gratitude and shun entitlement. The book's epigraph is a quote from Christian philosopher Dallas Willard: "Anger is the most fundamental problem in human life."

GENDER ISSUES

Andreas J. Kostenberger and Margaret E. Kostenberger. **God's Design for Man and Woman: A Biblical-Theological Survey.** Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway, 2014. 384 pages. \$22.99.



This husband-and-wife team, both professors at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, explores men's and women's roles throughout history — and what God intends for these to look like today. Helpful appendices include information on women's rights movements since biblical times and the importance of hermeneutics.

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Blessed mourning: Finding words of comfort in unexpected places

I never meant to write this column. These are thoughts I never wanted to have — or to share. On April 16 at 3:45 p.m., my wife of nearly 59 years, Joyce, died. All her life, she loved teaching and adored our children, their mates, our grandchildren and the spouses that four of them have brought to the family, our four younger grandchildren and our two great-grandchildren. She equally loved the 3,000 pre-kindergarteners she has taught over the past 47 years. She had a growth on her throat, and she wanted it gone so she could speak more forcefully to her class. She firmly believed that God had preserved her life so she could help young children come to know him through the great stories of godly men and women.

The surgery on her left vocal cord had no effect on her death. She had a heart attack one year ago on April 16. She had been under great cardiologists for years, and her doctor told me that he had been helping her survive for seven years. She had two faulty valves, and she was not strong enough to undergo the procedure to correct the problem. She had a second heart attack on April 2, and even though medical science did all possible to save her, we lost her two weeks later.

It was the worst blow I ever had. I have been surrounded by children, grandchildren, friends of nearly 50 years. Her memorial celebration was attended by more than 1,200 people, and more than 200 former students quoted Psalm 23. My three children have helped me with all the paperwork and details, but it seems to me that the light has gone out for me.

Joyce and I have been blessed to live into our 80s. We have had time to talk about and pray about such an eventuality. We agreed that quality of life was more important than more years. We promised each other that we would seek to do whatever God has planned for us. Joyce worried that I might sleep life away if she were not here to wake me, and she made me promise that I would get up and follow the same routine I had followed for years. She also asked that I do at least one good deed for

someone outside the family each day. I sought guidance from friends who have experienced the loss of a spouse. Most of the men I have talked to believe that only time really brings healing. One told me that I should take one day at a time, spend much time in prayer and begin to write my thoughts to Joyce. The time in prayer has been helpful, as has Bible study. I began reading Joyce's prayer journals and discovered that she prayed about nearly every person we know daily. I have started my own prayer journal, and I am trying to focus on others.

Another friend encouraged me to find a mature woman that I could visit with on a regular basis. That is not advice that interests me. I did, however, turn to a wise, godly widow whose children I have known since they were students at Oklahoma Christian University.

Sue Warren Green has a great heart of compassion, and the first thing she did was refer me to a column I wrote in 2013, "Blessed mourning." I told the story of my grandmother, whose first child died 12 hours after his birth. She had 12 other children who lived full lives, but in her later years her memory lingered over the son she lost.

I concluded the column with the statement, "Only the eternal perspective of God provides a valid view."

It was easy to sound wise when I was only dealing with death in general. Feeling the pain of Joyce's death I understand that mourning accentuates grief, but my mourning is only for me and my children.

I cannot mourn for Joyce because she has what she wanted all her life. I mourn for my children, but I celebrate that Joyce loved me, loved her family and loved almost every person she ever encountered. I am on God's time, and I will use every day to serve him and his kingdom.



Bailey McBride

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Christ in Indonesia

This Southeast Asian nation, with more Muslims than anywhere else in the world, is nonetheless ripe for the Gospel, ministry trainers say. **15**



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