

At the border, a crisis of faith



PHOTOS BY LYNN MCMILLON

America Ferrera, star of ABC's "Ugly Betty," plays games with children from Latin America at a Respite Center in McAllen, Texas. "We can't look at children who are fleeing violence and call them criminals," she told reporters.

Churches in South Texas show compassion — where they can

BY ERIK TRYGGESTAD | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

McALLEN, Texas — "Shoes!" A woman yelled the word, emphatically, as she hurried past Dale Fielder, in answer to his question: "Is there anything you need?"

Fielder, an elder of the Church of Christ North in Pharr, Texas, stood between television cameras and tables covered with donated clothes, bearing signs that read "Niños" and "Niñitas" ("boys" and "baby girls").

As many as 172 immigrants per day have filed through this Respite Center, a brief stop at the end of a 1,700-mile exodus from Central America.

The lucky ones make it to this South Texas city, after spending weeks — even months — wading through alligator-infested rivers and riding atop train cars.

They sell everything they have and pay *coyotes*, smugglers, as much as \$6,700 to take them, illegally, across the Mexican and U.S.

borders. Many die along the way — assaulted, robbed or trafficked into sexual slavery. Those who survive arrive here with clothes — and shoes — in tatters.

"It takes real courage," said Brenda Riojas, spokeswoman
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One Nación Under God

Third in a series

CROSSING BARRIERS IN HOUSTON 13
FROM THE CARTEL TO CHRIST 14
VIEWS: LOVING THE UNDOCUMENTED 31

In north Mexico, Christians tell of immigration woes, cartels and hope



Jesús "Chuy" Mar ministers just south of the U.S. border in Reynosa, Mexico.

BY ERIK TRYGGESTAD | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

REYNOSA, Mexico — Eleven miles of pavement — and a thousand miles of red tape — separate this city on the Mexican border from McAllen, Texas.

On a scalding Sunday afternoon, Jesús Mar, known as "Chuy," sat outside a small, dark blue house and spoke with two U.S. church elders who made the drive south. Inside, 38

members of the Colonia Solidaridad Church of Christ, which Mar and his wife, Lupita, helped launch in 2009, sang hymns as they concluded an afternoon worship service.

Only in Mexico can the elders, from the Church of Christ North in Pharr, Texas, speak with Mar face to face. The minister has applied for visas to visit the U.S. — where he graduated from high school and a school

of preaching — but the Mexican government has denied his requests.

As he preaches words of hope to his brothers and sisters in Mexico, he prays for the day when he'll be allowed to cross the border, legally.

All the while, thousands of Central Americans pass through Reynosa and across the border, illegally, into Texas. There, they surrender to U.S.

See **MEXICO**, Page 13



It's back! DA! Not Duh. But "DA," which means "Yes." While everybody else is saying "No," Ukraine is saying "Yes!" Regions all across Ukraine are asking for the Bible in thousands of public schools with hundreds of thousands of students. And now, public universities. Yes, public schools and

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The faith I have found in 'post-Christian' Europe

BRUSSELS, Belgium

Post-Christian Europe? I'm not sure I buy that description anymore.

You see, there *are* spiritual seekers in this West European capital, known for chocolate, lace, waffles and

Inside Story



Erik Tryggestad

high-level talks about intergovernmental military cooperation. (NATO headquarters is here.)

During a Wednesday night Bible study, I saw

something that I didn't expect to see in Brussels — something downright faith-shaking. A visitor.

It happened in the apartment home of Blair Roberts, a quiet, unassuming Christian from the Canadian province of Saskatchewan.

He and his wife, Susan, served for 14 years among the Flemish-speaking churches of Belgium before returning to Canada. Now empty nesters, they live part of the year in Brussels, hoping one day to help launch a Dutch-speaking church in this city of 1.1 million souls.

(Dutch is one of the official languages of Belgium, and Flemish is considered a dialect of Dutch, but they're basically the same language. I speak neither.)

Luckily, this Bible study was in English. It's something Blair Roberts does for a handful of Christian expats — including some U.S. military families stationed in Belgium. One of the

See **EUROPE**, Page 4



DAN MCGREGOR

The introvert behind the pulpit

FOR THESE PREACHERS, devotion to ministry requires balancing need for solitude with passion for sharing God's word.

BY BOBBY ROSS JR. | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

No offense, but people drain Mark Littleton of much-needed energy. Here's what invigorates him: sitting in his church office — alone — with his Bible, study books, computer and a Diet Dr Pepper.

"It's not that I don't want to be around people," said Littleton, pulpit minister for the Athens Church of Christ in Tennessee. "I don't mind that, for short periods, when it's balanced out by my 'alone time.'"

Like a surprising number of preachers, Littleton feels much more comfort-

able standing behind the pulpit than approaching strangers at a church fellowship meal.

"I think I was in my 30s before I realized that *most* preachers in my experience were actually introverts," said Bruce McLarty, 57, a longtime minister who serves as president of Harding University in Searcy, Ark., and describes himself as slightly more extroverted than introverted.

Based on the popular Myers-Briggs Type Indicator personality test, Lance Bennett qualifies as an introvert.

However, a person visiting the

See **INTROVERT**, Page 22

Brantly: Fight against Ebola is far from over

BY ERIK TRYGGESTAD | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

Dr. Kent Brantly is healed. Africa is not.

"Ebola is ravaging West Africa like a wildfire out of control," the Christian physician, who contracted and survived the deadly virus, wrote in a column for *Time* magazine. "We cannot sit back and say, 'Oh, those poor people.' We must think outside the box and find ways to help."

Brantly and his family attended the Southside Church of Christ in Fort Worth, Texas, before moving to Liberia in 2013 to serve in a post-residency program sponsored by Samaritan's Purse. For *Time* and in an interview with NBC's Matt Lauer, he detailed his battle with the virus, his transfer to Emory University Hospital in Atlanta and his release and reunion with his family.

"Even when I was facing death, I remained full of faith," Brantly wrote in *Time*. "I did not want to be faithful to God all the way up to serving in Liberia for 10 months, only to give up at the end because I was sick."

"Though we cannot return to Liberia right now, it is clear we have been given a new platform for helping the people of Liberia."

At least 2,400 people in West Africa have died from the virus, the World Health Organization reports.

Members of Churches of Christ in Guinea and Sierra Leone are among the dead, African ministers tell *The Christian Chronicle*.

"Please keep praying for Africa ... as the people are suffering and crying to God for help," said Jacob Sesay, a minister in Sierra Leone's capital, Freetown. "May the good God have mercy over his people and wipe off this virus in their lands."

RELATED COVERAGE, Page 10



Brantly

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ERIK TRYGGSTAD

Blair Roberts, left, and Paul Brazle, missionaries in Belgium, treat a small group of U.S. church members — on a layover, headed for Africa — to coffee at a café in Brussels.

EUROPE: Empty cathedrals, thirsty souls

FROM PAGE 3

participants, Catherine, struck up a conversation with a young man on the subway en route to the apartment. She invited him to join us.

And he did.

Dressed in a trendy leather jacket and boots, he had a “deer in the headlights” look about him, as if he weren’t quite sure what he had gotten himself into.

I thought about how I would feel, walking into the apartment of someone I didn’t know, surrounded by strangers who wanted to tell me about Jesus. This guy was brave, and I have to believe that something drove him to step out in faith.

He was here for a reason.

He participated in our discussion — even made a couple of good points, as I recall. And after the devotional, he didn’t bolt for the door. I’ll never forget the tough, tattooed U.S. Marine who made his way over to our visitor. (Or was he Air Force? Either way, he could’ve bench-pressed me.)

“I’d like to pray with you,” he said. “What’s something we can pray for?”

I’m going to keep praying for Europe. I know we’ll probably never see the kind of baptism numbers here that we see in Africa, India and other parts of the world where the Gospel spreads like wildfire.

But we’re needed here, too.

Europe has empty cathedrals and empty hearts. Beyond the

noise and clamor of its busy streets and subways, there is a search for meaning here. Only God can provide that meaning. He can use us here.

Let’s not give up on Europe.
Not just yet.

Speaking of Flemish ...

Several years ago I sat in on a Bible class at Oklahoma Christian University taught by Arlin Hendrix, a visiting missionary from Lyon, France. (See a feature on his work on Page 18.)

Arlin believes, firmly, that you haven’t really experienced the Bible until you’ve read it in the original French. One day, as he was taking the class through a passage about the Holy Spirit, he openly lamented an English word choice — one that just didn’t capture the spirit of the Greek word like the French translation did, he said.

Two students in the class were children of Paul and Carol Brazle, longtime missionaries in Belgium.

“How would you say that word in Flemish?” he asked them.

Immediately, a rather smart-alecky student next to me started making a gross, guttural noise — like a cat coughing up a hairball.

He was speaking Phlegmish.
And he was fluent.

CONTACT erik@christianchronicle.org.



PHOTOS PROVIDED BY LITTLE LEAGUE BASEBALL AND SOFTBALL

A big win for a Little Leaguer

Joshua Houston, a member of the Sheldon Heights Church of Christ in Chicago, pitches during the recent Little League World Series. Joshua threw five innings and drove in the game-tying run as Jackie Robinson West won the U.S. championship before losing to a South Korea team in the final. Jerry Houston, Joshua's dad and a fellow Sheldon Heights member, served as the team's pitching coach. Coming from "an impoverished neighborhood to No. 1, they did the impossible," minister Leonardo Gilbert said. "It's a very exciting time."



ARKANSAS

LITTLE ROCK — The Pleasant Valley Church of Christ is celebrating 50 years of missions.

In 1964, the church sent Charlie and Virginia Davis to serve an Air Force base in the Philippines. Since then, the congregation has provided full-time support for 50 missionaries, some for more than 20 years, missions minister Roger Pritchett said.

The church's 13 current missionaries share the Gospel in Brazil, Chile, Czech Republic, Kenya, Mozambique, Peru and Tanzania as well as four domestic locations, Pritchett said.

"More than 100 churches have been planted from the efforts of our current missionary force," he said.

CALIFORNIA

LOS ANGELES — As Billie Silvey sees it, journaling promotes self-discovery and reflection on God and his world.

Over the summer, teenagers at the Culver Palms Church of Christ — where Silvey is a member — studied about keeping a journal.

A class developed by Silvey, a professional writer, focused on themes such as discovery, meditation, reading, travel and prayer journals.

"The students participated enthusiastically in the discussions," Silvey said. "Both they and their parents expressed pleasure with the outcome."

MICHIGAN

DETROIT — The fifth areawide "United in Christ" worship assembly since 2006 drew 600 souls to the Elmwood Park Church of Christ. The service was part of an ongoing effort to bring together black, white and Hispanic churches in the Detroit area.

The recent gathering coincided with the ninth annual "Love in Action" school supply giveaway hosted by six congregations in partnership with eight other Churches of Christ.

Gary Smith, senior minister of the Fifth Ward Church of Christ in Houston, and Henry Roncancio, cross-cultural minister of the Webb Chapel Church of Christ in Dallas, spoke.

James Snow, minister and elder of the Redford Church of Christ in Detroit, serves as chairman of the unity committee. Roger Woods, minister and elder of the Walled Lake Church of Christ in Michigan, is co-chairman.



Smith

SPOTLIGHT

Stars and Stripes winner

OKLAHOMA CITY — Hannah Johnson, 17, became the first Oklahoma girl to earn the American Heritage Girls' Stars and Stripes award, the equivalent to the Girl Scouts' Gold Award or the Boy Scouts' Eagle rank.

The Memorial Road Church of Christ member was honored for a service project that involved outreach to homeless people, *Edmond Life & Leisure* reported.



PHOTO PROVIDED BY KENA VOGEL

Hannah Johnson displays her Stars and Stripes award.

American Heritage is a Christ-centered character development group for girls. Hannah's troop meets at the Wilshire Church of Christ in Oklahoma City.

NEW YORK

NIAGARA FALLS — More than two dozen Oklahomans — from children to retirees — traveled to the LaSalle Church of Christ to encourage fellow Christians, help with a gospel meeting and refurbish the church building.

The recent mission trip by the Edmond Church of Christ featured a door-knocking campaign and nightly preaching by Phil Sanders, speaker for the "In Search of the Lord's Way" television ministry.

Minister Mark Dailey and his wife, Audrey, serve the LaSalle church.

TENNESSEE

FRANKLIN — His Beloved, a ministry of the Fourth Avenue Church of Christ, serves families of children with special needs.

Through events such as "Angel Camp" and a Vacation Bible School for special-needs children and their siblings, the church affords opportunities for volunteers to build relationships with them, children's minister Marian Parker said.

"By providing a buddy system, a sensory-friendly classroom and an inclusive spirit, His Beloved hopes to show Christ's love to every child," Parker said.

Three preachers, 162 years of service



CLINT WALKER

Robert Oglesby speaks on his 50th anniversary with the Waterview church in 2013.

Oglesby to step down after 52 years in pulpit

RICHARDSON, Texas — On Feb. 3, 1963, Robert Oglesby Sr. preached his first sermon for the Waterview Church of Christ in Richardson, Texas.

On Feb. 1, 2015 — after 52 years as the Dallas-area church's first and only pulpit minister — Oglesby plans to preach one more time.

Then he'll semi-retire, remaining

on the ministry staff in a flexible, part-time capacity.

Oglesby revealed his intentions to his longtime church family recently.

"This will complete an unusual history in which a preacher starts with a new congregation on the northern edge of Dallas and stays with it through many years," Oglesby said.



TED PARKS

Andrew Hairston preaches at the Simpson Street Church of Christ in Atlanta in 2012.

Street named to honor 53-year Atlanta minister

ATLANTA — The Atlanta City Council voted recently to rename a street in honor of Andrew J. Hairston, who has preached for the Simpson Street Church of Christ for 53 years.

Newport Street became Andrew J. Hairston Street in a ceremony paying tribute to the "caring support and integrity" of the long-

time minister, civil rights leader, lawyer and judge.

Hairston's 1961 move to Atlanta came at a crucial time in the city's — and the nation's — history. As the U.S. struggled with race and war, Hairston worked with some key figures of the Civil Rights Movement, including Martin Luther King Jr.

Alabama minister sees Golden Rule as the secret to his 57-year longevity

BY LORI PRUITT | FOR THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. — Gerald Romine preached his first sermon while in high school. Later, as a student at Freed-Hardeman University in Henderson, Tenn., he preached most Sundays for area Churches of Christ.

In November, he will mark 57 years preaching the Gospel for the Roanoke Church of Christ, about 110 miles southeast of Birmingham.

"They called and said they wanted me to preach until they found someone, so I guess they're still looking," Romine said, chuckling.

As a young man, Romine had other plans. After receiving an associate's degree from Freed-Hardeman (then a two-year college), he transferred to Auburn University, intending to study chemical or electrical engineering.

At age 20, he was asked to serve a church in Lafayette, Ala., until they could find a new preacher. He moved to Lafayette, and then Roanoke called, asking him to fill in as well.

"I spent one quarter at Auburn, and then that was that," Romine said. "I preached at both churches for a while, but then Lafayette got someone to work with them. I never looked back."

Romine grew up on a farm and for many years built residential and commercial structures. As a result, "I developed some good friends and made a number of contacts," he said.

He and his wife, Louise, raised four children in Roanoke, where he shares the Gospel during a weekly program on a local radio station.

The secret to longevity as a preacher, in Romine's experience, is to simply treat others the way you want to be treated.

"Someone asked Gus Nichols how he was able to stay at his church in Jasper, Ala., for more than 40 years," Romine said. "He told them, 'Well, I've been married to my wife for 43 years, and we're still together, and she loves me, and I love her' ... so it's a matter of mutual love and respect."

"You also have to realize that personalities are different, and you need to deal with them," he added. "You don't get worked up because someone has a different opinion. Follow the Bible, and treat people right. Even when we had problems as a church, we got through them."

Sam Carpenter, a member of the Roanoke church since 1967, said Romine has traveled with him on mission trips to Cambodia, Grenada and the Ukraine.

"He's not one to sit idle," Carpenter said.

"Also, he stands with the truth, and that has kept him here with us. He's a very good Bible scholar."

Through the years, Romine has noticed what he characterizes as a growing lack of Bible knowledge among Christians, particularly among younger generations.

"I'm afraid people are following the Bible less and less," he said.

"People used to know what the Bible said about things and knew what to do. Now, while people know how to push buttons on their phones, when it comes to what the Bible says about something, they don't have a clue."

"In the book of Hosea, it says, 'My people are destroyed from lack of knowledge,' and if we don't study, learn and apply the word, we die."



PHOTO PROVIDED

Gerald Romine began preaching for the Roanoke Church of Christ in Alabama in 1957.

READ OUR ARCHIVED in-depth profiles of longtime preachers Andrew J. Hairston and Robert Oglesby at www.christianchronicle.org.

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BOLIVIA

SUCRE — A mission team in this South American capital asked supporters in the U.S. to participate in 60 days of prayer and fasting as they collected funds for their first church building.

The team, which has served in Sucre for seven years, also asked participants to send brief notes about their experiences as they fasted, to be read during the church's Sunday services.

Churches that support the work include the South Gate Church of Christ in San Angelo, Texas, and the Center Street Church of Christ in Fayetteville, Ark.

CUBA

SAN ANTONIO DE LOS BAÑOS — After a year of meeting together for worship, members of a small congregation in this Cuban town, about 30 minutes southwest of Havana, have a meeting place.

For more than a year, the church met in members' homes — and even a garage, said church member Jesús Manuel Blanco. The congregation has 10 members and regular visitors who are studying the Bible, he said.

EL SALVADOR

LA LIBERTAD — The Agua Escondida Church of Christ hosted an outdoor gospel meeting, with hopes that neighbors would hear the Good News. About 80 people attended, with at least 12 visitors each day, organizers said. One attendee committed to return to church after a two-year absence.

The Agua Escondida congregation began in 2010 as a church plant of 27 Christians from nearby Zaragoza. The church now has 51 members and is constructing a building to seat 100 for worship.

NICARAGUA

LEON — Seventy-five underprivileged girls in this Central American city felt "beautiful in God's love," said church member Dee Ann Scott, thanks to "fellowship dresses" made by women of the Crosswinds Church of Christ in Jackson, Tenn.

Scott and 27 fellow Christians from Tennessee distributed the dresses during a weeklong medical mission, hosted by the Nicaragua Christian



WWW.MISSIONLAZARUS.ORG/BLOG-HONDURAS

A bedside vigil after tragedy in Honduras

One of Wilfredo and Reina Rios' two sons sits by his mother's bedside at a hospital in Tegucigalpa, Honduras. The couple was riding a motorcycle that was struck by a bus as it swerved to avoid another motorcycle Aug. 30. The crash killed Wilfredo Rios, a minister who worked with Mission Lazarus, a church-supported nonprofit. Reina Rios suffered multiple fractures.



In 2002, the family lost their 12-year-old daughter, Makaila, to leukemia. A Church of Christ in Limon, Honduras, supported them through their grief, "but it was Reina alone who faithfully prayed for Wilfredo to stop numbing his pain with alcohol and accept the comfort that only Jesus can offer," said Jarrod Brown, executive director of Mission Lazarus. After his conversion, Wilfredo Rios attended the ministry's preacher training school and became a minister in Los Colorados, Honduras, with support from the College Hills Church of Christ in Lebanon, Tenn. For more information and to contribute to the family's needs, see www.missionlazarus.org.

School. Church members treated more than 2,000 patients through medical, dental and eye clinics and invited them to nightly gospel meetings. Two patients were baptized.

Elementary school students at Jackson Christian School in Tennessee donated 370 handmade loop bracelets for the patients. The Soddy Daisy Church of Christ in Tennessee sent more than 1,500 bead bracelets with "God's story" written in Spanish, Scott said.

THAILAND

BANGKOK — Gary and Michelle Ford recently reached the one-year mark of living and working as missionaries with the Somprasong 4 Church of

Christ in this Southeast Asian capital.

In recent months, the couple worked with interns from Abilene Christian University in Texas as they taught English using the Bible and worked with a ministry serving people in a district of Bangkok known for sex trafficking and prostitution.

"We're so thankful for all that we've been able to be a part of and for all of the great relationships that we've been able to form," the couple told supporters.

ZAMBIA

KITWE — No cell signal? Praise God! Evangelist Kennedy Mukuka was thankful for the unreliable cell phone service during a recent confer-

SPOTLIGHT**Serving souls from Spain to Ecuador**

MADRID, Spain — Juan Gabriel Cornejo is a man of ministry — on three continents.

The son of a minister in the South American nation of Ecuador, he traveled across the Atlantic Ocean to work with Churches of Christ in the Spanish capital. There, he served as a youth minister, visited the sick and elderly and participated in evangelism on the streets of Madrid and in the mountain village of Guadarrama.



CRONICA CRISTIANA

Juan Gabriel Cornejo receives his Baxter diploma from one of his professors, Ramon Perez de Prado.

He studied in an extension program of the Baxter Institute, a church-supported ministry training school in Tegucigalpa, Honduras. Recently he earned his Diploma for Leaders and Christian Workers.

He plans to return to Ecuador and work alongside his father, John Elias Cornejo, as they serve a Church of Christ in El Puyo, a city near the rainforests of the Amazon River.

ence, titled "Men on Fire: Fostering Christian Unity," at Mwekera Forestry College on the outskirts of Kitwe. About 130 men from across this southern African nation attended the conference.



Mukuka

"While at the meeting, we could not easily communicate with our families," Mukuka said, "leaving us with no option but to fully concentrate on sharing the Word, singing and praying."

By the end of the conference, seven men had rededicated their lives to the Lord, Mukuka said.



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PHOTO PROVIDED BY JACOB SESAY

In the midst of the Ebola outbreak, Idrissa Bangura of the Tengbeh Town Church of Christ in Sierra Leone shares Jesus through World Bible School and baptizes new believers.

Ebola kills, Jesus saves: In West Africa, Christians give aid, spread the Word

BY ERIK TRYGGESTAD | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

Physical contact is "fundamental" to everyday life in West Africa, said Nestor Tonguino.

"We shake hands to greet one another, travel in the same vehicles and attend the same churches and mosques," said Tonguino, minister for a Church of Christ in Conakry, the capital of Guinea.

As the Ebola virus spreads across his country, it also is ripping apart the social fabric, he said.

"How do we greet one another without shaking hands," he said, "when this is the ancestral custom in our communities?"

Through his church's radio program, the minister urges his countrymen to adhere to the instructions of the World Health Organization and Doctors Without Borders.

Meanwhile, the death toll rises.

Emanuel Sakila, a medical worker and member of a Church of Christ in Koindu, Sierra Leone, died recently from the virus. Authorities quarantined two of his apprentices, also church members, plus his mother and daughter, said Francis Musa, another minister in Guinea.

"It's frightening," Musa said, "and we can only pray for them and other relatives around there."

Affected nations, including Liberia, have shut their borders to flights and commerce, causing food prices to spike. Ministries sup-

ported by Churches of Christ have responded, said Liberian minister Isaac Daye. Texas-based Christian Relief Fund and Louisiana-based White's Ferry Road Relief have sent funds to help the hungry. Church members distributed rice, soap and buckets to more than 100 churches across Liberia, Daye said.

Healing Hands International is partnering with a Church of Christ in



Tonguino

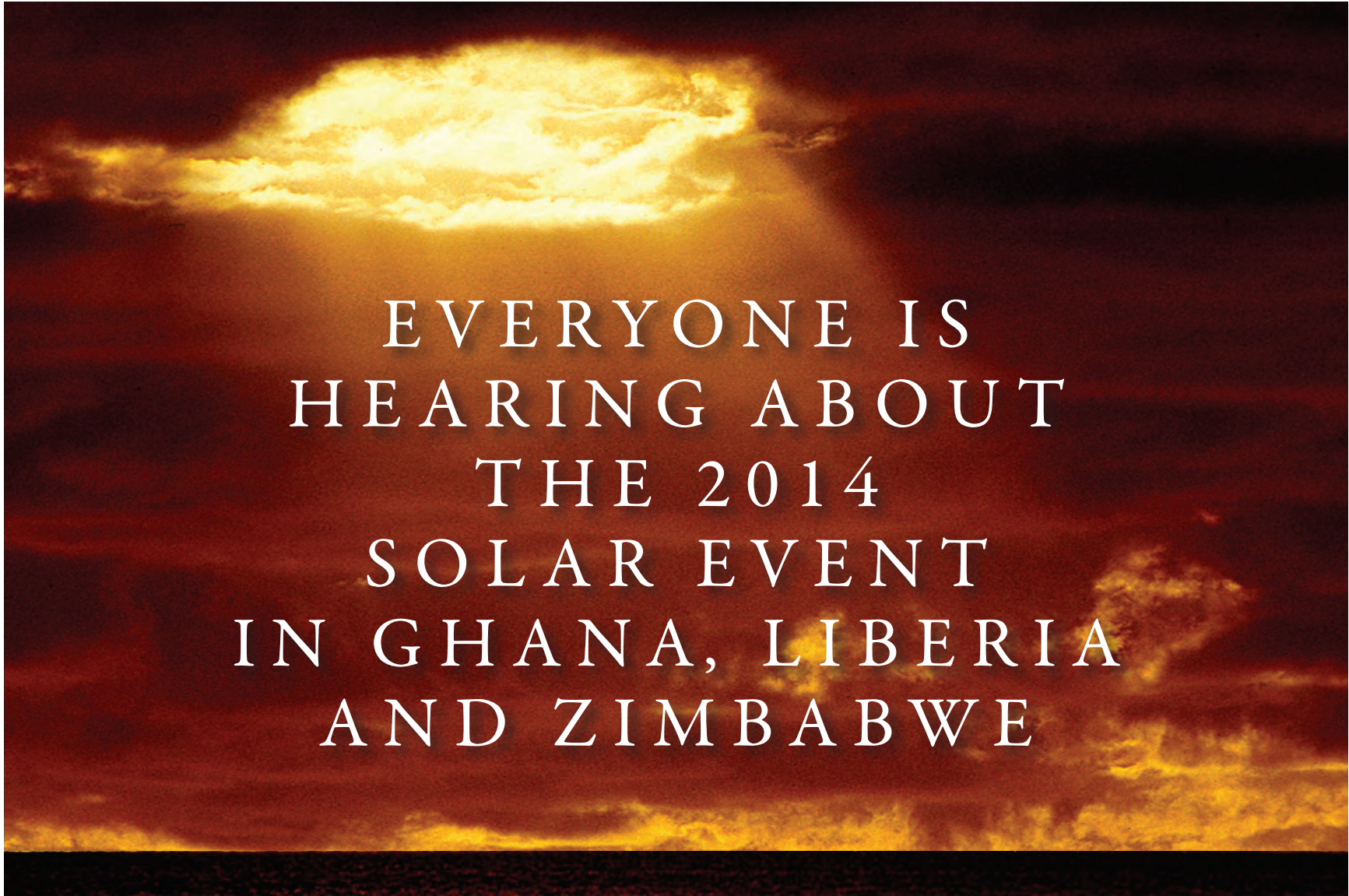
Sanniquellie, Liberia, whose members will distribute supplies in their city's hospital, including surgical gowns, gloves and face masks.

As they provide aid, churches spread the message that

"Ebola kills, but Jesus saves," said Jacob Sesay, a minister for a Church of Christ in Sierra Leone's capital, Freetown. Recently, a congregation to the southwest, in Tengbeh Town, reported the baptism of two women who studied the Scriptures through the World Bible School correspondence program.

Meanwhile, Christians in Freetown pray for one of their own — a church member and his family quarantined after a doctor in their community died from the virus.

"We now completely focus our attention on God Almighty," Sesay said, "for his mercy upon the people of West Africa."



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Carlos Perales, minister for the Lawndale Street Church of Christ in Houston, speaks in Spanish during the Campaign for Christ.

In Houston, churches cross cultural divide

BY ERIK TRYGGESTAD | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

HOUSTON — “If you don’t like it here, you’re going to hate heaven.”

That’s a joke Julio Cedeño tells about the bilingual service at the Northwest Church of Christ, where he serves as an elder.

“In heaven, there will be people from all nations, tribes and languages worshipping God together,” he explained, citing Revelation 7:9.

His congregation recently participated in the Houston Campaign for Christ, an effort by predominantly white, Latino and black Churches of Christ to serve their south Texas community of 6.2 million souls.



Cedeño

Reaching across ethnic barriers, Christians helped 3,200 people during a “Day of Good Works” with free school supplies, health screenings and Bibles in English and Spanish. During the evenings, church members and visitors participated in English and Spanish worship services. Forty churches were represented, and the campaign yielded 41 baptisms. Cruz Hernandez, minister for the Hidden Valley Church of Christ, coordinated the Spanish-language program.

Cedeño, a native of Venezuela, was baptized 30 years ago by Bob Brown, a missionary from the U.S. Now a vice president for a steel company, he began working

with the Northwest church’s Spanish ministry in the mid-1990s.

“I don’t want to do it if we’re going to be two churches,” he told the church’s leaders at the time.

Now church members worship and take the Lord’s Supper together — with prayers in both languages — and then separate to hear a sermon in either language. Once every two months, they stay together for a completely bilingual service.

“It is doable,” Cedeño said of bilingual worship. And, to him, it’s important for Christians to bridge the

cultural divide. After all, “if someone hadn’t become a missionary and taken his family where he didn’t know the language, I wouldn’t be here.”



Texas

Population: 26,448,193

Racial/ethnic groups: 44 percent white, 38 percent Hispanic, 12 percent black, 4 percent Asian, 1 percent American Indian, 1 percent other.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

MEXICO: ‘In these times, there is only hope. And our hope is not here’

FROM PAGE 1

authorities and receive court dates for amnesty hearings.

Mar’s mother brought him to Texas when he was 12, after she married a U.S. citizen. His stepfather sponsored him, along with his mother and sister, for U.S. citizenship but withdrew that sponsorship when he and Mar’s mother divorced.

In 2005, after about three years in legal limbo, Mar’s mother was allowed to stay in the U.S., but Mar, at age 24, had to return to Mexico.

The minister and his wife “have not let their misfortune keep them from serving the God who continues to guide our paths,” said Craig Cooper, one of the visiting elders. “They are great ambassadors for Christ in Reynosa.”

THE CARTELS AND CHRIST

Mar, who speaks fluent English, bears no ill will toward the Central Americans — many of them children — who cross the border.

“I understand the situation in Honduras, El Salvador,” he said.

The people of Reynosa are no strangers to the gang violence ravaging Central America. Here, drug cartels battle police for control of the



LYNN McMILLON

Members of the Colonia Solidaridad Church of Christ sing during afternoon worship.

city. A large-caliber bullet hole in a wall across the street from the church building testifies to the city’s woes.

In a place where kidnappings and shootings are daily threats, souls are turning to Christ. Since 1996, the Church of Christ North has assisted in planting 11 congregations in northern Mexico. The church sponsors Mar’s ministry and several others, including the South Texas School of Preaching and Biblical

Studies in Alton, Texas. Launched in 1995, the school has graduated 49 men and women, including Mar, who serve churches throughout Mexico and the U.S. Carrol Robertson, a former missionary to Peru, is the school’s director.

North and south of the border, about 1,700 Christians spend their Sundays worshipping God in churches supported by the small Church of Christ North, said Dale Fielder,

the other elder who traveled to Mexico. He dreams of the day when second- and third-generation church members will continue the work.

PRAYERS FOR THE NORTH AND SOUTH

After they hugged Mar, his wife and his children, the visiting elders drove across Reynosa to the 100-member Colonia Lampasitos Church of Christ, where minister Mateo Dimas greeted them.

Sunday night attendance was down, due to fears of violence, Dimas said. Still, about 30 members were at the church building early to practice new hymns.

The congregation continues to practice door-knocking evangelism — aware that the doors they knock may belong to members of a cartel.

As they serve, they pray for peace in Reynosa and the troubled nations to their south — where violence has driven scores of immigrants north, through their city and into the U.S.

“In these times, there is only hope,” he said. “And our hope is not here. The great hope is in heaven.”

FIND LINKS to contribute to humanitarian efforts and ministries serving north and south of the Mexican border at www.christianchronicle.org.

BORDER: 'The focus is helping our brothers and sisters'

FROM PAGE 1

for Catholic Charities, which oversees the Respite Center and another one 60 miles east in Brownsville, Texas. Daily, she hears heartbreaking stories from the families — of husbands and brothers killed by gangs in El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala and Nicaragua.

"We truly see them as refugees," Riojas said. "They're not coming here on a whim, to get rich. ... It's a means of survival."

Faith groups of all stripes have pitched in — including the Harvey Drive Church of Christ in McAllen. The church's minister, Abel Alvarez, is a registered volunteer who brought Fielder here to see how his congregation could help.

They arrived just after America Ferrera, a U.S.-born actress of Honduran descent, known for her role on the TV series "Ugly Betty."

Reporters huddled around the actress as she read a book to immigrant children. She said she hoped to shine a light on the human faces behind the border crisis.

Since October 2013, the U.S. Border Patrol has apprehended 63,000 unaccompanied children — and about the same number of adults with children — near the Mexican border. That's a dramatic upswing from previous

years, though the number declined significantly in recent months.

By law, the Respite Centers serve only families — mostly mothers and children — who make the perilous journey to "el norte," the North. Unaccompanied children — who sometimes arrive with notes pinned to their clothes, listing the address of relatives in the U.S. — are sent to other facilities.

After U.S. officials clear them for travel, the families visit the Respite Center, where they can take showers, let their children play with volunteers, eat a warm meal and get new clothes

and shoes. After a few hours, the volunteers put them on buses to destinations including New York, Los Angeles, Tennessee and Iowa, where they will await court dates for amnesty hearings.

Another 1,700 miles away — in Washington — lawmakers debate whether U.S. immigration policies contributed to the crisis.

Meanwhile, in McAllen, "it's a real blessing to see that politics are left at the door," Riojas said, "and the focus is helping our brothers and sisters in Christ."

SERVING A CHANGING SOUTH TEXAS

The problems of illegal immigration are nothing new for Christians

in Texas' Rio Grande Valley, "but now it's the worst it's ever been," said Dewey Young, an elder of the Harvey Drive church.

He and his family moved to the southern tip of the state in 1978. Then, it was a predominantly Anglo, "you-better-get-in-and-get-a-seat" church of 350, he said. Soon, it added a separate, Spanish-language service.

Now the valley, home to 1.3 million people, is more than 90 percent Hispanic. The church has struggled to adjust. On a Sunday morning in the midst of the border crisis, about 40 people — Anglos and Latinos — gathered to worship God.

Alvarez, the church's preacher for seven years, led hymns in English and Spanish. In addition to serving the church, he serves students in the McAllen Independent School District, where he has helped launch technology initiatives in partnership with his alma mater, Abilene Christian University.

He has attended meetings of Faith Communities for Disaster Recovery, a coalition of churches — including Catholics, Baptists and the Salvation Army — about the border crisis.

Catholics and Protestants don't often cooperate on projects, he said, but the focus of the meetings is "the logistics of helping people."

"We're a small church," he told the congregation, "but recently, events have conspired to drop something big in our laps."

"I don't get to dictate foreign policy for the U.S.," he said. "I wear a Christian hat ... and that one never comes off."

DOING MORE THAN FACEBOOK 'LIKES'

This summer, members of Harvey Drive's youth group served the immigrants arriving in their community — without knowing it.

The teens traveled 480 miles north to Abilene, Texas, to participate in Kadesh Life Camp at ACU. During the camp, the youths cleaned emergency cots for Global Samaritan Resources, a church-supported relief ministry.

Weeks later, Danny Sims, the minis-

try's executive director, drove a truck loaded with the cots and supplies to McAllen, to be used for immigrants.

Lauren Hudspeth, the church's youth minister, said she was privileged to help — and glad that she could do something for a cause beyond "liking" it on Facebook.

"We can get angry about it and say that it needs to change," she said of the crisis, "but we must make the change happen, alongside God."

READY AND PRAYING TO DO MORE

Other churches throughout the Rio Grande Valley are doing what they can to help. In Harlingen, the 8th and Harrison Church of Christ partnered with Healing Hands International, another church-supported relief ministry, to collect Magi Boxes of

clothes, toothpaste, soap and other essentials. Each year at Christmas, church members distribute the boxes among the "colonias," impoverished Hispanic communities of South Texas.

In Pharr, the Church of Christ North has worked among the *colonias* for 30 years, said elder Craig Cooper. Randal Adcock, the church's projects coordinator, coordinates a "24/7 mission" to the Latinos in these communities, Cooper said.

In the current crisis, Christians will have more opportunities to help when — and if — the government allows volunteers to serve unaccompanied children, Cooper said. Meanwhile, the Respite Center requests jackets, backpacks and phone cards for the people they can serve, he said.

And they still need shoes.

Also, "we have tried to be available as a conduit for funds for those who want to work through a Church of Christ," Cooper said, "and have gotten several donations for the work."

At Harvey Drive, Alvarez encouraged his fellow Christians to spend time in prayer, seeking God's wisdom to navigate a sea of politics as they look for ways to help.

"We get our gas tank filled up on the mountain," he said, "so that we can go down into the valley to serve."



ERIK TRYGGESTAD



Alvarez



Hudspeth



ERIK TRYGGESTAD

Members of the Harvey Drive Church of Christ in McAllen, Texas, line up to take the Lord's Supper. Church members are serving immigrants at the city's Respite Center.

From the cartel to Christ

IN THE MIDST OF MEXICO'S drug war, a bullet nearly ended the life of former gangster Sixto Jesús Meza — and helped him find God.

BY ERIK TRYGGESTAD | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

REYNOSA, Mexico

A well-worn, beige recliner sits between rows of wooden pews at the Balcones de Alcalá Church of Christ.

For Sixto Jesús Meza, it is a Mercy Seat — a reminder of God's love and forgiveness.

For the 80 Christians who worship alongside him, it is proof that no one is beyond redemption.

On a Sunday afternoon, Meza arrived at the church building in his wheelchair and quickly pulled himself onto the recliner.

He and a handful of the church's members spoke with Christians from north of the border who support their work. Gilbert Galdiano, minister for a bilingual Church of Christ in Alton, Texas, translated for the English-speaking guests.

Asked to share his story, Meza began — and the room fell silent.

He used to be part of the problem here on the U.S.-Mexico border. For nearly seven years, Meza worked for a drug cartel in Matamoros, just south of Brownsville, Texas.

What did he do for the cartel? "Everything," he replied — and declined to say more.

Since 2006, when the Mexican government intensified its war on drugs, clashes between the Mexican military and the heavily armed cartels have resulted in at

least 60,000 deaths, according to the Mexican government. Critics claim the number is much higher.

Meza almost was part of that number. One night, in 2012, police surrounded his van and began firing. He fled — and felt a bullet tear into his back. Face-down on the street, unable to move, he heard soldiers speaking above him. They thought he was dead.

"I asked God for another opportunity," Meza said, "another chance to see my kids, to see them grow up."

The bullet severed his spinal cord, paralyzing him from the waist down.

Doctors told his sister, Cira, that he likely would die in three months or less. She refused to believe it.

"I trust in God," she told them. "My brother is going to live."

She moved Meza into her home in Reynosa to take care of him — and to talk to him about

Jesus. One day, while she was away, members of the Balcones church knocked on their door.

At first, they thought no one was home, said Leopoldo Arvisu, one of the door-knockers. Unable to move, Meza yelled for them to enter.

He listened to them talk about salvation but refused their invitation to church because he couldn't get there.

It's OK, the church members told him. We'll come and get you. Weeks later, after Bible studies and prayer, Meza and his sister were baptized.

Physically, he's far from healed. He needs an operation to fuse his spine for stability. He's suffered setbacks, including a recent infection. The



LYNN McMILLON

'I don't work for the cartel anymore. I work for God. I work for the one who moves the whole universe.'

Sixto Jesús Meza



ERIK TRYGGESTAD

Sixto Jesús Meza with his sister, Cira, and members of his family at the Balcones church.

Church of Christ North in Pharr, Texas, which helps support the Balcones church, has agreed to help with medical expenses.

Meanwhile, Meza stays faithful and busy, distributing brochures that tell of God's salvation. He shares his faith with those who will listen.

"I don't work for the cartel anymore," he said. "I work for God. I work for the one who moves the whole universe."

Arvisu, who knocked on Meza's door, is a graduate of the Monterrey School of Preaching and now ministers for a church plant in Reynosa's Rincon de Las Flores neighborhood.

Asked how it feels to see Meza

sitting at church, Arvisu gave a one-word answer — "happiness."

"His story didn't start with me," Arvisu said, humbly. God already was at work in Meza's life, and he was seeking. "He was in a state of death, and now we see him in another state — a lot better than before."

Socorro Barrios is the widow of the Balcones church's former minister, Jesús Barrios, who died from cancer in 2009. Now their son, Alejandro, serves as minister.

Seeing God's mercy in Meza's life has renewed her zeal to seek and save the lost, she said.

"He has taught us that some hearts are hard," she said, "but be patient."



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KENTUCKY CHURCH MEMBERS stay true to their Christian values while operating one of the nation's last remaining drive-in theaters.



PHOTOS BY BOBBY ROSS JR.

The Calvert Drive-in Theatre opened on a 10-acre plot in 1953. It still shows two movies a night, drawing crowds from hours away to see first-run, family-friendly films.

BY BOBBY ROSS JR. | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

CALVERT CITY, Ky.

As the sun sets in rural western Kentucky, the marquee lights shine at the Calvert Drive-in Theatre.

For many who enjoy the outdoor movie experience, the nightly double features stir nostalgia and fond memories of simpler times.

But for theater manager John Harrington and his wife, Paula — faithful members of the Calvert City Church of Christ — the 61-year-old drive-in represents more than a fading icon of Americana.

It's a way of life.

"It's a family business that was built by John's grandfather," Paula Harrington said.

As their Christian faith influences their business, the Harringtons refuse to show R-rated films.

"The last R-rated movie we ran was 'Passion of the Christ,'" John Harrington said, referring to Mel Gibson's graphic portrayal of Jesus' final hours and crucifixion.

"We try to play the religious movies, such as 'Heaven is for Real,' 'Son of God' and 'Courageous,'" Paula Harrington said. "Church groups are always here on the weekend."

Ryan Scherer, youth minister for the Seven Oaks Church of Christ in Mayfield, Ky., said he likes bringing teens to the drive-in.

"What's great ... is that they do have a very family-friendly atmosphere," Scherer said. "Families are mostly who you see there."

In 1953, when Paul and Evelyn Harrington opened the Calvert Drive-in Theatre, more than 4,000 drive-in theaters dotted the U.S. entertainment landscape. Today, that number has dwindled to about 350.

Like four generations of Harringtons, Evelyn, now 103, remains active in the operations.

"She signs our paychecks and wants daily reports," said John Harrington, who grew up making popcorn and chuckling at the cartoons that preceded the movies. "She's very active."

In recent years, the drive-in has installed a new, 40-by-80-foot screen, tripled the size of the concession area and spent \$80,000-plus to move from 35mm film to digital projection.

On weekends, the theater draws

200 to 300 cars per night.

Admission is \$7 per person with children 11 and under admitted for free. Food prices range from \$1.50 for a hot dog to \$20 for a large specialty pizza.

"Granny's hamburger has always been something people came out to get, and we sell a lot of hamburgers to people who don't even stay for the movie," John Harrington said. "The hamburger saved the drive-in."

Jacob Sirs, 21, a member of the Oak Valley Church of Christ in Benton, Ky., works in the concession area making specialties such as "chili dog pizza."

"They're just really nice people," Sirs said of the Harringtons. "They're good Christians, and they understand that I like off on Wednesdays and Sundays."

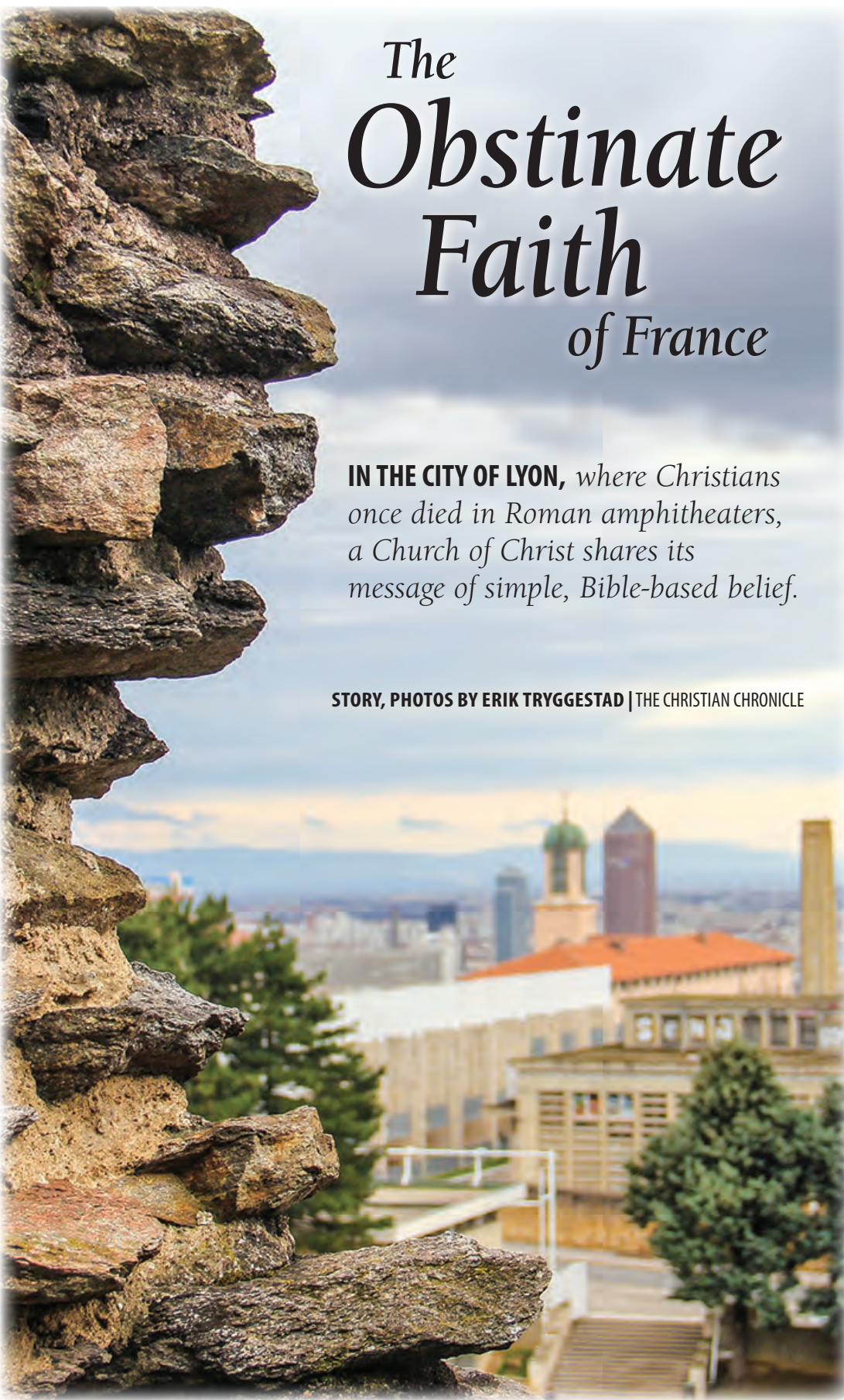


Four generations of Harringtons, including Paula and John, operate the theater. Movie posters can be seen in the concession area. A truck stops at the gate to buy a ticket.

The Obstinate Faith of France

IN THE CITY OF LYON, where Christians once died in Roman amphitheaters, a Church of Christ shares its message of simple, Bible-based belief.

STORY, PHOTOS BY ERIK TRYGGESTAD | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE



Ancient stones, the remains of a Roman theater, stand among the basilicas and modern buildings of Lyon, France. Once known as Lugdunum, the city was the capital of the Roman territory of Gaul.



The Basilica of Notre-Dame de Fourvière overlooks a street market in Lyon. Built in the late 1800s, the basilica occupies what once was the Roman Forum of Trajan.

LYON, France

Here, people of faith gave their lives to — and lost their lives for — the cause of Christ.

This city of nearly 1.6 million souls, 250 miles southeast of Paris, once was the capital of the Roman territory known as Gaul. Nearly hidden among Lyon's modern apartments and office buildings are the remains of the Amphitheater of the Three Gauls.

On a cloudy Saturday morning, missionary Arlin Hendrix finds a rare treat at the ruins — an open gate. He joins a handful of tourists walking among the ancient stones, where early Christians were fed to “wild beasts” for the amusement of the crowd, according to a letter dating back to 177 A.D.

Under emperor Marcus Aurelius, Christians in Lyon were ostracized, arrested and tortured — roasted to death on chairs of burning iron,

according to the letter. Yet the martyrs “endured every form of torture in the amphitheater as if they had no suffering at all before,” its unnamed author wrote.

More than 1,800 years later, crosses — once a symbol of Rome's power — dot Lyon's skyline. The Catholic church, though in decline across much of Europe, remains strong here, Hendrix says.

Behind the massive, ornate St. Jean Cathedral are the remains of a fourth century baptistery, used for adult immersion until the 1100s. In front of the cathedral, a more recent statue — only a few centuries old — depicts John the Baptist baptizing Jesus, pouring water over his head from a bowl.

Hendrix, a native of Madera, Calif., moved here with his wife, Judy, in 1975 to teach any who would listen about simple, Bible-based Christianity. Working alongside missionaries Max and Prisca



The ruins of a baptistery from an early Christian church, circa 400 A.D.



Members of the Lyon Church of Christ fill their plates at an after-church potluck.

Dauner, they helped establish a Church of Christ. Other missionary couples have come and gone — some to plant churches in other French cities and French-speaking territories, including the Caribbean island of Guadeloupe.

Judy Hendrix died of cancer in 1988. Arlin Hendrix later married Pamela Whitesell, who has worked alongside him in Lyon ever since.

“We’re ‘Framericans’ because we’ve been here so long that our cultures are mixed,” Arlin Hendrix says, reflecting on nearly 40 years of mission work. “This is home.”

GOD'S WILL AND THE FRENCH WORLD

For the Church of Christ, “home” is significantly humbler and cozier than the great cathedral and basilicas of downtown Lyon.

The congregation meets in the bottom floor of an apartment building. On Sunday morning, the members arrive early, carrying dishes for an after-church potluck. They kiss each other on the cheeks and speak in hushed tones, careful not to wake those still sleeping in the apartments above.

Ekel Jean, a native of Haiti, teaches Bible class, focusing on



Ekel Jean teaches a Sunday morning Bible class for the Lyon Church of Christ. The small congregation includes native French Christians and believers who came to France from Caribbean nations and territories including Haiti and Martinique.

the temptations Christ faced in the wilderness, recorded in Matthew 4.

“Jesus never talked about himself — always God,” Jean says in French as Pamela Hendrix takes notes in English for a reporter. The Savior was “*obstiné*” in doing God's will, he says, using a French word that can mean “obstinate,” “stubborn,” even “obsessed.” Followers of Christ must also be “*obstiné*” in their obedience to God, Jean says.

“Obedience isn't worth a lot if it's easy, with no effort,” he says, citing Jesus' words in John 6:38, “*For I have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me.*”

After worship, over plates of salad, cheese and braised beef, the church members talk about what attracted them to the congregation and its practice of simple Christianity.

“My voice is an instrument,” says Michaela Bonfre, sharing her love of the church's a cappella worship.

Christophe Varoquier says he appreciates the church's focus on Bible knowledge. Many homes in France — even Catholic homes — have no Bible, he says.

Evangelism here is difficult, he adds. Non-Catholics often are



Arlin Hendrix strolls through the ruins of the Amphitheater of the Three Gauls.

regarded as members of a religious “sect” and mistrusted. Many French people fear faiths from outside their borders, partly due to growing numbers of immigrants from Muslim nations.

In four decades, Arlin Hendrix has seen the church experience

“struggles, growth, sometimes tragedy, joyful periods. ... life,” he says. As many as 80 people have worshiped with the church, though now the number is closer to 40.

From Lyon, a university town, Christian converts have traveled around the globe — and taken the Gospel with them.

The Hendrixes make regular trips to Guadeloupe to conduct marriage enrichment seminars. In Lyon, they host young missionary families as they study French, preparing for mission work in the nations of French-speaking Africa.

France is a gateway to the world — including predominantly Muslim nations, Arlin Hendrix says.

In Lyon, he has watched as generations of new believers have grown up in the church. Though their numbers are small, he sees in these Christians the same steadfast, “obstinate” faith of the martyrs who once stood in the Roman amphitheaters.

Soon, French Christians will lead as the church's elders, he says. He and his wife look forward to the day when “we work ourselves out of a job.”

“The church does not depend on us,” he says. “It depends on the Lord.”

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'Always be open to doing something new'

MISSIONARIES CHAD AND SARA LUKKASON talk about their multifaceted church-planting ministry in Concepción, Chile

BY LYNN McMILLON | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

Chad and Sara Lukkason traded the Bighorn Mountains for the Andes. The two Montana natives, both 28, serve as missionaries in Concepción, the second-largest city in the South American nation of Chile. Sara Lukkason's parents were missionaries in the serpentine-shaped country — with a 4,000-mile coastline along the Pacific Ocean and an average width of 109 miles — for 10 years. Earthquakes have devastated the city of nearly 1 million souls several times in its history. The city continues to recover from an 8.8-magnitude quake in 2010.

As students at Oklahoma Christian University in Oklahoma City, the Lukkasons were active members of Outreach, a university club focused on missions and service. Outreach "exposed us to the stories of many missionaries from around the world," Chad Lukkason said, "and began to spark our interest in possibly doing missions ourselves."

As they prayed about the decision, they learned of a team forming to plant churches in Concepción. At Abilene Christian University in Texas, they trained for the mission as they earned master's degrees — Chad in divinity and Sara in marriage and family therapy. In 2011, they moved to South America. Numerous churches and individuals support their work, overseen by the Minter Lane Church of Christ in Abilene.

Their team launched the Vástago Iglesia de Cristo (Church of Christ), a congregation of Chileans with a few members from Bolivia, Colombia, Ghana and Germany.

Summarize the condition of Chilean churches today.

There are a number of Churches of Christ throughout Chile — most of which were started by missionaries in the 1970s and 80s. The capital city of Santiago has many congregations. Several more are scattered throughout the length of Chile. A few of those churches are thriving, while most remain small.

Churches of Christ are not well-



PHOTO PROVIDED

Chad and Sara Lukkason at home in Concepción, Chile.

known in Chile, which in some ways is a disadvantage in a culture that is suspicious of unfamiliar churches.

However, we have met many faithful members of the churches throughout Chile, and it is encouraging to see the ways they are seeking to please God and grow the church.

Tell us about your congregation.

After giving ourselves time to learn Spanish, adjust to the culture and form relationships with Chileans in Concepción, we planted the church in March 2012. Now, two years later, we have about 27 faithful members, including 19 adults and 8 children.

We meet weekly in three different cell groups. All of the groups meet together every six to eight weeks for a special church service.

Recently we have seen significant growth in commitment and leadership in several of our church members. This is encouraging.

Describe your work in Chile.

Our primary strategy is relational evangelism, which means we try to meet people, form relationships and invite them to participate in church or Bible study. Our hope is that they will recognize their need for Jesus, and we can help them become his disciples.

We have made new contacts and strengthened existing relationships through Let's Start Talking, a Herald of Truth radio campaign, Vacation Bible School, Marriage Encounter, lectures on various topics of interest and English and baseball camps for kids. We work to move our contacts into church, where we meet weekly to study the Bible, sing, pray and take communion together.

What have you learned about cultural adjustment and adaptation?

This is an ongoing process. We were very intentional our first year in Chile to learn as much as we

could about Chilean history and culture. We spent time with Chileans asking questions and participating in their lives. We learned that it's essential for us to adapt to their way of life — when possible — in order to earn their trust and respect.

However, we also have learned that our own U.S. culture is so ingrained in us that we will never be completely Chilean. We continue to experience cultural stress, but we have learned ways to adapt. We have learned to embrace many parts of Chilean culture while recognizing and appreciating the ways that our home culture makes us different.

What about mission work has been your greatest surprise?

Although we anticipated ministry as a multifaceted project, we have been surprised at how varied our work is on a day to day basis.

Any given day may consist of Bible studies, administrative work, accounting, preparing food for large events, language study, helping friends with house painting, advertising for upcoming events and any other number of assorted jobs.

We have learned to expand our skill set — to always be open to doing something new.

Some have said that a missionary is a jack-of-all-trades and master of few. Sometimes that makes it hard for both of us since we both tend toward perfectionism, but we also see God's provision for us as we always try to do our best work for him.

What has been most discouraging to you?

The lack of receptivity in the Chilean culture. Most Chileans would claim that they believe in God, but that does not translate into recognition of their need for a relationship with Jesus or participation in a community of faith. We encounter a lot of apathy.

However, we have learned to be patient because we believe God is working in his own time.

INTROVERT: 'I've just come to realize that God made me the way I am'

FROM PAGE 1

Riverside Church of Christ in Lafayette, La., where Bennett preaches, might never guess it.

"I have actually had people tell me that I can't be an introvert because my preaching style does not reflect it," he said. But like other introverts, Bennett gains energy in times of solitude and quiet.

In large-group social situations, his extroverted wife, Misty, typically meets everyone in the room. On the other hand, he tends to be quieter and focus on a smaller number of people.

"God takes care of me," he said. "In those seasons of busyness and frantic schedules, he has always provided a respite or break exactly when I needed it."

At the same time, Bennett must be careful not to turn down social invitations just because he craves his "alone time."

"My wife is great at identifying this tendency in me and keeping me honest," he said. "I appreciate her willingness ... to push me out of

my comfort zone at times."

If ministry didn't require involvement with people, Jeremy Sigle jokes that he'd prefer life as a hermit in the mountains.

But Sigle, who preaches for the Tarzan Church of Christ in Texas, said his passion for ministry drives him.

"I feel like my desire to reach people with the Gospel and my love for my brothers and sisters in Christ become priority," he said, "although I still need the time to myself to re-energize."

For Sigle, balancing time alone with God with the needs of his congregation and community is a struggle.

"Areas such as evangelism, community involvement and visitation do not come easy or feel natural, so I make extra effort in those areas," he said.

Like Sigle, Matthew Dowling, minister for the Monmouth Church of Christ in Tinton Falls, N.J., said he takes his personality into account when planning his schedule.

"One of the most common assumptions about introverted people is



DAN MCGREGOR

So your preacher is an introvert ...

WHERE DOES HE GET HIS ENERGY?

Introverts are drained by people and need more time to recharge (alone!) than their extroverted colleagues who recharge by being with people, said Sherry Pollard, a Harding University professor with a doctorate in psychology.

DOES HE ENJOY CHITCHAT? Introverts often are reserved, quiet and harder to get to know, Pollard said. They are not as comfortable with casual conversational chat, and they are not quick to reveal facts or feelings about themselves. They

tend to share their feelings only with those who are close to them, and they can be difficult to read.

WILL HE AVOID SOCIALIZING? Introverted ministers will probably be less interested in organizing and orchestrating big events, be slightly awkward in large social or fellowship gatherings and a bit reticent when it comes to fulfilling pastoral care and visitation expectations, said Ryan Fraser, who teaches "Theories of Personality" at Freed-Hardeman University. They're simply not wired that way.

that they are shy, even awkward," Dowling said. "In reality, I am a very outgoing person, but it drains me."

"After Sunday preaching and worship, I like to save more people-intensive activities like counseling for any day of the week other than Monday," he added, "so I can study and pursue the more isolated activities of ministry, like bulletin writing or sermon prep."

Dowling urges new preachers to figure out their personality type early and understand how it will affect how they do ministry.

"I am convinced that knowledge of my own personality type has helped me serve the church better and take care of myself appropriately," he said.

Matt Dabbs, minister for the Westside Church of Christ in Bakersfield, Calif., said he sets aside

his introversion as much as possible.

"It's hard to reach out to people, counsel people and encourage people if you are shy and seem disconnected," Dabbs said. "So I have had to learn to jump past that."

At the same time, he said, "It can be a great help to my study, as I am very happy to sit and study for whatever time is needed. At times, I think it helps me be a better listener as I don't always feel the need to jump in and fill the air with noise."

As Harding's McLarty sees it, "an awareness of who we are helps us not to beat ourselves up emotionally for not being something other than what we are."

McLarty described a friend who couldn't stop talking about "Brother X," who spent each morning in secluded Bible study and preached each Sunday "from the overflow" of that study.

Later, McLarty's friend went on and on about "Brother Y," who spent each morning visiting with folks at a doughnut shop and was known by everyone in town.

"Obviously, one person cannot be both men," McLarty said. "The more important message is that both men brought strengths to their ministry based on the particular gifts God had given them."

Even though he understands how God has gifted him, Littleton — the Diet Dr Pepper-loving Tennessee minister — still struggles with his picture of the ideal minister.

"There was a time early in my ministry where I actually considered doing something else because I felt I could never be what I saw other preachers being," Littleton said. "They were very vocal and outgoing all the time — the center of attention."

"I've just come to realize that God made me the way I am, and I've seen him use me to accomplish some things in people's lives, so I keep on going."

SEE EXPANDED INTERVIEWS with the ministers and experts quoted and join the conversation at www.christianchronicle.org.



Sigle



Littleton

What role does personality play when hiring a minister?

BEYOND EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE, *it matters whether a preacher candidate is an introvert or an extrovert, say some experts.*

BY BOBBY ROSS JR. | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

Tracy Moore thinks it's time to reconsider the typical preacher-hiring process.

"Most of the time, our approach to finding a preacher is to read about the education and experience of different guys, run a few of them through the pulpit to see how well they deliver the message and then interview them on their beliefs," said Moore, minister for the Vero Beach Church of Christ in Florida.

"I'm not saying that is all bad. In fact, it is smart," he added. "However, what do you really know about someone after a weekend?"

The self-described extrovert's new book, "Me and You and the People in the Pews" (Jenkins Institute, 2014), explores how various personality types can best function within the church.



Moore

Beyond typical resume items, a personality test can help determine what to expect from a minister, said Moore, who consults on searches.

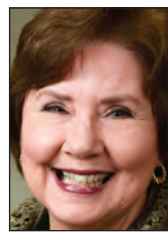
"Some churches are looking for someone who is out in the community, is good out front and sort of becomes the spokesman for the church in many areas," he said. "They are looking for a motivator, leader or someone with a lot of energy. If I know that, I will show them the resumes of extroverts like the *sanguine* and *choleric*."

"But if those elders are used to being the out-front guys and really need someone who can help them organize, not create problems and is very methodical, they want an introvert like the *melancholy* or *phlegmatic*," he added, using terms that his book highlights.

Considering personality traits of potential preachers and their wives could improve hiring processes, agreed Sherry Pollard, assistant

director of the counseling center at Harding University in Searcy, Ark.

An introverted wife, for example, "needs to be allowed to be who she is and not expected to fit the mold



Pollard

of the stereotypical preacher's wife who is always busy and involved with people," said Pollard, whose husband, Paul, serves as an elder of the College Church of Christ in Searcy.

"She may not want to teach Bible class. Don't judge her," Pollard added. "She has other ways she can serve God and his people."

Ryan Fraser, who teaches in the graduate mental-health counseling program at Freed-Hardeman University in Henderson, Tenn., advocates open dialogue about a prospective minister's personality traits. "A good question to ask a minister candidate is: 'Are you more energized and refueled when you are by yourself or when you are with larger groups of people?'" said Fraser, preacher for the Bethel Springs Church of Christ in McNairy County, Tenn. "A good follow-up would be: 'How do you go about regulating and balancing your need for time alone versus time spent with others in ministry?' And, 'What could we



Fraser

do as leaders to help you strike a healthy balance and empower you to play to your strengths and gifts?"

An introvert forced to portray an outgoing, gregarious persona — with insufficient "alone time" to refuel — could suffer an emotional and spiritual toll, Fraser said. "Therefore, he will need to pace himself, or he will very possibly be in danger of burning out of ministry," Fraser said. "The leaders of the congregation should be sensitive to his need for privacy and rest."



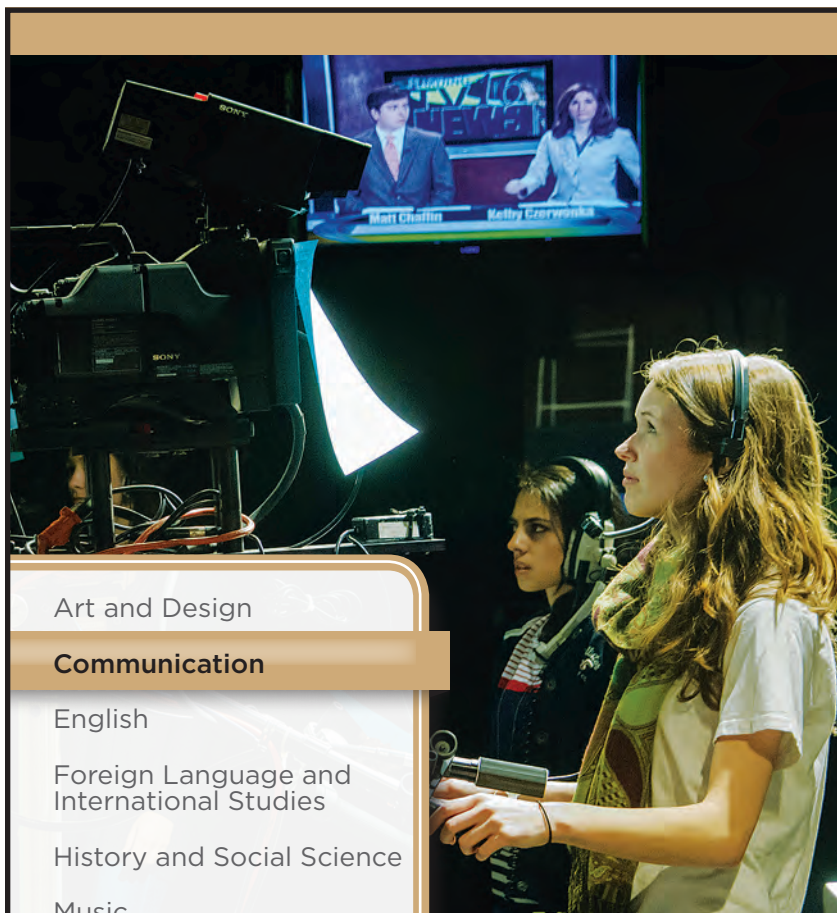
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CAMPING

BIG REEDY CHRISTIAN CAMP

BUTLER COUNTY, Ky. — About 350 people turned out to celebrate the recent grand opening of the Big Reedy Christian Camp.

More than \$1 million in donations paid for the camp, said board member Tina Hall. Her husband, W. Tom Hall, preaches for one of the sponsoring congregations, the Mount Pleasant Church of Christ in Bowling Green, Ky. The 30-acre camp site includes a lodge and 10 group cabins.

For more information, see www.bigreedycamp.com.

HIGHER EDUCATION

ABILENE CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

ABILENE, Texas — ACU trustees have decided President Phil Schubert's leadership "will continue to bless ACU," despite ongoing divorce proceedings between Schubert and his wife, Jamie.

Board Chairman Barry Packer delivered that message in an email sent recently to the university's 400 faculty and staff members, ACU spokesman Grant Rampy confirmed.

"We believe the covenant of marriage is created by God," Packer wrote. "We also believe strongly in the power of grace in a broken world and the call to be peacemakers."

To read the full statement, see www.christianchronicle.org.

FREED-HARDEMAN UNIVERSITY

DICKSON, Tenn. — Freed-Hardeman conducted a dedication ceremony recently at its new Middle Tennessee branch campus, where it began offering baccalaureate degree completion and master's level courses this fall.

The Jackson Foundation transferred ownership of the Renaissance Center in Dickson to FHU.

Designed as a fine arts and technology learning center, the \$18 million facility includes 110,000



PHOTO PROVIDED BY CAMPUS FOR CHRIST

Campus ministry meeting draws 150 to Lipscomb University

Attendees pray during the recent 58th annual Campus for Christ meeting, hosted by Lipscomb University in Nashville, Tenn. The campus ministry conference, with the theme "A Long Obedience in the Same Direction," drew 150 participants — nearly four times as many as attended last year's meeting in Delaware. "The convenient location did well to boost our numbers," said Tyler Ellis, a Campus for Christ board member who ministers to the Blue Hens for Christ at the University of Delaware. Besides teaching sessions and worship times, the conference featured a tribute to the late Jim Brinkerhoff, longtime campus minister at Auburn University in Alabama.

square feet of classroom space, conference rooms, film and video production studios, theater areas, offices and a planetarium.

FHU President Joe Wiley expressed gratitude for the gift.

"Being here at the Renaissance Center is the answer to a lot of prayers," Wiley said.



JUD DAVIS

Freed-Hardeman supporters explore the university's Middle Tennessee campus.

HERITAGE CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

FLORENCE, Ala. — The university recently announced the addition of \$525,000 to its scholarship endowment.

"It's humbling to have good families continue to invest in our mission of blessing the Churches of Christ by educating and encouraging missionaries, preachers, teachers and other leaders," school officials said.

The Cox Boulevard Church of Christ in Sheffield, Ala., recently provided a copy of the book "Muscle and a Shovel" by Michael J. Shank to every HCU student.

OKLAHOMA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

OKLAHOMA CITY — Ethos, Oklahoma Christian's new spiritual life program, provides multiple ways for students to grow in faith, serve others and worship God.

Students can fulfill spiritual life requirements through daily chapel services, mission trips, service projects, Bible studies and other options.

About a quarter of a \$2 million gift by an anonymous donor funded the launch of the Ethos initiative. In all, 11 givers have donated almost \$600,000 toward the initiative.

SPOTLIGHT

'Extreme!' youth focus

ORLANDO, Fla. — SonQuest, Florida's largest annual youth conference, engages nearly 1,800 teens.

The Labor Day weekend event is in the midst of a three-year focus on "Extreme!" Christianity — including extreme love, life and legacy.

"It was extreme worship ... no holding back," said Brandon Harriman, youth minister for the 53rd Avenue Church of Christ in Bradenton, Fla. "God was definitely glorified this weekend."

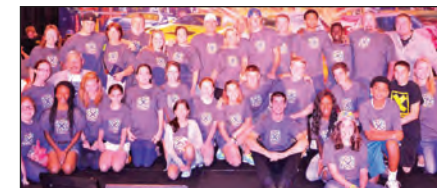


PHOTO PROVIDED BY PAUL HUYGHEBAERT

Teens from the Maricamp Road church in Ocala, Fla., don their SonQuest T-shirts.

WEB DEVELOPER OPENING

Oklahoma Christian University is seeking applicants for the full-time position of Web Developer in the university's Marketing Office. Responsibilities include: maintaining existing OC websites and developing new sites; optimizing landing pages and web response forms; tracking online marketing efforts and analytics data; and collaborating with other team members on university marketing and branding initiatives. Applicants should be familiar with HTML5, CSS3, Javascript/jQuery, templating languages, JSON, XML, Content Management Systems (CMS), Text Editors, and Adobe Photoshop. See what you can do at www.oc.edu

Submit a letter of application, resume, examples of past work (design portfolio, websites), and the name, address, email address, and telephone numbers of three references to Human Resources Assistant Lisa Jones at lisa.jones@oc.edu or Box 11000, Oklahoma City, OK 73136.



DAVE SMITH

Enjoying the NCJC reunion are, front row from left, Mamapalo Mokeyane and Bill McGee. In the second row are Charlene Brooks, Olivia Billings Kalu and Debbie McKee.

Northeastern Christian Junior College still special to former students, faculty

BY BOBBY ROSS JR. | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

Twenty-one years have passed since Northeastern Christian Junior College in Villanova, Pa., closed.

However, those who loved the Philadelphia-area college — which was associated with Churches of Christ — refuse to let its memory die.

"It was so much loved that every two or three years, alumni continue to gather to celebrate what it was and what it meant to their lives," said Doug Edwards, a former longtime administrator who helped organize the first reunion in 2009.

The school was founded in 1957 as the Northeastern Institute for Christian Education. It became Northeastern Christian Junior College in 1964.

Facing financial difficulties, Northeastern sold its campus and merged with then-Ohio Valley College in Vienna, W.Va., in 1993.

More than 100 people from 14 states and South Africa attended the most recent reunion at Camp Manatawny in Berks County, Pa.

Speakers included alumnus Keith Lape, minister for the River City Church of Christ in North

Little Rock, Ark., and former professor John Barton, an elder of the Hillcrest Church of Christ in Abilene, Texas.

Alumnus Roger Woods, minister and elder of the Walled Lake Church of Christ in Michigan, led singing, and former choral director Larry Bills taught a hymn that he arranged.

Jack Thorn, director of planned giving at Ohio Valley University, highlighted OVU's ongoing efforts to connect with Northeastern alumni.

"There is just something wonderfully family-like about being with 'small Christian college' people," said Don Middleton, minister for the Cross Timbers Church of Christ in Stephenville, Texas, who attended the reunion with his wife, Kimberly, a former Northeastern student.

"What a terrific bunch of folks in the Northeast," added Middleton, who has his own fond memories of attending the now-defunct Columbia Christian College in Portland, Ore. "They sing so incredibly well. It so reminds me of my CCC days."

THE NEXT REUNION will be in 2017. To be added to the mailing list or join the planning committee, contact alumnus Laurie Shirey at laurieshirey@yahoo.com.

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Milestones

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Charles and Sidonia Kelsey, 70th

Lawton, Okla.

J.B. and Evelyn Cox, 66th

Columbus, Texas

Birthdays

Berdina Logan, 101st

Sidney, Ill.

Annie Tomlin, 100th

San Antonio

Freeman Brown, 90th

Omaha, Neb.

Richard Neale Taylor, Sr., 88th

Florence, Ala.

Memorials

Barry Raymond Shaver

Barry Raymond Shaver, 88, died Aug. 16, 2014, at Stone Oak Methodist Hospital in San Antonio. He was born Nov. 18, 1925, in Randolph County, Ark.

Ray was a successful jeweler and watchmaker for many years. He was a veteran of World War II and stayed active as a leader of the VFW honor guard. He was an active member of the Pyburn Street Church of Christ.

“Papaw,” “Pop,” “Uncle Ray” was a wonderful human being and loved by many. He was an avid golfer, enjoyed his friendships and loved being a member of the community.

He will be missed and cherished forever in the hearts of his family.

Mr. Shaver was preceded in death by his parents, Luther and Dora, his loving wife, Vera, his siblings, Jewel Dean, Libla, and Ruby, and his son, Dave. He

is survived by two grandsons, Rob and Rich Shaver, daughter-in-law Paula Shaver; niece, Sheila Wilson Glisson, nephews Don Wilson, Buel Ramsey, and L.A. Hayes, and their families.

Dillard Eugene Brewer

Dillard Eugene Brewer died at the age of 87 in Manchester, Conn., on July 13, 2014, but he lived his life as a man after God's own heart.

Gene served earnestly as the minister for the Manchester Church of Christ from its founding in 1961 until his retirement in 2004. He was married 56 years to Barbara Christine Anthony Brewer, his partner in life, who was known by many as a longtime teacher at Bowers Elementary School.

Together, Gene and Barbara raised five daughters and served as parents, friends, counselors and inspirations to hundreds of people with whom they selflessly shared their love and lives.

Gene was born on March 24, 1927, the fifth and youngest child of Lewis Dillard and Rose Etta McMinn Brewer, farmers in Chandler, Okla. In 1944, Gene graduated from high school as the valedictorian of his class.

Prior to graduating, Gene took over full-time preaching responsibility when the local preacher went to work in a factory at the onset of World War II.

After high school, Gene attended the University of Oklahoma, where he obtained a bachelor's degree in business administration in 1947.

Despite completing a degree in business, Gene felt called to serve the Lord, and he set aside his business aspirations and took a full-time preaching position in

Moore, Okla. Desiring a more intimate understanding of the original languages of Scripture, Gene pursued a degree in Bible at Abilene Christian College in Texas while preaching in Stamford, Texas, ultimately graduating with a master's degree in 1961.

Gene's academic disposition and love of biblical languages, hermeneutics and real-world application for everyday people yielded a life of virtually indefinable value to those who knew him — including years of provocative, soul-piercing Bible study curricula; scores of life-changing books, articles and sermons; countless hours of advice, counseling and mentoring; and a heart for Jesus that revealed the love of God in every word expressed.

Notwithstanding his diligence as a student, Gene took notice of Barbara Anthony while attending OU and worshipping at the congregation where Barbara's beloved father was an elder. Gene and Barbara married June 25, 1948.

While Gene was preaching in Oklahoma, Barbara gave birth to Rebecca Jean (Brewer), Ann Marie (Brumley), Janet Kathleen (Stice), and Susan Elizabeth (Yeats).

Eventually, Gene and Barbara had their fifth daughter, Jennifer Elaine (Blake), after Gene began preaching in Manchester. Without a doubt, these six women were the joy of Gene's life. Barbara was Gene's soul mate, an indispensable partner in his lifetime of ministry — and the secret of his success. And he loved her unconditionally

until the day he died.

A feminist out of necessity, Gene found a way to put all of his daughters through college, performed their marriages to wonderful Christian men, loved their 11 children and basked in their life-long devotion to him as “Daddy.” Indeed, his greatest earthly pleasure was knowing that each of his daughters was a faithful follower of Jesus.

No description of Gene's life would be complete without acknowledging his love for the people of the Manchester Church of Christ, both past and present.

While we frequently speak of Gene's ministry in terms of “dedication” and “sacrifice,” he viewed his work as a gift — one that he gave and one that he received. While we felt that he changed our lives, he felt you changed his — enriching it, giving him purpose and allowing him to share in your glorification of God.

His final wish is the same as his first — for you to love God with all your heart and all your soul, all the days of your life.

Gene was predeceased by his wife Barbara, his daughter Rebecca, and his siblings Edward Brewer, Bertha Dean, Vivian Brewer, Clarence Brewer, and Ruby Williams.

Gene is survived by his daughters Ann and her husband Doyce Brumley, Janet and her husband Philip Stice, Susan and her husband Gary Yeats, and Jennifer and her husband Kent Blake.

Gene is also survived by his grandchildren Jenny Callahan Head, Lacey and Kylie Callahan, Chad and Todd Brumley, G.T. Stice, Jordan, Natalie, and Haylie Yeats, and Drew and Kelly Blake.

He is also survived by his great-grandchildren Peton and Marley Brumley as well as our close family friend, Leroy Washington.



Entries should be submitted to milestones@christianchronicle.org or call (405) 425-5070.

Rates and guidelines are available upon request (credit card preferred).

Milestones *continued.*

Clarence Obert Henderson

Clarence Obert Henderson, 88, died on Sept. 1, 2014, the anniversary of his 62-year marriage to Juanita McGuire Henderson, who passed away May 6, 2013. His death followed a heart attack at his home in Hood River, Ore. Preaching and teaching college business were his chosen occupations, based on a desire to serve.

He preached for churches in Marfa, Texas; East St. Louis, Ill.; Walnut Ridge, Ark.; Pullman, Wash.; and Loveland, Colo. As a professor of business, he taught at Colorado State University, Washington State University, Harding University, and Columbia Christian/Cascade College. While at Harding in the 1970s, he began the "Campaigns Northwest" program which brought college students to churches for summer mission work.

Born in Willow, Okla., on Nov. 14, 1925, he was the youngest child of Clarence Andrew and Birdie Lola Rogers Henderson. His parents and siblings — Odell, Odessa, and Orman — preceded him in death.

After graduating from high school in Salem, Ore., he was drafted in World War II. He held the rank of Army tech sergeant and served as a medic in the Philippines. A 1950 graduate of Harding College, he later earned his master's degree in business at Washington State University and his Ph.D. from the University of Oregon.

Henderson's favorite hobby was raising a large vegetable garden and sharing the produce with others, but spare time was also filled with Bible study, teaching, reading, cabinet building, woodworking and fishing. Together with Juanita, he delivered Meals-on-Wheels for 22 years.



Teaching classes at church, being an elder and mowing the church lawn were a few of his volunteer jobs.

Having the family around his table was his only wish for birthdays and holidays. He is survived by his children Cam Henderson (Andrea) of Beaverton, Ore., Brent Henderson (Cathy) of Hood River, Ore., Karen James (Ken) of Wasilla, Alaska, Vern Henderson of Redmond, Ore., his nine grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

Memorials may be made to Healing Hands International or Smile Train.

Vance Carruth, 89

Bellflower, Calif.

George Roggendorff, 80

Austin, Texas

Memorial Gifts

The *Chronicle* appreciates and acknowledges generous gifts donated in memory of Bob and Robbie Bryson, longtime missionaries to Panama and Latin America, and W. L. Fletcher III of North Ridgeville, Ohio.

Awarded

A Serving Heart Makenzie Hyde

Makenzie Hyde took an oath to love God, cherish her family, honor her country and serve in her community — an oath she takes very seriously.

In the spring of 2013, Makenzie, a Tenderheart member of the American Heritage Girls Troop OK 1776, a faith-based scouting organization for girls, learned of the clean water shortage in Africa. Around the same time, she also learned how to knit. Wanting to make a difference, Makenzie was inspired to knit and sell scarves in order to raise the \$3,000 necessary to purchase a water well in Uganda.

Makenzie brought her idea to a

friend at her home congregation, the Dewey Church of Christ in Oklahoma. The friend, so inspired, was determined to make her dream a reality.

And the response was overwhelming.

A friend donated yarn while others knitted scarves, hats, afghans and baby booties. Makenzie and her sister Larissa, also a Tenderheart member, knitted 10 scarves and a baby afghan, while still others donated hand-made quilts, jewelry, woodwork, ironwork, baked goods and even a painting. The items were to be sold in a silent auction in the fall.

On Nov. 16, 2013, the sisters helped sort, organize, set up and tear down the auction event, which was held at the Dewey church's family center. The auction brought in \$6,000, which far exceeded the original goal. Aside from the items sold, some donations came from Conoco Phillips employees who gave of their time, money and resources. The funds have been donated to the Kibo Group, a U.S.-based organization focused on developing initiatives in East Africa.

Makenzie and her family have since moved to Shawnee, Okla., where her father, Jimmy, is pulpit minister for the Central Church of Christ. She is an Explorer in the American Heritage Troop OK 0405, chartered by the Wilshire Church of Christ in Oklahoma City.

Makenzie's new troop sponsors have no doubt that she will continue to use her talents to help and bless others, locally and globally.



Makenzie Hyde, right, with B.J. Brittenham and Larissa Hyde.

Sept. 27 Predisan Celebration and Reunion. Oklahoma Christian University, Oklahoma City. robertbaker@gmail.com.

Sept. 27-28 75th Anniversary Celebration, Northside Church of Christ. Wichita, Kan. (316) 838-5200.

Sept. 28 Eastern European Mission Million Dollar Sunday. (800) 486-1818, www.eem.org.

Sept. 28-Oct. 2 25th Annual Roundhouse. Family encampment for homeschooling families. Flat Rock, N.C. www.roundhouse.us.

Sept. 28-Oct. 1 Harding University Bible Lectureship. Searcy, Ark. (501) 279-5123, www.harding.edu/lectureship.

Sept. 30 CAMT Alumni Event. Harding University, Searcy, Ark. awarren3@harding.edu.

Oct. 3-4 Liberia Networking Conference. "Treasure In Heaven." www.treasureinheaven.org/liberia-conference.html.

Oct. 4 The Cambridge Call 2014 Annual Leadership Seminar. Ross Street Community Center, Cambridge, England. cyriljweinman@ntlworld.com.

Oct. 5-7 OC Lectureship 2014. "Fully Engaged." Oklahoma Christian University, Oklahoma City. (405) 425-5141, www.oc.edu/lectureship.

Oct. 7-8 Children's Ministry Leadership Forum. "Refuel & Retool." (806) 543-8777.

Oct. 7-10 Abundant Living Branson Retreat. "Making the Most of the Rest of your Life." Radisson Hotel, Branson, Mo. www.abundantlivingseniors.com, (501) 279-4055.

Oct. 11 Fairfax Elderlink Seminar. Fairfax Church of Christ, Fairfax, Va. (325) 674-3732.

Oct. 12 Ulysses Youth Rally. Ulysses Church of Christ, Ulysses, Kan. (620) 356-2217.

Oct. 12-15 ELEVATE Spiritual Enrichment Conference, Heritage Christian University, Florence, Ala. www.hcu.edu.

Oct. 16-18 Global Missions Conference. "The Mission of God." Memphis, Tenn. (800) 311-2006, globalmissionsconference.org.

Oct. 17-19 2014 ZOE Worship Conference. "Loved." Otter Creek Church, Nashville, Tenn. www.zoegroup.org, (615) 306-6596.

FULL CALENDAR, www.christianchronicle.org

Entries should be submitted to milestones@christianchronicle.org or call (405) 425-5070.

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NEWSMAKERS

AWARDED: Scott Lambert, the Lifetime Achievement Award at the 2014 National Campus for Christ Conference. **Jerry and Gail Heiderich**, of the Family Institute of Latin America, the Towel Award at Abilene Christian University's Summit Celebration Dinner. **Carl Burkybile**, director of agriculture for Healing Hands International in Nashville, Tenn., with the 2014 Champaign-Urbana International Humanitarian Award.

NOMINATED: Christian Delahoz and Cape Monn by the Christian Home and Bible School of Mount Dora, Fla., to attend the inaugural Presidential Leadership Institute at York College in York, Neb.

NAMED: Dick Porter to the San Antonio Radio Hall of Fame by the society of San Antonio Radio Broadcasters. Porter attends the San Pedro Avenue Church of Christ. **Lori Hadley**, director, and **Kristen Box**, assistant coordinator,

the Harden Early Childhood Center for the Christian Home and Bible School of Mount Dora, Fla. **Taylor Cave**, spiritual life director, history teacher and girls soccer coach for Oklahoma Christian Academy in Edmond, Okla.



Hadley



Mack



Robinson

Richard Frank, executive administrator for the North Davis Church of Christ in Arlington, Texas.

NEW MINISTERS: **Jay Mack**, campus minister for the Memorial Road Church of Christ in Oklahoma City. **Steven Smith**, youth minister for the Glenwood Church of Christ in Tyler, Texas. **Jarrod Robinson**, minister of the Word for the Southern Hills Church of Christ in Abilene, Texas.

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EDITORIAL

Help for old headlines

‘What has been will be again, what has been done will be done again; there is nothing new under the sun.”

Those words, from the first chapter of Ecclesiastes, might come to mind as you turn the pages of this month's *Christian Chronicle*. At first glance, this appears to be an issue of old headlines.

The border crisis? That ended months ago, right? And the doctor with Ebola? He's healed.

‘We praise God for those who bring aid and hope — even after the television cameras leave.’

Though the mainstream media have moved on to other issues — most recently, the terrible conflict in the Middle East — these stories haven't gone away. We praise God for those who bring aid and hope — even after the television cameras leave.

Ministries with ties to Churches of Christ, including Global Samaritan Resources,

Healing Hands International and Christian Relief Fund, contribute to efforts on the Mexican border and in West Africa. Nonprofits outside our fellowship, including Samaritan's Purse, provide relief for those displaced by Islamic extremists in the Middle East. Ebola survivor and church member Dr. Kent Brantly served — and was served by — Samaritan's Purse.

Disaster relief is a years-long process. In New York and New Jersey, Churches of Christ continue to serve the victims of Hurricane Sandy. Multiple ministries and churches serve the people of the Philippines as they recover from last year's devastating Typhoon Haiyan.

Find links to all of these ministries, nonprofits and churches at our website, www.christianchronicle.org. Please pray for and contribute to these noble causes, even after they disappear from the headlines.

From God's Word, we know that what has been will be again. May we be ever ready to serve.

‘Immense wisdom’ needed in Ukraine

“You have been a refuge for the poor, a refuge for the needy in their distress, a shelter from the storm and a shade from the heat. For the breath of the ruthless is like a storm driving against a wall.”

— Isaiah 25:4

Twenty-one years ago, I was invited to accompany a small group of people on a trip to Torez, Ukraine. I had not heard of the city. Now, millions of people have.

The small town in eastern Ukraine, near the Russian border, is close to where much of the debris fell after the cowardly attack on Malaysia Airlines Flight 17.

Back in 1993, we flew to the Ukrainian capital, Kiev. We boarded an old passenger train for a 14-hour trip to Donetsk — now under siege by pro-Russian separatists. We then took a small van for a 90-minute drive eastward to Torez.

I traveled with men who had vivid memories of the Cold War. They told stories about their impressions of the Soviet Union and its people. We arrived at a dilapidated hotel in Torez on a dark, cold evening. Locals greeted us and served us a meal of borscht. The men I traveled with later said that these people — their personalities, their emotional warmth — did not match the stories they were told 50 years ago.

Some of the Ukrainians remained very pro-Soviet while others anticipated a new future. Many were coal miners who hadn't been paid in months. We saw bare shelves in grocery stores. We saw people determined to rebuild their lives.

Most of all, we saw the need for Jesus.

A group of converts began in Torez that year — and continue to congregate for worship and to serve the Lord. Churches and Christians in the Memphis, Tenn., area help support the



PHOTO PROVIDED

Members of the Torez Church of Christ in Ukraine.

church — spiritually and financially. It has been a joy to communicate with and travel to Torez to work alongside these brothers and sisters during the past couple of decades.

I was naive enough to believe that they would not experience such social upheaval again in their lifetimes. I did not anticipate the emails I have received about universities and church buildings seized, tanks passing their homes, the sounds of artillery.

I never thought that 298 people would lose their lives as an airplane was blown up by a missile — and that the debris would be strewn near Torez as renewed armed conflict surged.

It will take right hearts and immense wisdom — that none of us possess — to resolve the problems now faced by the people of Torez. What I do know is that parents, children, widows and widowers — victims of the ruthless — need our prayers and active concern.

GARY W. DODD ministers for the Owen Chapel Church of Christ in Brentwood, Tenn., and works as a palliative care nurse practitioner.

In the Word



Gary W. Dodd



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Love your undocumented neighbor

CAN PEOPLE OF FAITH hold true to Christ's call for compassion while upholding the law?

As a U.S. citizen, I understand the difficulties and strain of having millions of undocumented people crossing our border.

But I've also seen the faces of illegal immigrants in my own neighborhood. I have worked in the Hispanic and outreach ministries of the Antioch Church of Christ in Nashville, Tenn. Our community has a large Latino population, and our church reaches out with free English as a Second Language classes and Bible studies. We provide Spanish interpretation during our worship services.

I have traveled to Nicaragua, Mexico, El Salvador and Honduras and seen poverty there firsthand — and the hopeless look in the eyes of parents. I understand why they want a better life for their children — and that they would do anything to get it.

As a Christian, I feel empathy and love for them.

There are an estimated 11 to 12 million undocumented Hispanics living in the U.S., though that number is hard to verify. And a year-long surge has brought about 63,000 unaccompanied children — fleeing gangs and violence in their Central American homelands — into the U.S., causing terrible stress on our legal system, costing untold millions of dollars.

How do I reconcile loving my undocumented neighbors and upholding the law?

Leviticus 19 says, *"The alien who resides with you shall be to you as the citizen among you; you shall love the alien as yourself, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt."*

Yet Romans 13 says, *"Let every person be subject to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except from God,"* and *"whoever resists authority resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment."*

And, in Matthew 22, Jesus tells us to *"love your neighbor as yourself."*

Dan Carroll, author of **"Christians at the Border: Immigration, the Church and the Bible,"** believes, as I do, that "Christians must think about and act on Hispanic immigration as Christians."

What is disturbing to me is that, often, we have the same response to the immigration problem as people who are not believers. We are so busy stating that we need to retain our way of life that we forget who has given all of us life.

When the issue of the added costs to schools and hospitals is brought up, we often back that up by reciting Romans 13. Although these are real issues, where is the love and the compassion we see in the

life of Jesus as we try to find answers?

Jesus associated with people who were on the fringe, outcasts. He sat with sinners. These were often-marginalized people because of their behavior as well as their physical condition.

Views



Lisa Steele

So many undocumented workers live on the edge of poverty, with little legal protection, and often are the victims of others' greed. They may be viewed as lepers or outcasts. By excluding them, we are missing out on fellowship, friendship and the opportunity to show them compassion.

As Americans, we are concerned for the laws of our land and the wellbeing of our nation. We are frustrated and angry that many immigrants have illegally entered our country.

Yet, as citizens of heaven, we are deeply concerned for the wellbeing of these same people — who work in our neighborhoods and send their children to school alongside ours.

I pray for a new reality. I want to see a world where the people of Latin America can be fruitful and fulfilled in their home countries. Latin America can be a place where people have enough to eat, have no need to fear their own police and can receive a good education.

Yes, this is a huge goal — even idealistic — and it may seem impossible to accomplish. But the Word of God tells me that all things are possible in Christ. I believe that includes social reform.

Meanwhile, I maintain very specific boundaries as I interact with undocumented immigrants. I will never help anyone enter our country illegally. I will not lie for anyone.

But I do whatever I can to lawfully help any person who is marginalized in our society. I help undocumented persons get their documents. I sponsor people for citizenship. I help them find Christian lawyers.

Through it all, I try to share the Gospel with them and show them the love of

Jesus — with words and actions. I want to spend eternity with my new brothers and sisters. That's right. Many of these undocumented workers are now my brothers and sisters in Christ. We are family.

I pray that one day I will stand before God and know that I tried to show compassion and mercy to others, regardless of their legal status.

LISA STEELE is assistant dean of student life and director of intercultural development and Latino student services for Lipscomb University in Nashville, Tenn.

LETTERS

Hispanic church encourages

This is an amazing story — a tremendous definition of the true Spirit of Christ. ("Cristo can move mountains," Page 13, October) I needed this encouragement today. Thank you, and God bless our brothers and sisters in Elgin, Ill.

Tim Hall | Huntsville, Ala.

Praise God for answered prayer. I am from a very small congregation in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. We meet in a library hall and pray to have a building of our own one day. Your answered prayer gives us renewed hope.

Patricia Holst | Shelly Beach, South Africa

From California, praise to the Father for your happiness. Knowing that you will use this building for the glory of God, we pray for your growth and teaching of the Word of God. So happy for all of you. He is "Mighty to Save" — one of my favorite songs.

Gerri Means | Fremont, Calif.

Hermanos, buen trabajo. Sigamos adelante, "sabiendo que vuestro trabajo en el Señor no es en vano." 1 Cor. 15:58

(Brothers, good work. Move forward "because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain." 1 Cor. 15:58)

Carmelo Cuéllar Barrón | Sherman, Texas

More praise for news, opinion

A special thanks to Ted Parks for writing the wonderful article, "Blue Ridge farewell" in the October 2014 issue (Page 3).

Ted did an outstanding job delving into the history of the 64th and final Blue Ridge Encampment in Black Mountain, N.C. Ted spent much time interviewing participants of all ages and varied backgrounds to cover the story in a thorough and memorable way.

Beth Horn Waters | Knoxville, Tenn.

If I were rich, I would start a news network that would only pick up on stories like this (Inside Story, Page 3, October) and the so many good things people do daily for each other. This story did my heart good.

Sandy McCorkell | Porterville, Calif.

"Kid President" Robby Novak is such an inspiration to kids across our nation (Page 17, October). We are respite parents for a children's home, and the experience has enriched our lives.

Reneé B. Mayher | Cookeville, Tenn.

Acts of revolution: Bible shows a disruptive church

The Restoration Movement calls followers of Jesus back to the Bible. In Churches of Christ, we place a premium on the importance of God's Word — all of it.

The book of Acts has played an especially formative role in our fellowship since it contains so many conversion narratives and examples of how the early Christians practiced their faith.

In his first book, **"How to Start a Riot: Support Your Local Jesus Revolution,"** Jonathan Storment, preaching minister for the Highland Church of Christ in Abilene, Texas, seeks to help shed new light on Acts. He does not believe that our traditional way of reading Acts is invalid — just incomplete.

In his words, Acts is "a book trying to wake Jesus followers up to the implications of following Jesus."

He later adds, "In the religious tribe that I belong to, we have tended to read the book of Acts as if it could be broken down into a series of steps or a law code of some kind, all the while forgetting the most basic message Acts is telling."

There are three themes in Acts that Storment traces. First, the implications of Jesus' resurrection dominate the story of Acts more than we may

have previously realized.

In Storment's view, "resurrection has been misrepresented as a doctrine that promotes indifference." It's certainly true that hope in the afterlife can cause some to

not care much about this life. Instead of indifference, Storment argues that the resurrection should make the church bolder, inspiring us to take greater risks.

"Jesus said to go into all the world," he writes. "He never said anything about coming back."

Second, Jesus' ascension is, in Storment's estimation, one of the most neglected events in Scripture. Like the resurrection, the implications are striking. He mentions how the ascension was a direct challenge to the authority and lordship of Caesar.

By preaching a risen, ascended Christ, the early church stood against the politics of their day. Though they were willing to render to Caesar what was Caesar's, they nonetheless denied him the one thing he wanted most — worship.

Finally, Storment weaves an argument throughout this book that the church today has become much more domesticated and tranquil than our first-century counterpart. Indeed, the title of the book echoes

In Print



Michael Whitworth



★★★★☆

Jonathan Storment. **How to Start a Riot: Support Your Local Jesus Revolution.** Abilene, Texas: Leafwood Publishers, 2014. 192 pages. \$14.99.

the reality that Paul and others caused quite a disturbance wherever they went with the Gospel. In a world where the church is increasingly expected (even commanded) not to rock the boat, Acts serves as a manifesto for the church to turn the world upside down.

Overall, I appreciated Storment's message. It is human nature to grow comfortable with our paradigms and patterns. Occasionally, however, we need to re-read Scripture so that God can correct our blind spots.

Storment observes the undercurrent of racial and socioeconomic reconciliation running through Acts — areas in which the church has struggled throughout her history.

The church is depicted in Acts as a community in which we learn to love those most different from us. If I'm honest, I much prefer going to church with people just like me.

While there is much to like in this book, some readers may not understand or appreciate Storment's many pop culture references or deadpan humor. There are also doctrinal viewpoints expressed in the book that I did not agree with, but none are essential to the book's main message.

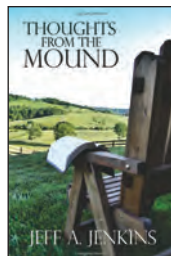
The Churches of Christ are right to point to Acts as a source of patterns of conversion and church life. But the apostles' memoirs have other lessons, too.

MICHAEL WHITWORTH preaches for the Carter Lake Road Church of Christ in Bowie, Texas. He is the author of several books, including "The Epic of God," a first-place winner in the 2014 Christian Small Publishers Association awards, and "The Derision of Heaven."

NEW AND NOTeworthy

DEVOTIONAL

Jeff A. Jenkins. **Thoughts from the Mound.** Bowie, Texas: Start2Finish Books, 2014. 206 pages. \$12.99.



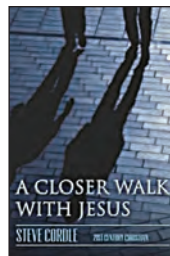
Culled from the author's blog, this book presents winsome thoughts on varied topics, with a scripted prayer at the end of each entry.

Chapters are focused but supported with many Scripture references.

Jenkins has preached for the Lewisville Church of Christ in Texas for 10 years.

BIBLE STUDY

Steve Cordle. **A Closer Walk with Jesus.** Nashville, Tenn.: 21st Century Christian, 2014. 122 pages. \$8.99.



This 13-chapter study is geared toward adult Christians wishing to deepen their spiritual maturity.

Written by a graduate of Bear Valley Bible Institute of Denver, topics include prayer, the tongue and trials. Each chapter ends with a suggested prayer and discussion questions — making it suitable for group study.

BIBLE STUDY

Cecil May Jr. **Providence: The Silent Sovereignty of God.** Nashville, Tenn.: Gospel Advocate Co., 2014. 127 pages. \$9.99.



May, a longtime minister for Churches of Christ, reknowned church scholar and a dean emeritus of Faulkner University, discusses God's work among mankind under the New Covenant. Originally written as a Bible study series for churches, numerous requests for the series resulted in its publication, he writes.

MEMOIR

Serge Gasore with Patsy Watson. **My Day to Die: Running for My Life.** Bloomington, Ind.: Archway Publishing, 2014. 155 pages. \$13.99.



A survivor of the Rwandan genocide of 1994, Gasore won a track scholarship to Abilene Christian University in Texas, where he experienced peace, healing and conversion to Christianity. Now married and pursuing a master's, he and his wife founded a nonprofit that provides medical care for children in Rwanda.



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Dr. Ken Cukrowski, Dean • ACU Box 29400, Abilene, Texas 79699-9400

The **Department of Marriage and Family Studies** invites applications and nominations in writing for a tenure-track faculty position as assistant or associate professor of marriage and family therapy, beginning in Fall 2015. The M.M.F.T. program at ACU has held continuous COAMFTE-accreditation since 1983. The candidate will be expected to teach courses relative to couples therapy, research methods in MFT, and others assigned by the chair; supervise graduate interns; mentor student research; and accept departmental, college and university committee assignments. The candidate should possess a well-defined program of research as evidenced by peer-reviewed publications and presentations; demonstrate competence in the integration of theological and spiritual issues with therapy; must hold the Ph.D. in marriage and family therapy or a closely related mental health discipline; exhibit competence as a classroom teacher; demonstrate eligibility for licensure as an LMFT in the State of Texas; and hold Clinical Membership and Approved Supervisor or Supervisor Candidate status with the AAMFT. Information about the department is available at acu.edu/mft.

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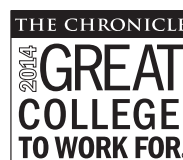
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ACU's graduate **Department of Occupational Therapy** is seeking faculty members for two nine-month, tenure track positions to join the innovative and service-oriented M.S. in occupational therapy (MSOT) faculty team. The entry-level MSOT program at ACU currently has Candidacy Status towards accreditation from ACOTE and admitted its first class of students in Fall 2014. The department is looking for faculty with experience in teaching, research and clinical skills, preferably in the areas of pediatrics, mental health and adult populations. Candidates must hold a post-professional degree in occupational therapy or a related field. The credential of a completed doctorate is preferred. Requirements include demonstration of at least five years of practice experience. Additionally, current NBCOT certification and Texas OT license (or eligibility) is required. Academic rank, salary and tenure status are commensurate with credentials and experience. Information about the department is available at acu.edu/occupationaltherapy.

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 applications 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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In the mail and online, World Bible School continues its soul-winning ways

Would it surprise you to know that World Bible School has 1.5 million students studying the Bible around the world right now? And that they are exchanging Bible lessons with a volunteer network of 8,000 study helpers from more than 1,000 Churches of Christ?

Every week at my home congregation, I see Christians carrying stacks of lessons that they are returning or taking home to grade. Lloyd Deal, a long-term missionary in Iowa and leader of many short-term efforts in Kenya and Uganda, coordinates our church's WBS ministry.

The ministry's familiar postal method, using printed lessons, is still quite relevant and highly effective for the almost two-thirds of the world that cannot access the Internet. Prison ministries here in the U.S. also see great success with it.

World Bible School's web teaching method is growing steadily as Bible seekers find its free online lessons. The web-based studies are now available in English, Spanish and Portuguese.

The WBS Internet method allows congregations to have a strong, Bible-based resource readily available for both local and world evangelism. Online lessons can be a helpful resource for mission teams and current missionaries in parts of the world where Internet is available.

Church leaders can equip Christians to be evangelistic using their own laptop, smartphone or iPad — at home or on the go. Through the WBS Connect program, congregations can have their own customized WBS website to enroll and study with students locally and in targeted mission points.

The founder of World Bible School was Jimmie Lovell (1896-1984), a businessman who lived in California. He worked for a chemical company and sold its line of products. Lovell's highest pursuit, however, had to do with the Gospel. In 1944, during

World War II, Lovell provided funds to Gordon Turner at Lawrence Avenue Church of Christ in Nashville, Tenn., to print Bible correspondence for members in the military.

In time these courses reached C.A.O. Essien, a retired policeman in Nigeria. Essien found teaching that matched what he read in the Bible, and he immediately taught many others. Later, Eldred Echols and Boyd Reese visited and confirmed that Essien and his trainees had brought some 10,000 others

to Christ. The reports from Nigeria showed the great potential of correspondence teaching.

From 1973 to the present, some of the strongest men of faith with hearts for missions have followed Lovell into the great work of evangelism through correspondence

teaching: Reuel Lemmons (1978-1987), R.H. "Tex" Williams (1987-2006) and John and Beth Reese, the first American missionaries to devote full-time mission work to WBS follow up. John Reese now serves as president of WBS.



PHOTO PROVIDED

Nigerian Christian C.A.O. Essien realized the potential for World Bible School to reach lost souls in Africa.

Beginning in 1993, John Reese wrote and published World Bible School's new curriculum, the Master Series. Two years later, WBS

became one of the first ministries to use the Internet for recruiting and teaching students. Kit Mullins helped to start the Internet program, and it continues advancing under the technical leadership of Jonathan Towell.

Under John Reese's leadership, WBS continues its expansion and outreach. Using the website, any person can become a teacher or student.

See worldbibleschool.net to learn about different ways to get involved.

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The introvert preacher
Educated? Yes. Experienced? Yes.
Energized by social interaction?
Not really. For some ministers,
God's children are a blessing —
and an energy drain. **3**



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