

JON OWEN

Christina Kadzamira, a native of the African nation of Malawi, and minister Buddy Bell pray for kidnapped girls in Nigeria during a vigil at the Landmark Church of Christ in Alabama.

In Africa, in America, ‘bring back our girls’

ABDUCTIONS IN NIGERIA send Christians to their knees, offering prayers for victims of human trafficking worldwide

BY ERIK TRYGGESTAD | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

Daughters of Africa knelt in the sanctuary of an Alabama church on a gray Friday evening, pleading in prayer for the release of more than 200 girls, stolen in the night.

Alongside their American sisters and brothers, they petitioned God for an end to tyranny and oppression worldwide, for an end to the poverty, mistrust, greed and hate that drive people to treat the powerless around them as property.

“All these girls are guilty of is desiring education,” said Uduak Afangideh, a member of the Landmark Church of

Christ in Montgomery who organized the prayer vigil. Education “would empower them to make a difference in their generation and among their people.”



Afangideh

Instead, the girls abducted from their boarding school in Chibok, Nigeria, sit in Muslim *chador* cloaks, reciting verses from the Quran in a video released by their captors, Boko Haram.

In another video, the terrorists’ leader proclaims, “I abducted your girls. I will

sell them in the market, by Allah.”

“Kidnapping” doesn’t describe this unconscionable act, said Afangideh, a native of Nigeria and science professor at Faulkner University. “This is enslavement and human trafficking. American Christians should let it be known that this is not acceptable.”

It happens *in* America — not just Africa
See **BRING BACK**, Page 16

FAITH FIGHTING HUMAN TRAFFICKING

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VIDEO STILL VIA NEWS.NAJJ.COM

A video released by Boko Haram shows kidnapped Nigerian girls in Muslim *chadors*, praying in an undisclosed rural location.

DA!

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



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let's say "Yes!" Just say "DA!"



Five ideas to improve Sunday night

I don't like Sunday night services," said a minister friend, whose congregation draws 250 for morning worship but only 100 for the evening assembly.

"Our Sunday night attendance is plummeting," a different preacher said. "We go from 130 in the morning to 30 at night."

Inside Story



Bobby Ross Jr.

In many — but certainly not all —

Churches of Christ, the Sunday night gathering has a glorious past, a lackluster present and an uncertain future.

In our fellowship, the tradition can be traced to the earliest days of the American Restoration Movement, which began on the U.S. frontier in the 1790s and called for Christians of all denominations to follow the Bible only.

"Multiple meetings on Sunday were common from the beginning, including some in the evening for prayer and Bible study," said John Mark Hicks, a Restoration scholar and theology professor at Lipscomb University in Nashville, Tenn.

"Revivalism in the late 19th century and the rise of better lighting encouraged Sunday evening gatherings for evangelistic preaching, and then shift work during WWI and WWII encouraged Sunday evening offerings

See **SUNDAY NIGHT**, Page 4

Pro-Russian gunmen seize church in Ukraine

BY ERIK TRYGGESTAD | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

During Sunday morning worship, armed men seized a building used by a Church of Christ and a ministry training school in the eastern Ukrainian city of Gorlovka.

The men, who call themselves soldiers of the Russian Federation, interrupted the worship service "and demanded we leave," said Olga Paziura, a member of the Central Church of Christ, which meets in the building. "After much negotiation, we were given two hours to remove contents from the building that we wanted, and (they told us that) the rest would be destroyed."

The building also is the home of the Bear Valley Bible Institute of Ukraine, an extension program of the Bear Valley Bible Institute of Denver.

Church members spent three hours removing the congregation's belongings from the building as the armed men stood and watched, Paziura said. They left behind a television, washing machines and refrigerators.



Paziura

"It was just very shocking and stressful," Paziura said. "Some girls lost consciousness (or) started crying."

None of the church members were injured.

The day before, seven students graduated from the institute's two-year program, said Howell Ferguson, stateside coordinator for Bear Valley. The school's director "went to bed Saturday night feeling good and relieved that they were able to accomplish

the graduation in spite of the turmoil in Ukraine," Ferguson told *The Christian Chronicle*. "They never expected something like what happened ... during worship."

Another ministry training school, the Ukrainian Bible Institute in Donetsk, is closed until further notice, said director Jay Don Rogers, currently in Canada. The school is associated with Sunset International Bible Institute in Lubbock, Texas. Recently, Rogers received a report that about 20 armed men broke into the school's facility and searched its dormitory and classrooms. The facility was unoccupied and nothing was taken.

UKRAINE IN CRISIS

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JASON LEGER

Moments after a tornado destroyed their home on May 20, 2013, Jason Leger snapped this photo. The remains of Leger's home are at the far left.



PHOTO PROVIDED

Jason and Kala Leger, with their four children, stand in the doorway of their rebuilt home.

After the disaster

FAMILY THAT SURVIVED killer tornado gives advice — and Bibles

BY ERIK TRYGGESTAD | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

NEWCASTLE, Okla.

The Bible bookshelf is back. And the pizza's here, too.

In this Oklahoma City suburb, just south of Will Rogers World Airport, about 20 teenagers are busy doing what they do on Thursday nights — making themselves at home. They drift in from playing basketball in the backyard and grab slices of pepperoni.

Along with a small group of adults, the youths search the shelf for the paperback Bibles bearing their names, scrawled in silver marker on the spine. Everyone who attends a devotional at the Legers' house

gets a Bible. That's the rule.

A year ago, torn, soggy Bible pages were strewn across a massive field of debris here. A tornado spun up just down the street, collapsing the 2,100-square-foot home as the Legers — Jason, Kala and children McKenzie, Madison, Jett and Hutton — huddled and prayed in a tiny concrete shelter.

The May 20, 2013, storm intensified as it smashed through Moore, Okla., toppling two elementary schools and killing 24 people — 10 of them children.

Members of the Legers' congregation, the Southwest Church of Christ in Oklahoma City, helped the family sift through the

See **DISASTER**, Page 14



Director of Residential Programs Position

Hope Harbor Children's Home & Family Ministries in Claremore, Okla., is currently accepting applications for the position of Director of Residential Programs. Position becomes available as of July 2014. The successful candidate will provide supervision and training of a multidisciplinary team of professionals including house parents, on-site counselor, and admissions coordinator and will participate in establishing direction for long-term program development and growth. Candidates must possess a master's degree in a mental health field and be licensed or license eligible. Experience in intervention and leadership in residential care or a related setting preferred. Knowledge and expertise in trauma informed care also preferred, but not required.

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Revelation 22:1

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SUNDAY NIGHT: Five ideas to make it better

FROM PAGE 3

for those who missed, including the Lord's Supper," Hicks added. "This became standard in the 1940s."

In wider Christian circles, Sunday evening services also have a long history, but they are disappearing, evangelical trends guru Thom S. Rainer suggested in a recent blog post.

The LifeWay Christian Resources president and CEO explored possible reasons why, from the disappearance of "blue laws" mandating Sunday store closings to an increasing emphasis on family time to ministers lacking the "desire, energy or commitment to prepare a second and different sermon."

If your Sunday night assembly is still going strong, that's wonderful. Praise God!

But if you — like the ministers I quoted — are frustrated, here are five ideas:

1. Organize small group meetings.

This typically involves members gathering in each other's homes for food, fellowship and faith-oriented activities, such as prayer and Bible study.

"We have consistently had more people in attendance on a given Sunday night in small groups than we ever had when the church met together at the church building," said Alan Phillips, an elder of the Lake Cities Church of Christ in Trophy Club, Texas. "We have also found that relationships are strengthened, shepherding is more effective, visitors are less intimidated, and more prayer takes place."

2. Move Sunday school to Sunday night.

The Spring Meadows Church of Christ in Spring Hill, Tenn., has enjoyed success with this.

"We decided to 'throw the clock away' on Sunday mornings," minister Dale Jenkins explained. "Our services typically last an hour and 30 minutes, though that is not a form."

This approach allows more time for singing, the Lord's Supper, preaching and special-focus assemblies, Jenkins said. "We don't feel rushed," he said.

"Then we moved our classes to

Sunday evening," Jenkins added. "Our people love the flow of our Sunday morning services, and more people stay around and visit afterward."

Sunday night attendance? It's up as much as 75 percent.

3. Eat lunch, then meet again earlier in the afternoon.

The Walnut Street Church of Christ in Cary, N.C., replaced its Sunday night assembly with 2:30 p.m. services twice a month. "This has worked extremely well," member Dennis Billingsley said.

4. Enjoy a night of rest.

The Broken Arrow Church of Christ in Oklahoma meets most Sunday nights, with one Sunday night a month set aside for small groups.

But once a year, the congregation plans a "Day of Worship and Rest."

That Sunday begins with an extended morning worship assembly lasting about an hour and 45 minutes. But no Bible classes or other church events are planned that day.

"We began doing this out of a realization that our church calendar frequently conspires against already overcommitted members of our church family," minister Tim Pyles said. "We urge people to seek times of Sabbath and stillness before God and maintain margin in their lives, and then we make it virtually impossible for them to actually accomplish this by a relentless whirlwind of services, activities and events."

5. Replace the sermon with a service project.

Some churches dub this approach "We Are The Sermon."

"It makes sense to me to hear the Word in the morning and live it out in the afternoon/evening," said Jamin Speer, a member of the Stamford Church of Christ in Connecticut.

A friend from my home congregation balked, though, at my ideas.

"No one should be expected to attend on Sunday night if they have something more important to do than worshipping God," my friend said.

My friend makes me smile.

SEE VOICES, Page 29, for more perspectives.

www.christianchronicle.org

Get the latest news, including updates on the turmoil in Ukraine and Nigeria, on your smartphone, tablet or desktop. Find online-exclusive classified advertising. Find links to church-support ministries and nonprofits. See expanded photo galleries and videos.





PHOTO PROVIDED BY MICHELLE J. GOFF

Nearly 100 Hispanic women enjoy Ladies Day hosted by Maryland congregation

Women and children pose for a photo at a recent Ladies Day hosted by the Spanish-speaking congregation of the Silver Spring Church of Christ in Maryland. Michelle J. Goff of Iron Rose

Sister Ministries spoke on the topic of Christian relationships. Nearly 100 women from the Washington area, North Carolina and New York participated in the seminar.

COLORADO

LAKEWOOD — Reg Cox, minister for the Lakewood Church of Christ, has made a name for himself as a “community catalyst,” as he likes to describe his role.

A former longtime staff member at Abilene Christian University in Texas, Cox told the *Denver Post* that he relishes bringing together church leaders to tackle challenges, such as helping turn around a struggling neighborhood elementary school.

To see a video with Cox, recorded during a recent ACU visit, see www.christianchronicle.org.

GEORGIA

SMYRNA — The Central Church of Christ in Smyrna and the Macland Road Church of Christ hosted a recent “Purity Day” for 117 middle and high school girls.

“Finding Your Happily Ever After in God’s Kingdom” was the theme.

“Statistics are running high for teen pregnancy, drugs and alcohol abuse, social media bullying, ‘sexting’ and self-mutilation,” Central minister’s wife Heather Scarborough said. “Thus, Purity Day was born.”

Speaker Hannah Colley Gisselbach focused on topics such as modesty, how to find a mate, self-esteem, bearing good fruits and “mean girl syndrome.”

MISSOURI

WENTZVILLE — The Crossings Church — a Church of Christ — raised more than \$400,000 on a recent weekend.

“A large chunk of that is going directly toward church and campus ministry planting,” said Wes Woodell, a church planter who works with Crossings.

Minister Robert Cox and other leaders “did a great job leading members to give sacrificially,” Woodell said.

OKLAHOMA

TAHLEQUAH — The South College Church of Christ hosts a community meal each Tuesday evening.

The meal draws between 75 and 150 people each week, said Max Ellis, a church member and one of the organizers. Not only does the meal serve those in need, but it also helps the church to be known and appreciated in the community, Ellis said. Also, some who eat stay for a Bible class.

TENNESSEE

NASHVILLE — A homeless man saved the day for the Woodland Hills Church of Christ recently.

Eric Ledbetter had been staying at the church and called authorities after witnessing a man break a back window, WKRN reported.

An officer arrived and tackled the

suspect, John Quinton, as he tried to get away, the television station reported. He reportedly fell into the baptistery at one point.

TEXAS

SAN PEDRO — The San Pedro Church of Christ has begun a bilingual children’s Bible hour as an outreach.

Children will learn greetings, numbers and colors in Spanish, teachers James and Dawn Brents and Amy Galindo told the *Christian News of South Texas*.

“Biblical concepts will be interwoven into the curriculum as the children become fluent,” according to a written description of the outreach. “They will learn through songs, lessons, puppets, games, guest speakers and, on occasion, videos.”

WASHINGTON

SEATTLE — More than 450 people attended the dedication of the 43-year-old Holgate Church of Christ’s new building in Seattle’s Central District.

Neighborhood residents, sister congregations and city officials joined the recent celebration, minister James A. Maxwell said. The 28,000-square-foot building seats 650 and features a commercial kitchen, fellowship center, administrative suite, classrooms, elevator and space to accommodate future ministry plans.

SPOTLIGHT

A Ray of light

LAUREL, Md. — Michael Ray, minister for the Laurel Church of Christ, died May 14 after a six-month battle with colon and liver cancer. He was 49.

In 2012, the Laurel church was featured in a *Christian Chronicle* Churches That Work feature.

Ray, a Lipscomb University graduate and Kentucky native, came to the Laurel church in 2003.

Ray wrote occasional stories for the *Chronicle*, including one on Cliff Holladay, a Maryland minister who was paralyzed in a beach accident and later died. Ray’s survivors include his wife, Susan, and their three children, Elizabeth, Alex and Jeff.



FACEBOOK.COM

Michael Ray preached for the Laurel Church of Christ.

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BOBBY ROSS JR.

Jonathan Charley, a member of the Milton Church of Christ in Massachusetts, leads singing at the New England Lectureship. The lectureship drew more than 300 participants.

Lectureship brings together Christians in Massachusetts

BY BOBBY ROSS JR. | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

TAUNTON, Mass.

As Maurice Davis points out, Massachusetts — one of the nation’s least religious states — is a mission field. In fact, none of the 50 states has a lower ratio of members of Churches of Christ than this one, a *Christian Chronicle* analysis found. The state’s 28 churches and roughly 2,300 men, women and children in the pews represent a tiny fraction of Massachusetts’ 6.6 million total residents. Yet even those Christians — separated by miles and sometimes race — often do not know their brothers and sisters at other congregations, said Davis, minister for the Milton Church of Christ. “The congregations are isolated,

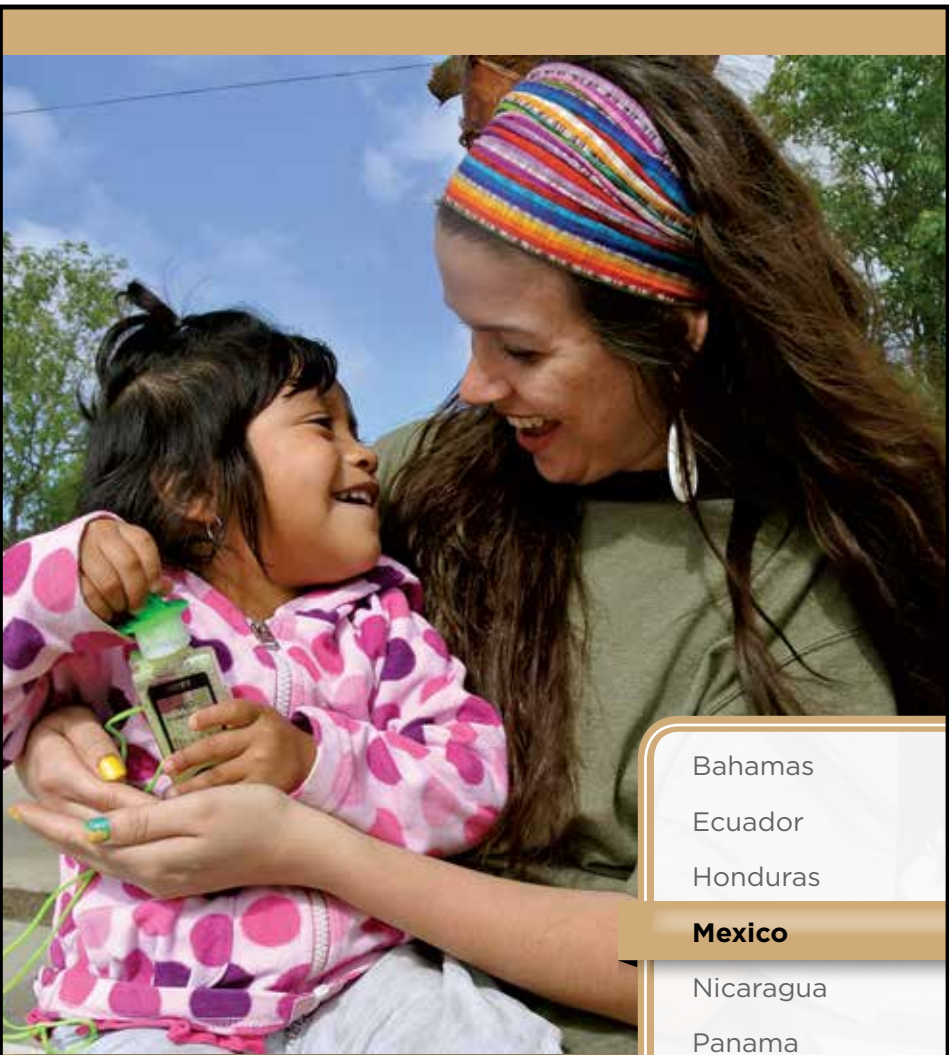
independent,” said Davis, who moved here four years ago after serving Texas and Oklahoma congregations for two decades, “and everybody is more focused on their own ministry at their location than seeing the benefit of us all working together and seeing the greater good we could accomplish.”



Davis

Davis helped revive the New England Lectureship, a once-annual event that had disappeared. The recent lectureship, held at a hotel 40 miles south of Boston, drew 300 church members from 10 states.

See **NEW ENGLAND**, Page 8



- Bahamas
- Ecuador
- Honduras
- Mexico**
- Nicaragua
- Panama
- United States

Sharing God’s love

Spring break is a much-anticipated time of no class, no tests and no papers. Students at Harding University celebrate this break in a number of ways, including traveling to several U.S. states and foreign countries on mission trips. Many students spend their week going out into the world, showing love to others, and sharing the good news about Jesus. Make a difference with your spring break at Harding University.



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States with the lowest, highest ratios of church adherents

The Christian Chronicle compared the number of adherents (members plus children) of Churches of Christ in each state with each state's total population to determine where the fellowship's numerical presence is weakest and strongest. To see the statistics for all 50 states, visit www.christianchronicle.org.

Lowest

MASSACHUSETTS



Adherents: 2,306
Population: 6,646,144
Residents per adherent: **2,882**

UTAH



Adherents: 1,126
Population: 2,855,287
Residents per adherent: **2,536**

MINNESOTA



Adherents: 2,475
Population: 5,379,139
Residents per adherent: **2,173**

Highest

TENNESSEE



Adherents: 212,610
Population: 6,456,243
Residents per adherent: **30**

ARKANSAS



Adherents: 83,565
Population: 2,949,131
Residents per adherent: **35**

ALABAMA



Adherents: 112,744
Population: 4,822,023
Residents per adherent: **43**

SOURCES: U.S. Census Bureau 2012 population estimates and 2012 edition of "Churches of Christ in the United States" directory published by 21st Century Christian

MASSACHUSETTS: Lectureship touts Bible basics



BOBBY ROSS JR.

Jonathan Charley, left, and Dave Russell, right, both members of the Milton Church of Christ in Massachusetts, sing with a choral group at the New England Lectureship in Taunton, Mass.

FROM PAGE 7

That attendance topped the 250 who came last year when the three-day event was resurrected.

"Back to Bible Basics" served as the theme for the 2014 lectureship.

"This breaks isolation," said Tony Black, who preaches for the Melrose Church of Christ, north of Boston. "It gets us all together."

'WE WANTED EVERYONE TO FEEL COMFORTABLE'

Six Massachusetts congregations — a mix of predominantly black and white Churches of Christ — sponsored the lectureship. Besides the Milton and Melrose congregations, those sponsors were the Roxbury Church of Christ, the Blue Hill Church of Christ in Mattapan, the Fall River Church of Christ and the Lawrence Church of Christ.

"We decided ... that whatever we created was going to be a lectureship that featured black and white speakers," said Davis, the director. "And to the best of our ability, we were going to make it an equal number because we wanted to be able to reach out to all groups that make up the congregations here, and we wanted everyone to feel comfortable with the speakers."

Mike Mullen, minister and elder for the Fall River church, said he enjoys the diversity, including the singing of hymns such as "Here I Am To Worship," "Home

of the Soul" and "Sunday Morning" by a mostly black choral group.

"It gives some of the white churches a taste of that culture," Mullen said. "It really is encouraging."

But at least one person complained about the group's clapping. As Davis sees it, working through such issues is a part of creating unity.

"One of the good things about having something like this is, we're coming together," he said. "We're listening to a diversity of preaching, a diversity of singing, and we're beginning to see, 'We're all the same. We worship God the same way.' But even here, it has taken time to get everybody comfortable and supporting of the work."



Mullen

'EVERY SUNDAY, SOMEBODY NEW VISITS'

Roman Catholics — many nominal — and those with no faith at all dominate Massachusetts' religious landscape.

Robert Randolph, minister for the Brookline Church of Christ in Boston, points out, too, that "the independent Christian Churches have made some real inroads in Massachusetts with several strong church plants in the state."

Randolph also notes that the International Churches of Christ — once known as the



BOBBY ROSS JR.

Phillip Morrison from the Roxbury Church of Christ teaches a teen class at the lectureship.

Boston Movement — were "here for a long time, and they are still a presence."

"Our part of the tradition has become rather sectarian," he said of mainstream Churches of Christ. "Right now, we tend to come together in ever smaller combines with those we are most comfortable with."

Several ministers at the lectureship, however, said their congregations are growing and finding New Englanders more spiritually hungry than ever.

"Every Sunday, somebody new visits the church," said Mullen, reporting that Fall River's attendance is up about 40 — to around 120 — since last year. "I have probably about seven Bible studies going."

People seem more receptive to the Gospel, agreed Johnny E. Thomas Sr., minister for the Blue Hill church. "The thing is, getting the members to have the faith and confidence that they can bring somebody to Christ," Thomas said.

As a result of a heavy emphasis on evangelism, the 130-member Milton church is baptizing 20 to 25 people a year, Davis said.

"We just need people to pray for us," he said. "But we also need people to be available to come and do mission efforts here."

"One of the things we're trying to do at our congregation," he added, "is position ourselves so that next summer we can host interns, from the Christian colleges, to help start preparing ministers to serve Massachusetts."

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PRESIDENTIAL SEARCH

Faulkner University is conducting a national search for its next President, following the announcement by Dr. Billy D. Hilyer that he plans to retire on May 31, 2015.

Dr. Hilyer has served with distinction as the university's President, overseeing a period of significant growth and success, while holding Faulkner true to its original mission as a distinctively Christian university that seeks to educate the whole person, including the mind, heart and soul.

Faulkner University seeks as its president a leader with the values, knowledge, and skills to build upon the University's heritage of Christian scholarship, spiritual formation and service. The new President must be a person of strong personal faith in Christ, evidenced by their character and integrity, and be an active, faithful member of the churches of Christ with a longtime history of involvement.

The Board of Trustees has named a Presidential Search Committee that will seek broad input from the public, identify and interview candidates, and make recommendations to the Board.

Interested parties should submit their resume and any additional relevant information on or before **August 1, 2014** to Dale Kirkland, Faulkner Search Committee Chair, at FaulknerPresidentialSearch@gmail.com.



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ECUADOR

QUITO — Christians gathered in this South American capital to celebrate a young congregation's inaugural worship service in its new building.

Members of the East Hill Church of Christ in York, Neb., helped lay the foundation for the building of the Pisuli Church of Christ, which meets in the Pisuli neighborhood on the north side of Quito. The U.S. church members also participated in the worship service.

"There were nearly 120 in attendance, including representatives from eight other Ecuadoran churches, offering their encouragement and blessings to this new work," said Rusty Campbell, a missionary with Operation Ecuador.

EL SALVADOR

AGUA ESCONDIDA — A four-year-old Church of Christ in this Central American nation hosted a gospel campaign, attended by 78 people. The congregation had 27



Castellanos

members when it was planted and has since grown to 51, minister Santos Ayala said.

Church members from Quezaltepeque, Zaragoza and San Juan Opico assisted in the campaign, said minister Alexander Castellanos.

The attendees "were very edified to be united in this evangelistic activity," he said. "The Word has been seeded, and the fruit will come."

NIGERIA

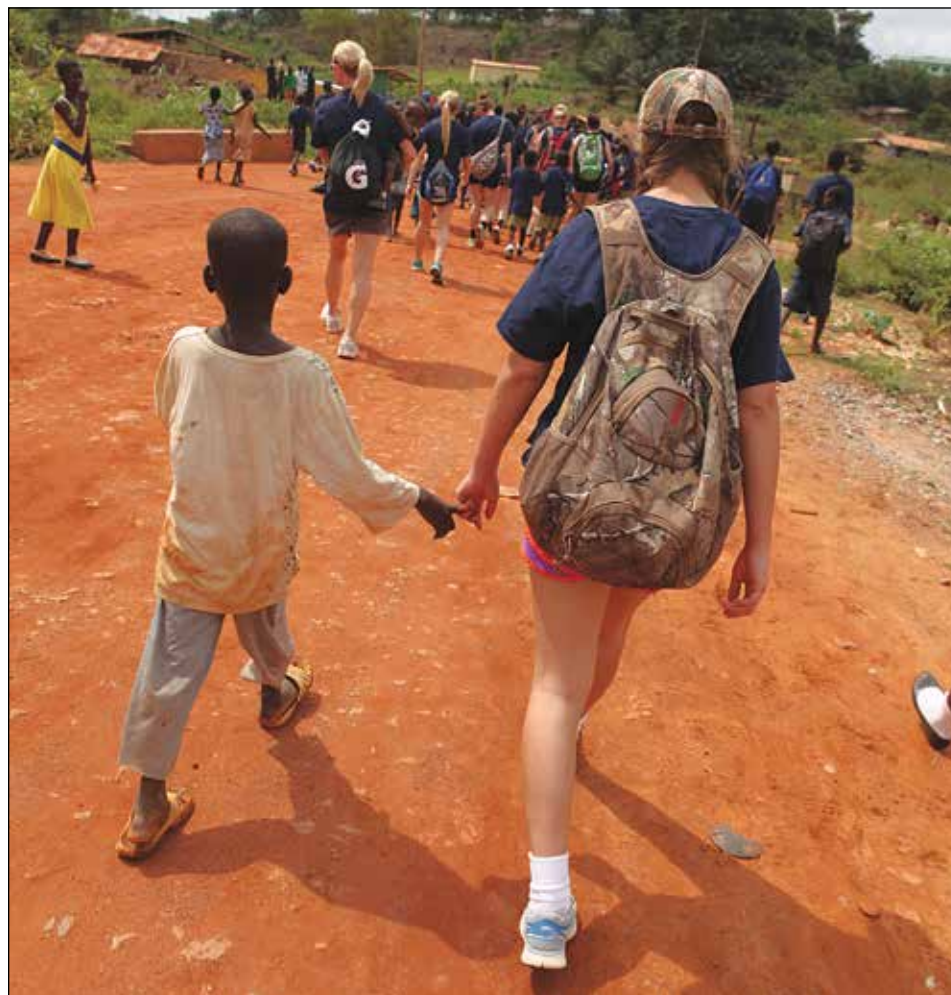
IKOM — An annual, three-day gathering called The Great Workshop drew 468 preachers and church leaders to this town near Nigeria's border with Cameroon. The workshop featured "rich fellowship, Bible lectures, inspirational songs and devotionals," said Sylvester Imogoh, minister for the Ugbogbo Church of Christ in Igarra, Nigeria.



Imogoh

Eleven people were baptized. In addition, 2,496 Bibles were purchased and 135,000 gospel tracts were distributed to attendees.

"Several reasons make these workshops 'great,' Imogoh said, "and these gospel materials that the preachers get to go home with is not the least of such reasons."



MARTHA LEESON

Christian students serve sister school in Africa

Kennedy Barnett holds a child's finger during a weeklong trip to the Ateiku International Church of Christ School in Ghana. A team of 20 students and five sponsors from the school's sister institution, Dallas Christian School, made an annual visit to the campus. The team commissioned two water wells, poured concrete at the Christina Adcock and Sons Christian Hospital, volunteered during a night shift at the hospital, hosted a sports camp and distributed shoes.

RWANDA

KIGALI — *Kwibuka* means 'remember' in Kinyarwanda, Rwanda's language.

Recently, Christians in Rwanda and around the globe remembered the genocide that claimed 800,000 lives in this East African nation, proclaiming that their nation "would not be defined by the horror perpetrated by hate," said Bryan Hixon, who lives in Kigali with his family and serves as part of Rwanda Outreach and Community Partners.

"I *kwibuka* with you, Rwanda, because



Hixon

remembering motivates me toward a brighter future," Hixon said.

The church-supported effort works with Rwandans in education, community development and faith-based initiatives. See www.rocpartners.org and www.kwibuka.rw.

SOUTH KOREA

SEOUL — Church leaders in this Asian nation are preparing for a July lectureship — a follow-up to a lectureship in January attended by 11 Korean evangelists and one church elder. Workers with the Bible Correspondence Center hosted the event and prepared the schedule.

SPOTLIGHT

Mustard seed grows in the Marianas

SAIPAN, Mariana Islands — Robert Martin journeyed to a land "where America's day begins." That's a common saying in the Mariana Islands, a U.S. territory in the Pacific Ocean, home to about 54,000 souls. Situated west of the International Date Line, the islands are 14 hours ahead of the U.S. east coast.

Martin's day began extra early — 3:20 a.m. — when his plane arrived in Saipan. Nonetheless, Christians were waiting to greet him, saying

"Welcome home, brother Robert."

Martin and his wife, Mary, lived on the island and helped establish a Church of Christ there before leaving the work to fellow missionaries Steve Vice and Joey Treat and their families.

Sixty-seven Christians attended Sunday worship and heard Robert Martin preach. During his visit, he taught courses from the Pacific Islands Bible College.

"Boy, the church has grown from that mustard seed beginning in our living room to a strong church in the Lord," he said. The Forest Park Church of Christ in Georgia supports the work.



WWW.PBLCOC.ORG

Robert and Mary Martin have served in the South Pacific for nearly 50 years.

"To my knowledge, this lectureship was virtually the first attempt by the Korean preachers to prepare a long-term, scheduled, fixed lectureship series," said Malcolm Parsley, a longtime missionary in South Korea. "Watching the mature attitude of my Korean brothers, I feel extremely pleased."

THAILAND

KHON KAEN — The Khon Kaen Bible Institute hosted a recent family camp in Thailand's northeastern Chaiyaphum Province.

More than 450 people, representing 42 churches from across the country, attended. Four people were baptized.



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Ministry houses 50-plus refugees from ongoing conflict in Ukraine

KOLENTSI, Ukraine — A ministry associated with Churches of Christ is hosting more than 50 refugees — most of them women and children — from the turmoil in eastern Ukraine.

The Christians who work with Jeremiah's Hope, a ministry for Ukraine's orphans and at-risk youth, are doing their best to accommodate the unexpected guests, said Andrew Kelly, who co-directs the nonprofit with his wife, Jenny.

However, "if we get more refugees, we cannot handle sorting through aid, cooking, cleaning and watching the dozens of kids without parents who came with just a couple of caregivers," Kelly told *The Christian Chronicle*. "We need manpower, help and finances as soon as possible."

Jeremiah's Hope owns a Christian camp in the community of Kolentsi, about an hour north of Ukraine's capital, Kiev.



Kelly

The camp has room for 100 people.

A friend in Slavyansk — a city in eastern Ukraine — contacted the Kellys about housing children and caretakers from an orphanage there. A Baptist church across the street, which works with the home, was seized by pro-Russian separatists, the Kellys' friend said. The couple arranged to take in 38 people.

"Instead ... a steady stream of refugees arrived on our property," Andrew Kelly said. Jeremiah's Hope, with a staff of five, currently is hosting 57 refugees.

The Christians are praying for peace in Ukraine's troubled east — and for the families who remain in Slavyansk, where Ukrainian troops have exchanged artillery fire with separatists in recent weeks.

"We are praying for the nightmares to pass," Andrew Kelly said. "Those nightmares come every night for these children, who have seen what no human should have to see — war."

RELATED DEVOTIONAL, Page 27. For more information, see www.jeremiahshope.org.

Christians in Kenya defy cultural barriers, build a new home for an 'uncleansed' widow

BY ERIK TRYGGESTAD | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

Mama Bonyo had resigned herself to a life of homelessness and poverty.

A widow for 10 years in a rural village of western Kenya, she had refused to undergo a ritual known as "cleansing" to disconnect her from her husband's spirit.

In some sub-Saharan cultures, a widow is forced to have sex with a "cleanser," often from outside the community, to break the bond between the woman and her late husband. Otherwise, she will be haunted by his spirit, it is believed. Without the ritual, the woman is not permitted to remarry or own property.

Although such rituals "are intended as ways of showing public respect for the dead ... they expose the widows to psycho-emotional and physical indignity" — and possibly HIV/AIDS — writes Samson O. Gunga,

of the University of Nairobi, in a journal article about widowhood and remarriage in Kenya.

When members of the Oduwo Church of Christ learned of Bonyo's ordeal, they "decided to cross this dreaded cultural bridge and did the unbelievable," said Charles Ngoje, a minister and director of the Winyo Mission Center in nearby Rongo, Kenya.

The Christians solicited contributions from church members in Kenya and the U.S. and used the funds to build a house for the widow.

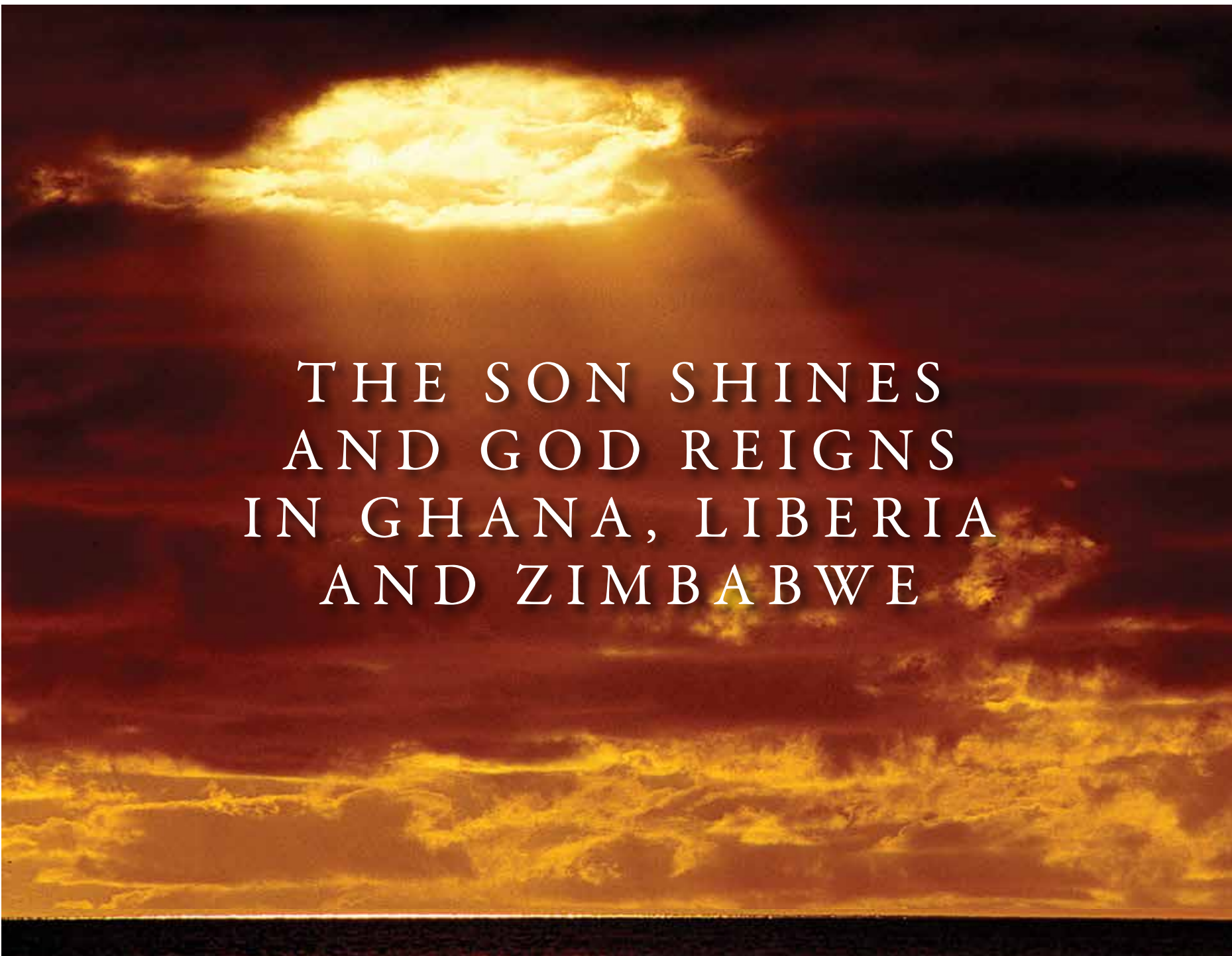
Upon seeing the completed house, Bonyo fell to her knees and thanked God.

Ngoje thanked the contributors, who "made it possible for this church to wrestle down a monster that has held many widows and orphans captives, locking them in shackles and chains of poverty and hopelessness."



PHOTO PROVIDED

Mama Bonyo falls to her knees upon seeing her new home.



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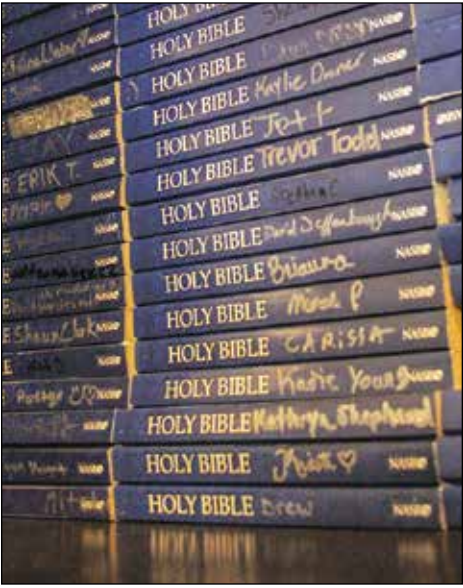
JASON LEGER

The remains of the Legers' home after the tornado. The storm shelter in the foreground likely saved their lives.



ERIK TRYGGESTAD

Jason Leger, far right, leads a devotional at his family's rebuilt home. Members of the Southeast Church of Christ had input in the design of the house, which includes a large, open family room and kitchen. The Legers host weekly devotionals on Thursday nights.



ERIK TRYGGESTAD

The names of regular devo attendees — and visitors — can be seen on the new Bible shelf at the Legers' home in Newcastle, Okla.

DISASTER: ‘You can see, everywhere, how they made this house for us’

FROM PAGE 3

remains. Volunteers from Oklahoma Christian University and Churches of Christ across the nation assisted in the cleanup and demolition of the house. Jason Leger, a deacon of the Southwest church, says he's gained a lot of disaster wisdom in the past year. He shared advice on his Facebook page as the storm's anniversary approached.

- "Take photos of all your wall-hung photos," he wrote. Many don't exist digitally and can't be replaced.

- Make sure the lights in your storm shelter won't explode under pressure. Theirs did.
- Insurance doesn't cover everything, including the removal of trees if they're not on your house. "Even if there is a car in the tree, it's not covered," he wrote.
- Gift cards are "invaluable for peace of mind," he says. As families wait for insurance payments, gift cards keep them from dipping into their own cash reserves.
- As they moved from a hotel to temporary housing, the Legers continued to

host the weekly devotionals, using the church building or other members' homes. Eight months after the storm, close to Valentine's Day, they moved into their rebuilt home.

When she first visited, "I got goose-bumps," says Aron Wynn, a Southwest member who has attended the devotionals for 15 years. After the storm, "it was heartbreaking to see their life strewn everywhere. But she was inspired by the family's response — the way they praised God during TV interviews.

She's equally impressed with the new house, which includes a spacious living room and open kitchen — perfect for large groups to fellowship. There's even a bathroom with exterior access for the youths who play basketball.

"You can see, everywhere, how they made this house for us," Wynn says.

Though the new locale still seems a bit unfamiliar, "the same atmosphere is present," says Steve Spor, another longtime devo devotee. "It's a totally different house, but the same God."

Joplin, Mo., tornado, May 2011

WHAT HAPPENED: A mile-wide tornado tore through Joplin on a Sunday afternoon, killing 161 people and causing \$2.8 billion in damage. Two members of the 26th and Connecticut Church of Christ died.



ERIK TRYGGESTAD

WHAT HELPED: "Our volunteers and donors are what kept us energized to work 14- to 16-hour days in 100-plus degrees," said Dale Hoggatt, a deacon of 26th and Connecticut. Some workers had to go out "blindly" to find people to help, but "I think some people had richer experiences — and really got to see Joplin's spirit — when they offered the help to strangers." The church kept its minister, Richard Chambers, at the building as a familiar face for volunteers and those seeking aid.

Hurricane Katrina, August 2005

WHAT HAPPENED: A Category 5 hurricane in the Gulf of Mexico caused destruction from Florida to Texas. More than 1,800 people died in the storm, which flooded the city of New Orleans.



BOBBY ROSS JR.

WHAT HELPED: "Self-contained" crews that brought their own equipment and had food to share were useful, said Kirk Garrison, minister for the Carrollton Avenue Church of Christ in New Orleans.

WHAT DIDN'T: Used clothing, bent folding chairs and broken tables were of little use and difficult to store. However, "what worked way outweighed the ultimately minor irritations of what didn't," Garrison said. "We will be eternally grateful for all the love that was showered down on our church after Katrina."

California fires, October 2007

WHAT HAPPENED: Raging fires, visible from space, burned more than 500,000 acres. Nine people died, and at least two families from Churches of Christ in southern California lost their homes.



ERIK TRYGGESTAD

WHAT HELPED: An informal task force, representing multiple congregations, helped in planning and coordination, said Gilbert Oropeza, a member of the Canyon View Church of Christ in San Diego. Food boxes, cleaning supplies and disposable masks were useful as Californians wiped away the ash from their homes.

WHAT DIDN'T: In the early stages of recovery, churches received furniture, washers and dryers. Fire victims were unable to use these things until their homes were rebuilt, Oropeza said.

Southeast tornadoes, April 2011

WHAT HAPPENED: A storm system produced more than 350 tornadoes in a four-day period. Hardest hit was Alabama, where two Churches of Christ lost their buildings.



PHOTO PROVIDED

WHAT HELPED: A church in Texas sent heavy duty tents, which helped workers organize supplies, said Chandra Clark, a member of the Central Church of Christ in Tuscaloosa. A loaned forklift also was useful.

WHAT DIDN'T: In addition to useful donations, the church received "old 8-track tapes, cassette tapes, tattered and dirty clothing and dilapidated furniture," Clark said. "That just made more work for all of us." Church members also got conflicting information from federal emergency workers, she said.

Tennessee floods, May 2010

WHAT HAPPENED: Two days of torrential rain caused the Cumberland River in Nashville to crest at a level not seen since 1937. Storms claimed 20 lives in Tennessee, six in Mississippi and four in Kentucky.



TED PARKS

WHAT HELPED: As the floodwaters rose, the Bellevue Church of Christ served stranded motorists. Lipscomb University provided shelter for those forced to evacuate. Churches of Christ Disaster Relief Effort, based in Nashville, set up 20 distribution centers at churches across Tennessee. "One of the most amazing things is the churches working together," said Howard Howell, family minister for the Pennington Bend Church of Christ in Nashville.

Hurricane Sandy, October 2012

WHAT HAPPENED: A Category 3 storm claimed more than 280 lives in seven countries, causing millions of dollars of damage in New York and New Jersey.



REBECCA YOUNG

WHAT HELPED: "The hurricane created huge evangelistic opportunities," said Carl Williamson, lead evangelist for the Gateway Church of Christ in Holmdel, N.J. Transitioning from short- to long-term recovery has helped in this effort. Church members have provided furniture and helped remodel the inside of 200-plus homes since the storm. The church also has a strong focus on counseling victims.

WHAT DIDN'T: Although they ran out of diapers, "We had more M&M's than we could use," Williamson joked.

Help that helps

DISASTER RESPONDERS and survivors share what they've learned

BY ERIK TRYGGESTAD | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

Send gift cards — not 8-track tapes. Be ready to transition from relief to recovery. And bathe your efforts in prayer. *The Christian Chronicle* interviewed relief specialists who serve Churches of Christ and church members who have survived fires, floods, tornadoes and hurricanes. They offer advice for Christians who live through — or respond to — natural disasters.

BEFORE THE DISASTER

- **Have a plan.** There's little time for an elders' meeting after a disaster strikes, says Laura Cremeans of Churches of Christ Disaster Response Team. Make sure your church has emergency contacts and a basic plan.
- Mike Baumgartner of Disaster Assistance CoC recommends that churches have coordinators for volunteers, supply distribution and incoming requests for aid. Make sure your congregation has access to generators and hookups for recreational vehicles.
- **Review your insurance.** Don't merely estimate the value of your church's property, says Rick Hatfield, an elder of the Central Church of Christ in Tuscaloosa, Ala. Estimate

the replacement costs. Also, "use your volunteer help in places that are not covered by insurance," she says.

AFTER THE DISASTER — SHORT-TERM

- **Update your website.** It may not seem important, but the Internet is a vital link when cell phone towers are down, says Dale Hoggatt, a deacon of the 26th and Connecticut Church of Christ in Joplin, Mo. No website? Set up a Facebook group to disseminate information quickly.
- **Tents and tarps.** They're useful in the early days for storing supplies in a single location and covering damaged property, Hatfield says.

After a tornado destroyed most of Hackleburg, Ala., one church member supplied a trailer that he converted into portable showers. It was a huge help, says Mike Lane, minister for the Hackleburg Church of Christ. Another trailer was converted into a food pantry. For several weeks "we were the main grocery store," elder Wade Hood says.

- **Don't send clothes. Or do.** Old clothes take up space, sorting time and usually get thrown away, most of the relief experts say. But Carl Williamson, lead evangelist for the Gateway Church of Christ in Holmdel, N.J., sold several truckloads of donated clothes to a local



TED PARKS

Volunteers prepare boxes of relief supplies at the headquarters of Churches of Christ Disaster Relief Effort in Nashville, Tenn., after the 2010 Tennessee floods.

company, generating profits for additional relief work after Hurricane Sandy.

- **Pray without ceasing.** Pray with responders and victims. "If you're not praying about the disaster," Williamson says, "then you become like a business."

AFTER THE DISASTER — LONG-TERM

- **Make the transition.** "Do they still need food, or do they need sheetrock?" asks Williamson. Pick a focus, such as helping people to refurnish their homes. Have resources available to help victims apply for grants and file insurance claims.
- **Mind the codes.** Your city may adopt new, firm building codes as reconstruction begins, says Kirk Garrison, minister for the Carrollton Avenue Church of Christ in New Orleans. Be

careful using volunteer labor, as some of their hard work may have to be redone.

- **Bible studies that last.** Many of the Bible studies conducted in the relief tents didn't produce long-lasting fruit, Hatfield says. Instead, people helped by the congregation as they rebuild see long-term Christian influence in their lives.
- **Don't neglect your congregation.** "A disaster takes a toll on your church," Williamson says. Some volunteers may feel like they're doing more to help than others. Churches, like families, can tear themselves apart in such high-stress situations. Or, the minister says, "the struggle can strengthen us."

FIND MORE TIPS and join the conversation. Share your disaster relief experiences at www.christianchronicle.org.

11 girls from Churches of Christ among the abducted in Nigeria

BY ERIK TRYGGESTAD | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

Among the nearly 300 students taken from a boarding school in Chibok, Nigeria, were a dozen girls from Churches of Christ.

"Only 53 of the girls came back home, one of them being a member of the Lord's church," minister Yusuf Buba told *The Christian Chronicle*, "but 11 of our members are still in the forest."

The girls come from four of the 18 Churches of Christ in the Chibok area, said Buba, who has struggled to maintain a preacher training school in the predominantly Muslim Borno state of northern Nigeria. Boko Haram, the terrorist group that abducted the girls, has attacked both Muslims and Christians throughout the region. Boko Haram seeks to establish an Islamic state in northern Nigeria and condemns what it calls "Western education."

"We are still worshiping, but some churches have disappeared as the community they are planted in is wiped out by Boko Haram," he said. Other churches have died "because of lack of preachers."

Church members in Nigeria's predominantly Christian south are praying for their brethren in the north — and for their troops. In the western city of Ilorin, three members of the Amilegbe Church of Christ serve in the military and are deployed in the north, battling Boko Haram, said church member Ifalola Oluwatosin. The congregation hosted a prayer vigil for their country.

Biodun Owolabi also asked for prayers.

Weeks after the abductions, the director of Western Nigeria Christian College traveled to the northern city of Jos for the 25th anniversary lectureship at the School of Biblical Studies. During the lectures, he heard explosions. No one at the school was injured, but they soon learned that bomb attacks by Boko Haram in Jos had killed 118 people.

Such attacks have become a part of life in Nigeria, said Brad Blake, a church member in Vicksburg, Miss., who lived in northern Nigeria from 2001 to 2008.

"Yet, evangelists, church leaders and faith-filled sisters continue to live faithfully without fanfare," said Blake, who worked with a non-governmental organization, now known as Hope Springs International. "Christians in Nigeria are actually serving as a model for Western believers in deepening our trust in God despite circumstances of abducted girls, burnt villages and martyred disciples."

In Chibok, Buba and fellow church member fast and pray for a day when peace will reign and newly trained preachers will abound. Until then, "we are pressed but we are not afraid," he said. "If am killed for Christ, I know my crown waits for me."



Owolabi

BRING BACK: Enslavement a global threat

FROM PAGE 1

or nations plagued by unrest. The U.S. State Department estimates that up to 27 million people worldwide are the victims of modern-day slavery.

Human trafficking, the illegal trade of human beings for the purpose of exploitation — including forced labor and prostitution — is the third-largest international crime industry, behind the sale of illegal drugs and weapons, according to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. From 600,000 to 800,000 people are trafficked across international borders per year — and 14,500 to 17,500 of them are trafficked into the U.S., the State Department reports. More than 70 percent are women.

The abduction of an estimated 276 female students from a government-run secondary school in northern Nigeria's Borno state sparked a massive social media campaign.

Human rights advocate Malala Yousafzai, First Lady Michelle Obama and celebrities from Sean Combs to Sean Penn released photos of themselves holding signs reading "Real Men Don't Buy Girls" and "#BringBackOurGirls."

Christians involved in the fight against human trafficking say they're glad to see awareness of the global problem, but discouraged that it took such a horrific act to bring it to light.

"A great man once said, 'Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere,'" Afangideh said, referencing words written by Martin Luther King Jr. from an Alabama jail cell, not far her current home, in 1963.

"In the same vein," she said, "enslavement anywhere in the world is a threat to freedom everywhere."

'THIS COULD HAVE BEEN OUR SCHOOL'

The abductions are "close to my heart," Afangideh said. "This could have been our school or my father's school in Uyo, Nigeria."

The church member and her husband launched a Christian school in Calibar, Nigeria, in 2003.

Her father, Okon Mkpong, is an influential leader among Churches of Christ in West Africa and founder of the Nigerian Christian Institute.

In 2010, Mkpong was kidnapped and held by armed mercenaries for 12 days before his release. His wife, Afangideh's mother, died a month later — likely due to stress, said another daughter, Idongesit Mkpong-Ruffin, who also works at Faulkner, serving as chair of the computer science department.

The trials have convinced the sisters of the need for Christian education in Nigeria.

"We go home every opportunity that we have," Mkpong-Ruffin said. "We work with local congregations in various ways by teaching, working with youth groups, ladies' lectureships."

Other Christians, including Linda Egle, advocate

for women on a global scale. Egle, a member of the Highland Church of Christ in Abilene, Texas, founded Eternal Threads, a nonprofit that sells fair-trade items crafted by women in a dozen countries, including Afghanistan, Madagascar, India and Nepal.

In Nepal, profits from the sale of items including red thread bracelets support anti-trafficking initiatives, including 13 border stations where as many as 200 girls per year are rescued from traffickers. Workers with Eternal Threads' partner nonprofit in Nepal intercept traffickers as they attempt to take the girls to India and sell them into slavery.

"The trafficking of girls is one of the great evils in the world," Egle said, "and I believe strongly that Christians are the ones that should be fighting this evil."



JON OWEN

About 50 people prayed for Nigeria during a vigil in Montgomery, Ala.

THANK YOU FOR CARING ... NOW GO FIGHT

Afangideh's daughter, Salem, is joining that fight.

The third-year law student at Faulkner is spending her summer interning with Free, Aware,

Inspired, Restored (FAIR) Girls, a Washington-based nonprofit that provides crisis response, prevention education and a transitional home for survivors of human trafficking.

"I have always been totally horrified by the lack of empowerment to girls — and especially the way that the Nigerian culture makes young girls more easily susceptible to being trafficked for sex and labor," Salem Afangideh said. "This was a driving force behind my decision to go to law school and become a human rights attorney."

Growing up in Nigeria, she remembers telling a male classmate about her plans, only to hear him say, "But you are a girl. Learning how to cook and dress nice will serve you better."

Fortunately, she has strong female role models in her mother and aunt, she said. After graduation, she hopes to get experience prosecuting traffickers and providing services for victims. Eventually, she wants to return to Nigeria and work with a nonprofit that fosters human rights.

"As I go through this path, I have felt so lonely a lot of times," she writes on her personal blog, "Warrior Princesses." The sudden awareness of human trafficking encourages her and reminds her of the words from 1 Corinthians 1:27, "God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong."

"So thank you for caring. It has spoken volumes," she writes to all of those who have sent social media messages to "bring back our girls."

"Now, go find ways to actually and practically fight against injustice. Awareness is just the first step."



Salem Afangideh

From modern-day slave to slave for Christ

BY BOBBY ROSS JR. | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE



PHASE 4 FILMS

Jamie Chung stars in "Abduction of Eden," based on the real-life story of Chong Kim. A victim of human trafficking, Kim worships with the Airport Freeway Church of Christ in Euless, Texas.

CHONG KIM ESCAPED *captivity and became a crusader against human trafficking*

Chong Kim had a secret. She was pregnant, but that wasn't her secret. Everybody knew about the baby. Her unborn daughter was what brought her to a Christian maternity home in West Texas.

She had worked as a prostitute, but that wasn't her secret, either. She freely shared that part of her story, even seeming to enjoy the shock value.

But the young Korean-American feared revealing the full truth. Feared for her safety. Feared for her family's safety.

No one at Christian Homes of Abilene knew about her abduction by a man she thought was her boyfriend.

No one knew about the untold hours she spent handcuffed and chained to a doorknob.

No one knew about her years-long

captivity as a doped-up sex slave forced to perform countless tricks.

Certainly, no one knew that she struck a driver on the head with a stiletto heel and swiped a car outside a Las Vegas casino in a harrowing escape from a domestic human trafficking ring — a frantic effort to save her baby from being born into that lifestyle.



Kim

To the folks at Christian Homes of Abilene and the nearby Highland Church of Christ, all that mattered was that Kim was a troubled soul in desperate need of love and grace — in desperate need of Jesus.

"I never felt such compassion," Kim said of the hugs she received the first

time she visited the Highland church. "There was not one feeling I ever got that they judged me."

BEATEN, RAPED AND HELD HOSTAGE

Growing up in Oklahoma and Texas, Kim endured physical and sexual abuse.

Even at church, a clergyman inappropriately touched her.

She eventually ran away from home and ended up in the foster care system.

"That's what gave me a conflicting view about God," she said in a recent interview with *The Christian Chronicle*. "He's supposed to be an almighty God, but all these bad things were happening."

At age 19, Kim was living in the Dallas area when she and her girlfriends went out to a club.

"That guy is checking you out," one of her friends said of a man wearing a

military uniform.

"What I did not know back then," Kim said, "was that you could buy an authentic military uniform in Army surplus stores."

Kim dated the man for a few weeks. She fell in love with him. When he invited her to travel to Florida and meet his parents, she excitedly accepted.

Instead of going to Florida, though, he drove her to an abandoned house in rural Oklahoma. After opening the passenger door, he grabbed her by the neck.

Inside the house, he handcuffed her and snatched a phone from a briefcase. "I've got her," he reported.

"From that point, I was beaten. I was raped. I was held hostage," Kim said. "Then I got sent to Nevada, where we were held in a storage container. That's

CONTINUED



U.S. IMMIGRATION AND CUSTOMS ENFORCEMENT
The North Texas Trafficking Task Force executes a warrant at a massage parlor suspected of operating as an illegal sex front.



PHASE 4 FILMS
In "Abduction of Eden," a movie based loosely on Chong Kim's life story, teens and young women are held captive in a Nevada warehouse. Screenwriter Rick Phillips proposed the project after Kim began speaking out about her experience on talk shows. "I agreed, and we started going back and forth over the screenplay," Kim said. The dark, disturbing film can be viewed on Netflix or purchased on Amazon and iTunes.



NEW FRIENDS NEW LIFE
Supporters of New Friends New Life, a Dallas nonprofit that helped 700 exploited girls and women last year, point to the abuse endured by many who work in the sex industry. The organization began as a grassroots ministry of the Preston Road Church of Christ in Dallas.

Christians bring hope – and freedom – to trafficking victims

BY BOBBY ROSS JR. | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

DALLAS

Think of Katie Pedigo as a modern-day abolitionist. A Church of Christ preacher's daughter who grew up to become an attorney, Pedigo wages a daily battle against sex slavery — in the heart of the Bible Belt. It's a fight that surprises some Christians. "A lot of people think that if it's sex trafficking, then it's happening overseas, it's happening in India or Thailand or somewhere else," said Pedigo, executive director of New Friends New Life, a faith-based nonprofit that works to restore and empower victims. "So it's important for us to realize that it's happening right here, in every city in our country."

Once known as Amy's Friends, New Friends New Life grew out of a grassroots ministry that started 16 years ago when a woman in the sex industry became involved in a women's Bible study at the Preston Road Church of Christ.

"The average age that a girl enters the sex trade in America is between 13 and 14 years old," said Pedigo, who has a 14-year-old daughter and a 12-year-old son. "It's not OK for your daughter, not OK for mine, to have to endure that trauma and the abuse that comes with that."

Across the nation, individual members and ministries associated with Churches of Christ increasingly are taking up the fight to bring hope — and freedom — to trafficking victims, *The Christian Chronicle* found.

Such efforts honor a God who makes setting captives free a priority throughout the Scriptures, said Wade Hodges, the Preston Road church's senior minister.

"I think we're a lot more aware than we were five years ago," Hodges said of domestic human trafficking.

"This is a hard thing to teach and preach about in a Sunday morning atmosphere because it's so dark," he added. "But because of Katie's leadership, more and more churches in our community are addressing it."

Victims range from runaways to illegal immigrants to Internet users — frequently teens — who succumb to cyber predators.

"The main thing people in the U.S. church need to realize is that our world is changing fast, and Satan is working hard," said Brandon Edwards, outreach and evangelism minister for the Lewisville Church of Christ, north of Dallas.

"We have gangs that are now selling women and children for sex," added Edwards, who volunteers with the International Justice Mission, a human rights organization. "Why? Because a child and a woman can be reused over and over again. Drugs and guns run out."

Neglected children make easy prey for traffickers and pimps, said Ron Clark, minister for the Agape Church of Christ in Portland,

Ore., which works with law enforcement agencies and helps victims leave the sex trade. Agape's ministry and Sunday assembly offer a "safe place" for victims and service providers, Clark said.

"The street kids we work with who have been in this, sometimes boys, have done

this as an attempt to get food, clothing, safety," he said. "They are being exploited for basic human rights resources they deserve. Even if they do it for drugs or alcohol, we still believe it is exploitation."

In Wichita, Kan., Carpenter Place — a girls' home associated with Churches of Christ — partners with ICT S.O.S., a local organization that fights human trafficking. ICT is Wichita's airport code.

"We're just trying to do anything we can to help," said Ben Zickafoose, Carpenter Place's CEO. "We have had victims pulled off the streets and put into our program. It's just such a prevalent, sad situation."

Sara Pybus, a member of the Bering Drive Church of Christ in Houston, volunteers with Free the Captives, which fights trafficking in the nation's fourth-largest city. "This is a cause that requires God's active help," Pybus said.

The cause has found a receptive audience among Christian university students. In West Texas, recent Abilene Christian University graduate Katie Cukrowski, 22, got a job as the door girl at a strip club and went undercover to investigate.

See **TRAFFICKING**, Page 20

'If we dwell on the evil, we allow it to defeat us'

CONTINUED
where the trafficking started." The traffickers injected Kim and other sex slaves with cocaine, methamphetamines and morphine. The slaves were held in a warehouse. They were blindfolded and trucked to trailer parks, apartment complexes and hotels to meet clients. "We had to shower and get ready in less than 10 minutes before the customers came in," Kim said. "I had to pretend I was a 13-year-old Japanese girl. "It's almost like someone had electrocuted my brain," she added. "When I'd see the customers come in, knowing they had requested a child — even though I wasn't a child — made me sick to my stomach. They'd say, 'Thank you for letting me see you,' and I'd want to vomit." At some point, Kim decided that rising through the ranks as a madam might be a means to escape the operation. But when she found herself pregnant, she could not imagine her baby being born into slavery or sold in a black market adoption. In a recurrent dream, she heard a baby crying. But when she looked inside the crib, all she saw was blood.

"I felt like God was waking me up from my addiction to drugs and alcohol and everything else," she said. As she saw it, God was telling her, "If you continue to live this life, the child you are carrying will die in your hands." As a kid, she watched James Bond movies with her father. While staying at a casino, she hatched a plan to crawl through ceiling vents and escape. "I know I haven't been to church," she prayed to God. "I've been a bad girl. But for the sake of my child, I'm praying for time." She made it outside, stole the car and raced into the desert.

'I'M A PROSTITUTE'

Back in Oklahoma, Kim flipped through the Yellow Pages and came across the adoption listings. A 1-800 number for Christian Homes of Abilene caught her attention. "I had no idea where Abilene was, but I knew they helped pregnant women," Kim said. Most of the women who seek help through the Texas-based ministry — now known as Christian Homes & Family Services — face at least two crises, said Sherri T. Statler, president and CEO.

"The unplanned pregnancy is just the most obvious," Statler said. "While they consider adoption for their unborn child, it also gives us the opportunity to help them deal with other issues, including homelessness, chronic unemployment, alcohol or substance addictions, mental health issues and family estrangement. "Our goal," she added, "is to use the adoption experience to transform both her life and her child's life. With birth mothers, that often means we plant seeds that may take years to take hold and flourish."



Statler

At first, Kim told her housemother, Jo Andrews, that she would not go to church. But later, she changed her mind. After Bible study one day, a former Abilene Christian University student named Carl Spain offered her a ride home. "What do you do?" he asked. "I'm a prostitute," she replied. He hit the brakes.

'GODLY MEN' DON'T ABUSE WOMEN

Despite his initial shock, Spain told a friend he felt God calling him to help Kim.

He, his brother Tim Spain and fellow ACU alumnus Brian Keenan became friends with Kim and showed her love — sometimes tough love. She refers to them as "the three disciples."

Even as she tried to manipulate them and — after giving up her daughter for adoption — drifted back into drugs and prostitution, they never abandoned her.

"They took a chance no one else did," Kim said. "They wanted to show me that there were godly men and that godly men do not exploit, do not hurt and do not abuse women."

Kim was baptized while living at Christian Homes of Abilene, but it took years, she said, before she gave her life fully to God.

She credits the seeds planted with her eventual decision to become a slave for Christ.

"I guess if there's a lesson, it's to do your best to love people where they're at," said Tim Spain, now youth minister for the Troy Church of Christ in Tennessee. "I think when you do that, then God's love is shown through you."



Tim Spain

'COULD IT HAPPEN TO AN AMERICAN?'

Kim's ordeal happened in the mid-1990s, but not until 2003 did she find the courage to speak out.

At that time, she was working as a legal advocate for a courthouse. One day, she was invited to a training session on human trafficking — a term she did not recognize. "I thought it was a session on traffic tickets," she said.

A Russian woman described her experience as a trafficking victim, and Kim bawled. "Could it happen to an American girl?" someone asked.

"No, only to foreigners," the Russian replied. Kim gasped. "I'm sorry," Kim heard herself say, "but I have to disagree with you."

"Who are you?" the other woman demanded. "What's your expertise?" "It happened to me."

Those words marked the beginning of Kim becoming a national crusader against human trafficking. Kim's experience inspired the 2013 movie "Abduction of Eden," which can be viewed on Netflix.

Rated R for strong language, violence

and sexual situations and directed by Megan Griffiths, the film stars Jamie Chung and Beau Bridges.

A *New York Times* critic cited the movie's "excruciating vision of under-age women conscripted into sexual slavery by a criminal enterprise from which there is seemingly no escape."

Now a speaker, writer and film consultant, Kim is married to Christopher Tracy, a U.S. serviceman, and has a 14-year-old son, Anthony.

She lives in the Dallas area and — when not traveling to share her story — worships with the Airport Freeway Church of Christ in Euless, Texas. Human trafficking can be a heavy, depressing topic. Nobody knows that better than Kim.

But she leans on her Savior for strength. "If we dwell on the evil, we allow it to defeat us," she said. "If we say, 'Lord, I'm equipped however you want me,' that's how we fight this. It's God. It's God."

God, she said, "found me in my darkest hour. Even in the aftermath of the violence, he never let go."

See a video of Chong Kim sharing her story at www.christianchronicle.org.

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TRAFFICKING: 'Can't sit back and not do anything'

FROM PAGE 19

In a paper for a class, Cukrowski described meeting one lost soul who seemed more interested in connecting on a personal level than staring at the naked bodies all around him.

"I really think the church could reach out to lost, lonely people," Cukrowski told the *Chronicle*.

At Harding University in Searcy, Ark., recent graduate Bailee Searcey, also 22, led a campus anti-trafficking organization called "HUMANity."

Last summer, she organized a one-day human trafficking seminar at the North Davis Church of Christ in Arlington, Texas, between Dallas and Fort Worth.

"I can't sit back and not do anything about this, knowing the absolute deprivation and horrible, horrible circumstances they're in," Searcey said.

Dallas police rescue anywhere from 100 to 120 child sex trafficking victims a year — many of them runaways who found they had only one commodity to sell, said Sgt. Byron Fassett, who supervises the department's high-risk child victims and sex trafficking unit.

"When they run away, despite what a lot of people think, they can't exist on the street," said the 33-year police veteran, whom New Friends New Life honored recently for his work fighting trafficking and Internet crimes against children.

"Whether you're a 16-year-old child or a 10-year-old child, you can't rent cars," Fassett added. "You can't rent hotel rooms. You can't get jobs. You can't open banking accounts. So, as a result, they're forced to depend on adults. And that's generally how it starts."

This past spring, the North Texas Trafficking Task Force — comprised of 17 law enforcement agencies — executed search warrants on 10 massage parlors suspected of operating as fronts for illegal sex and harboring undocumented aliens.

Such operations "locate and rescue victims of human trafficking and bring those responsible to justice," David M. Marwell, Homeland Security Investigations special agent in charge, said in a statement. "However, the best way of attacking human trafficking is by increasing public awareness."

A recent study commissioned by the U.S. Justice Department found "an underground commercial sex economy in America that is diverse, organized and lucrative, extending far beyond the typical street corner," researcher



BOBBY ROSS JR.

Katie Pedigo serves as executive director of New Friends New Life in Dallas.

Meredith Dank and colleague Kate Villarreal wrote.

In just seven urban areas studied, underground commercial sex represents a nearly billion-dollar industry — from a massage parlor in Seattle to a high-end escort service in Dallas to a makeshift brothel in California to a clandestine Internet site, as the Urban Institute's Dank and Villarreal described it.

Shining more light on the industry can motivate communities to help more victims escape the shadows of sex trafficking, the researchers said.

"We need more resources and mandates for law enforcement and service providers not only to find, arrest and convict traffickers, but also to provide services for those who want to leave the life but have few alternatives," Dank and Villarreal wrote.

Across the highway from Southern Methodist University and the George W. Bush Presidential Library and Museum, New Friends New Life occupies a suite in a high-rise Dallas office tower.

Last year, New Friends New Life provided access to education, job training, interim financial assistance, mental health services and spiritual support to more than 700 trafficked girls and sexually exploited women and their children.

"We feel like we're screaming it from the rooftops every day: It's happening," Pedigo said of sex trafficking and exploitation. "It's happening to American girls on every street corner, every bus stop, every mall in our city, and we need to open our eyes, and we need to know it's happening, so we can fix it and get it out of the shadows."

CHRISTIAN HIGH SCHOOL senior Khalil Lowry talks about his desire to serve those in need of a father

'I hope to give back more than I have been given'

BY LYNN McMILLON | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

It's a good thing Khalil Lowry plans to major in business management when he enrolls at Lipscomb University this fall.

Making it as a hip-hop sensation isn't in his future plans.

That much is clear from a YouTube video in which he and his adopted father, Adam Paa, sing and rap an invitation for a potential date to accompany Lowry to the junior/senior banquet at Greater Atlanta Christian School.

The song, a corny send-up of Rebecca Black's "Friday," was voted one of the top three invitation videos at Greater Atlanta Christian, a K-12 school associated with Churches of Christ. And it earned Lowry a date.

But he thinks he'll stick to the business world instead of the music industry — for now.

Lowry was 5 years old and living in Abilene, Texas, when he met Paa, a student at Abilene Christian University who gave him rides to church. After graduation, Paa married Susan Jones. A few years later, the couple adopted Lowry with the approval of his mother.

The family moved to Atlanta, where Adam Paa serves as a counselor for GACS and Susan Paa works for a drug and alcohol rehabilitation center.

In May, Lowry graduated from GACS, where he played football for four years. He is an active member of the North Atlanta Church of Christ youth group, participating in mission trips and Bible studies. He volunteers with shelters and nonprofits that serve inner-city Atlanta.

Why are you a Christian?

I had always believed in God, but I did not know the impact of giving my life to the Lord. I had heard many tremendous stories of how God transformed someone's life for the better.

When I was a freshman in high school I realized I needed to take the next step. I knew that's who I wanted to be in my life — forever.

How do you express your faith?

In many different ways. I go to church every Sunday. I participate in many church activities, such as retreats, Bible studies and serving the less fortunate whenever I get the chance.

I have tried to be a good example of a Christian man to the younger boys in the youth group. Last year I signed up to be in Chapel Practicum at school, and I was accepted. Chapel Practicum is a class of juniors and seniors who are considered "leaders" on our campus.

I did not think I was going to get in, but I had faith anyway. Once I was accepted, my life was changed forever.

We planned chapels for 800 students in the high school almost three times a week. None of us would have gotten through it without the grace of God.

I love proving to others that God is real by sharing stories and moments that would not be possible without him.

What experiences have strengthened your faith?

One of my first faith-strengthening experiences was when I was on a church retreat and saw an older guy crying.

This was not an ordinary guy. This was a guy who was known for his mischief and corruption outside of church. When I saw this, I instantly felt something inside of me, and I had no idea what it was.

Eventually, I realized God was filling the room with his spirit and was restoring our broken hearts again.

This experience strengthened my faith in ways I would never have imagined.

What do your non-Christian friends think about Jesus?

Honestly, I really try to associate with people that I know are Christians. I can only think of a few of my friends who are not Christians — and they never have much to say about Jesus.

The only reason those of my friends who aren't Christians don't believe is because of something bad that happened to them. They blame Jesus for that tragedy.



MARIO LOZANO

Khalil Lowry will study business at Lipscomb University in Nashville, Tenn., this fall.

What challenges your faith the most?

My faith is most challenged when something bad happens to me, my friends or my family.

One situation that definitely challenged my faith was when I got a phone call from my mom back in Texas. She told me that my closest cousin had been taken to the hospital — and had died.

It was an utter disaster. I started to resent God. In fact, I hated him with a burning passion. I wanted nothing else to do with him.

Then I learned that my cousin hadn't died, but had suffered from seizures and was in critical condition. When I finally got to see him in the hospital, my aunt said he could barely see anything. Yet, I was standing 10 feet away from him,

and he saw me. He said he liked the cross on my necklace.

My hate went away. It was amazing because I could tell God was working in that situation.

What advice do you have for next year's senior class?

Invest in godly friendships. Get involved in service projects with those friends to help build those friendships while you help others.

The most important suggestion I have is to read the Bible. No matter how I'm feeling, when I read my Bible I always feel better. The Holy Spirit is always working. You can't let people or school get in the way of you finding your life purpose through Christ.

Do you have a favorite Scripture?

Jeremiah 29:11: *"For I know the plans I have for you", declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."*

This verse always speaks to me because it just proves that he will *always* be with you — no matter what you are going through.

I have been at a place when I felt like I was going through life alone. Then my youth minister gave me this verse, and my mind set was completely transformed into a mindset that Jesus would have.

I recommend this verse to anyone that is struggling with doubt or negativity.

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

I hope to give back more than I have been given.

My passion is to serve underprivileged kids who may not have a

father figure in their lives. I want to be a good example of what a Christian man is supposed to look like.

My mission is to be like Jesus.

'My passion is to serve underprivileged kids who may not have a father figure in their lives. I want to be a good example of what a Christian man is supposed to look like.'

Khalil Lowry

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HIGHER EDUCATION

OHIO VALLEY UNIVERSITY

VIENNA, W.Va. — About 100 members of the Ohio Valley University community gathered recently to celebrate the retirement of Philip Sturm.

Sturm taught history at OVU for 44 years. He also was the first person to sign on as a student when the Christian college was founded in 1960, the *Parkersburg News and Sentinel* reported.

"The remarkable influence this man has had on this college, his friends and thousands of students is limitless," OVU President Harold Shank said.



OHIO VALLEY UNIVERSITY

Philip Sturm receives congratulations.

OKLAHOMA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

OKLAHOMA CITY — Doug Peters will serve as Oklahoma Christian University's first Baugh Chair of Gospel Preaching.

His selection comes after Benton and Paula Baugh, members of the Memorial Church of Christ in Houston, donated \$1.7 million to establish an endowed preaching chair at Oklahoma Christian.

Peters has 27 years of experience in ministry and preaching, including the past 13 years as pulpit minister for the North Davis Church of Christ in Arlington, Texas.

K-12 CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS

GREATER ATLANTA CHRISTIAN

NORCROSS, Ga. — Jesse C. Long Sr., who served as Greater Atlanta Christian School's first president from 1963 to 1998, died May 15 after an extended illness. He was 81.

After retiring as president, Long



PAUL WHITE

ACU honors McCaleb for 50 years of service

Bryan McCaleb, left, congratulates his father, Gary McCaleb, after catching the ceremonial first pitch from him at a baseball game at Abilene Christian University in Texas. ACU recently honored Gary McCaleb with a "Home Run" celebration in recognition of his 50 years of service to the university. Both father and son were baseball lettermen for ACU's Wildcats as student-athletes.

served as chancellor until his death.

In a 2007 *Christian Chronicle* interview, Long said the school had remained true to the founders' original vision: "When I spoke in chapel the first day of school, I said, 'This will be God's school. This will be an excellent school. This will be a school of winners.'"

Long had served as an elder of the Campus Church of Christ on Greater Atlanta Christian's campus



Long

from 1972 until his death.

He was active in the Christian education movement of Churches of Christ and one of the originators of an annual conference that led to the creation of the National Christian School Association.

RELIEF AND DEVELOPMENT

HEALING HANDS INTERNATIONAL

NAIROBI, Kenya — Healing Hands International is partnering with the Nairobi Great Commission School to

SPOTLIGHT

Coaching legend Don Meyer dies at 69

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — Garth Pleasant, former longtime basketball coach at Rochester College in Michigan, was sitting in church May 18 when he received a text. The text informed him that coaching legend Don Meyer — his friend — had died at age 69.

"As I finished reading the text I realized the church was singing 'Victory in Jesus,'" Pleasant wrote on Facebook. "The legacy this man has left is matched by few in this world. He touched countless thousands. I so miss my friend, but I rejoice for him. Love you, Coach, and thanks for the memories."

Meyer, a member of the Aberdeen Church of Christ in South Dakota, coached at Lipscomb University from 1975-1999. For expanded coverage, see www.christianchronicle.org.



LIPSCOMB UNIVERSITY

Philip Hutcheson, athletic director for Lipscomb, and Don Meyer in a recent photo. Meyer coached Hutcheson at Lipscomb.

teach preachers income-generating activities. These include fish farming; free-range poultry; kitchen gardening; a tomato greenhouse; baking and the sale of bread; and the sale of water from NGCS's well.

Students are encouraged to pass the training on to their communities. The holistic approach provides the means for making a living on earth combined with preparation to go to heaven, administrators said.

Healing Hands International provides technical expertise and initial financing for these activities.

Milestones

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

Memorials

L. Arnold Watson

L. Arnold Watson, 94, of Abilene, Texas, passed away Saturday, April 12.

Arnold was born in Wilder Canyon, Idaho, on April 24, 1919. As a young child, his family moved to Sand Hollow, Idaho, where Arnold grew up on a potato farm. He graduated from Notus High School in 1937, where he played trombone in the band, basketball and baseball. He then attended Abilene Christian College in Texas for two



years, where he met his wife, Ruby Mae White. The couple was married on April 30, 1939, in Abilene. After spending time preaching in Idaho and California, Arnold received his bachelor's degree in 1943 from Pepperdine University in Los Angeles. In 1958, he received his master's from Harding Graduate School of Theology in Memphis, Tenn.

Arnold lived a life dedicated to faith and served numerous Church of Christ congregations across the country as pulpit minister — including the Dearborn Church of Christ Michigan, the Highland Street Church of Christ in Memphis and the Northside Church of Christ and Russell Avenue Church of Christ in Abilene. He served as minister of education for the Richardson East Church of Christ in Texas.

Arnold spent the latter part of his career in fundraising in Amarillo, Texas, and Atlanta. In addition to full-time pulpit work, Arnold was the featured speaker at gospel meetings all over the United States and led tour groups through the Holy Land. Arnold directed the Church of Christ exhibit at the 1964-65 New York World's Fair. He was a much-sought-after speaker, a published

author and worked several years for the Hallmark Company in Abilene.

Arnold and Ruby Mae spent countless hours travelling the globe together. He was an avid golfer and a dedicated crossword puzzle enthusiast.

Arnold is preceded in death by his parents, Lawrence M. Watson and Dorothy Alice Watson, and his wife of 74 years, Ruby Mae Watson.

He is survived by three sons — Lawrence Watson and wife Linda of Old Hickory, Tenn.; Lorin Watson and wife Patsy of Abilene; Jerre Watson and wife Rita of Arlington, Texas; two daughters — Ann Ezell and husband George of Wilmore, Ky.; Linda Arnett and husband Jim of Nashville, Tenn.; brother Lloyd Watson and wife Betty of Long Beach, Calif.; 14 grandchildren; 27 great-grandchildren; one great-great grandchild; two nieces; four great-nieces; one great-nephew; and many friends.

Douglas Arthur Williams

Douglas Arthur Williams, 72, of Mont Belvieu, Texas, fought an aggressive form of cancer for almost two years and left us to be with the Lord on Thursday, May 15, 2014. Doug was born on March 26, 1942, in Barbers Hill, Texas, to Katie Ingre and Solomon Ross Williams. Doug was proud to tell others that his great grandmother was the first person born in Barbers Hill.

He was the youngest of five brothers including Paul, Everett, and Rollie Williams, and Clay Fouts.

One of 22 graduates in his Barbers Hill High School class of 1960, he also graduated from Abilene Christian University in Texas with a degree in business administration in 1964. After seven years of pursuit, he married Bethul Rice Williams on August 28, 1964, and was proud to call Bethul his wife for almost 50 years. Doug



worked in family businesses from the time he was a young child and returned to work in the family grocery store in Mont Belvieu after graduation from ACU. His early career included 18 months with Exxon and 10 years with U.S. Steel.

Doug always had a passion for serving the Lord and dedicated his later career to ministry with Missouri Street Church of Christ in Baytown, Texas (12 years), Outreach Church of Christ in Mont Belvieu, Texas and Impact Houston Church of Christ (27 years). He served as song leader (since age 16), counselor, education minister and as champion of the poor. Doug was a founding member of the Impact Church, which focuses its ministry on giving significance to the poor and to the homeless.

Doug became better equipped to serve through earning postgraduate degrees in biblical and related studies and in marriage and family therapy. Doug's ministry focused on people that society disregards. The Lord taught Doug to see all people as having eternal value and significance. That lesson enabled Doug to be God's instrument to impact lives for good, to heal and to extend compassion in ways that only God can do. He sponsored a recovery house and saw many lives changed as a result of the grace provided through that program.

His greatest blessings in life include his family and the countless people whose lives were touched by the Lord through his service. Doug was known as a man of his word.

He was preceded in death by his parents and three brothers. Doug is survived by his loving wife, Bethul Williams of Mont Belvieu, Texas; sons Stanton Williams and wife Kelly of Keller, Texas, and Thayne Williams and wife, Shawna, of Mena, Ark.; and by grandchildren Maclaine, Garrison and Jarrett, all of Keller, Texas, and Mason, Alexa and Kaylee, all of Mena, Ark. He's also survived by his brother, Paul Williams, and wife Susie of Mont Belvieu and sisters-in-law, Maydell Williams Brill of Baytown, Texas, and Doris Williams of Houston.

NEWSMAKERS

NAMED: Greg Glenn as Head of School for Lipscomb Academy in Nashville, Tenn. **Mark Benton** as president of Jackson Christian School in Jackson, Tenn.



Glenn

AWARDED: Oklahoma Christian University awarded **Heath Jones**, professor of music, and **Jeff Simmons**, chair of the Department of Management and Marketing, with the Faculty Leadership Award; **Jeff Price**, director of gaming and animation, the Gaylor Chair of Distinguished Teaching Award and **Richard Wright**, associate professor of New Testament, the Jack and Barbara Rowe Distinguished Scholar Award.



Benton



Cooper

RETIRING: Sylvia Cooper as the bookkeeper for the past 28 years at Christian Academy of Greater St. Louis.

NEW ELDERS: Dan Greathouse, Joe Hendrix and Jim Marsh, Hilton Head Island, S.C., Church of Christ.

NEW MINISTER: Corey Stacy, Church of Christ in Monroe, Wis.

ANNIVERSARIES: 69th: Dee and Audra Martin, Dallas. 66th: Donald and Virginia Worten, Lubbock, Texas. 62nd: Lloyd and Patricia Overby, Dill City, Okla.; Larry and Tricky Arnold, New Lexington, Ohio. 61st: Joe and Carolyn Deem, Stuart, Fla. 60th: Bob and Crystal Andrews, Greenville, Texas. 58th: Harold and Dolores Jones, Amarillo, Texas.

BIRTHDAYS: 99th: Katie Long, Altus, Okla. 95th: Grace Dempsey, Altus, Okla. 94th: A. F. Fitzhugh, Houston; Dee Martin, Dallas. 90th: Retha Gorham, Jasper, Texas.

PASSAGES: Norman Atchley, 88, Feb. 22, Mountain View, Mo. Ernest Allen Clevenger, 84, April 22, Nashville, Tenn. Elmo Hall, 83, May 13, Oklahoma City. Madge Miller, 91, April 28, York, Neb. Justin Byron Roberts, 78, May 9, Jeffersonville, Ind. Lee Watkins, 102, May 11, Sarasota, Fla.

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

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

June 19-21 Midwest Evangelism Workshop. Decatur, Ill. Civic Center. Contact (217) 428-1236 or www.morningsidecoc.com.

June 20-21 Parents of Missionaries Retreat. Homewood Suites, Fayetteville, Ark. Contact missions@mrnet.org or (817) 267-2727 or www.mrnet.org/POMRetreat

June 21-25 Red River Family Encampment. Red River, N.M. Contact www.rrfe.org or (806) 468-7676.

June 22 75th Anniversary, Echo Meadows Church of Christ, Oregon, Ohio. Contact (419) 639-9928 or pcm511@emcoc.net.

June 26-29 Spiritual Growth Workshop. Rosen Centre Hotel, Orlando, Fla. Contact (352) 357-6616 or www.spiritualgrowthworkshop.com

June 29 - July 1 Summer Celebration at Lipscomb University. "Reviving the Mission: Insights from Joshua." Contact www.lipscomb.edu/summercelebration.

July 10-12 Campus Ministry United Workshop. Park Plaza Church of Christ, Tulsa, Okla. Contact Lynn Stringfellow at (918) 312-7914 or www.campusministryunited.com.

July 13 25th Anniversary, Church of Christ on Hilton Head Island, S.C. Contact (843) 686-2323 or www.hilton-headchurchofchrist.org.

July 24-27 Campus for Christ Conference. Lipscomb University, Nashville, Tenn. Contact www.campuscrosswalk.org.

June 26-30 Houston area Campaign for Christ. M. O. Campbell Center, Houston, Texas. Contact www.houstonchurchesofchrist.org or Gary Smith at gsmith@fifthwardcoc.org.

July 30-August 3 Pepperdine Family Camp. Pepperdine University, Malibu, Calif. Contact (310) 506-6602 or www.pepperdine.edu/familycamp.

August 1-2 31st Annual American Indian Missions Seminar. Church of Christ in Gallup, N.M. Contact (505) 722-2937 or www.gallupchurchofchrist.com.

August 1-3 100th Anniversary, Church of Christ in Tabernacle, N.J. Contact (609) 268-0576 or www.weplantandwater.org.

August 6-10 Pepperdine Family Camp. Pepperdine University, Malibu, Calif. Contact (310) 506-6602 or www.pepperdine.edu/familycamp.

August 9-10 70th Anniversary, Highland View Church of Christ, in Oak Ridge, Tenn. Contact (865) 483-7471 or www.highlandviewchurch.org.



He stood at the dugout or sat in the stands nearly every home game I can remember. He drove a 1967 Mercury Cougar promised to me when I was old enough, but sold it when I drove it at age 15 without a license. He always wore a brown hat and coat in the northern California coast winter months when picking me up from school.

He shared with me the works of Chaucer and Tyndall, Emerson and Thoreau, the music of Don Quixote and of Handel's Messiah, all with equal passion and appreciation. He always smiles deeply when greeting family and friends as well as new acquaintances, treating all as treasures of life. He is more critical of the words from his mouth than the foods he would put in it. "Always try a different food once" is an operational creed — even for frozen poor boy sandwiches. Truth is paramount, honor is foundation, compassion for all is necessary. A positive "never give up" attitude is ever-present. "Always give your best" and "Never stop learning" are his mottos. "Always live for God" is his life.

There are many things that come to mind when I consider Billy C. Lawrence, a Church of Christ minister for 52 years, currently serving in Eureka, Calif.: How his father, Carl Lawrence, wanted him to pursue a career in teaching; how Orville Washam, a minister in his hometown of Paducah, Ky., was Dad's inspiration in

becoming a minister; how he and Jerry Hoover, a high school friend, shared preaching responsibilities for a small church near Paducah that did not have a full-time minister.

William Woodson, a longtime professor at Freed-Hardemen University, was a major influence and mentor early in Dad's career. He held various minister jobs over the past half-century: Chowchilla, Calif. (1963-1965); Eugene, Ore. (1965-1967); Taft, Calif. (1967-1972); Eureka, Calif. (1972-1990); Cypress, Calif. (1990-1996); Burbank, Calif. (1996-2000); and his current position in Eureka. He delighted in receiving the Teacher of the Year award more than once as the Instructor of Biblical Studies for the Southern California School of Evangelism in Cypress.

I asked once about his career choice and why it was important to him. His reply still speaks volumes: "It's not a job — it's my life." Admirable and exemplary, to say the least.

There are many more things that come to mind when I think about Bill Lawrence — including how he went toe-to-toe with coaches, teachers, college professors and administrators and other ill-willed people on my behalf over the years; how he would take my siblings and me to the beach on his twice-a-month trips to Klamath Falls and Crescent City to minister to sister congregations; how he buried my dog after it was killed when I couldn't bury him and how my next dog



Milestones *continued.*

FATHER'S DAY TRIBUTE TO MY MINISTER, MENTOR AND DAD

Billy C. Lawrence

became "his" dog when I moved away from home.

I also remember the day I got onto a plane in San Francisco heading for Texas to go to school. The rest of my family all gave me hugs, but Dad gave me a handshake — a strong, confident and affirming blessing that held all the words of "I'm proud of you, you're now ready to face the world and I love you".

Dad, there are very few times during the week when you don't cross my thoughts. Every time I stood and saluted our country's flag when I was on active duty with the Air Force I thought of you, for it is in you that I learned patriotism. Every time I see a display of postcards I think of you because you always asked about my travels ("adventures," you called them). And I will never be able to walk into a Barnes & Noble or a Starbucks coffee shop without thinking of you, because books and coffee will always be two icons of your character. Maybe you should consider retirement in a Barnes & Noble store? No son can ever really express in words the value of a blessed father, for you have truly been an exemplary blessing to me and to my family all our lives. You are a genuine, passionate, focused, servant of Jehovah Almighty. I am honored to be called your son, but even more, so blessed to call you my brother in Christ.

All my love and admiration this Father's Day and always.

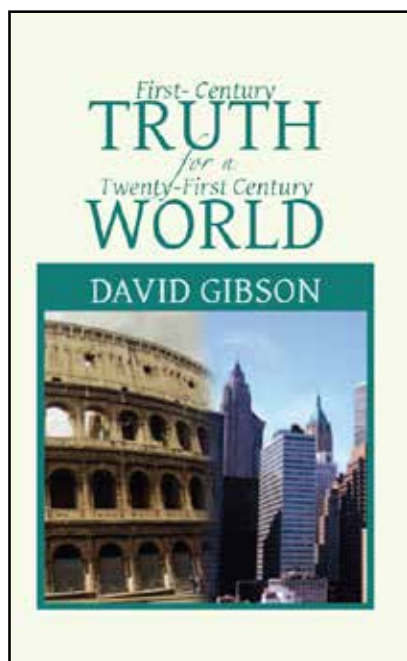
— Lane

FATHER

by Wayne Dunaway

F is for faithful ... to God and His word.
A is for attention ... children need to be heard.
T is for tough ... if that's what it takes.
H is for honest ... when he makes a mistake.
E is for example ... in word and in deed.
R is for righteous ... the father they need.

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EDITORIAL

Resist the urge to 'do something'

No offense, Matthew West, but sometimes the worst thing we can do is "something."

West is a contemporary Christian artist whose hits include "My Own Little World" and "Hello, My Name Is."

After meeting a young woman serving orphans in Uganda, he penned the song "Do Something."

Well, I just couldn't bear the thought of people living in poverty, children sold into slavery. The thought disgusted me. So I shook my fist at heaven, said, "God, why don't you do something?" He said, "I did. I created you."

Amen! So what should we do? The lyrics don't include many suggestions. (Granted, it's asking a lot of a four-minute song to tackle the complex issues of extreme poverty and human trafficking.) Instead, West focuses on his desire to make a difference: *I don't want a flame, I want a fire. I wanna be the one who stands up and says, "I'm gonna do something."*

The repetition of "I" concerns us. "I"-fueled desire drives us to help in ways that don't help — fighting poverty by creating dependence on American dollars, assisting in disaster relief only until the TV cameras move on, healing the sick while neglecting their spiritual poverty and need for Christ.

We must give smart aid to those in need. Speak to the leaders of ministries with experience in developing nations. Work alongside disaster relief organizations toward long-term recovery strategies. We recommend books such as **"Toxic Charity"** by Robert Lupton and **"When Helping Hurts"** by Steve Corbett and Brian Fikkert. The latter two authors ask us to reconsider the meaning of poverty, which stems from the broken relationship between man and God. Each of us suffers from a form of poverty, and only through Christ can we find healing — for ourselves and the world.

As followers of Jesus, we must use our God-given abilities to formulate faith-based, prayer-driven, sustainable solutions for the plagues of our planet. Seeking and saving the lost in a sick, dying world requires us to do so much more than "something."



PHOTO PROVIDED

"Time to preach the Gospel," says Sasha Prokopchuk, standing in front of a government building in Donetsk.

Jesus: 'The most stable thing in our country'

"Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

— Matthew 28:19-20

Beginning in 1992, many Churches of Christ were planted in Ukraine. We are thankful to our God and grateful to missionaries supported by Christians in America who came to our country.

Out of deep chaos, created by the collapse of the Soviet Union, Ukrainians enjoyed a measure of freedom. Yet, until recently, few of us understood the meaning of freedom, just as the children of Israel did not fully understand their freedom — and even desired at times to return to their former lives in Egypt.

In the 23 years since Ukraine's independence, we have experienced tests in our Christian walk. Churches struggled to find permanent meeting places, moving from one rented hall to another. Sometimes we were discouraged when it seemed

our ministries were not as stable as Ukraine's politics, businesses or other new enterprises.

The recent conflicts — and the severance of Crimea from our country — have taught us a most important lesson. In this world, we have no guarantee of stability — not for politics, business or even our borders. We can find our permanence only in our continuous service to God.

To our amazement, it now becomes clear that the ministry of Jesus is the most stable thing in our country. Even now, churches keep on meeting for worship — sometimes on the streets where violence occurs.

People still come to the Lord and are baptized. Orphanages continue to be helped. Prisons are visited.

Today, as never before, we realize the words of Jesus: *"I am with you always, even to the very end of the age."*

SASHA PROKOPCHUK is minister for the Transfiguration Church of Christ in Donetsk, Ukraine, where pro-Russian forces have declared independence from Ukraine and asked to join Russia.

In the Word

Sasha Prokopchuk



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President and CEO: **Lynn A McMillon**
lynn.mcmillon@christianchronicle.org

Editor: **Erik Tryggstad**
erik@christianchronicle.org

Chief Correspondent: **Bobby Ross Jr.**
bobby.ross@christianchronicle.org

Advertising Manager: **Tonya Patton**
tonya.patton@christianchronicle.org

Advertising Assistant: **Kelcy Nash**
Reviews Editor: **Kimberly Mauck**
kim.mauck@christianchronicle.org

Copy Editor: **Sarah Jane Kyle**

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lynda.sheehan@christianchronicle.org

Administrative Assistant: **Tonda Stafford**
tonda.stafford@christianchronicle.org

Administrative Assistant: **Joy McMillon**
joy.mcmillon@christianchronicle.org

Editor Emeritus: **Bailey McBride**
bailey.mcbride@christianchronicle.org

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VOICES

How do you spend your Sunday nights?

Home Bible studies? Worship and Lord's Supper at the building for those who missed the a.m. service? Family time? The Christian Chronicle asked readers how they spend their Sunday nights. Following are a few of their responses.

We still meet on Sunday night with a few faithful saints to study a book or subject. It has been truly rewarding, since we feel no need to replicate the morning hour's activities. We are presently in an interesting study of Hebrews. About 18 attend.

George Mansfield | Beamsville, Ontario

We have about 250 members in our congregation. After morning service, we have potluck every week then Bible class. In the evening we have small groups.

Beth Reichel | Palmer, Alaska

We have a wonderful combination that works for our congregation of about 600. We have small groups that meet, mostly on Sunday night, in homes. We have had great participation in this. We study and eat. Some do projects to help others during this time when needed.

Then we have what we call the "super group" of about 75 that meets every Sunday evening at the church building for their Bible study. It is less formal than Sunday morning worship and not headed by the preacher, but by some of the elders. This gives one a chance to meet at the building and take communion if they so desire.

Jackie Beall | Fayetteville, Ark.

We eliminated Bible classes on Sunday night. ... We did begin frequent evening meals after 5 p.m. services to encourage fellowship. We mix up the agenda on Sunday evenings. We have a service concentrated on singing to enjoy the old favorites and introduce new songs. We have prayer services where several of the men are assigned to come forward to pray for different areas of concern.

Darlene Beeler | Prairie Grove, Ark.

We only have about 55 on Sunday mornings and about 12 of us on Sunday evenings. We meet again at 2 p.m. because some of us drive up to 40 minutes and it is easier in the winter.

I enjoy the church family and look forward to spending the whole day together.

Christine Stoneham | Sandpoint, Idaho

JOIN THE CONVERSATION at www.christianchronicle.org.



PHOTO PROVIDED

Paul Harp appears via Skype on computer and TV screens in China as he teaches a Bible study to a small group of students.

Baptized via Skype: Christian in Arkansas plants Gospel seeds across an ocean in China

“Cherry, do you believe with all your heart that Jesus Christ is the Son of God?” I asked. “Yes I do,” she answered. I replied, “Cherry, you are now being immersed in the name of the Father and of the Son and the Holy Spirit for the forgiveness of your sins — and that you may receive God’s Holy Spirit.”

I spoke to her husband. “Sam, now put her body completely under the water.”

He did, and I watched as a new child of God arose from the watery grave of baptism — more than 6,900 miles away.

Cherry and I don’t live in the same country — or on the same continent. She’s in China and I’m in Arkansas. She was on the Internet, looking for help to improve her English, when I was introduced to her a little more than a year ago. We started meeting weekly using Skype, a live communications program that allows us to communicate face-to-face.

The Bible was our study guide. She carefully read the chapters and worked on the vocabulary. I read the text, and then she would repeat it before we discussed what it said. We began with Genesis 1:1 and spent several weeks on Old Testament backgrounds before proceeding to Luke. We finished Luke and moved on to John.

Her English skills improved greatly — and her faith blossomed. However, we couldn’t find a person to baptize her.

I found a house church some distance away and put her in contact with them. She traveled for almost two hours, making three bus transfers, to meet with them. They conducted a lengthy interrogation using such scriptures as Galatians 5:22-23 (the fruit of the Spirit) to see if she was worthy. They even observed the Lord’s Supper but told her she could not partake because it was just for Christians. She returned home in tears.

Cherry found two other house churches in her town and put me in touch with one. When I visited with the leader, I learned they were of the “faith only” belief.

As we considered our dilemma, she asked if we could do the baptism by Skype. She told me she had a large water tank on the roof of her house and I could baptize her by having her husband be the one to put her under the water. We agreed that this would be workable.

I emailed her a detailed plan as to how the baptism would be done. I began by stating that, when one asked, “What must I do to be saved?” many different answers would be given by man.

But only one answer is given by God. I quoted scriptures including Matthew 28:19-20, Mark 16:16, Acts 2:37-39 and 22:16. We set the baptism for a Sunday night — Sunday morning by my clock.

Two days before her baptism, Cherry was spreading the Gospel. She met the other house church leader and showed him the sheet I had prepared on baptism. We discussed it over Skype and, after several questions (including one about the salvation of the thief on the cross in Luke 23), the church leader asked if we could have a weekly Bible study every Friday.

On Sunday, Cherry filled the water tank, positioned her laptop on a high shelf overlooking the tank with her husband at her side. A doctor who had joined our weekly Bible study took pictures.

As she was raised from the water, I said, “Congratulations, Cherry. You are now a child of God, a Christian, a member of Christ’s church.”

The angels in heaven — and a guy on a computer in Arkansas — rejoiced that another sinner had joined the ranks of the saved.

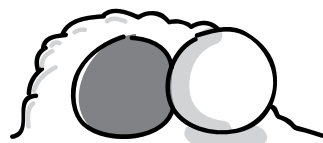
Views



Paul Harp

PAUL HARP is a member of the College Church of Christ in Searcy, Ark.

Share Jesus. It's simple.



Sabbath means more than stress-free living – it is an act of resistance

In a time when 80-hour workweeks, heightened anxiety and neglect of home and family are a sort of social currency — exchanged for status and prosperity — reducing stress by simplifying, unplugging and slowing down has become a common theme in Christian books.

In his new book, **“Sabbath as Resistance: Saying No to the Culture of Now,”** preeminent Old Testament scholar Walter Brueggemann takes up this topic, but his trajectory is quite different.

Instead of arguing for Sabbath as a therapeutic practice that frees one from stress, Brueggemann goes back to Exodus to place the fourth commandment in its context.

Fresh out of Egypt and Pharaoh’s control, the people of Israel needed reminding that God is not Pharaoh, and they are no longer living under the pagan values of Egypt. In contrast to Pharaoh’s demand not only to build with bricks, but also to make them — with no extra time allowed for the extra work (Exodus 5), Israel’s God commands a complete halt of all work once a week (Exodus 20:10). Pharaoh may have commanded a constant stream of back-breaking labor, but God, who himself rested on the seventh day, wants his people to follow suit. God is not a Pharaoh.

This leads Brueggemann to see Sabbath as an act of resistance, whereby God’s people actively resist and protest a culture fixated on production, profit and constant anxiety. Brueggemann envisions four specific areas in which Sabbath is an act of resistance — anxiety, coercion, exclusivism and multitasking.

Against anxiety, Sabbath works to “counter anxious productivity with committed neighborliness.” While we

constantly fret that we have not done enough, Brueggemann reminds us that, by “the end of six days God had done all that was necessary for creation ... so have we!”

Perhaps most relevant to us today is the chapter on Sabbath as resistance to multitasking, which Brueggemann defines as “the drive to be more than we are, to control more than we do, to extend our power and our effectiveness. Such practice yields a divided self, with full attention given to nothing.”

Sabbath demands that our full attention be given to God and neighbor — not to the selfishness that often defines the other six days of the week.

Those wanting a “how to” book will not find much here. But what the book lacks in practical application, it makes up in the important reminder that Sabbath is rooted in God’s character, not in the

health or psychological benefits of rest or reduced stress.

“Sabbath is a practical divestment,” he writes, “so that neighborly engagement, rather than production and consumption, defines our lives.”

As our TVs show us a commercial mocking anyone who does not want to work 60 hours a week for 52 weeks a year so he or she can acquire a luxury car, we realize that Brueggemann’s words are a needed corrective — and a reminder that God’s economy is different.

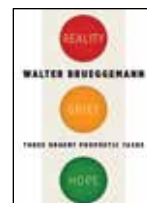


★★★★★

Walter Brueggemann. **Sabbath as Resistance: Saying No to the Culture of Now.** Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox Press, 2014. 89 pages. \$14.

JOSH KINGCADE is education minister for the Memorial Road Church of Christ in Oklahoma City and adjunct instructor at Oklahoma Christian University.

ONLINE, read a review of Walter Brueggemann’s **“Reality, Grief, Hope: Three Urgent Prophetic Tasks”** by David Fleer, professor of Bible at Lipscomb University and director of the Christian Scholars Conference in Nashville, Tenn., June 5-6.



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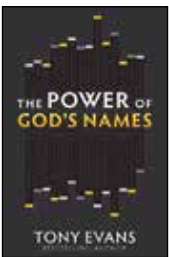


Josh Kingcade

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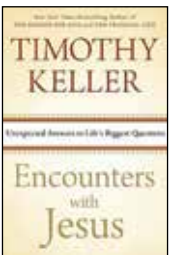
BIBLE STUDY

Tony Evans. **The Power of God's Names.** Eugene, Ore.: Harvest House, 2014. 224 pages. \$14.99.



Evans, senior evangelist for a community church in Dallas, explores 14 of the Hebrew and Greek names used to refer to God, from “Elohim” to “Immanuel.” A “member book,” sold separately, leads a small group through six sessions. Evans is author of the bestselling books “Kingdom Man” and “Kingdom Woman.”

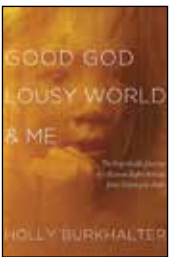
Timothy Keller. **Encounters with Jesus: Unexpected Answers to Life's Biggest Questions.** New York: Dutton Adult, 2013. 240 pages. \$19.95.



Each of the 10 chapters in this book explores deeply the context and significance of one person's personal meeting with Jesus — and how that experience changed his or her life. Keller, a bestselling author known for clear, concise prose, shows how the person of Jesus truly can change a person. Keller broadens the definition of “encounter” in the second half of the book, exploring Satan, the Holy Spirit, and the meaning of the ascension of Jesus.

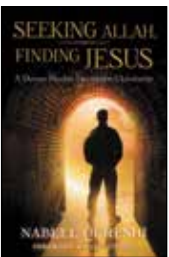
MEMOIR

Holly Burkhalter. **Good God, Lousy World, & Me: The Improbable Journey of a Human Rights Activist from Unbelief to Faith.** New York: Convergent Books, 2013. 208 pages. \$22.99.



Many Christians in the Western world rarely come into contact with the suffering that people experience daily in developing or war-torn countries. Burkhalter saw these atrocities up close in her work and says she “cursed God daily” for them. Her account shows how getting involved with the International Justice Mission, a Christian human rights organization, opened her heart to a God who hates the suffering of his people even more than we do.

Nabeel Qureshi. **Seeking Allah, Finding Jesus: A Devout Muslim's Journey to Christ.** Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 2014. 304 pages. \$16.99.



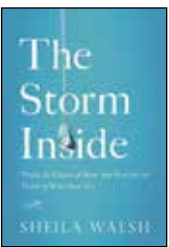
Qureshi, who holds graduate degrees in medicine, religion and apologetics, came to Christianity through historical reasoning and a spiritual search for God. Now a speaker for Ravi Zacharias' ministry, he offers a powerful apologetic for Christians seeking to reach out to Muslims. The book includes a glossary of Muslim terms and contributions from scholars and experts.

CHRISTIAN LIVING
Tullian Tchividjian. **One Way Love: Inexhaustible Grace For an Exhausted World.** Colorado Springs, Colo.: David C. Cook, 2013. 240 pages. \$14.99.



This popular author, a minister and a grandson of Billy Graham, calls Christians to recognize the completeness of Jesus' sacrifice. (One of his previous books is titled “Jesus + Nothing = Everything.”) His latest offering urges readers to abandon “performancism” and instead rely fully on grace, which drives us to serve God out of a thankful heart — not from a desire to check things off a list.

Sheila Walsh. **The Storm Inside: Trade the Chaos of How You Feel for the Truth of Who You Are.** Nashville, Tenn.: Thomas Nelson, 2014. 224 pages. \$21.99.



There are three levels of reality, writes Walsh, an admired author and speaker at women's conferences. These realities are the chaos of what we feel, the lies Satan would have us believe and the truth that God is in control. This conversational, intimate book leads readers through 10 transformations that God can work in the lives of those who cry out to him.





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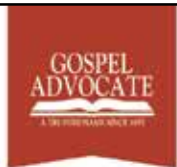
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Interested persons should contact
Jeff Conrad at 972-298-4656
or email a resume to :
jeffconrad@ourgraceplace.org

Full-Time Minister

Chillicothe Church of Christ

75-member congregation in North Central Missouri.

For more information please contact:

Charles Eddy, elder 660-646-6014
ceddy@gaslight-chilli.com

Ray Blakely, elder 816-863-7995
rblakely@blakely-eng.com

Rod Forbess, elder 660-973-7543
rodforbess@gmail.com

www.chillicothechurchofchrist.org

Bilingual Children's Minister - Miami, Florida

The **Sunset Church of Christ** is a 500-member bilingual church **located in Miami, Fla.** We are seeking a bilingual individual to oversee our Children's Ministry in both English and Spanish.

For more information:
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Foster Parents

Potter Children's Home and Family Ministries in Bowling Green, Kentucky, has been serving children and their families for 100 years. We are seeking foster parents for our on-campus Foster Care home for boys. In addition to the daily duties required in running a household, the foster parents will provide appropriate structure and supervision, transportation, participation in planning meetings and other activities that support the work. Couples must be faithful members of the church of Christ. They should also meet the state of Kentucky's requirements for foster parents, have a strong marriage, and be in good physical health. This is a live-in position with both parents hired. Salary is based on experience. Benefits are provided.

For further information see our website:
www.potterministries.org
If you are interested contact:
Tom Doty, Minister of Family Services, by phone at 270-843-3038 or by email at tom@potterministries.org.

The church of Christ in **Wheeler, Texas**, is searching for a pulpit minister.

Our preference is a married man with some experience as a full-time preacher, with a Biblical degree and a deep knowledge of the scriptures. Our 125-member congregation is diverse in background and age. We have many young families who will be a major focus of our mutual efforts. We have three elders. See online classified for more details.

Please contact: **Stacy McCasland**
806-886-4000
mccas@me.com

Church of Christ, Struthers, Ohio is seeking a full-time minister. Our family is age-diverse in the metro Youngstown, Ohio area. Average Sunday worship attendance is 125 with 4 shepherds and 4 deacons. Experience as a pulpit minister is required; a degree in Biblical Studies is preferred. Seeking a dynamic, energetic man, soundly dedicated to promoting the Lord's Work in the community. High inter-personal skills and experience and willingness to work with Youth is a requirement. Skills sought are ability to lead, self-motivated, organized, and effective as a teacher and preacher. Salary with housing allowance based on experience. Qualified individuals willing to help us grow and mature in the Lord can apply via:

strutherscocpreachersearch@gmail.com
Struthers Church of Christ
Attn: Preacher Search
PO Box 99, Struthers, OH 44471

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Minister Wanted

The **Ypsilanti church of Christ**, located in Ypsilanti, Mich., is seeking to fill our vacant minister position; this includes pulpit, class and evangelistic duties. We are a diverse congregation with a current average Sunday morning attendance of 130.

If you desire to be considered for this position, please submit your resume with three sermons (audio and/or video) to:

ypsicofc@gmail.com

For further information contact:
Bob Bowen (elder) at (734) 482-6213.

Parkway Drive Church of Christ in Lubbock, Texas

is seeking a full-time minister to fill the pulpit responsibilities of a multi-cultural congregation with an average Sunday a.m. attendance of 170. The right person for this job must be willing to carry out additional tasks with a positive attitude for the growth and nurturing of the congregation and to the glory of God. Parkway Drive is located in a mission field within our city. Must be mission minded with a passion to go to where the people are in order to bring them to Christ. Salary commensurate with experience. Please send resume along with a CD or DVD and two letters of reference to:

Elders Parkway Drive Church of Christ
3120 Parkway Drive, Lubbock, TX 79403

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'Where are the other nine?' Jesus' question demonstrates the divine nature of gratitude

A friend suggested that I share my thoughts on gratitude.

Jesus addresses the issue in Luke 17, as he travels to Jerusalem, walking along the border between Samaria and Galilee. Ten men with leprosy meet him and cry out, "Jesus, Master, have pity on us." He tells them to go to show themselves to the priests. As they go, they are cleansed.

One returns, throws himself at Jesus' feet and thanks him. Luke's gospel records that this man is a Samaritan and that Jesus asks him, "Where are the other nine who were healed?"

Gratitude to God is such a big issue that I want to spend more time thinking about it and understand how to encourage expressing our thankfulness for all God has done for us — from creating this amazing and beautiful world we live in to sending his son to be a sacrifice for our sins. The subject is important and should be explored by all believers.

Right now I want to address the subject of gratitude toward other people.

Most of us are like the nine who were healed. We move on to enjoy and celebrate life after we receive special service from others.

In the midst of this year's graduations, I was reminded of a sermon I heard years ago, encouraging Christians to thank teachers who made a difference by their kindness or encouragement.

The teachers I remembered from high school were the ones that immediately came to mind. It had been 25 years since I graduated from high school, so I wrote the board of education to find out how to reach the five teachers I wanted to thank.

Unfortunately, four had died.

The first, my senior English teacher, required us to read a book a week and write a review of it. All of the books were classics, and a misspelled word meant the highest grade possible was a D.

During one nine-week period, I wrote a 30-page research paper with at least 50 sources. In another section, we studied the great architecture of the world.

The second was my physics teacher, who helped me understand a complex subject and encouraged me to study what I loved — not what others were encouraging me to study.

The third, my American history teacher, helped me understand that history is not just facts, people and dates. She encouraged analysis of cause and effect in the development of a civilization.

The fourth, my Latin teacher, made me understand the structure of language and gave me insight into the culture of the Roman empire.

The teacher who was still living had moved to Florida. He taught me ancient history and Latin American history.

More importantly, he fostered in me the understanding that worrying is waste — and curiosity and hard work always bring success. I made sure to tell him that in my letter, though I never received a reply.

In the years since, I have tried to reach out to people who have made a difference in my life and my thinking.

Albert Schweitzer observed, "At times our own light goes out and is rekindled by a spark from another person. Each of us has cause to think with deep gratitude of those who have lighted the flame within us."

Through the 33 years I have written this column, I have shared information about family members, friends, preachers and Bible teachers who have lit or rekindled a flame within me.

Not many people have such a public forum, but we all can pick up the phone or write a letter (or email) expressing appreciation for a kindness or inspiration that we have received from a teacher, a friend, a parent or a grandparent.

Often we fail to show gratitude to the people who are closest to us and have been a source of encouragement, inspiration or even correction.

Because we are all busy, we plan to write our thank you note or make a phone call later. How easy it is to let time pass and miss the opportunity to express our gratitude.

Don't miss your opportunity to acknowledge a special person who lifted you up.

Insight



Bailey McBride

CONTACT bailey.mcbride@christianchronicle.org.

Stan Williams

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“Therefore go and make Disciples of All Nations” (Matthew 28:19)

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High Plains Children's Home in Amarillo, TX is accepting applications from faithful Church of Christ couples that have a heart for children and are drawn to the ministry of caring for young people. The Home offers an excellent salary package that includes health insurance, housing, commissary privileges and a matching 403(b) retirement plan. If interested in working in a professional, full-time ministry as houseparents or relief houseparents, please contact us below or visit hpch.org for additional information.

Lecia Moody
800.728.6581
leciam@hpch.org



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Houseparent Position

For over 44 years we have served at-risk children in Albuquerque, New Mexico. The Albuquerque Christian Children's Home is all about the children--loving them, helping them heal and teaching them about God's love. Fostering children who have been abused or neglected is challenging work, but also rewarding.

We are looking for a married couple who are faithful members of the church of Christ to come and work as Houseparent's. Benefits included.

If you are interested, send your cover letter of interest and your resume(s) addressed to our Executive Director, Everett White.

*Please send to the e-mail address:
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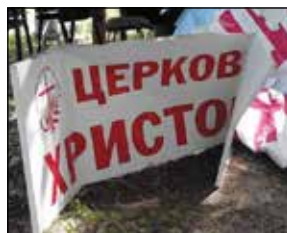
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