

50 years of Northern exposure

ALASKA LECTURESHIP celebrates a half-century of promoting unity among Churches of Christ.

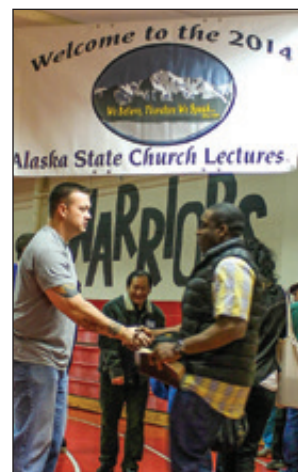
BY BOBBY ROSS JR. | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

WASILLA, Alaska

This state known for its natural beauty, midnight sun and independent spirit boasts an estimated 3 million lakes, 100,000 black bears and, oh, about 2,500 adherents of Churches of Christ.

Here in “The Last Frontier,” hundreds of miles and — in some cases — rugged terrain accessible only by boat or plane separate many of Alaska’s 28 congregations.

Yet Christians in this vast land one-fifth the total geographic size of the Lower 48 states maintain close ties.



Daniel Morphew, left, shakes hands with D'Angelo Cloud at the Alaska Statewide Lectureship in Wasilla.

For 50 years, the Alaska Statewide Lectureship has played a major role in helping unite the faithful — along with the Midnight Sun Bible Camp, the annual Alaska Youth Forum and frequent hunting and fishing excursions involving members all over the state.

“The joke is, when you leave your back yard in Alaska, you enter

the food chain,” said Robert Kuenning, minister and elder of the Valley Church of Christ in Wasilla, about 45 minutes north of Anchorage.

“Life and death become a little more obvious up where you can die from exposure and die from bear attacks pretty quickly,” added Kuenning, whose growing

See **ALASKA**, Page 14



A motorist pumps gas in a commercial area of Palmer, Alaska, east of Wasilla in the Mat-Su Valley. The Valley Church of Christ organized the 2014 lectureship.

PHOTOS BY BOBBY ROSS JR.



CBS BROADCASTING

Jet and Cord McCoy, members of the Fittstown Church of Christ in Oklahoma, have competed in three seasons of “The Amazing Race” on CBS.

Racing with amazing faith

CORD AND JET MCCOY strive to let Christ’s light shine on hectic reality game show.

BY ERIK TRYGGESTAD | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

OKLAHOMA CITY — “Oh my gravy!”

Don’t bother asking Jet McCoy where the phrase comes from. He doesn’t know.

“I didn’t even know I said it until I watched the show,” says McCoy, on a break between worship services at the Memorial Road Church of Christ. He and his younger brother, Cord, are speaking about faith and fame after competing in three seasons of “The Amazing Race.”

“The first leg of the race ... I might have said it 12 times,” he recalls, “but they aired it 12 times. My sister-in-law was actually selling ‘Oh my gravy’ T-shirts after the first race. At least somebody made a little money off of it.”

Money — \$1 million, to be exact — is the prize of the CBS hit show, which challenges pairs of contestants to race around the globe. Along the way, they must perform tasks from rappelling down a waterfall in Malaysia to battling a gladiator in Rome, all with the goal of reaching the finish line first. The pace is lightning quick. The competition is fierce.

But the McCoy brothers see an eternal

See **MCCOYS**, Page 13



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In Africa, an expensive soul gets new life

SANGUERA, Togo

This man's soul is expensive."

It's an offhand remark, uttered by a preacher named Doh Satisfait (which sounds like "Satisfy" to us English-speakers).

Inside Story



Erik Tryggstad

He says it without a hint of scorn or malice, and I start to wonder if I've made a mistake.

I try to be sensitive to the ways of my African brethren, but

giving a guy a ride into town — to be baptized — can't be a cultural *faux pas*. Can it?

It's our last day in Togo, a tiny, sliver of a country in West Africa that you have to squint to find on a map.

There's no oil here, no brutal conflict, nothing that would attract the attention of the world's media. But an *Eglise du Christ* (Church of Christ) in this former French colony just appointed elders — one of the first congregations to do so in French-speaking Africa.

The Wilshire Church of Christ in Oklahoma City asked me to attend the installation ceremony. And I never say no to Africa.

Just like most of my visits to this continent, I've spent a lot of time in cars, bouncing along dusty backroads.

With Togolese preachers as our guides, we've visited churches, schools and a community garden — works supported by the African Mission Fund, overseen by

See **EXPENSIVE**, Page 4



PHOTOS BY MARK YEAKLEY

Deborah Allen, center, and a couple of friends share a laugh at Women Walking with God.

Making joyful noises

WOMEN WALKING WITH GOD draws sell-out crowd of almost 1,200

WICHITA, Kansas

Christians — unlike 100-calorie packs of Oreos — must be authentic.

That was Lisa Smartt's message to nearly 1,200 women at the eighth annual Women Walking with God conference. The author and humorist, who struggles with her weight, expressed her genuine disappointment in the diet-friendly snack bags, which don't contain actual Oreo cookies but tiny, black, hexagonal crackers with little taste, she said.

Hosted by the Northside Church of Christ in Wichita, organizers had to move this year's venue from the church building to a community center to accommodate demand. The 300 additional seats sold out within hours of their online posting.

"Joyful on the Journey" was the theme, taken from Romans 12:12: "*Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer.*"

Beth Robinson, assistant provost for Lubbock Christian University in Texas, talked about her experiences working with foster children and told participants that their circumstances shouldn't dictate whether or not they feel joyful.



Rachel Riley speaks at Women Walking with God.

She warned against using personal experiences to interpret Scripture. Instead, followers of Christ should use Scripture to interpret their experiences.

Other speakers included Lisa Robertson, wife of "Duck Dynasty's" Alan Robertson, Rachel Riley of Abilene Christian University in Texas and Brianne Banning, mother of a cancer survivor and author of "The Beautiful Bald Princess."

WEBSITE: womenwalkingwithgod.org

Church members in Ukraine, Russia are 'united in God'

BY JEFF ABRAMS | FOR THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

KRAMATORSK, Ukraine — Tanks have roamed the streets of this city in recent weeks. Rumors of government buildings seized and police chiefs taken hostage by pro-Russian demonstrators flash across the Internet.

Though the Donbas region of eastern Ukraine is a focal point of conflict between the two former Soviet nations, more than 200 Christians — from Ukraine and Russia — gathered here for a "Celebration of Unity."

"This subject is of great importance for us and our country — at this moment when our country is on the edge of division," said Katya Gladkih, a church member from Kostiantynivka, Ukraine. "If God's people don't understand and value the unity in Christ, then it's just a mass of people who belong to a community center, but not the church."

Participants represented 16 Churches of Christ — in the Donbas region and cities including Odessa in far southern Ukraine, Chernivtsi in western Ukraine and Russia.

"The most important thing (was) to see all the Christians united in God," said Genadiy Sherbakov, a church elder in Syktyvkar, Russia. Followers of Christ in both nations, he said, should adhere to the apostle Paul's plea in Philippians 2:2, that believers be "one in spirit and of one mind."

The Christians encouraged each other to remain strong, despite the current tension and uncertainty about the future.

Valentina Petrussenko, a church member in Kramatorsk, said that seeing so many believers — from across Ukraine and Russia — "helps us to understand how mighty we can be in Christ."



Gladkih



Sherbakov



Petrussenko

RELATED EDITORIAL, Page 26

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COURSE INSTRUCTOR: PHIL MCKINNEY II



We congratulate Dr. McKinney upon the completion of the Ph.D. degree awarded by Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. His dissertation topic is "Adolescent Christian Formation and Mother Nurturance and Involvement." Dr. McKinney is the husband of Angie; the father of Kaylee, Taylor, and Rylie; the discipleship minister at Fairfax (Va.) Church of Christ; and one of the outstanding instructors for the **Master of Ministry** program.

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EXPENSIVE: Togo trip shows the value of a soul

FROM PAGE 3

the Wilshire church.

Wendell and Rochelle Wardell are with me. Members of the Cooksville Church of Christ in Illinois, they're longtime supporters of the work in Togo. We didn't know each other when we arrived. Now, after a week in Togo, we're family. Tonight, close to midnight, we'll board a plane for Europe before parting ways.

This morning, our first stop is Sanguera, where members of a Church of Christ from another town, Tokoin, have planted a new congregation. After that, we'll head back into the capital, Lome, to meet with a host of preachers at the Nukafu Church of Christ (the one that installed elders).

The Sanguera church's entire membership waited nearly all day yesterday for us to visit, to no avail. A ruptured fuel line — repaired thanks to Wendell Wardell's surprisingly African ingenuity — kept us from making the visit. Such delays are common in Africa. I'm filled with a familiar mix of guilt and resignation.

A few members have returned to the church building to meet us. It's a sheet-metal roof supported by wooden poles and surrounded by a brick wall. Nice, really. I speak with the minister, Kossi Gidigidi. (The Togolese preachers who accompanied us here take immense pleasure in saying his name — over and over.) He introduces me to two recent converts, who tell me how the church has saved them from alcohol addiction.

"When I was in the world, I met with troubles, troubles," says one, Sagbo Kuma, as Satiffait translates. "But now that I see Jesus, there is great change."

I scribble down the quote hurriedly, because Gidigidi (yeah, I like saying it, too) and the others are pulling me away. They're anxious to show us another church, nearby, off a dirt path.

This one meets under a thatched roof. Its members practice a mixture of beliefs from various denominations but genuinely want to do what the

Bible says. Gidigidi and others study with them, and several have asked to be baptized. Less than two years since the Sanguera church was planted, its members are planting another church.

Six or seven people are waiting for us under the thatched roof. I notice a man, sitting in back, staring intently forward. He's holding one of those free, Gideon Bibles, his finger stuck between the pages to mark his place. After we pray, he pulls one of the preachers aside.

Esperance Mensah, minister for the Nukafu Church of Christ, listens in and tells us, "OK, this one says he's ready to be baptized." The preachers start talking about the nearest water source.

That's when I chime in.

"Hey, we're headed back to the Nukafu church anyway. There's still water in the baptistery, right?"

After an awkward pause, we pile into the sport utility vehicle with our soon-to-be brother, Ekpli Lord Lugard — a royal name to add to a royal priesthood.



ERIK TRYGGESTAD

Ekpli Lord Lugard, about an hour before baptism.

It's about a half-hour drive back into Lome, so someone will have to give him a ride back home — or pay cab fare.

Sandwiched next to Lugard in the back seat, Satiffait makes his "expensive soul" remark, and I start wondering if I should have kept my mouth shut.

I also start thinking about the men and women back home who sent me here. They've dedicated resources God has given them to help Africans spread the Gospel in tiny Togo — all but forgotten by much of the world.

I think about the good shepherd from the Gospel of John — the one who lays down his life for his sheep. Or the shepherd from Jesus' parable in Matthew 18, the one who leaves the 99 to search for that one lost lamb.

All of us have expensive souls. I thank God for the servants of Christ — in Africa and around the world — who labor tirelessly to secure them for eternity.

SEE CURRENTS, Page 17, for more Togo coverage.

CORRECTION: An advertisement that appeared on Page 10 of the June 2013 issue contained errors. Tiffany Guerrero worked as an unpaid volunteer at the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's Office of Research, Center for Veterinary Medicine, in 2012. While she and several other federal employees worked on assigned projects, she did not manage any programs or their funding. She worked under the supervision of a federal employee who was responsible for managing the projects, the funding for the projects and the volunteer workers assigned to the projects.



VIDEO STILL VIA WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/GROUPS/LTCSW

Leadership Training for Christ students take the Gospel to a galaxy far, far away

"Somewhere in space, this may all be happening right now." Thus begins a video produced by youths from the Palo Verde Church of Christ in Tucson, Ariz., for the Southwest Leadership Training for Christ conference. The video, paying homage to the original "Star Wars" trailer from 1976, features

Michael Evans, Ali Sene, Addison Schwamb, Josh Beaulieu and Lane Hooker and gives a space-opera twist to the theme "Called Out" from the book of Exodus. Lucas Berlin, 19, who participated in LTC for 10 years, was the group's coordinator. See the video at www.christianchronicle.org.

ARKANSAS

NORTH LITTLE ROCK — The Levy Church of Christ's recent annual Community Day drew 500-plus visitors, minister Danny Dodd said.

"It is growing each year," Dodd said. "We interact through games for kids, crafts for adults, free food and clothing stores."

The event also includes opportunities for prayer and Bible study, Dodd said. More than 170 church volunteers helped.

ILLINOIS

CHICAGO — When drivers pass the Maypole Avenue Church of Christ building on Chicago's west side, they'll be reminded of the church's former minister. Whether they know it or not.

That's because the 4400 block of West Maypole Avenue has been renamed Cardie L. Harper Way. A new city ordinance, introduced by Alderman Jason C. Ervin, honors Harper for four decades of service to the Maypole Avenue church.

Harper, a Mississippi native, planted the church that would become Maypole Avenue in 1960. He retired in 2002 and died in 2007.

Past and present Maypole Avenue members as well as many Chicago-area church leaders attended a recent dedication ceremony.

MISSISSIPPI

OLIVE BRANCH — Andrew Archer, 17, was baptized just three weeks before he died, ABC 24 in Memphis, Tenn., reported.



Archer

A wreck on the way home from a school prom April 18 claimed the life of the teen, who had attended the Olive Branch Church of Christ all his life. Troopers said Archer fell asleep at the wheel and hit a tree.

Youth minister Jared Rhodes described him as a one-of-a-kind teen who stayed out of trouble and was "always a friend that you could count on."

OKLAHOMA

MADILL — The Madill Church of Christ hosts a free medical clinic to help people with no medical insurance. Dr. Pam Ahearn opens the clinic the first and third Wednesdays of each month, minister's wife Ashley Hudson said.

TENNESSEE

MURFREESBORO — One down and 59,999 to go.

That's the tally after the North Boulevard Church of Christ — which has set an ambitious goal of planting 60,000 new churches over the next 60 years —

launched its first church plant recently.

The inaugural service at the church's new campus in west Murfreesboro drew 421 souls.

"While some of those were North Boulevard's own people, many were also first-time visitors or people who are looking for a church home," said Renee Sproles, the congregation's vision coordinator. For more information, see nb2020vision.com.

TEXAS

LUBBOCK — An areawide worship assembly drew a standing-room-only crowd to the Lubbock Civil Center, said Keith Lancaster of Acappella Ministries.

"God Is On Our Side" served as the theme for the recent unity event. Ken Jones, Lubbock Christian University's former longtime president, spoke.

The Children's Home of Lubbock, which is celebrating its 60th anniversary, was highlighted.

"I only wish that more regions would make the effort to bring churches together on common ground to experience unity and worship," Lancaster said.

TO SUBMIT ITEMS for consideration for Across the Nation, email Bobby Ross Jr. at bobby.ross@christianchronicle.org. Contributing writer Patrick Odum and Reviews Editor Kimberly Mauck helped with this month's news briefs.

SPOTLIGHT

'Hope Wins' in Memphis

MEMPHIS, Tenn. — Wrapping up a recent sermon series on hope, Josh Ross invited church members to take yellow sticky notes and reflect on challenges they had overcome — and still need to defeat.

Members posted their replies on a board spelling out "Hope Wins."

"We had a few hundred reply, and it was a balance between expressions of celebration and desperation," said Ross, preaching minister for the Sycamore View Church of Christ.



PHOTO PROVIDED BY JOSH ROSS

Minister Josh Ross poses in front of the "Hope Wins" sign with his sons, Truitt and Noah.

Share Jesus. It's simple.



PHOTOS BY LYNN MCMILLON

Richard Barclay, a minister for the Hillcrest Church of Christ in Decatur, Ga., speaks during the 70th National Lectureship of the Churches of Christ in Atlanta. About 2,600 Christians attended.

Faith in uncharted waters

Church members shouted — and typed — “Amen!” as ministers from across the U.S. shared the Gospel at the 70th National Lectureship of the Churches of Christ. About 2,600 church members attended the annual gathering. Hundreds more watched the keynote sessions live online and posted comments. “Navigating Uncharted Waters: Examining Issues. Creating Solutions” was the theme.

Congregations in Atlanta hosted this year’s lectureship, directed by Richard Barclay, minister for the Hillcrest Church of Christ in Decatur, Ga., and Orpheus Heyward, minister for the West End Church of Christ in Atlanta.



A few of the hundreds of prefilled communion cups served during the Lord’s Supper at the lectureship.



At the lectureship: Tonya Wilkerson, of the Camp Creek Church of Christ in Atlanta; Dayna Ludy, of the West End Church of Christ in Atlanta; Alexis Ludy and Deborah Ludy, of the Roosevelt Freeport Church of Christ in New York; Laina Ludy, of West End; and Belle Alexander (seated), of Camp Creek.



PHOTOS PROVIDED

High school students celebrate their winning scores at the fourth annual Texas Bible Bowl.

Texas Bible Bowl features tests on Moses, plus games, sports, fellowship and devos

MARBLE FALLS, Texas — Caleb Kirkwood, a high school junior, certainly impressed judges at the recent fourth annual Texas Bible Bowl.

Kirkwood, who attends McDermott Road Church of Christ in Plano, Texas, correctly answered 232 of 250 questions regarding the life of Moses.

More than 150 children and teenagers studied 1,622 verses from the books of Exodus, Numbers and Deuteronomy to prepare for the event, held at Camp of the Hills.

“These kids know their Bible,” said event coordinator Paul Hendrickson of the Hawley Church of Christ in Texas. “What a blessing they are, not to the future of our churches, but to the church right now.”

Competitors were separated into four divisions according to age. Students in sixth grade or lower competed in the elementary division; students in seventh grade through ninth grade competed in the junior division; high school students competed in the senior division; and older participants competed in the adult division.

But event organizers said the Texas Bible Bowl is about more than competition. Throughout the weekend, participants are encouraged to “spur each other on” and view each other as family in Christ. Beyond Bible Bowl activities, games, sports, fellowship and devotionals play a key role in the camaraderie.



Students take tests at the Texas Bible Bowl.

Event coordinator Nick Schroeder of the Magnolia Church of Christ in Texas said the event is similar to summer camp. Some travel from up to seven hours away to participate.

“This is not your ordinary Bible Bowl,” he said.

Many churches host celebrations for participating students. Jessica Hooks, coach of a team from the Memorial Church of Christ in Houston, said her congregation held a party — complete with pizza, cake and buzzer Bible Bowl games — to encourage students to keep participating in Scripture-focused events.

Eight students from the Memorial church participated this year. The congregation covered all expenses for students.

“It is important that we encourage our young people to pursue God,” Hooks said.



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David Skidmore—"The First Restoration"
Jerry Taylor—"If These Walls Could Speak"
Rick Atchley—"How Much Will Your Sin Cost Me?"
Shon Smith—"The Blessings of Curses from Life's Choices"

Landon Saunders—"Still Willing to Stand and Fight"

Josh Ross—"Come Stand with Me"

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WENDI ROGERS

A surprised — and happy — winner at Lads to Leaders

Paul Rogers reacts with excitement after earning first place in third-grade boys' speech at the recent Lads to Leaders convention in Louisville, Ky. Rogers is the son of Kenneth and Wendi Rogers, members of the Washington Church of Christ in Pennsylvania.

"He practiced and practiced his speech," Wendi Rogers said. "He had no clue he would win. He said he did terrible. But obviously, that was not the case."

Christian Chronicle wins nine 'Best of the Christian Press' national awards

CHICAGO — *The Christian Chronicle* earned nine national awards for its efforts to inform, inspire and unite Churches of Christ — in print and online. The Associated Church Press presented the awards at its annual national convention, celebrating journalism produced in 2013.

For the seventh straight year, the *Chronicle* was recognized as one of the top publications in the "Best in Class" competition for national and international newspapers, receiving third place. Twice, the international newspaper for Churches of Christ has been named the nation's top Christian newspaper.

Editor Erik Tryggstad, Chief Correspondent Bobby Ross Jr. and writers Ted Parks and Murray Evans won first place for in-depth reporting for coverage of tornadoes that swept through Oklahoma and Texas last spring.

Tryggstad also won first place in news reporting for "God put his hand on us," which told the stories of a church deacon and his family who lost their home and other Christians impacted by the storms.

Travis Langley, founder of

Webdextero.us, won first place for his redesign of the *Chronicle's* website, christianchronicle.org.

Tryggstad also earned a first-place award for feature writing for "Camp Shamrock" — a story about Churches of Christ in Northern Ireland urging a new generation to become "instruments of peace." The story also placed second in newspaper design, spread or story.

Ross earned second-place awards for a news story about the legacy of Nelson Mandela and coverage of a conference on homosexuality and the church.

The *Chronicle's* "Rural Redemption" series earned a third-place award in theme issue, section or series for Ross, Tryggstad and writer David Chenault.

In a separate contest, Ross won first place for education reporting in the Oklahoma Society of Professional Journalists' annual awards, competing against the state's largest newspapers.

The story, focusing on religious freedom in public schools, featured the Holland Park Church of Christ in Simpsonville, S.C.

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BAHAMAS

MARSH HARBOUR — Two congregations in the Bahamas' capital, Nassau, have provided preachers for Bahama Missions' work in Marsh Harbour, missionary David Caskey says.

A group of about 20 Christians from Nassau helped church members with construction projects. Members of the Gators for Christ campus ministry from Gainesville, Fla., also spent time with the congregation.

Caskey seeks an older couple to preach, teach and counsel the congregation, which had 50 members on a recent Sunday. See www.flyingpreacher.com.

BRAZIL

FEIRA DE SANTANA — Missionaries Randy Short and Antonio Barros traveled to this city of 700,000 souls, near Salvador in Brazil's Bahia state, to encourage members of a young church.

Instead, "who came out of the weekend encouraged was us," said Short, who works in Recife, Brazil. He taught the church's members alongside Barros, a native Brazilian missionary in Uniao dos Palmares in Alagoas state.

Short described the congregation as "a thriving church of 50" with "plans for reaching many other neighborhoods in this city and the 417 cities in the state that have not heard the pure and simple Gospel."

BULGARIA

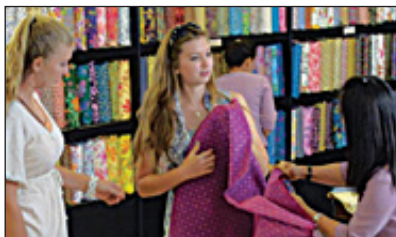
SOFIA — Members of the Renaissance Church of Christ help African immigrants as they search for jobs and legal status in this southeastern European nation. Some immigrants have moved on to other countries within the European Union, minister Hristo Arnaudov said.

**Arnaudov**

The church seeks translation devices to aid guests —



PHOTOS PROVIDED BY DAVID ALLEN

Ready for prime time: Missionaries on the air in Thailand

Brielle Allen gets some finishing touches from TV make-up artists before she and, her sister, Brianna, shop for high-end Thai silk in front of the cameras (left). The sisters and their parents, David and Michelle, posed as tourists during a commercial shoot produced by Thailand's tourism authority. The one-minute spot is slated to air on CNN and the BBC.

Since 1994, the Allens have served as part of a church-planting team in Chiang Mai, Thailand.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, see sites.google.com/site/chiangmaiteam

from Africa and other locales — during church services. See www.churchofchrist.bg.

CANADA

SALMON ARM — Members of the Salmon Arm Church of Christ in the western Canadian province of British Columbia shivered through the "Coldest Night of the Year" recently — alongside 12,000 walkers in 63 locations throughout the country. The event raises funds for homeless shelters and food banks.

The team, led by Ralph Edwards, raised more than \$3,000 and placed fourth among 28 teams and 230 walkers in Salmon Arm. The town raised just under \$40,000.

MOZAMBIQUE

TETE — Tim Brumfield traveled to this coal-mining town of

130,000 souls in southern Africa to "Let the Bible Speak."

That was the title of the Evangelistic Message course taught by Brumfield, who works with Sunset International Bible Institute in Lubbock, Texas, training Christians to serve in Portuguese-speaking nations.

The students "are eager and searching for the Word of God," he said. "Now some of the brethren there have gone through the course multiple times and should be ready to teach it on their own and in their tribal languages."

"One of the assignments I gave them was to teach at least seven hours of the evange-

**Brumfield**

listic lessons to those who need Jesus." Eight baptisms resulted.

PANAMA

SANSON — Jonathan Farrar, U.S. ambassador to Panama, visited the Clinic of Hope in Panama's eastern Darien Province recently as volunteers with Panama Missions conducted a medical and dental clinic.

"Like me, Ambassador Farrar loves this part of Panama," said Larry Brady, the mission's director. "He was very impressed with what we are doing to help the people of the Darien." The Childersburg Church of Christ in Alabama oversees the work.

TO SUBMIT ITEMS for consideration for Around the World, email Erik Tryggstad at erik@christianchronicle.org. Copy Editor Sarah Jane Kyle contributed to this month's news briefs.

SPOTLIGHT**Returning to give thanks**

HYDERABAD, India — Though it's been nearly three decades, Karen Clayton can't forget Digamber Mane.

"He always had a smile as big as Texas," recalls Clayton, who serves alongside her husband, Ron. In the mid-1990s, the couple opened a children's home in Hyderabad, a city in central India, to serve impoverished children.

"These were the children of the poorest of the poor. Almost all of them had lost at least one of their parents," Karen Clayton said. "They all needed help. ... I spent a tremendous amount of time at this home. It was my ministry. I loved these kids. I taught them God's Word."

Mane carried her books, gathered the children for class. "In short, he was my right arm," she said. "He always called me mom."

That was OK with me."

Mane, now 30 and married, with a baby on the way, emailed Karen Clayton to arrange a visit.

"Before he left Sunday afternoon ... he told me the reason he wanted to see me. He wanted to thank me for all I had done for him as a young child and as he grew to his teenage years."

He "wanted to make sure that he was never one about whom it could be said, 'Where are the nine?'" Karen Clayton said, referring to the story of the 10 lepers healed by Jesus in Luke 17 — only one of which returned to thank him.



PHOTO PROVIDED

The Claytons with Digamber Mane.



Bahamas

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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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R. SANGA

In India, music teacher hears 'the voice of many angels'

Students at Angels' Place raise their voices, with coaching from Sarah Burnell, a music teacher from Montreal. Burnell, Jan and Leslie Swensen, of the Holiday Park Church of Christ in Plum, Pa., and Hedi Devine, of the Elmwood Street Church of Christ in Lafayette, Ind., visited the children's home, which serves 155 orphans and impoverished children in Manipur, a state in northeastern India. R. Sanga, minister for a Church of Christ and founder of the Imphal School of Preaching, directs the children's home. The children have angelic voices, Jan Swensen said, and will continue to study music and practice via Skype, an online communication service. See www.jamesconnection.org.

Despite South Pacific floods, 'the Lord reigns'

HONIARA, Solomon Islands — "The Lord reigns" — even in the midst of a tsunami warning.

Christians packed into a church building in this South Pacific nation on a recent Sunday and sang those words, days after heavy rains swept through the region, killing 23 people and leaving 9,000 homeless. Hardest hit by the floods were the capital city, Honiara, and the island of Guadalcanal, a site of intense fighting during World War II.

Randall John Uthe, who works with Malaysia-based Crisis Relief Services & Training, or CREST, traveled to the islands to assess needs and assist in relief efforts. He sang hymns with a congregation there as the government issued a tsunami warning, but no additional damage occurred.

Missionaries Randy and Sharon English visited the islands about a month before the floods and are scheduled to return. The Forest Park Church of Christ in Georgia, which supports their work, is collecting funds for relief.

"Please, we ask that you pray for all the people affected by this terrible tragedy,"



RANDALL JOHN UTHE

Relief workers ride on sacks of rice as they travel to remote villages affected by floods.

Randy English said. "Also, we ask that you please pray for the many members of the church in Honiara and nearby villages who — as in times past — are serving and helping others, doing what they can with what resources they have.

"Pray, please, that we can reach these members and friends in their great time of need — and with the assistance that they need."

FIND LINKS TO CONTRIBUTE to relief work at www.christianchronicle.org.

McCOYS: On TV, brothers 'can either be dishonest and win or serve God'

FROM PAGE 1

purpose in the spotlight of reality TV.

"You have to decide, 'OK, here's this moment. I can either be dishonest and win or serve God,'" Jet McCoy says. "Am I going to serve my own desires or do what God has called me to do?"

'DON'T SQUAT IN YOUR SPURS'

Earlier on Sunday, the reality TV stars pulled up to the church building in a flatbed diesel pickup, complete with reels of barbed wire and a cattle feeder.

They were in diapers when they first rode horses. Jet, 34, the fourth of Denny and Janet McCoy's five children, is named after his mother's maiden initials (Janet Elaine Tucker).

As for Cord, 33, "I had yellow jaundice, so I spent three or four days in the hospital," he explains. "Every time they needed a nurse, there was a hospital pull cord. So it was like, 'Hey, we'll call him Cord.' True story."

As far as they know, they aren't related to those other McCoys who grew up in Churches of Christ — the ones who played football for the Texas Longhorns. (Cord McCoy says he's occasionally praised for his gridiron prowess by folks who mistake him for Colt McCoy, now a quarterback for the Washington Redskins.)

These McCoys grew up on a ranch in southern Oklahoma. There were lots of chores, and when they complained, their mother was quick to quote Philippians 2:14, "*Do everything without grumbling or arguing.*"

Even before "The Amazing Race," the brothers had traveled to 48 states, riding, roping and earning massive belt buckles at junior — and later, professional — rodeos.

On the road, their father did his best to make sure they didn't miss Sunday worship. He remembers thumbing through phone books in hotels across the country, looking for the nearest Church of Christ.

"God has blessed them so much over the years," Denny McCoy says of his sons. While the brothers were still in high school, a reporter from *Sports Illustrated* followed them on the rodeo circuit for a week and wrote a feature.

It's as if the Lord himself has been preparing them for the glaring lights of the media, their father says.

Scott Young met the McCoys when he served as youth minister for the Southwest Church of Christ in Ada, Okla.

"Their mom was really involved in children's ministry, teaching class, taking kids to Bible bowls," said Young, now worship minister for the Memorial Road church.

He remembers teaching a high school class about the Old Testament book of Proverbs and asking the students to share some modern-day words of wisdom. Jet McCoy's contribution: "Don't squat in your spurs."

"Denny and Janet have raised those kids to love God and to treat people right," Young says. "I've never heard anybody say a negative word about them. ... You have to make up stuff not to like them."



ERIK TRYGGESTAD

Scott Young prays with Cord and Jet McCoy at the Memorial Road church.

Bulls and Blood

If the Almighty has played a role in preparing Jet and Cord McCoy for the spotlight, he's also protected them.

That's especially true for Cord McCoy, who competed in the Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association and Professional Bull Riders' Built Ford Tough Series, qualifying for the PBR World Finals as recently as 2011.

In 2004, he suffered a fractured skull while riding a saddle bronc in Oklahoma City. He spent three days in a medically induced coma and eight months in speech therapy.

"I don't really remember what I forgot," he jokes when asked why he got back in the saddle after the injury. He thanks God



WWW.CORDMCCOY.COM

for his mercy and healing.

In late 2013, the PBR announced that Cord McCoy was retiring from bull riding.

"Now, see, that's questionable," he says. "There's no real retirement. You just don't get on bulls anymore."

"Yeah," his brother chimes in, "It's not like you had a 401(k) or anything."

THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT ... ON TV

The McCoys' competitors on the latest, "All-Stars" season of "The Amazing Race" seem to have a hard time not liking the cowboys — as they've raced from China to Sri Lanka to Italy.

"Clearly, these lone rangers are more group-oriented than they think, earning love from the other teams with little to no effort," wrote Justin Sedgwick, a reviewer for BuddyTV.com.

When they aren't trekking the globe, the brothers worship with the Fittstown Church of Christ, a 100-member congregation where their father and their brother-in-law, Roger Callison, serve as elders.

Jet McCoy and his wife of 10 years, Ashlee, are ranchers and have a 5-year-old daughter, Ti Silver. Cord McCoy raises bulls with his wife of three years, Sara.

"I was 30 when I got married," Cord McCoy says. "But I had prayed for my wife for a long time before that."

Jet McCoy teaches an adult Bible class in the Fittstown church's auditorium. He says he's continually astounded by the wisdom of his fellow Christians, especially on topics such as forgiveness.

Recently, he led a study of the fruit of the Spirit from Galatians 5:22-23. Needless to say, traits such as love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control can be rarities on "The Amazing Race."

"One of the older guys in our class made the comment ... that the fruit of the Spirit is a promise, not a command," Jet McCoy says. "When you have the Spirit, the Spirit produces these things in you. ... It's been a good class."

The brothers take the Bible lessons they've learned as children and adults into the race — a grueling, 30-day experience, captured by camera operators who accompany each team.

"But really, the stuff we're dealing with ... that all these millions of people are watching every week, it's exactly the same stuff that we all deal with on a day-to-day basis," Jet McCoy says. "How do you treat other people? How do you deal with stressful situations? How do you play the game?"

"Just because you're not on 'The Amazing Race,' you're not on TV, you're still being that same kind of example ... as a Christian, wherever you're at.

"I think sometimes it's easy for us to lose sight of that."



CBS BROADCASTING

Jet and Cord McCoy have raced across five continents on reality TV. Jet McCoy says he's not sure how many countries they've visited, but "I know I had to get new pages for my passport."

ALASKA: Life and death, light and dark in 'The Last Frontier'



Children watch from the bleachers during a session of the Alaska Statewide Lectureship at the Wasilla High School gymnasium.

FROM PAGE 1

congregation of about 250 organized the recent three-day lectureship. "Maybe the issues of faith and of destiny become a little more focused."

Bible lessons about light and dark resonate, too, in a place where the sun sometimes shines past midnight and other times gleams just a few hours a day, said David Boswell, minister for the Northern Lights Church of Christ in Fairbanks, about 350 miles north of Anchorage.

"Fairbanks has a really high depression rate, and it's based on a lack of Vitamin D, a lack of sunlight," said Boswell, who preaches for the nation's northernmost Church of Christ, near the Fort Wainwright Army post.

"Now, compare that to when the sun is up: People are happy," he added, recalling that church members celebrated last year's summer solstice with an all-night softball game.

'GOOD NEWS FOR A GREAT LAND'

The Anchorage Church of

Christ hosted the first statewide lectureship in 1964.

Then — as now — "Good News for a Great Land" was the concept.

"For 50 years, that simple but powerful idea has provided sound Bible lessons, hope, encouragement and fellowship to thousands of Christians," Valley church elders wrote in the 2014 lectureship program.

Judy Singleton's late father, Howard Singleton, spoke at that first lectureship, just a few months before the largest earthquake in U.S. history struck Alaska on Good Friday 1964.

"I remember the excitement of everybody coming and being there," said Judy Singleton, now the Anchorage church secretary.

A 1964 schedule noted: "If those attending from out of town will let us know in advance we will arrange for you to stay in homes of members."

Fifty years later, that hospitality remains the same, as the lectureship rotates among



Church members pray during the annual lectureship, which began in 1964 in Anchorage. The 2015 lectureship will be next May in Fairbanks, hosted by the Northern Lights Church of Christ.

larger congregations from Juneau to Homer to Fairbanks.

"Alaska is very unique in that it's a family," said Singleton, who has attended most of the lectureships but missed some when she served as a missionary to Europe and later South Korea. "The whole church is a family."

"Newer Christians who move in haven't caught on to that

because communication has become so easy," she added. "Back in those days, this was the only time we could talk to each other. So lectureship was just like family being able to be together."

'RUN UP AND HUG EACH OTHER'

In the shadow of snow-capped mountains and yellow

"Moose Crossing" signs, more than 450 Alaska church members representing at least 15 congregations came together for the milestone lectureship.

For three days, Christians young and old gathered in the Wasilla High School gymnasium — amid bright red basketball, hockey and wrestling banners and not far from former Gov. Sarah Palin's lakeside home — to sing, pray and rekindle their evangelistic fervor.

Many traveled hundreds of miles to attend.

But in Alaska, distance is relative, said Sally Smith, a longtime Valley church member.

Her husband, Glenn Smith, has been known to fly his 1957 Cessna 180 float plane to Midnight Sun Bible Camp just to drop off the newspaper and doughnuts.

"Fifty miles to people in the Lower 48 is a long way," Sally Smith said. "We do that every day, going to Anchorage."

Still, the miles that separate congregations can become a



PHOTOS BY BOBBY ROSS JR.

A moose grazes beside an Alaska highway, where a sign warns that 243 such creatures have been struck by Mat-Su Valley motorists since last July.



Loren Hollingsworth, a longtime missionary to Thailand and a seasonal member of the Valley Church of Christ in Wasilla, visits with Valley member Sally Smith, right. He spoke at a leadership seminar before the lectureship.

concern if Christians don't work hard to stay connected, said Mike Shero, minister for the Anchorage church.

"The best thing I can do evangelistic-wise for the church here in Alaska is to keep the preachers pumped," said Shero, who regularly chats with fellow ministers via Skype, an online video service.

At the lectureship, participants shared hugs, laughs and meals prepared by church volunteers.

"I have never experienced anything like this before," said Gordon Johnson, minister for the Juneau Church of Christ, who attended for the first time. "I felt welcomed as a newcomer, and brothers literally wrapped their arms around me. Handshakes were not an option.

"It's encouraging on a very emotional, very personal level," added the California transplant, who caught a commercial flight from the isolated state capital in southeast Alaska.

A 50th anniversary cake featured blue frosting in the

shape of Alaska and words from 2 Corinthians 4:13: "We also believe, and therefore also we speak."

"Oh, it's amazing up here in Alaska how important the lectureship really is," said Larry Smith, 77, an Anchorage church member who estimated he has made about 30 of the lectureships. "We all get together, and we all know each other. Our kids go away to a Christian college, and they see somebody from a church 500 miles away, and they run up and hug each other."

'A LOVING, UNIFIED BODY'

Almost nine years ago, Jeff and Dana Jaworski packed everything they could fit on a 16-foot trailer and set off — with their two dogs — on a 4,000-plus-mile drive from Texas.

Their destination: Anchor Point, a salmon and halibut fishing community in the Kenai Peninsula, about 200 miles south of Anchorage.

Their mission: work with

World Christian Broadcasting, whose 100,000-watt Alaska transmitters share the Gospel in Chinese, Russian and English and can reach seekers 5,000 miles away.

As the Jaworskis see it, God has blessed their journey with three children — Leif, 8; Nate, 5; and Kathryn, 2 — and a close-knit, statewide church family.

"Despite conflict and chal-



Church members sing during the lectureship before children and teens are released for special programs geared toward their age groups.

'I felt welcomed as a newcomer, and brothers literally wrapped their arms around me.'

— **Gordon Johnson**, minister, Juneau Church of Christ



Isaac Kuenning, right, the son of Robert and Carol Kuenning, enjoys fellowship while ice skating with fellow teens from churches all over Alaska.

lenges, we seem to work it out and stay tight," Dana Jaworski said of Alaska church members. "It's a very loving, unified body of believers."

It's a state where Christians choose to focus on what they have in common, such as the "roadkill ministries" offered by at least two congregations, church leaders said.

Through those ministries,

the Nikiski Church of Christ in southern Alaska and the Eielson Church of Christ in North Pole, Alaska, near Fairbanks, harvest moose struck on the highway and feed the hungry.

Although 565 miles separate Anchor Point from Fairbanks, the distance is much shorter relationally, the Jaworskis said.

That's because Christians make the 12-hour drive down south each year to fish and stay in members' homes.

Besides fishing, Jeff Jaworski hunts caribou, moose and bears. His partners include Cy Cox, the Nikiski preacher, and Tony Cloud, minister for the Soldotna Church of Christ.

"I won't hunt with anyone who's not my brother," Jeff Jaworski said. "At that time, out there in God's wild ... he's providing for me, and it is deeply spiritual."

At the lectureship each spring, the Jaworskis recognize most of the faces.

"It's like a family reunion once a year," Jeff Jaworski said.



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In West Africa, a church charges its first elders to love and serve God's children 'as Christ has loved you.'



PHOTOS BY ERIK TRYGGESTAD

The elders of the Nukafu Church of Christ — Ishmael Saffo-Addy, Hubert Komede Matri, Mensah Joe Gbenyo and Komlan Noukounou — kneel as ministers pray for them in Lomé, Togo.

New elders 'move forward together' in Togo

BY ERIK TRYGGESTAD | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

LOMÉ, Togo

Crouched on their knees, heads bowed, eyes shut, the four elders of the Nukafu Church of Christ grasped each other's hands.

Above them, a line of preachers asked God to grant the newly appointed leaders wisdom and strength as they shepherd a flock of 225 souls in this West African capital.

"I charge you to love and serve Christ's people ... as Christ has loved you," George Akpabli, a ministry trainer from

neighboring Benin, told the elders. "Open your life to them, sharing their joys, their burdens, their labors, their faith."

After the prayer, the four men rose and gave a similar charge to four younger men — the church's first deacons. Then a group of still younger Christians took the stage — and taught them all a lesson.

Setting up rows of plastic chairs, members of the church's youth group formed a tiny congregation, singing hymns and praising God in a mix of French and *Ewe*, the local language.

One of the youths, portraying the preacher, announced that four of his

peers would serve as the church's elders. The youths quickly changed the scene to one of the elders' homes.

The elder, played by teenager Basile Kpeto, talked to his wife, played by Akpene Koudanou, and, after some discussion, began strutting around the stage.

"He is saying, now that he is an elder, perhaps he should carry himself in this fashion," said Martin Adjevi, a minister from Ghana. Seated on the front row, Adjevi



Mensah

and his wife, Marie, translated the skit into English for visitors from the U.S. — who struggled to hear them over the audience's laughter.

"Now he's firing everybody," Adjevi said, stifling a chuckle at the youths' over-the-top performance. Soon, the self-appointed "head elder" was seated at the front of the mock congregation, heckling the preacher as his wife sent text messages from her phone.

Esperance Mensah, the church's minister, helped the youths write the skit — a cautionary tale for his new elders

CONTINUED



Youths including Basile Kpeto, left, and Akpene Koudanou perform a skit about an elder who thinks too highly of himself and destabilizes the church.

Elders must be 'good people'

CONTINUED

about godly leadership run amok.

It wasn't what Komlan Noukounou, one of the four men appointed to lead the church, expected to witness during the installation ceremony.

"I was very shocked," he said, but "I know that good people today can become bad people tomorrow." The skit stressed that the church's new leaders "have to put our house together, to move forward together for the glory of God."

A 42-YEAR PRAYER ANSWERED

It was a day of celebration for the "mother church" in Togo, a tiny, narrow, former French colony sandwiched with Benin between the English-speaking nations of Ghana and Nigeria.

Launched 42 years ago by a handful of Togolese and Ghanaian Christians, the Nukafu church has birthed congregations throughout this country of 6.6 million people, now home to about 40 Churches of Christ.

Christians from across the region — dressed in a mix of Western suits and vivid, African

apparel — gathered for the celebration. Church members coiled glossy ribbon around the building's pillars and adorned its stage with stick-on Christmas bows.

After Sunday morning worship, vocal groups performed as church members in the crowd — including the elders' wives — clapped and whooped in appreciation of God's blessings.

Holding video cameras, cell phones and iPads above their heads, the Christians snapped photos of Paul Gbedemah, a gray-haired Togolese who stood on the stage alongside his family — his traditional robes barely brushing the tops of his dress socks.

Known as "Tall Paul," he helped plant the congregation in Lomé after studying ministry at a school of preaching in Ghana's capital, Accra. Walter Bryan, a visiting minister from the U.S., agreed to help him find support. As they traveled across America, Bryan and his wife, Ruth, raised funds for the work.

But the Togolese congregation lost most of its members when a totalitarian ruler made it illegal to worship in a church not registered

with the government.

Heartbroken, Gbedemah went to the Nsawam Road Church of Christ in Accra and "made his own Macedonian call for us to come and help him," said George Akpabli, a Ghanaian evangelist.

Akpabli responded to that call, moving to Lomé in the mid-1980s

and working with Gbedemah and a small group of believers who met in secret.

For many years, the church struggled to survive.

Gbedemah was arrested for

leading an unlicensed congregation when he attempted to apply for a visa to attend a church conference.

Eventually, Togo's government changed and the church gained legal status. Togolese ministers, including Dey Adomekoe and Koffi Koudahe, helped build up the Nukafu church before establishing congregations in other parts of the country.

Bryan and other church members from the U.S. visited



Gbedemah



After Sunday worship, a chorus of young women sings as the Nukafu church celebrates the installation of its first elders and deacons.



Samuel Ayim offers a devotional before the Lord's Supper.

'le' – today and tomorrow

regularly, and their fundraising efforts became the African Mission Fund, overseen by the Wilshire Church of Christ in Oklahoma City and supported by congregations across the country.

In 1995, Akpabli moved to Benin and launched the Bible Training Center, which prepares men for ministry in French-speaking African nations. Esperance Mensah, a native of Togo, was a top student at the the school. He stayed in Benin and worked with Akpabli, training dozens of preachers for his home nation.

A few years ago, after the death of the Nukafu church's pulpit minister, Mensah returned to Togo to preach for the church. He helped launch a radio ministry, with support from World Radio Gospel Broadcasts, and a Christian primary school that meets in the church building, with support from the African Mission Fund.

Mensah also helped prepare the congregation to install elders and deacons. Akpabli and missionaries from the U.S. taught classes on the leadership practiced in the first century church, described in New Testament books including Titus

and 1 Timothy. The church chose four men — Noukounou, Ishmael Saffo-Addy, Komede Hubert Matri and Mensah Joe Gbenyo — to serve as its first elders.

Gbedemah, now 74, respectfully declined to serve as an elder — a task for younger men, he said.

At the ceremony, he thanked his wife — who established a vibrant women's ministry for the church — his fellow evangelists and U.S. supporters including Bryan, who died four months before the installation at age 100.

Seated on the front row, Marie Adjévi paraphrased "Tall Paul's" tearful remarks in English.

"What he wanted to see, he has seen with his own eyes," she said. "So he can die today. He thanks God that he lived to see this day."

THE FUTURE OF THE CHURCH

The night after the installation, the four elders gathered in the home of Samuel and Patricia Ayim for dinner. Samuel Ayim, a banker and native of Ghana, is a member and steadfast supporter of the Nukafu church.

They discussed the future —

their concern that growth among Churches of Christ in West Africa seems to have slowed in recent years and their desire to keep young Christians motivated and evangelistic.

Since their installation, the new elders have taken oversight of the church's ongoing projects, including the expansion of its building, Mensah said. They hope to "create a setting of encouragement for the craftsmen and other workers in the church," he said.

The elders oversee Bible classes for visitors and newly baptized Christians and are developing initiatives to help church members become mature followers of Christ.

Komlan Noukounou said that he and his fellow elders pray for the young men who portrayed them in the cautionary drama — that one day they will take the stage again as they become the next generation of deacons and elders.

"We are committed to work hard to keep the church going," Noukounou said, "to do our work with humility ... to make this church a source of blessing to many people."



Church members hang a sign before the elder installation, citing Acts 14:23, "Paul and Barnabas appointed elders ... in each church and, with prayer and fasting, committed them to the Lord, in whom they had put their trust."



A sign outside the Nukafu church tells congregants that their bodies "are temples of the Holy Spirit" and displays clothing unacceptable during worship.



More than 600 people from across West Africa shared communion and sang praises during Sunday worship before the installation of the church's elders.



After a celebration lunch, elder Hubert Komede Matri heads home.

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AUTHOR, THEOLOGIAN N.T. Wright discusses threats and challenges for followers of Jesus in a post-modern era.

Christians must 'be the Good News in the present'

Second of two parts

BY LYNN McMILLON | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

Tom Wright doesn't mind if people nod off while he speaks. After all, the apostle Paul, whom the renowned Bible scholar often discusses, once preached so long that a man named Eutychus fell asleep and tumbled from a third-story window. Eutychus lived, the preaching continued, and the young church "celebrated the meal which speaks of the dying and rising of Jesus himself," Wright wrote in his study guide "Acts for Everyone."

There were few, if any, bleary eyes as Wright addressed a crowd of 2,700 recently at Oklahoma Christian University in Oklahoma City. It was one of four speaking appearances in the U.S. during a tour promoting his latest scholarly work, "Paul and the Faithfulness of God."

He discussed Pilate's question to Jesus in John 18, "What is truth?" Wright told the audience that "truth is what happens when God speaks his Word." It doesn't come from Caesar, as Pilate believed, and "God's truth is the new reality that is bursting in on Pilate's world."

In this second part of our interview, we present questions asked by *The Christian Chronicle* and topics discussed during Wright's visit to Oklahoma Christian. Read part one online at www.christianchronicle.org.

How can we effectively communicate the Gospel to our generation?

The Christian message is not a theory. The Christian message is not advice. The Christian message is news.

That word is "Good News," "Gospel." That's what it's all about. And so many parts of our culture want to turn it back into just good advice. So when we look at the plural challenge of our culture, with their many questions about God, that's good. We don't simply teach with words; we do it with lives, and with prayer, and



LYNN McMILLON

N.T. "Tom" Wright speaks about truth and the Gospel at Oklahoma Christian University.

with love, and with generosity, with what many have been doing, with mission trips and service trips and so on.

Somehow we have to navigate all the good things that are here and make sure, in embracing those, we do so in a way which is about generosity, is about service, is about justice, which is about helping those less fortunate than ourselves.

What challenges do we face as we seek to share this Good News?

The post-modernists — like the modernists — want us to stop talking about Jesus. They want us to stop talking about the thing that actually happened in real time in this real world.

They want us to talk about, "Oh, here's a religious experience you might have." We have to go on saying no, something *actually happened* in history when Jesus of Nazareth rose from the dead. The world was called to account and God's new world was born.

The challenge, then, for us — our vocational challenge today and in the rest of our lives — is to live between the news that happened then and the news that will happen at the end. It is the challenge for us to be the Good News in the present.

Globally, what serious threats does Christianity face?

There are, of course, well-publicized attacks on the Christian faith all over the world, especially from some extreme and violent, would-be Muslim groups (though most Muslims worldwide would reject such attitudes). This has been greatly exacerbated by the last 10 years of Western attacks on countries in the Middle East, which Muslim extremists have been easily able to portray as "Christians attacking Muslims" and thus appearing to justify a reaction.

At a much deeper level, the serious threats the Christian faith faces today are the result of the global power of the post-Enlightenment Western nations and the fact that the churches have so often failed to speak the truth to power within their own contexts. This is true of so-called "liberal" churches in one direction (watering down the faith to fit a modernist agenda) and of so-called "conservative" churches in another direction (offering a privatized and detached "spirituality" and "salvation.")

As long as these continue, there will be as much undermining of Christianity from within its traditional heartlands as there will be attacks from outside.

How are you able to write for popular and scholarly audiences?

I have been fortunate to spend much of my life studying and teaching the Bible, and over the years I have developed various ways of explaining things, which have developed into lectures and seminars and so into books and articles.

For some reason, I seem to have a gift of producing words, sentences and paragraphs quite easily. I enjoy writing, as long as I've done the background reading and sorted out what precisely I want to say.

I have always enjoyed poetry (both reading it and, occasionally, writing it). A love of words and their rhythm has spilled over into my writing.

I don't find much difficulty switching between the 'popular' and 'scholarly' writing. It all depends on having a picture in your mind of who you're writing for, and making sure you are communicating with them and not going way over people's heads when writing at a 'popular' level or missing out on key complex discussions when writing for scholars.

What is a favorite scripture?

One of my favorite passages in all of the Bible is Isaiah 11, which is the vision of the messianic kingdom, in which — under the rule of the kingdom — the wolf will lie down with the lamb, the cow and the lion will feed, a little child shall lead them and the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.

How did the waters cover the sea? The waters *are* the sea. There's a sense that God wants to drench the world with his own presence of love without stopping it from being itself — still being his creation and being itself.

This is the mystery of the Trinity, actually, that God makes a world that is other than himself in order to affirm and embrace it with his love.

SEE A VIDEO of Oklahoma Christian University President John deSteiguer's interview with N.T. Wright and Wright's speeches on campus at oc.edu/ntwright.



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HIGHER EDUCATION

CROWLEY'S RIDGE COLLEGE

PARAGOULD, Ark. — For the third spring break in a row, Crowley's Ridge College sent a group to work with the Christian nonprofit Hope for Haiti's Children.

Ken Bever, a member of the Northeast Church of Christ in Cincinnati, founded the Haiti ministry.

Crowley's Ridge students served at a children's home, conducted a Vacation Bible School, painted a school building, built a fence, gardened and spent many hours with the children, organizers said.



SETH PARNELL

Chase Almond plays with a child in Haiti.

HERITAGE CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

FLORENCE, Ala. — The Jenkins Institute held its fourth "Better" conference recently at Heritage Christian University.

The event provides instruction in the craft of sermon delivery, said Dale Jenkins, minister for the Spring Meadows Church of Christ in Spring Hill, Tenn.

The conference drew 137 ministers to hear David Shannon, Kirk Brothers, Jay Lockhart, Keith Parker, Dan Winkler, Craig Evans, Lonnie Jones, Cecil May Jr., Jeff Jenkins and Dale Jenkins.

LIPSCOMB UNIVERSITY

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — Leonard Allen, director of Abilene Christian University Press, has been named dean of Lipscomb University's College of Bible and Ministry.

His wife, Holly Allen, director of the Child and Family Studies Program at John Brown University in Siloam Springs, Ark., also will join the Lipscomb faculty, Provost W. Craig Bledsoe announced. Lipscomb President Randy Lowry



Allen



MALCOLM YAWN

Serviceman surprises daughter at Christian school

Lyrique Alteus, a second-grader at Christian Home and Bible School in Mount Dora, Fla., hugs her father after he surprised her during a school chapel assembly after nine months overseas. Air Force Tech. Sgt. Wil Alteus was residing in New Jersey as a single parent when he was called overseas. He flew his daughter to Florida in August to live with his sister and attend the Christian school.

said, "I eagerly anticipate the way Leonard and Holly will serve this university and how their expertise will help us connect our program to the Churches of Christ and our community as well as to strengthen family studies in this region."

OKLAHOMA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

OKLAHOMA CITY — Oklahoma Christian University is expanding from three to five academic colleges — the College of Biblical Studies, the College of Business Administration, the College of Engineering and Computer Science, the College of Liberal Arts and the

College of Natural and Health Sciences.

"Our academic and leadership teams have been planning, praying and discussing how to build on OC's legacy of exceptional success in science, engineering and business," said Scott LaMascus, vice president for academic affairs. "Our new colleges will focus on growth in these areas and implement strategic planning to help us serve more students."

PEPPERDINE UNIVERSITY

MALIBU, Calif. — Rick Marrs, dean of Seaver College, the undergraduate

SPOTLIGHT

York plans \$3.5 million performing arts center

YORK, Neb. — York College plans to build a \$3.5 million performing arts center.

The college, associated with Churches of Christ, has received \$2.2 million in gifts and pledges toward the total project cost and expects to begin construction on the 12,000-square-foot facility this fall.

The center will be focused on the day-to-day needs of music and communications students.

A \$2 million gift by an anonymous donor kick-started the project.

Other major commitments include a grant from the York Community Foundation and a gift from R L Craft Roofing Company of Harlan, Iowa.

"Reaching out to our community has been a hallmark of our programs, and a new performing arts center will help us do this better than before," York President Steve Eckman said.



IMAGE PROVIDED BY YORK COLLEGE

An artist's rendering of the planned center.

college at Pepperdine University, has been named provost of the university. Marrs will succeed Darryl Tippens,

Pepperdine's chief academic officer since 2001.

Tippens revealed plans last year to retire from Pepperdine and return to Abilene Christian University in Texas, where he'll serve as ACU's first

Distinguished Scholar of Faith, Learning and Literature.



Marrs

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

Memorial

Joseph Robert (Bob) Bryson

Joseph Robert (Bob) Bryson, 92, passed away Sunday, March 16, 2014.

He was born July 12, 1921, in Woodbury, Tenn. During World War II Bob honorably served in the U.S. Air Force. He was a retired minister of the Church of Christ and had served at Forrest Park Church of Christ in Valdosta, Ga., in the 1960s. In 1957, along with a fellow minister, he established the Pan-American Mission, which began in Panama and later expanded to other Central American countries. He and his wife Robbie were the driving force behind the missionary work in Latin America for over fifty years by coordinating evangelistic and medical campaigns and through fundraising for

the Bible School of the Americas and Children's Home in Panama.

Memorials may be made to Latin American Missions, PO Box 2330, Valdosta, GA 31604-2330.

Honoring

Phil and Mary Watson

The Zambia Mission Fund Board of Trustees honored Phil and Mary Watson for their years of service with Zambia Christian College at their board meeting in Oklahoma City.

Phil Watson ran dozens and dozens of board meetings for Zambia Christian College, but for this meeting he got to sit and watch until the crowd insisted that he come forward.

In addition to the honor, the Board of



ERIK TRYGGSTAD

Trustees announced the establishment of the Phil and Mary Watson Endowment Fund that will be a part of Zambia Mission Fund's proportional endowment.

The endowment is to help support education, orphan care and evangelism in Zambia.

Donations to the fund can be made online at www.zambiamission.org/watson.

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

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

NEWSMAKERS

NAMED: Lorna J. Hutcheson and Robert L. Solomon II to board of trustees of Ohio Valley University, Vienna, W.Va. **Joy Jones** as Vice President for Academic Affairs and **Marty Davis** as director of marketing for Ohio Valley University, Vienna, W.Va. **Jeff McCormack**, dean of the College of Natural and Health Sciences and **Byron Newberry**, dean of the College of Engineering and Computer Science for Oklahoma Christian University, Oklahoma City, Okla. **Sam Harrell** as Offensive Coordinator for Fort Worth Christian School in North Richland Hills, Texas.



Hutcheson



Solomon



Jones

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

ANNIVERSARIES: 62nd: Robert and Carleene Whinery, Dill City, Okla. 60th: John and Joan Sikes, Amarillo Texas. 59th: Joel and Shirley Johnson, Forest Park, Ga. 51st: Gene and Rita Sewell, Amarillo, Texas. 50th: Bobby and Geneva Baird, Batesville, Miss. Oscar and Margaret Easley, Florence, Ala. Tom and Brenda Eslinger, Waco, Texas.



Davis

BIRTHDAYS: 100th: Eloise Coburn, Lubbock, Texas. Naomi Cook, Plano, Texas. 99th: Audra Duncan, Oberline, Kans. 88th: Benna Gordon, Lubbock, Texas. 84th: Rusty Russwurm, Lubbock, Texas. 78th: Nancy Alls, Lubbock, Texas.



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PASSAGES: Virginia "Ginny" Gibson, 18, Apr. 14, Bowling Green, Ky. Frances L. Patterson, 93, Feb. 20, Mesquite, Texas. Billy D. Schrivner, 84, Mar. 12, Jackson, Tenn. Ruth L. Stephenson, 94, Mar. 6, Centerville, Tenn. J. Larry Williams, Apr. 16, Morrilton, Ark.



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May 6-29 Eastern European Mission dinners. Various events at various locations. Call (800) 486-1818 or see www.eem.org/join-us-for-dinner

May 8 Fourth Annual Spring Apologetics Lectures. "Genesis 1 and Lessons from Space." Grande Pointe Conference Center, Vienna, W.Va. Contact (877) 350-9222 or www.warrenapologeticscenter.org.

May 19-21 33rd Annual Sermon Seminar. Austin Graduate School of Theology, Austin, Texas. Contact (512) 476-2772 or www.sermonseminar.com.

May 23-26 Catalyst Retreat. Ages 18-29. Camp Yamhill, Ore. Contact (503) 662-3710 or www.campyamhill.org.

May 25 90th Anniversary, Cedar Crest Church of Christ, Dallas, Texas. Contact (214) 943-1340 or www.cedarcrestcoc.com.

May 31 Teacher Workshop. Bonner Springs Church of Christ in Kansas. Contact www.bonnerrspringscoc.org or (913) 422-5529.

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

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 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.

COMPLETE CALENDAR at www.christianchronicle.org.

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THE CHILDREN'S HOME
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This message sponsored by The Children's Home Foundation, supporting the vision and mission of The Children's Home of Lubbock.

Help Wanted: Roof Repair

The Page Church of Christ in Page, Arizona, is a small congregation of 5-10 members seeking help in funding the repair of recent roof damage.

Total cost of the project is \$15,300.

Anyone willing to help, please contact:

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EDITORIAL

For Ukraine, no turning back

The Soviet Union prepared eastern Ukraine to receive the Gospel.

During the Cold War, those who disagreed with state-enforced communism were given two choices — exile in Siberia or labor in the coal mines of Ukraine's Donbas region, said Evgen Sosnovsky, a miner from the eastern Ukrainian town of Dobropole. As a result, the mines were full of "free thinkers," Sosnovsky said.

When Ukraine became a free nation in 1991, missionaries from Churches of Christ found fertile soil in the deep holes. Swiftly, eastern Ukraine became the "Bible Belt" of the former Soviet world.

Sosnovsky spoke to *The Christian Chronicle* in 2011 during a church conference in Crimea — a peninsula that now flies the Russian flag.

Protests have spread to eastern Ukraine, where pro-Russian militias have attempted to seize government buildings and break away from the country. Across the Internet, words of anger fly between Russians and Ukrainians.



Sosnovsky

That's why we are encouraged deeply to hear of a recent unity meeting in Kramatorsk, Ukraine, between members of Churches of Christ from both nations. Jeff Abrams, minister for the Tuscumbia Church of Christ in Alabama, and George Spurlock, elder of the Azalea City Church of Christ in Semmes, Ala., helped organize and attended the event. (See Abrams' report on Page 3.)

"Unity — this is our prayer, our dream," Abrams told the 200 souls who gathered in Kramatorsk. "We shall not be judged by the color of our national flags but by the content of our character. ... When the devil seeks to divide us, I say 'no.' You say 'nyet!' ... To God's irresistible dream that we be one, united church ... I say 'yes.' You say 'da!'"

We pray for the free thinkers of eastern Ukraine.

Regardless which flag flies over them, we are confident their faith will not be uprooted. The people have learned the truth, and the truth has set them free. No government, regime or power on earth can change that.



ERIK TRYGGESTAD

An assortment of fruits and vegetables — on display at a public market in Vitoria, Brazil.

Trusting in Christ's real security bears fruit

"Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing?"

— Matthew 6:25

Bills. Clothing. Mortgages. Food. These basic needs make us all lose sleep.

But Jesus pleads for us to lean upon his shoulders and trust him to provide. What other security do we need?

Consider what you have been told is security in this life — including money to spend on life's pleasures. Do these pleasures secure happiness?

How the devil has been deceiving us with the same old trick beats me.

If money can buy happiness, why then are millionaires left with broken homes? Why do they take drugs as a means to run away from the self-imposed complications of life? And yet, year after year, people kill for money. Divorces happen. Children run away from home. People sell their souls in the name of security.

Consider the blessings Jesus freely gives us in

Galatians 5:22-23:

- **Love:** Selfless and true, love for God and love for each other.

- **Joy:** A feeling of true pleasure and happiness.

- **Peace:** Freedom from disturbance, tranquility.

- **Long-suffering:** Showing patience in spite of troubles, especially those caused by other people.

- **Kindness:** Being friendly, generous, considerate.

- **Goodness:** Showing virtue, righteousness, morality, ethics, uprightness, integrity, principle, rectitude and dignity.

- **Faithfulness:** True fidelity.

- **Gentleness:** Considerate and kindly, amiable and tender.

- **Self-control:** Holding in check one's emotions and desires — especially in difficult situations.

If one were to sell these blessings for money, how much do you think they would be worth? How do you quantify these qualities?

They simply are priceless.

IZU EGE is minister for the Sheffield Church of Christ in England.

In the Word



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Cold hands and warm hearts in rural Alaska: reflecting on fellowship by the Anchor River

Large chunks of ice and debris rush by in the swollen waters of the Anchor River. I watch as two eagles spar, dive and scree out their distinct cries ... the higher pitched male and lower toned, female.

Beautiful spruce, cottonwood and birch trees line the banks of the river beneath a metal trellis bridge built in 1949. Two teenagers are starting fires in the fire rings at the nearby picnic spots.

It is springtime in Anchor Point, Alaska (population 1,845), and that means we are experiencing what locals call “The Fifth Season” — otherwise known as Breakup.

Breakup is the time when the rivers thaw and begin to flow, snow melts, and mud boots are necessary footwear. It also happens to be my husband’s 40th birthday.

Our church family and friends are meeting at the “place where we baptize folks” to surprise him.

As I watch the river’s flow, I remember a baptism in April 2011. My husband, Jeff, was the newly appointed half-time minister. A young man named Josh married a girl in our congregation and felt the conviction of the Spirit to make changes in his life.

After some study, this Alaskan-born-and-bred boy decided to forgo the baptistery in the building and brave the cold, breakup waters of the river.

As Jeff quickly “plunged him to victory”, ice was bobbing past them both.

Josh’s baptism hearkened back to the days when the church building was merely a daylight basement and didn’t have a baptistery. The old-timers tell tales of breaking ice in order to immerse new converts or driving nearly two hours north to a sister congregation.

When a person decided to follow Jesus, their decision had to come with a certainty of conviction. This certainty is one of the many virtues that still set this body apart more than 60 years later.

The Anchor Point congregation began meeting in the early 1950s as families moved into the area to homestead. Initially, they met in homes, and then they moved to a small red building that was later relocated in Homer when the basement was dug. For nearly a decade, the congregation actually met underground

until sufficient funds could be raised to complete the building. Now we meet in the building that was begun in the late 1960s.

Views



Dana Jaworski

The same hearty attitude that built the church is the one that keeps it going. Mary Haakenson Perry, a veteran Bible class teacher and part of one of the homesteading families of the 1950s, remembers a tight-knit group that “supported each other no matter what challenge arose.”

Innumerable challenges can — and do — arise when a family is attempting to carve an existence out of the Alaskan wilderness. In those early days one could find church members helping to hand dig wells, raise roofs, fell trees and build fish net sites.

Some members lacked running water, electricity or phone lines. Roads were unpaved, and at certain times of the year travel was difficult or impossible.

Time together in worship and fellowship was essential to survival in the harsh environment. Much like today, there was a deep sense of community.

Here, disagreements about scriptural interpretation and even outright conflict are handled with a long-term focus on bodily unity. When a family’s ability to thrive depends on their relationships with their neighbors, they can’t afford to be divided.

When there is not an option to go down the road to another congregation, you tend to give God time and room to work.

The riverside party begins, and the 60-plus people that are gathered are delighted they helped surprise their preacher and friend, Jeff.

The tables are overflowing with food. With a healthy 70 to 80 people on most Sunday mornings — and many more that come for the summertime — we are a growing congregation in rural Alaska.

Our springtime get-together is a toasty 52 degrees. Everyone needs to warm their hands by the fire, but as I look around at the faces of my beloved brothers and sisters, I see the warmth in their hearts.

DANA JAWORSKI is a mother of three and the wife of Jeff, who preaches for the Anchor Point Church of Christ in Alaska.

LETTERS

Praise for column on LTC

Thank you, Tonya Patton, for your insightful and on-the-mark column. (“Seek the true prize in LTC, Lads to Leaders,” Page 3, May).

Leadership Training for Christ has been a wonderful blessing to my congregation in so many ways. This program has helped grow our children into young people who love their Lord and want to be his servant. But Satan also has been active in our program. Being very mindful of the many ways he can work in parents, children and coaches is so important. Bathing our LTC in prayer is vital. And sometimes stopping in the middle of a practice and reminding the children why we’re here ... needs to happen.

Cathy Anderson | College Station, Texas

New churches growing in Mexico

The Dialogue “In Mexico, ‘souls are starving to know God’” (Page 23, May) pointed to a great need and at the same time was encouraging, interesting and very well-written. Judy and Jim Taylor are such great examples of faith and of people using their gifts to serve God.

Regarding the need for preachers in the Baja Peninsula, it may be interesting for readers to know that under the leadership of Alabama-based Baja Missions there have been nine churches — soon to be 10 — established in the Baja in the past decade or so. All have full-time preaching ministers and are blessed to have many mission trips involving benevolence, medical clinics, building projects and leadership training from churches all over the U.S.

Bob Bohannon | Arlington, Texas

(In response to discussion of difficulties helping the poor improve their lives), baptized followers of Christ who have the promised Holy Spirit living inside them are capable of incredible things — even in the midst of difficult circumstances. God has promised to take care of his children and does not wish them to be dependent on anyone but him.

Bart Dodson | Oklahoma City

VOICES

Were you baptized at camp? Please share your experiences.

Asked by Erik Tryggstad, editor. (See more Christian camping stories and a list of camps on Page 32.)



I was baptized in the Medina River at Camp Bandina, in Texas, in 1972 when I was 10 years old. The counselors had me call my mother first, to get permission.

Janice Enlow | Newnan, Ga.



I was baptized at Palmetto Bible Camp in Cleveland, S.C. Thirty something years later, at 3 a.m., I got the privilege of baptizing my middle son, Tyler, in the same water.

Kevin Wilson Sr. | Belvedere, S.C.



Yes, at Beaver’s Bend State Park in Oklahoma, with our camp for the Dale Church of Christ. There were six of us baptized at about 10 p.m. in the frigid water ... but many of us remarked that walking in chest deep in that water we didn’t feel the cold at all.

Kelli Milette | Dale, Okla.



I was baptized in the Sierra Bible Camp swimming pool in Canyon Dam, Calif., by my grandfather, Ordo Clothier. Best memory ever!

Lisa Borden | Portland, Ore.

Sound financial policy is biblical, new books say

Believe it or not, economics figures into the core of many theological discussions. It always has.

In Acts 6, for example, economics drove the discussion of the daily distribution of food and the Grecian widows.

Such discussions continue today, as followers of Christ contemplate their role in addressing income inequality and social justice.

Two recently published books study financial issues through the dual lens of economic theory and the Bible.

“Godonomics: How to Save Our Country and Protect Your Wallet Through Biblical Principles of Finance” is written by Chad Hovind, an evangelist in Cincinnati.

Once one gets past what could be considered a regrettable title, the author advises the reader on what he believes God would say to certain well-known figures — both past and present — on economic and financial questions. Each chapter begins with the title “What God Would Say to ...?”

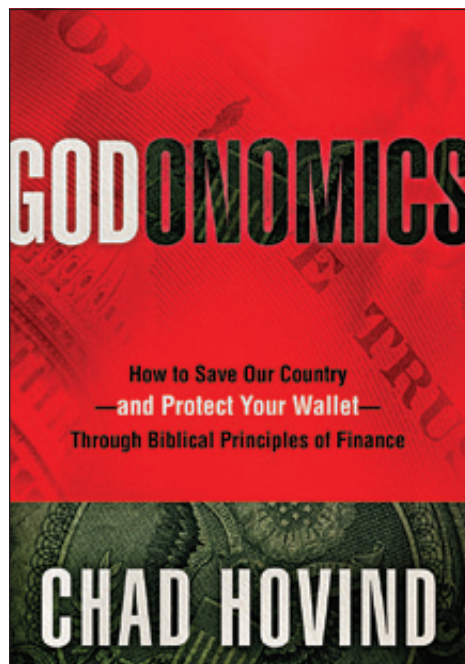
Using this structure, Hovind covers a broad swath, with topics such as budgeting, unintended consequences, the money supply, socialism, capitalism and the Internal Revenue Service.

He also has God addressing everyone from Scottish philosopher and “The Wealth of Nations” author Adam Smith to revolutionary socialist Karl Marx. U.S. president and “New Deal” pioneer Franklin Roosevelt and contemporary theologian Jim Wallis also get chapters.

Hovind begins with the premise that not only does Scripture provide adequate support for the ideas of free markets, personal freedom and private property, but also that God endorses capitalism.

To make his argument, he cites passages that uphold the principles of private property, incentive and freedom. For instance, the eighth and 10th commandments (theft and coveting) are used to make the case for property rights, which are essential for economic freedom and prosperity.

Paul’s famous injunction, “The one who is unwilling to work shall not eat,” from 2 Thessalonians 3:10, is used to give scriptural sanction to motivating with proper incentives.



★★★★★

Chad Hovind. **Godonomics: How to Save Our Country — and Protect Your Wallet — Through Biblical Principles of Finance.** Colorado Springs, Colo.: Multnomah Books, 2013. 340 pages. \$21.99.

Once this foundation is laid, the book’s conclusions are fairly predictable, even to the most casual observer of economic debate. Free markets are good — even holy. Any degree of government intervention in the economy is bad, even un-Christian.

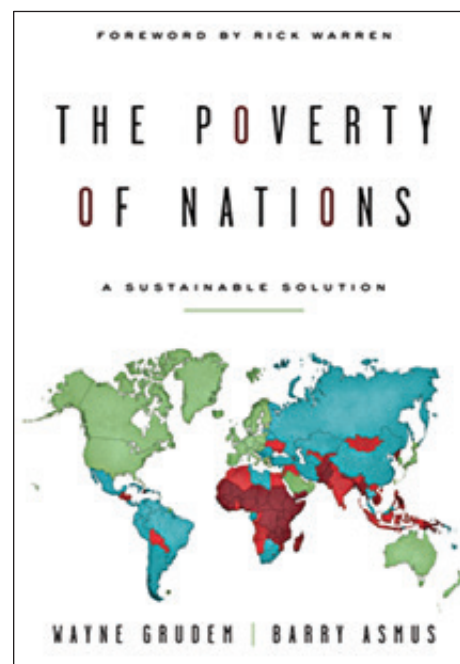
While his conclusions are economically sound, Hovind’s way of placing God’s stamp of approval on his economic arguments may irritate some readers.

A subtler approach is taken in **“The Poverty of Nations: A Sustainable Solution,”** written by Wayne Grudem, a theologian, and Barry Asmus, an

economist. This is a heavily researched work that relies on the prior work of social and economic scholars and is infused with biblical references.

Like “Godonomics,” it is unapologetically free market, but the authors come across in a less pugnacious way.

The book is the result of a years-long project to “combine the findings of modern economics with the teachings of the Bible in an attempt to solve the



★★★★★

Barry Asmus and Wayne Grudem. **The Poverty of Nations: A Sustainable Solution.** Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway Books, 2013. 402 pages. \$19.99.

age-old problem of world poverty,” the authors contend. Their research led to the development of 78 factors that they claim will lead any nation out of poverty.

In short, the authors make the case that free markets, private property, limited and accountable government

and a God-believing, moral populace will lead to economic prosperity.

Grudem and Asmus do an excellent job arguing that a free market system is preferable to any other way to arrange an economy. They use examples from history and data from empirical studies to make their case that economic freedom and personal freedom are prerequisites to the economic prosperity of any nation.

Based on their research, they claim there is simply no other economic system that has brought broad segments of the population in any country from poverty to prosperity.

They lament that so many well-meaning Christians work with poverty relief agencies that run counter to a free-market system. History should teach us that those who love the poor should love free markets, they argue.

In recent years, citizens of the United States have seemed willing to turn over much of their economic freedom — and by extension their personal freedom — to the government in exchange for promises of economic security. The messages in both of these books are badly needed.

Both end with similar conclusions, but if you read only one of these books, read “The Poverty of Nations.” Of the two, it has the potential to become a classic.

JIM SHELTON is a professor of accounting in the Paul R. Carter College of Business at Harding University in Searcy, Ark. He teaches accounting and business ethics and also directs the college’s summer program in London.

In Print



Jim Shelton

NEW AND NOTeworthy

EMPLOYMENT

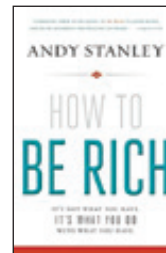
Anita Agers-Brooks. **First Hired, Last Fired: How to Become Irreplaceable in Any Job Market.** Abilene, Texas: Leafwood Publishers, 2013. 224 pages. \$14.99.



Each of this book’s 12 chapters studies the work ethic of a Bible character, and explores how Christians today can exhibit the same positive qualities in their jobs. Agers-Brooks, a business and inspirational coach, uses fictional anecdotes — contrasting typical employee behavior with that of Christian employees — and ends each chapter with reflection questions.

MONEY MANAGEMENT

Andy Stanley. **How to Be Rich: It’s Not What You Have. It’s What You Do With What You Have.** Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 2013. 160 pages. \$14.99.



According to this author, an Atlanta preacher and best-selling author, we are all rich. Most of us just don’t know how to use our money, time or gifts for God’s kingdom.

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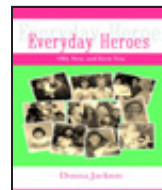
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AUTHORS FROM CHURCHES OF CHRIST

PRAYER/DEVOTIONAL

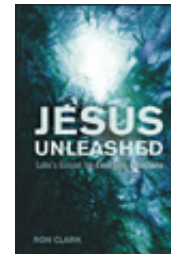
Bruce Green. **Praying in the Reign.** Nashville, Tenn: 21st Century Christian Publishing, 2013. 153 pages. \$11.99.



A minister for the 10th Street Church of Christ in Opelika, Ala., Green offers an in-depth study of the Lord's Prayer.

He divides the prayer into seven sections and examines the significance of Jesus' wording for Christians' spiritual lives today. Each section has four to seven short studies, followed by questions for reflection, making this a good book for short devotionals.

Ron Clark. **Jesus Unleashed: Luke's Gospel for Emerging Christians.** Eugene, Ore.: Cascade Books, 2014. 221 pages. \$25.



The second book by Clark, minister for the Agape Church of Christ in Portland, Ore., delves deeply into the book of Luke and encourages Christians to reach out to oppressed peoples, just as Jesus did.

The Agape church specializes in outreach to the addicted, homeless and those struggling with same-sex attraction, giving Clark plenty of credibility and contemporary stories to weave into the narrative.

Uduak Afangideh. **Sister to Sister: Inspiring Stories of an Extraordinary God Transforming Ordinary Women Today.** Seattle: CreateSpace Independent Publishing, 2014. 172 pages. \$14.99.



A biology professor at Faulkner University in Alabama, Afangideh speaks to women at gospel meetings across the U.S. and in her home country of Nigeria. In her travels, she has collected stories of women letting God work in their lives. In this book, she shares those stories to encourage and inspire women.

Each of the 12 chapters concludes with discussion questions and space for journaling answers.

(See our Dialogue with Afangideh

and her sister and fellow Faulkner professor, Idongesit Mkpong-Ruffin, online at www.christianchronicle.org.)

BIBLE STUDY

Michael Whitworth. **Living and Longing for the Lord.** Bowie, Texas: Start2Finish Books, 2014. 193 pages. \$14.99.

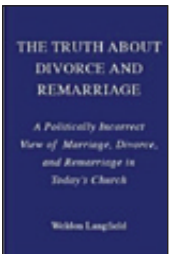


Whitworth, preaching minister for the Carter Lake Road Church of Christ in Bowie, Texas, writes exegetical (explanatory) Bible study books, this one focusing on Paul's letters to the Thessalonians.

The theme of these epistles, according to Whitworth, is living daily life in anticipation of Christ's return. He presents scholarly research in a conversational manner. Each chapter concludes with "Talking Points" to help readers meditate and apply the Scriptures.

DIVORCE, REMARRIAGE

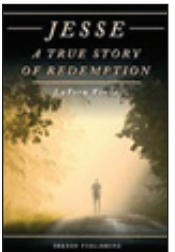
Weldon Langfield. **The Truth About Divorce and Remarriage: A Politically Incorrect View of Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage in Today's Church.** Bakersfield, Calif.: Weldon Langfield Publications, 2013. 159 pages. \$21.95.



Langfield examines Hebrew and Greek Bibles and analysis from scholars and Church of Christ ministers to argue that there are situations in which remarriage is scripturally acceptable. Longtime minister Jim Woodroof and *Gospel Advocate* writer Charles Hodge have endorsed this work.

MEMOIR

LaVern Vivio. **Jesse: A Story of Redemption.** Nashville, Tenn.: Tekton Publishing, 2013. 168 pages. \$12.99.



Lipscomb University graduate and Nashville radio personality "U-Turn LaVern" shares the true account of her lifelong friend, Jesse. Beginning in western Kentucky, Vivio weaves a folksy story of an enduring, encouraging and supportive friendship.

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Readers share fun, life-changing moments at Christian camps

As summer arrives, The Christian Chronicle asked readers who have attended Christian camps to share their favorite memories — canoeing, campfires, Bible studies and baptism. Following is a sampling of responses.

The second time I went to a Christian camp was 10 days after my brother was killed in a car accident. During an evening devotional they sang a song that was sung at the funeral. I became a crying mess on the floor.

Before I knew it, there was a pile of brothers and sisters in Christ holding me and asking what was going on. ... They prayed over me. Even though I had been raised in church, it was the first time I really knew

what it was like to be a part of God's family. The guy that I would marry six years later was at that camp.

Nyla Sue Jones | Mountlake Terrace, Wash.

When I was in fifth grade and my brother, Chico, was in first grade, we stayed for a week at a Christian camp near Memphis, Tenn. I loved everything about the camp — except accidentally swallowing a big mouthful of the green lake water while swimming. Ugh!

When we got home, my mom unpacked my brother's things and discovered that he had not changed his underwear the whole week.

Venice Miller | Chattanooga, Tenn.

It was about 1955. I went to camp in northern Arizona. My



ERIK TRYGGESTAD

A baptism during a summer youth camp near St. Petersburg, Russia.

mother went and worked as a cook at the camp to pay for my camp. It was hard times back then. ... She did a great job.

At that time I was drifting away from the Christian base. I continued to drift and finally

completely sank into sin later.

But those experiences at church, church camp and other activities and my mother's teachings formed seeds. Those seeds sprouted and grew later in life.

David Benson | Phoenix

Nebraska Youth Camp, near Kearney, has served young people since the mid-1960s.

If you were to look at the list of baptisms at the Church of Christ in Hastings, Neb., you would see that most of our young people's names are followed by "Baptized at NYC," including three of our own children.

Reed Munsell | Hastings, Neb.

One of my real pleasures in missions was starting the Baltic Christian Youth Camp in Tallinn, Estonia, which celebrates its 20th year in July.

Seeing all the young folks from Estonia, Latvia, Russia and USA getting an opportunity to learn about Jesus over all these years is a real blessing and makes all the effort worthwhile

Royce Sartain | New Brighton, Pa.

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www.copperbasinbiblecamp.org

ARKANSAS

- Camp Tahkodah
www.harding.edu/tahkodah
- Camp Wyldewood
www.campwyldewood.org
- Corin Read Christian Camp
www.corinread.org

CALIFORNIA

- Tahoe Family Encampment
www.tahoefamilyencampment.com

FLORIDA

- Central Florida Bible Camp
www.cfbbiblecamp.org

GEORGIA

- Camp Wetoga
www.campwetoga.com/northgeorgia

KANSAS

- Silver Maple Camp
www.silvermaplecamp.com

MICHIGAN

- Michigan Christian Youth Camp
www.mcy.org

MONTANA

- Yellowstone Bible Camp
www.yellowstonebiblecamp.com

NEBRASKA

- Nebraska Youth Camp
www.nebraskayouthcamp.com

NEW MEXICO

- Camp Blue Haven
www.campbluehaven.com
- Red River Family Encampment
(lectureship-style, for families)
www.rrfe.org

OKLAHOMA

- Lariat Creek Christian Camp
www.lariatcreek.org
- Quartz Mountain Christian Camp
www.qmcc.org

OREGON

- Camp Yamhill
www.campyamhill.org

PENNSYLVANIA

- Camp Manatawny
www.manatawny.org
- Pennsylvania Christian Camp
www.pachristiancamp.net

TENNESSEE

- Valley View Christian Camp
www.valleyviewcamp.com

WASHINGTON

- Delano Bay Christian Camp
www.delanobay.org

WISCONSIN

- Wisconsin Christian Youth Camp
www.wcyc.org

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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.

For more information, contact **Ralph Richardson, Ph.D.** at (918) 343-0003, Ext. 230, or e-mail ralph@hopeharborinc.org. To learn more about Hope Harbor, visit our website at www.hopeharborinc.org.

Minister Wanted

The **Ypsilanti church of Christ**, located in Ypsilanti, Mich., is seeking to fill our vacant minister position; includes pulpit, class an 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.

Bilingual Children's Minister - Miami, FL

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:

(305) 271-8141

churchoc@bellsouth.net

Applications accepted through June 30th.

De Kalb Church of Christ

De Kalb Church of Christ, in De Kalb, Tx, is seeking an individual with a strong business background and a heart to serve the Lord. This offer involves two part-time positions to be divided equally between Youth Ministry and Pre-Owned Car Sales.

Interested candidates should submit resumes and questions to:

johnlinda23@windstream.net

**413 E Front Street, De Kalb, TX 75559
(903) 276-7471**

Full-Time Local Evangelist

The Dewey Church of Christ, located in Dewey, Okla., is seeking an experienced full-time local evangelist. We are a loving and caring church of 140 members, with elders and deacons, that desires to be more active in reaching our community with the gospel message.

We offer a regionally competitive salary and benefits package for our congregation's size.

Interested applicants should submit a resume and cover letter telling us about yourself and your interest in serving with us here. Submit applications to:

Elders

Dewey Church of Christ

PO BOX 340

Dewey, OK 74029

Email: deweychurch@sbcglobal.net

Youth & Family Minister Search

The **Choctaw Church of Christ**, a congregation of about 400 souls located just 10 miles east of Oklahoma City, is seeking a minister to work with our growing number of families with pre-teen and teen children.

The successful candidate will have good organizational and communication skills as well as college training in Bible and related areas of Youth & Family Ministry. Song leading ability as well as previous ministry experience will be preferable.

Please send resumes, references, and

contact information to:

church@choctawsaints.org

Subject line - YFM

Family Life/Youth Minister

The church in **Silver City, New Mexico**, is looking for a family life / youth minister who can help bring our families and the various age groups together.

We prefer someone who has a college degree in religious training or a certificate from a school of preaching.

If interested, please contact the church office:

(575)-538-9533

or send your resume to:

silvercoc@signalpeak.net

Family Minister

The **Stillwater Church of Christ** is seeking an experienced Family Minister to lead our congregation in building strong Christian families. Responsibilities include teaching and the implementation of events and programs to facilitate spiritual growth and faith discovery in our families. The Family Minister works closely with the associate youth minister and our senior ministers.

To learn more about Stillwater Church of Christ, visit us at:

www.stillwatercoc.org

Send cover letter and resume to:

**Search Committee, Stillwater Church of Christ,
821 N. Duck, Stillwater, OK 74075**

or via email:

searchcommittee@stillwatercoc.org

Applications accepted until May 30, 2014, or until the position is filled.

The Kandiyohi Church of Christ

in central Minnesota is seeking a **part-time minister.**

We are a small, acapella, established church looking for a preacher to help with continued growth.

Send resumes to:

PO Box 267

Kandiyohi, MN 56251

The higher love Christ calls his followers to practice is difficult – and worthwhile

A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another." (John 13:34-35)

Jesus calls us to a higher standard of conduct — toward him and toward others. What he envisioned for his disciples was a harmonious community where love governed the way that people interacted with each other. *Agape* love is the highest form of care. It is the kind of love God demonstrated by sending his only begotten son into the world to redeem man's sins. It is unconditional love, unselfish love and sacrificial love. Christ on the cross is *agape* incarnate.

Since the day of Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit came with demonstrated power to lead the apostles into all truths about the Kingdom, disciples have struggled to make the love command of Jesus work. Grecian Christians were disturbed that widows of their number were neglected in the daily ministration of food. Jewish Christians remained uncomfortable with Gentiles who became Christian converts. Sisters became fractious and threatened the workings of a congregation. Even leaders such as Paul and Barnabas could not agree about John Mark in the early days of spreading the church into the Roman world.

"Love one another" never is easy — unless God is involved.

Since the Renaissance, the factions in the Christian world have caused people to despise Christianity. Even generous critics of Christianity question the many denominations and their splinters. The Restoration movement set out to restore the purity of New Testament Christianity, but from earliest days of the initiative, differences have thwarted the efforts to get back to the heart of Jesus' teaching.

Agape is, in contrast, a learned love, not something that is natural with mankind. *Agape* is not possible unless the spirit of God is living and working in a person. Without God's work on the heart and the actions, no person can rise to love all other disciples in the way Jesus described in John 13.

The capacity to love all believers depends on our loving Jesus and the church with all our being. We live in a time when people do not generally love

institutions or organizations, and so our process of loving each other must begin with our learning to love God and the church with all of our heart, mind and spirit. The church, God's Kingdom for all his followers, must be a primary love

Insight



Bailey McBride

of our life or we will not care about others who are seeking to be the disciples of Jesus.

Agape is not easy. We have to submit to the Spirit and allow it to nurture in our nature the ability to show patience and long-suffering. Disciples can be ugly, unlovable,

demanding, challenging and cantankerous, but *agape* sees beyond those character flaws to the eternal soul of another redeemed person.

Agape helps us develop persistence in love for those who are acting in a way that turns us off. We continue showing care and kindness in an effort to reach the person and bring him or her to a transformed relationship with God and with others. *Agape* means never giving up on a person until the relationship is fulfilling and meaningful.

Agape brings joy to a community because there is acceptance and relationship. The mystery of God the father, Jesus the son, and the Spirit all being one should be the model for the joyous fellowship of people who truly love one another. The mutual love allows us to rejoice and share the happiness of those we care for — just as we care for ourselves. And the sharing of sorrows helps lift the sense of oppression.

Agape recognizes that understanding and interpreting God's Word is a challenge when God requires that we use our intellect to search out the doctrines of the Kingdom from the biographies of Jesus, the history of the early church, epistles to churches and individuals and the Revelation. *Agape* beats down the impulse to challenge and divide and inspires the determination to love each other as saints together and thereby declare to the world that we are Jesus' disciples.

Father, let *agape* dwell in your people and draw us together to serve you.

CONTACT bailey.mcbride@christianchronicle.org.



Development Director Position

The Albuquerque Christian Children's Home, a non-profit faith-based, long-term residential care facility for at-risk children, is seeking a **Development Director**.

Works with the Executive Director and Board of Directors to formulate and implement a comprehensive development program to maintain and expand all sources of funding to meet ACCH's annual budget. Specific projects may include annual fundraising events, board development, planned giving, major gift solicitation and foundation/corporate grants, and our newsletter publications. Able to speak to Churches and do some travel.

Contact us for job details/requirements.

Email your cover letter, resume and portfolio to:

Everett White, Executive Director
5700 Winter Haven NW
Albuquerque, NM 87120

ewhite@acch4kids.org
Look us up on our website:
www.acch4kids.org



We are looking to hire two Christian couples to serve as House parents by early summer!

Must be:

- Faithful members of the church
- Physically fit
- Emotionally stable
- Spiritually driven
- Able to work closely with team
- Trainable
- Lovers of children!

Benefits:

- Competitive salary package
- 21 days on; 7 days off rotation
- ½ Health/Dental/Vision
- Joy of making a difference!

If interested:

Contact Kenny Holton,
Executive Director,
(229) 559-5944 or email:
kholtan@raintreevillage.org

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www.faulkner.edu

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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Leaders for West Africa

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Frontier of faith

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The real McCoy's

'Amazing Race' stars in a rush to serve Christ. **1**

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... that you should follow
in His steps.*

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WALKING IN HIS

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OCTOBER 5-7

www.oc.edu/lectureship

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