

Bar refugees? Build a border wall?

Why the issue is so personal for Texas family

BY BOBBY ROSS JR. | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

HOUSTON

To Reda Hicks, refugees aren't nameless faces on the news. They're real women — with real stories of escaping war and persecution in places such as Iran, Iraq and Sudan.

Hicks, a member of the Memorial Church of Christ in this ethnically diverse Texas metropolis, volunteers with The Community Cloth, a nonprofit that helps refugee women launch microbusinesses.

"My children understand what a refugee is ... because they've played together, shared stories and showed kindnesses to one another," said Hicks, mother of Howard, 6; Josie, 4; and Katie, born just a few weeks ago.

What motivates the 35-year-old attorney — whose husband, Jake, is a former Green Beret — to devote time and talents to helping refugee families start over in a new country?

She points to her Christian faith. "Throughout the Bible, there are examples of people risking everything to take care of others," she said. "Consider Rahab and the critical role she played in carrying out God's plan for the people of Israel. Consider the Good Samaritan. Consider every Christian that has ever spoken truth to power, knowing they could be forfeiting their lives in doing so."

Jake Hicks, 43, identifies with his wife's concern for refugees based on his own experiences with U.S. Army Special Forces. While fighting to stabilize Iraq, Afghanistan and other war-torn nations, he frequently served

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BOBBY ROSS JR.

Sancha, pictured with daughter Gracey Rai, spent 20 years in a refugee camp in Nepal. Now living in Houston, she makes and sells children's hats to help support her family.

CHRISTIANS debate President Trump's immigration orders.

BY BOBBY ROSS JR. | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

"We Welcome Refugees," declared the sign outside the Northlake Church of Christ in Tucker, Ga., on a recent Sunday.

That message reflected the intense national debate over President

Donald Trump's order to bar — at least temporarily — refugees from seven countries deemed terrorism threats.

Trump's court-challenged travel ban and his push to build a wall along the U.S.-Mexico border have sparked passionate responses from Christians.

Members of Churches of Christ express a desire to show love and compassion to refugees and immigrants.

But many voice concerns, too, for the nation's security.

"For me, there's hardly anything more clear in the Bible than welcoming the stranger," said Jim Neal, a Northlake church elder who serves as director of operations for Friends of Refugees, an Atlanta-area Christian nonprofit. "It reflects so much of the character of what God is trying to do through his people."

On the other hand, ensuring America's safety would put Christians in a better position to serve, said James Telgren, a minister for the Levy Church of Christ

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Neal



Telgren

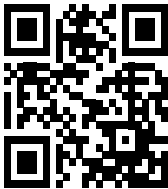


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My second-favorite place in the world

HUALIEN CITY, Taiwan

wake up to three little sets of eyes, peeking over the row of train seats in front of me.

"They want to know what Americans eat," says Yolanda Chen, the minister's wife

Inside Story

who's spent the whole day with me, introducing me to Christians on this East Asian island and serving as my interpreter.



Erik Tryggstad

It appears she's not done with that particular task.

"You guys like pizza?" I ask. Yolanda translates. The kids frown and shake their heads. "Really? What about hot dogs? Hamburgers?" They nod. One of them chatters in Mandarin and giggles.

"You remind her of Santa Claus," Yolanda says.

I grimace. "He's considerably grayer than I am."

Fatter too, I think, though I suppose I have the pizza, hot dogs and hamburgers to thank for any resemblance.

This is probably my second-favorite place to be in the world — on a train, headed back to my hotel in a foreign city (Taipei, in this case) with a camera full of photos and a note pad full of scribbles (that I hope I'll be able to decipher a month from now when I actually write the story).

Today I sat at the feet of a Christian couple in Hualien City named Boaz Wang and Ruth Lu. That's right, Ruth and Boaz. They serve a small

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"King" Austin Peters basks in the spotlight of Night to Shine as he and the volunteer accompanying him prepare to board a limousine.

A night for God's children to shine

BY BOBBY ROSS JR. | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

FORT SMITH, Ark.

Crowns on their heads, the kings and queens flash huge smiles as they emerge from a sleek black limousine.

They wear fancy suits and formal dresses and seem to glide up the red carpet as the waiting crowd cheers.

The 150-plus royal guests pass under a lighted archway with the message "Night To Shine" flanked by the words "Hope" and "Dream." Many pump fists in the air. Others simply glow.

The friendly paparazzi hold cameras and smartphones with one hand and

wipe tears with the other — unable to contain a flood of emotions.

On this recent Friday night, more than 350 volunteers came together at the West-Ark Church of Christ to throw a giant party for God's children with autism, Down syndrome and other special needs.

"This is a glimpse of the kingdom, that's what it is," said Chris Benjamin, preaching minister for the 700-member church. "You see the upside-down kingdom in action because those often overlooked are given special honor."

Around the world, 375 churches in all 50 states and 11 countries hosted

See **SHINE**, Page 10



PHOTOS BY BOBBY ROSS JR.

"King" Shawn Bagley, with his Night to Shine buddy Kenna Tackett.

Churches send relief after deadly storms in the South

Ministries associated with Churches of Christ sent truckloads of relief supplies after severe storms and tornadoes ripped across Mississippi, Georgia and Florida, claiming 12 lives and demolishing dozens of homes.

Church members and volunteers unloaded two truckloads of supplies at the meeting place of the US 19 Church of Christ in Albany, Ga. The supplies, sent by Nashville, Tenn.-based

Churches of Christ Disaster Relief Effort, are sorted into disaster kits that include cleaning supplies, food and other emergency needs. The ministry also supplies clothing and shoes.

After the storms, another round of severe weather pounded the New Orleans area, producing multiple tornadoes.

The Disaster Relief Effort sent two truckloads of relief supplies to the

Louisa Street Church of Christ and the Crowder Boulevard Church of Christ.

Disaster relief ministries, including Churches of Christ Disaster Response Team and Disaster Assistance CoC, are working with congregations including the Kensington Woods Church of Christ in Hattiesburg, Miss., to distribute relief.

SEE UPDATES at www.christianchronicle.org.

WORLD: Travels remind us of God's gift — each other

FROM PAGE 3

Church of Christ and have a ministry at two nursing homes. That doesn't do them justice, though. These guys are totally invested in the lives of the people they serve. I'll share more about them in the months to come.

My *most* favorite place to be, by the way, is with my family, hearing my wife use words like "suprachiasmatic," listening to my 9-year-old bang out the notes to Europe's "The Final Countdown" as she practices piano or watching my 3-year-old grab a household item and give it a funny voice. "Hello. I'm Mr. Bag. You can put stuff in me." Classic.

Leaving them for weeks at a time is tough. I'm blessed to have in-laws who move in whenever I need them, making personal sacrifices to care for our children.

Still, as I sit on nasty airport carpet (because there *never* are enough seats), wait in a long line to see a surely immigration officer (seriously, I'm just changing planes here), and watch "Forrest Gump" for the second time on a 12-hour flight (because they don't have "Lord of the Rings") I wonder if it's all worthwhile. It is.

Truth be told, I love it — all of it.

I love it because I know what's on the other side of the customs sign that reads "Nothing To Declare."

There I find my brothers and sisters in Christ — some I know as dear friends, some I know only from their email newsletters.

I am so thoroughly indebted to the Christians who go out of their way to show me their homelands



LIU FONG

Over cups of coffee in a Japanese-style tea room near Hualien City, Taiwan, Erik Tryggstad interviews Boaz Wang and his wife, Ruth Lu. Yolanda Chen (in hat) translates.

and their ministries. Often, it seems we're brought together by a divine hand, and this trip is no exception.

Last year, while plotting a course to and from Cambodia to cover the Angkor of Faith youth service trip, I worked out a stopover in Hong Kong. I remembered that my friend Gigie Carranza from the Philippines had worked with an English-speaking congregation there.

She put me in touch with Felix Olidan, a Filipino minister for the Wanchai Church of Christ. He helped me plan the visit. I attended the Chinese and English services.

The English service, I learned, is mostly Filipino women who work long hours as maids. Hearing stories about the community they've found in the church was inspiring. We published a feature on them last year.

While in Hong Kong, I met John Dionio and his family. They were

visiting Olidan — and taking their kids to Hong Kong Disneyland. Dionio is director of the Philippine Bible College of Bangar. We had dinner and talked about the college, founded by the late Leo Corpuz.

A few months ago, Dionio messaged me about speaking at the Bible college's graduation. I found a good deal on plane tickets and accepted, scheduling a trip long enough for me to take a side trip somewhere else.

I looked on a map. Hey, Taiwan is close. Never been there.

I didn't know much about Churches of Christ in Taiwan, so I asked my Southeast Asian contacts. Henry Kong, a minister for the Pasir Panjang Church of Christ in Singapore, sent me a list that included William Chen, minister for the Taipei Church of Christ.

Minutes after I saw his name on the list I had a Facebook message

from William. He was asking for statistical info on churches in the U.S. I gave him what I had, and added, "By the way ... I'm thinking about visiting your city."

William invited me to church, picked me up at the airport and drove me all over Taipei — in the midst of Chinese New Year celebrations. He and his wife, Yolanda, treated me like family — because we are family.

I'm indebted to the Chens, the Dionios and so many others around the world — Steve Raine in New Zealand, George Akpabli in Benin, Bert Ritchie in Northern Ireland, Steve Aponte in New York and many more. For all of you who have sacrificed your time and resources to help me tell the stories of our fellowship, I have nothing to declare except heartfelt thanks.

As the train nears Taipei Station, as I say goodbye to the three little sets of eyes in front of me, I'm reminded of the great gift God gives us in each other. Regardless of where we live, whether in wealth or poverty, oppression or freedom, we are a community of faith with one goal — spreading God's love to a world that so badly needs it. And we help each other out along the way.

Tomorrow I'll head for a new destination, Manila, and the Bible school graduation. Thankfully, I can sleep in before William picks me up for the ride to the airport.

Or maybe I should look for a gym. Santa could stand to lose a few pounds.

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SPOTLIGHT

Not quite 'Footloose'

HENRYETTA, Okla. — It's best known as the hometown of Hall of Fame quarterback Troy Aikman.

Recently, though, this small community made headlines not for its famous football cleats — but for putting away its dancing shoes.

Sparking reminders of the 1984 movie "Footloose," a businesswoman canceled a dance across the street from the Henryetta Church of Christ, national media reported.



BOBBY ROSS JR.

The Henryetta Church of Christ sign touts feeding faith and starving doubts.

However, youth minister Cody Sifford said the church had nothing to do with the decision.

"I think this is giving the Church of Christ a bad rap," Sifford told *The Christian Chronicle*. "We're not the ones that complained about it. If they want to dance, let them dance."



WAXAHACHIE FIRE DEPARTMENT

Firefighters help repair the church wall.

firefighters rushed to help after a recent accident damaged the Graham Street Church of Christ's building.

"Good job Station 2, B Shift," the fire department said on its Facebook page. "Going above and beyond to help our neighbors secure their church after a vehicle accidentally ran through an outside wall. Luckily, no one was injured."

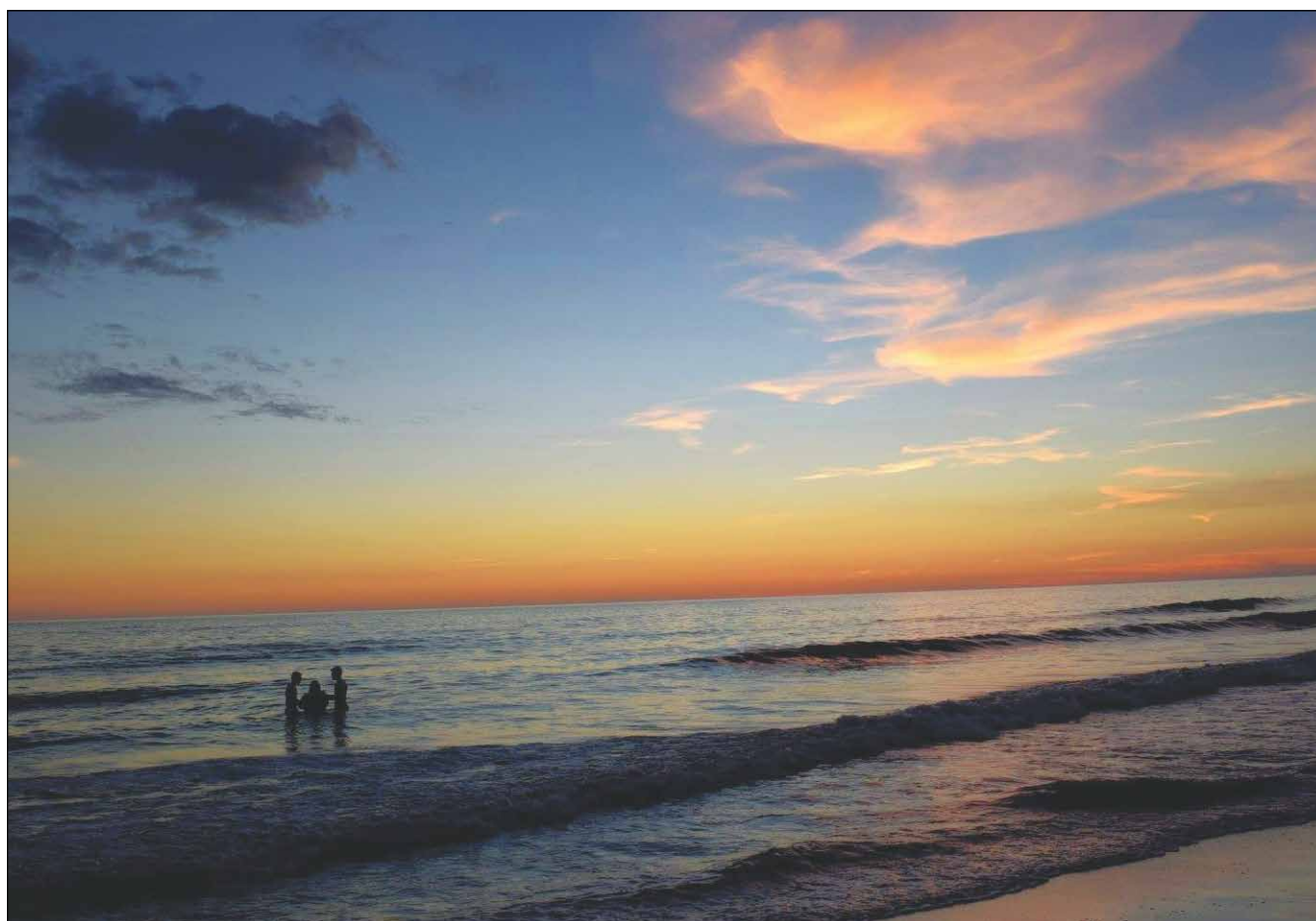


PHOTO PROVIDED BY MATT MILLS

In the Gulf of Mexico, a soul finds new life during Getaway

Matt Mills, right, baptizes Emma Boodt, center, during the recent Gulf Coast Getaway, an annual campus ministry event in Panama City, Fla. At left is Harrison Daffern. Mills serves as campus minister for the Church of Christ University Center at Oklahoma State University.

CALIFORNIA

YUBA CITY — A minister, his wife and their six children packed one backpack each and left their home after military personnel warned of potential severe flooding from the tallest dam in the U.S.

"We were blessed to be able to find someone to shelter all eight of us with comfortable beds," Sarah Heltsley told *The Christian Chronicle* after she and her family evacuated. "Otherwise, we would be located at one of the emergency shelters."

Her husband, Addam, is minister for the Peach Tree Lane Church of Christ in Yuba City, which meets about 35 miles south of the Oroville Dam. Authorities asked the Heltsleys — and about 188,000 other Californians who live downstream from the dam — to leave their homes

for higher ground Feb. 12.

Waters in the Oroville Dam have risen rapidly due to heavy rain and snow — following five years of severe drought in California — prompting state officials to begin releasing water into an emergency spillway for the first time in the reservoir's 49-year history, *USA Today* reported.



PHOTO PROVIDED

Addam and Sarah Heltsley and their six children are safe in Sutter, Calif.

LOUISIANA

NEW ORLEANS — The Louisa Street Church of Christ, one of the last hurricane-damaged congregations to reopen after Katrina struck in 2005, opened its doors recently to help victims of a tornado.

The church passed out food, clothing, cleaning supplies, shovels, pillows and blankets provided by Nashville, Tenn.-based Churches of Christ Disaster Relief Effort, WVUE-TV reported.

"We're glad to be here to do all we can to help try to take the burden off of as many people as we can," minister David Green said.

TEXAS

WAXAHACHIE — Construction work is not in the Waxahachie Fire Department's job description. But

Lubbock Christian University

DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI AWARDS

2017



Distinguished Alumnus of the Year
Significant Professional and Personal Achievement

Alan Rhodes ('80)
President, Underwood Law Firm

Alan Rhodes and his wife, Robyn ('79), met as students at LCU. Avid supporters of the university, they established the Rhodes Educational Scholarship that provides support for students with a special gift in teaching. They also established The Rhodes Family Institute for Undergraduate Research and have leadership roles in the 2020 Vision Campaign. They have three children and three grandchildren.

Rhodes began his practice of law with Underwood Law Firm in Amarillo immediately following graduation from Texas Tech School of Law in 1983. He is now president of the same law firm. Rhodes was general counsel for the Baptist St. Anthony's Health System in Amarillo when the organization merged with a specialty physician hospital, acquired a cancer center, and completed a \$60,000,000 addition. Rhodes and his agriculture partner helped move Dutch families from Denmark, along with families from California, and those families have changed the face of Texas agriculture. Rhodes led the transaction team for the Stan Kroenke acquisition of the Waggoner Ranch, the largest ranch in the United States under a single fence, and served as lead counsel when the purchase closed in February 2016.

Rhodes partners with Joe Bob McCartt on commercial real estate transactions with syndicated properties valued at \$120,000,000. He partners with Kevin Nelson as the Texas franchisees of My Place Hotels. Their newest hotel is in Lubbock, and they have committed to building 30 Texas, Oklahoma, and New Mexico hotels. Rhodes is a current member of the LCU Board of Trustees and LCU Foundation Board of Trustees, and was a past president for many other boards and worthy causes.

...



F.W. Mattox Award
Excellence and Outstanding Service to the University

John King ('68)
*Sr. Vice President,
LCU University Advancement*

John King graduated with an associates degree from LCC and met his wife, Elaine, while completing undergraduate studies at Harding.

Elaine ('72) continued her education as a member of LCC's first four-year class. Their son Jonathan, daughter Jennifer, and their spouses are all LCU graduates. Their four grandchildren are destined to be future Chaps.

King has served the University in many important ways throughout his 47-year tenure. He worked with six University presidents, held key roles in six successful

capital campaigns, and developed key alumni, donor, and board relationships. He has been responsible for admissions, alumni relations, financial aid, university relations, and university advancement. It is fair to say that his steadfast commitment and service to the University will continue to impact positively, the lives of alumni, future alumni, and their children and grandchildren.

In addition to developing Encounter and Camp Champion, King leads a Pine Springs Camp session and serves as a Pine Springs board member. When Pine Springs became owned and operated by LCU, King hired LCU students as counselors and encouraged youth ministers to direct sessions and bring youth groups full of prospective LCU students. King is still a member of the Pine Springs Board and manages the operations on behalf of the University.

...



Young Alumnus of the Year
Distinguished Professional Achievement Under the Age of 40

Calder Hendrickson ('09)
Founder and CEO, AquaSmart

Calder Hendrickson came to LCU with dreams of a career in baseball. When an injury ended his dream, he focused on his studies in youth and family ministry. Shortly after graduation in

2009, he encountered a gentleman who introduced him to a product that made water last longer in soils. Hendrickson purchased the patent and continued to promote the technology as founder and CEO of AquaSmart. Other major league franchises followed suit after the Oakland A's began using AquaSmart PRO to hold more moisture in their infield skin.

He and his team have gone from a single patent used in sports fields to having over 20+ patents that are being developed and deployed in the oil & gas, concrete, agriculture, and lawn & garden markets. AquaSmart now focuses on using the technology to increase energy production through hydraulic fracturing, reduce infrastructure cost, produce more food, and reduce water consumption around the globe. 2015 Forbes Magazine 30-Under-30 list named Hendrickson in recognition of his company's success.

His wife, Ceri ('08), graduated from LCU with an agriculture business degree. They have two future Chaps, Celah and Case.

...



60th Anniversary Enduring Legacy Award
Excellence and Service to the University

Dr. B. Wayne & Yvonne Hinds

Dr. B. Wayne Hinds came to the University in the role of music department chairman in 1957. His wife, Yvonne, wrote the words

to the alma mater, and he composed the music. Today, Yvonne is affectionately known as Mama Hinds.

Dr. Hinds founded the A Cappella Chorus in 1957 and directed the chorus until he retired in 1998. He formed the first LCC Band and Music Masters. Master Follies was performed and produced by Music Masters until responsibility shifted to social clubs. Dr. Hinds also founded Meistersingers and directed the chorus until he turned it over to Charles Cox in 1960. Meistersingers continued in Cox's capable hands until he retired in 1996. Dr. Philip Camp continues the choral tradition with one chorus named Praise Choir. Through the years, each of these choruses has played a vital role in promoting awareness, recruiting prospective students, and sharing Christ's love through music.

The Hinds spent thousands of hours preparing for concerts, traveling the United States, and taking chorus members on at least twenty-five mission trips abroad. Strong bonds of love and respect still exist between Dr. Hinds and his students. The Alma Mater remains unchanged and many of the traditions they established continue to live on through Dr. Philip Camp, Praise Choir, Master Follies, other musical programs on campus.

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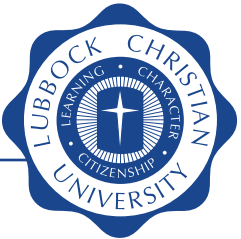
K.C. Moser Award
Excellence and Outstanding Service to the Church

Lynn ('74) & Janie ('73) Harms

Lynn and Janie Harms achieved degrees in Education from LCU. Janie has used her knowledge and experience as a principal, registrar, and teacher at Kingdom Preparatory Academy in Lubbock.

She was a home educator for their four daughters, Elizabeth Siebert ('06), Alicia Black ('05), Anne-Marie, and April. In addition to private school and home education, Janie has served as an education and curriculum developer for Broadway Church of Christ in Lubbock.

Viewed as an expert in his field, Lynn provided staff development consultation for Hacienda of Hope in Ecuador and was a charter member of the Public-Private Partnership, a consortium of the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services and private Child Care Providers. Lynn led the Christian Homes and Family Services Association and Texas Alliance of Child and Family Services as president and served as executive director at Christian Homes of Arklatex in Shreveport, LA. With Janie by his side, he served as president of both the Texas Boy's Ranch and the Children's Home of Lubbock. In 2016, he participated in the successful transition of a new president and remains involved in the work of the Children's Home as a past president and advocate.



REFUGEES: ‘Do we really trust God enough to love our neighbors?’

FROM PAGE 1
in North Little Rock, Ark.
“For a nation, a wall is or can be beneficial. When God’s people were their own nation, they used walls to protect cities from invaders. But that didn’t negate God’s command to care for the poor and the foreigner,” said Telgren, whose congregation sets up cots on cold nights when regular homeless shelters fill up.

KEEPING AMERICA SAFE
Faith vs. fear.
That’s the battle that some refugee advocates describe Christians as waging.
The proposed border wall, as Wissam Al-Aethawi sees it, is about more than a desire to stem illegal immigration.
The wall relates to “an unfounded fear of foreigners,” said Al-Aethawi, an Iraqi refugee who serves as a Church of Christ missionary in the heavily Arab community of Dearborn, Mich.
Such measures are “intended

to give the false sense of security against everything that is different,” added the former Muslim, who spoke at the recent Freed-Hardeman University Bible Lectureship in Henderson, Tenn., on understanding Islam.

The nations covered in Trump’s refugee order — Iran, Iraq, Syria, Sudan, Somalia, Libya and Yemen — are all majority Muslim. The president’s supporters cite a need for better vetting of potential terrorists. Critics accuse Trump of targeting a specific religion.
Al-Aethawi noted that — even though he already had converted to Christ when he came to the U.S. in 2011 — his asylum papers officially listed him as Muslim.
“All the Lord’s work through the Arab Christian ministry could not have happened,” he said, “had the U.S. not admitted an Iraqi Muslim

asylum seeker.”
Christians can’t just love fellow Americans and people who look and sound like they do, said Cana Moore, a member of the Downtown Church of Christ in Searcy, Ark.
“As an American, I fear the radical terrorists who hate our nation,” said Moore, who is pursuing a master’s of divinity degree at Harding School of Theology in Memphis, Tenn. “I want to keep my friends and family safe.”
“However, as a Christian, I believe my calling to be marked by my love for outsiders is more central to the work of the Lord,” she added. “If I serve my Americanness over my Christianity, I am abusing the Gospel.”
But Christian compassion does not require Americans “to be bleating sheep led to the slaughter,” argues Trent Wheeler, who preaches for the Lake Butler Church of Christ in Florida.
“As a Christian, I struggle between compassion, respect for the law and the truly inherent risks that illegal

immigration creates,” said Wheeler, who is active in international mission work in places such as Nigeria.
Wheeler proposes a threefold approach: “First, reinforce our borders to slow the flow of illegal immigration.
Second, begin an aggressive course of action toward those who pose a real risk, and deport those who are caught committing a crime. Finally, for those willing to demonstrate a desire to be contributing members of our society, work on a path toward citizenship.”

WHICH CITIZENSHIP DEFINES US?
In Canada, two Churches of Christ sponsored the resettlement of a Syrian family — a Muslim father, mother and six children — to their community south of Toronto.
Jodi Warren, a member of the Tintern Church of Christ in Ontario, praised the resiliency of the refugee



JON WARREN, WORLD VISION
A 15-month-old Syrian refugee girl holds her mother’s hand at a settlement in Lebanon.



JIM NEAL
The sign at the Northlake Church of Christ in Tucker, Ga., voices support for refugees.

family, who fled a civil war.
“For people who have been through so much, they are not angry, bitter or vindictive but are still loving,” Warren said. “They are not at all what I had anticipated. People do not realize how much they have to offer new immigrants, and we are the ones who have gained so much in the process.”
Tintern minister Noel Walker said: “If Canada had failed to respond to this refugee crisis, (the father and his family) would still be sharing a barn with three other families outside a refugee camp in Beirut with no hope.”
At a federal deportation center west of Chicago, minister Bobby Lawson offers prayers and other support to undocumented immigrants’ families.
Potential benefits to stronger border enforcement include curtailing illegal drugs and sex-trade trafficking, said Lawson, who preaches for the Park Forest Church of Christ in Matteson, Ill.
However, he warns against putting national security interests



Moore

over concern for hurting and vulnerable souls.
“It seems to me that disciples of Jesus in America are coming to a crisis of faith,” Lawson said. “Do we really trust God enough to love our neighbors as they need us to? What defines us most: our American citizenship or our citizenship in the kingdom of God?”
Dan Bouchelle, president of the Texas-based Missions Resource Network, said he learned a powerful lesson about refugees last year.
Bouchelle visited Athens, Greece, as part of a seven-country trip, he said, “seeking to discern the best ways to advance God’s mission during this historic opening to Jesus among Muslims around the Mediterranean Rim.”
“In Greece, we saw how God is showing up in the stranger and the alien. He is reviving Christian faith in a once-Christian land,” Bouchelle said. “I fear my nation will miss out on this move of God, because we are doing all we can to keep the Jesus who is among the refugees out. I pray it will not be so.”



Lawson

HOUSTON: 'Most people ... just want the basic necessities'

FROM PAGE 1

alongside natives — interpreters, medics and militia members who helped save American lives while putting their own in jeopardy.

"Most people around the world just want the basic necessities of life," said Jake Hicks, who flew helicopters and dispatched to numerous war zones in 22 years with the Army. "They want freedom and happiness and to be able to practice their religion."

AN OPEN DIALOGUE

At Jake and Reda Hicks' home congregation in Houston, most identify as politically conservative.

Many members of the Memorial church — including some of the elders — voted for President Donald Trump, said Reda Hicks, a registered Republican who declined to support the billionaire businessman.

On social media and elsewhere, Reda Hicks has been outspoken against Trump's executive order that placed a temporary ban on refugees from seven Muslim-majority countries characterized as terrorism threats. A federal appeals court lifted the ban, and at press time, it remained on hold pending court challenges.

While not all Memorial members agree with Reda Hicks, she praises the congregation's willingness to engage in an open dialogue.

"I mean, sometimes there's a pretty heated disagreement, but people tend to be willing to listen," said Hicks, a community activist who serves on the boards of Leadership Houston and the League of Women Voters of Houston.

Jake Hicks — who declined to say if he voted for Trump — said he sees a need for a tweaking of the president's original order, even if he doesn't align totally with his wife's position.

The husband, who owns a security and private investigations firm, said he knows that some bad people attempt to circumvent governmental systems and enter the U.S. to do harm. But the refugee vetting process already in place is long and cumbersome, he said, so much so that it's difficult to imagine most terrorists going that route.

However, Jake Hicks stressed, "I



EWART JONES PHOTOGRAPHY

Jake and Reda Hicks pose for a family photo with son Howard, 6, and daughter Josie, 4. Not pictured is newborn Katie, the newest addition to the Hickses.

don't like to judge the president too much, unless you are in his seat and see what is presented to him."

'CITY OF REFUGEES'

Houston, the nation's fourth-largest city, became a haven for refugees when it welcomed 200,000 South Vietnamese "boat people" beginning in the 1970s.

Each year, thousands of new refugees make this city of 2.2 million their home. If greater Houston were a country, it would rank fourth in the world for refugee resettlement, the *Houston Chronicle* reported in 2015.

H-Town's status as a "city of refugees" can't help but influence how the city's people of faith approach the issue, Reda Hicks said.

"Part of it is just experiential," she said. "You can't live in Houston without running across people who come from somewhere else."

Preaching minister David Duncan jokes that most of the Memorial church's 1,000 members trace their roots to the Republic of Texas. But in the pews on a typical Sunday morning, at least 18 other native

countries are represented — from South Africa to South Korea.

"I don't talk specifically about politics in sermons," Duncan said. "I do, however, talk about how Jesus teaches us to treat people, no matter their situation. It doesn't matter if they are wealthy or poor, employed or unemployed. It doesn't matter if they are American or from some other nation ... our goal is to treat people like Jesus did."

Jake and Reda Hicks love God and express it in the way they love people, the minister said.

"Jake gives his time volunteering for Vacation Bible School, going on mission trips and conducting personal safety seminars for the church," Duncan said. "Reda is involved in church, too, but much of her mission is to be a Christian voice in various community charities that are concerned with the plight of the less fortunate."

The Hickses met in the Philippines in 2007. Jake was there with the Army. Reda came on behalf of a client. They married in 2009.

Coincidentally, they adopted

their middle daughter Josie, who has special needs, from Muslim Mindanao, an autonomous region of the Philippines.

"We kind of felt that we're adopted. Jesus adopts us," Jake Hicks said of adding Josie to the family. "It's a calling."

'SHE'S GOING TO ACT'

Encounter Reda Hicks at a Sunday service, and your first impression might be of a meek young mother just happy to dote on her children.

But that side of her personality belies the passion and force with which she pushes causes — such as refugees — that are close to her heart.

"When the rubber hits the road, she's not just going to sit and talk about things. She's going to act," said Roxanne Paiva, executive director of The Community Cloth, which helps refugee artisans turn skills in areas such as knitting, weaving and jewelry making into sources of income. "She knows that in order to really help this community, you're going to have to roll up your sleeves and dig in."

Sancha, one of the women with whom Hicks has worked, is a native of Bhutan who spent 20 years in a refugee camp in Nepal.

"We lived in a small hut made of bamboo, and we were getting food from the Red Cross," said Sancha, speaking in improving English at her Houston apartment.

Nearby, her daughter, Gracey Rai, who will turn 4 in May, played on a smartphone. The Community Cloth asked *The Christian Chronicle* not to publish Sancha's last name.

The woman said she never imagined that she and her husband would get the opportunity to come to the U.S.

"I think it is like dream, but it is now in reality," Sancha said.

She crochets children's hats in the shape of animals such as bunnies, elephants and tigers. Last year, she sold 62 products. The Community Cloth markets the artisans' goods at boutiques and community fairs.

"The ladies I've met, including Sancha, just kind of blow me away," Reda Hicks said. "The spirit it takes to have the attitude they do when they come here is really incredible to me."

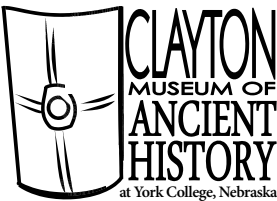


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Kings and queens enjoy time on the dance floor during Night to Shine.



Harold Davis, one of more than 350 volunteers, shines the shoes of a king during the Night to Shine event hosted by the West-Ark Church of Christ.



"Queens" Najamah Odoemenam and Carla Rye wait in line at the Night to Shine.

SHINE: 'A real heart for children with special needs'

FROM PAGE 3
prom-like Night to Shine events sponsored by the Tim Tebow Foundation — a faith-based charity started by the Heisman Trophy-winning quarterback and inspirational speaker.
In all, the festivities involved 150,000 volunteers and 75,000 guests, the foundation reported.
"Favorite night of the year!" Tebow declared on Twitter.

'JOY AND LOVE'

In this western Arkansas city of 88,000 — near the Oklahoma state line — a catered meal, karaoke and other entertainment highlighted the special night.
"I've cried several times tonight just watching my daughter," said Billie Jones, mother of Nicole Jones, 28, who is mentally disabled. "She's wanted a prom dress since she was 6 years old. ... She just cried and cried because she was going to get to come."
Billie Jones described the West-Ark church volunteers as magnificent, praised Tebow for recognizing children "who are always left out" and said she felt God's love.

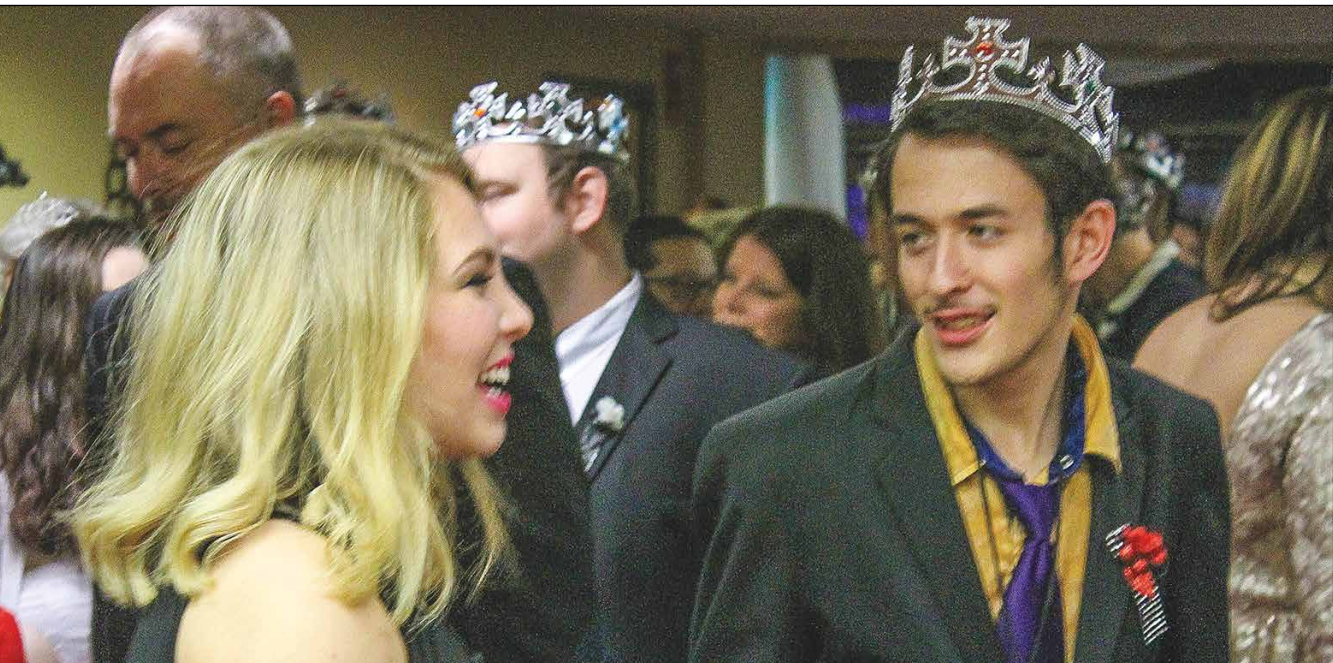
Blessed be the Caregivers

Sixth in a series

"We are supposed to become as little children," the mother said, referring to the Lord's words in Matthew 18:3. "So you watch the world through their eyes, and you'll see Christ."
The West-Ark church became involved with Night to Shine after members Jordon and Meredith Brown heard about it on the radio.
Once the Browns saw videos of last year's revelry, they knew they wanted their own congregation to participate.
"There is so much joy and love, and it just makes you want to be a part of it," Meredith Brown said.
"Jesus hung out with the people most people don't honor," Jordon Brown said. "We want to honor these people."
At first, the elders were a little leery — given that Night to Shine includes dancing, an activity with which some Christians take issue. But the more the elders learned, the more receptive they became.
"Our church has a real heart for children with special needs," said elder Brent Evans, a junior high band director who infused the

karaoke with plenty of Elvis. "So it was just a natural thing for us to do. After it's explained to you, it's like, 'How could we not do it?'"
Benjamin stressed that church leaders saw Night to Shine as more of a celebration than a dance.
"At any point, if we had determined that there was anything ungodly or worldly in this, we weren't going to go forward," the minister said. "We haven't seen that. In fact, it transcends many of the events that we do for ourselves."
'MAKE THEM THE BEST'
Boutonnieres and crowns for the gentlemen.
Corsages and tiaras for the ladies.
All the kings and queens who showed up at the West-Ark church were treated like royalty. They ranged in age from 14 to 70.
"The world says they're second-best, and it's like, 'No, we're going to make them the best tonight,'" said West-Ark member Rachel Snider, whose younger sister, Leah Rice, 23, has Down syndrome.
In one room, professional stylists helped the females with their makeup and hair. In the church foyer, a sign encouraged the males to get their shoes shined and hair combed and

"feel like a MILLIONAIRE!"
"It's the modern equivalent of foot washing," Benjamin said of the shoe shining.
Asked what he'd remember most about Night to Shine, elder Dave Cogswell joked, "The smell of shoe polish probably. I've shined a lot of shoes."
On a more serious note, he said, "The thing about this that has been so wonderful is that it's not about us at all. It's all for *them*. It's just been wonderful to see how people have responded."
A volunteer buddy was assigned to accompany each king and queen.
West-Ark member Kenna Tackett served as Shawn Bagley's buddy. The 23-year-old said she soaked in Bagley's happiness.
Asked what her 31-year-old buddy enjoyed most, she said, "The limo. I asked him what his favorite part was, and he said he loved the limo before he even got on the limo. He's very positive. It's very uplifting."
Organizers let caretakers decide whether their loved one would benefit most from a buddy of the same or opposite sex. One mother explained that if her daughter got a male buddy, she'd assume — wrongly — that he was her boyfriend.



Volunteer Allison Thompson enjoys a laugh with a king for whom she served as a buddy during Night to Shine. Each of the 150-plus people with special needs was assigned a buddy. Caregivers decided if the buddy should be male or female.

Carla Rye, 62, lives at a facility for adults with developmental disabilities. She held a picture of herself taken at Night to Shine and talked excitedly about the “silver sparkly bling-bling” on her bright red dress. Rye picked a pink corsage even though her caretaker mused that it clashed with her dress. “I danced with a nice young man,” she said, recalling her evening. “I liked the food.”

‘JUST CAN’T QUIT EATING’

The kings and queens weren’t the only honored guests: During the three-hour party downstairs, guests’ caretakers ate, chatted and entertained themselves upstairs. “We have food and games and massage therapists,” said Snider, whose parents, Bill and Mary Rice, members of the Wilshire Church of Christ in Oklahoma City, made a 200-mile drive to bring her sister to the event. Snider said she knew her parents — and many other caregivers — wouldn’t want to leave their children alone at the church, so the upstairs respite rooms gave them a quiet place to enjoy a break. “They’ll be able to relax and have almost a date night,” she said. A separate sensory room, staffed with physical therapists, was available for any kings and queens who became overstimulated or overwhelmed. Bill Rice jokingly complained that

there was too much food. “I just can’t quit eating,” said Bill Rice, who enjoyed Domino’s pizza, Chick-fil-A chicken and Olive Garden salad — all donated by some of the dozens of businesses that helped support Night to Shine. “I had vegetables, and they were good,” Mary Rice said with a smile. “We sat and watched the ‘Star Wars’ movie, and that was fun.” Kent Snider, Leah Rice’s brother-in-law, served as her buddy. She wore a midnight blue lace dress with a beige lining. “It was fun,” she said, describing the food as her favorite part. When her mother said she didn’t sign up for a massage, Leah Rice expressed her disappointment. “Ahhhhh,” she said. “I’m sorry I didn’t,” Mary Rice replied. “Mo-o-o-m-m-a,” the daughter said, stretching out the word. “She knows that Mom likes that kind of stuff,” Bill Rice explained. “It was fun just to sit and watch a movie and know that she’s having

fun,” Mary Rice said. Stephanie Mealer said she, too, found the downtime refreshing. Mealer’s 15-year-old daughter, Reagan, has high-functioning autism and attends a regular high school. “I’ve never done adult color sheets,” Mealer said as she finished her artwork.

“It’s pretty amazing, especially being a working mother,” she said of the break. “My husband and I both work, so when we get home, we’re exhausted.” She thanked the church for reaching out to “a very unministered-to population.”

‘EAGER TO SERVE’ A banner at the back of the West-Ark auditorium proclaims the church’s motto: “Making disciples of Jesus who are eager to serve others.” Serve is exactly what the congregation did on this night. Vicky Bynum’s 15-year-old daughter, Rebecca, won’t soon forget Night to Shine. “I just want to be normal, Mom,” Rebecca likes to say.



PHOTOS BY BOBBY ROSS JR.
Allison Tucker, Miss Arkansas Teen USA, poses with one of the kings at West-Ark’s Night to Shine.



A king and his buddy receive cheers as they walk up the red carpet.

“You are normal,” the autistic teen’s mother replies. “God created you this way. You’re special.” On this Friday, Rebecca — clad in a purple dress with fingernail polish to match — got to be a little more normal than usual. “She gets to see other kids and other adults that have some of the same disabilities that she does, and I think that’s really neat,” Vicky Bynum said. “She feels like a queen.” As Dena Jenkins sees it, God’s children with special needs represent “a huge mission field.” Jenkins is a staff member for the West-Ark church’s connections ministry. Her 14-year-old son, Adam, has autism. The technologically savvy teen helped his father, Kerry, make prints of the photos taken of the kings and queens. Many people with a special-needs loved one encounter difficulty finding a church home, Dena Jenkins said. “Often,” she said, “they’ve been hurt by a church, which just breaks my heart.” In her view, that’s part of what makes Night to Shine so important. “To have the opportunity to reach out to those families and just purely show God’s love, that’s the ultimate goal,” Jenkins said. “We are just humbled and honored to be able to have that opportunity.”



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TRUITT ADAIR talks about effective preaching and church leadership – with broad appeal, yet uncompromising devotion to Scripture

‘We cannot change gospel truth’

BY LYNN McMILLON | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

‘Preach the Word!” As aspiring ministers step up to the pulpit at Sunset International Bible Institute, their fellow students and teachers shout those words of encouragement. The phrase has become a motto for the 55-year-old school in Lubbock, Texas, which shares a campus with its overseeing congregation, the Sunset Church of Christ.

For 23 of those years Truitt Adair has served as president of the institute, which trains preachers for Churches of Christ in the U.S. and around the world. Recently, he announced his decision to transition into the role of chancellor at the beginning of the 2018 academic year.

“I love Sunset, and I am not planning to go anywhere,” Adair said. “I want to help the next president enjoy the same mentoring that I received when founding president Cline Paden passed the baton of leadership to me in 1993.”

Under Adair’s leadership, Sunset developed an international division with 72 partner schools in 42 nations. Hundreds of students study the institute’s curriculum online and through DVD courses. The institute now offers undergraduate and graduate degrees in ministry.

During Adair’s tenure, the institute became debt-free and quadrupled its budget. The school completed a \$12 million campaign and created a foundation with an endowment of more than \$7 million.

As Sunset’s board of directors searches for the institute’s next president, its members salute Adair as “a visionary leader” who “led the Institute through an incredible period of growth over the past two decades,” said chairman Bob Crockett.

Born in Phoenix, Adair is a graduate of Sunset and Abilene Christian University in Texas. In his 50-year ministry he has served churches in Texas and Arizona. For two years he worked as a missionary in Lagos, Nigeria, and has participated in mission efforts in India and Eastern Europe. He has preached in 30 foreign countries and nearly every U.S. state.

He and his wife, Sandra, have four children, 11 grandchildren and two great-grandsons.



TOM RUCKER

For more than a half century, Truitt Adair has preached the Gospel and trained ministers.

Many churches in the U.S. aren’t growing. Why do you think that is?

Churches grow when they are healthy in certain important factors and diminish when they are unhealthy in those same factors. Churches that are intentional in developing greater health in leadership, spirituality, worship, unity, evangelism, relationships and stewardship are far more likely to grow.

This is true up and down the doctrinal spectrum. Doctrinal orientation will certainly determine what kind of church we grow, but this is not the greatest determination in whether a church is likely to grow.

Many congregations that have radically changed their doctrinal positions, gender roles and worship style in the name of growth now find themselves half the size they were when they began their evolution. Others that could be considered pillars of faithfulness to doctrinal purity are bleeding

members and dying. The problem is exacerbated by population shifts, economic factors, aging membership and congregational divisions.

Are we too narrow in our appeal to society?

We cannot change gospel truth to conform to our culture but should seek to adapt our methodologies to broaden our appeal to receptive sinners in our society.

Jesus said, “No one comes to the Father except through me.” He was so uncompromisingly narrow in some areas that his contemporaries

rejected and killed him.

However, in other areas he was broad in his appeal to the culture of his day. He associated widely with the religiously committed and the non-religious, with the prosperous and the poor, with the educated and the unlearned. He was rightly accused of being the “friend of sinners,” including prostitutes, tax collectors, zealots and the hurting and rejected.

Later, Paul became “all things to all people,” in order that they might be won to Christ. But Paul was uncompromising in insisting that his message and way of life be taught “everywhere in every church,” as we see in 1 Corinthians 4.

In Galatians, he wrote that those who “teach another gospel” than the one he taught would be condemned.

That is very narrow, but it is also very biblical.

Why do you think Churches of Christ are losing young people?

I have interviewed a number of young people and a number of leaders of youth ministries, campus ministries and young singles’ ministries. There are two streams of thought regarding the loss.

Some cite millennial culture and its affinity for relative truth and tolerance.

This stream of thought lays the blame at the feet of our education system, the media and cultural pressures.

The second line of thought blames parents and church leaders for their failure to recognize and compensate for the strong pull of an ungodly culture by providing more and better teaching and Christian models.

Perhaps a more important question is, “How can we better reach

‘Jesus said “No one comes to the Father except through me.” He was so uncompromisingly narrow in some areas that his contemporaries rejected and killed him. However, in other areas he was broad in his appeal to the culture of his day.’

Truitt Adair, Sunset International Bible Institute



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ADAIR: On highly effective ministers, elders

FROM PAGE 13
millennials with the Gospel and keep them in the church?"

Young people want the church to be real and relevant. They want to be engaged and involved in something that has value and meaning. They will resist participation simply out of duty. They are turned off by and often walk away from a congregation that expects them to settle back into a comfortable pew and "do church as usual."

Should we be planting new churches or rescuing dying churches?

Generally speaking, new churches grow faster and convert more people than older congregations. There would be greater Kingdom growth if more of us would help plant new congregations in new population centers as cities expand.

While I am not ready to give up on revitalizing dying congregations, putting more resources into planting new churches may be more productive for long-term Kingdom growth.

What are the most exciting initiatives of Sunset around the world today?

One of the most exciting is the Solar Player Ministry launched in 2014. This mission provides small solar powered MP3 players that are loaded with the entire Bible, World Bible School lessons, New Life Behavior series and the complete teaching curriculum of Sunset International Bible Institute, composed of more than 40 courses. The players also have several hours of gospel singing.

Since 1.5 billion people around the world live without electricity, a solar-powered unit that can be recharged and played using the power of sun to teach about the Son is very effective.

The Solar Player Ministry is working because, years ago, we began an International Division which now partners with 72 preacher-training schools in 42 nations, training nearly 3,000 international student preachers at any given time. We graduate between 350 and 500 each year.

What is Sunset doing to prepare ministers who are skilled and tuned in to the needs of today?

Good ministers need not only the

Word of God, but also people skills, servant hearts and the ability to lead and work well with others — especially congregational elders.

That is why we have emphasized internships for new ministers to work for a time with experienced and successful ministers and elders before they "solo." We arrange both summer internships for current students and longer-term (one- to two-year) internships for recent graduates. This is especially critical for younger and less experienced students.

What makes a highly effective minister?

An effective minister will teach and preach a well-planned curriculum of God's Word that he has studied and researched thoroughly. He will equip others to serve by teaching and training members publically and privately.

A good minister prays daily for his people and for open doors to reach the lost with the Gospel. He learns how to be a good steward of his resources, including time, ability and money. An effective minister knows how to work with a broad spectrum of ages, ethnicities, financial strata and social classes. He knows when to rebuke sharply and when to gently persuade.

What makes a highly effective church elder or leader?

An effective elder must know the Word of God and also know the God of the Word. Elders both lead and feed God's people. They guard the church against error and evil. An elder must be able to influence God's people to participate in spiritual growth and significant service. According to Ephesians 4:11-12, job one for leaders is to equip the members for ministry. The path to effective leadership is good discipleship.

Those who have learned submission to Christ can more credibly persuade others to follow their example of service. There can be no more effective and pleasant church situation than for elders who are true spiritual examples of Christian discipleship to lovingly shepherd and provide visionary oversight for people who willingly follow them in becoming more like Christ.

SPOTLIGHT

In Russia, new life on Wednesday night

ST. PETERSBURG, Russia — A Wednesday night Bible study is paying dividends on Sunday mornings for the Neva Church of Christ.



Egirev

Minister Igor Egirev launched the study at the end of 2015.

“That class has become particularly popular among church visitors,” Egirev said. “The focus ... is reading

a particular passage of Scripture followed by a lesson on it. Then we share our own discoveries from the text and ideas on how to implement it in our Christian life.

“At the end of class we pray for each person in the group. It takes much time, but we value it a lot.”

One participant in the class is a young woman from Uzbekistan, a Central Asian nation and former Soviet republic. Her family is Muslim, but she was baptized by a small group of Christians. She visited the Neva church for nearly two years before she became a member, Egirev said, adding that “the Wednesday night Bible class played an important role in her transition.”

In the church, “she is loved, supported and protected,” the minister said. “Now she enjoys serving others and thinks about becoming an evangelist to her nation. She is a little, courageous young lady.”



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Members of the Neva Church of Christ sing for the people of St. Petersburg during the recent Festival of Evangelical Culture's “Epiphany Nights.”



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In Central America, children gleefully tear down their Bible class

After Sunday morning worship, children of the Ataco Church of Christ in El Salvador begin tearing apart the humble structure that served as their classroom for the past year. The congregation recently began the first phase of construction on its property. Church members are leveling the land and laying foundations for 10 new classrooms — including classes for the youths. The children were “so enthusiastic with the idea of soon having better classrooms,” said missionary Hector Cortez, who serves the 150-member church with his wife, Rachel. “I also believe that they just enjoyed knocking it down. Not often are they allowed to do this.”

CHAD

SARH — Thirteen Chadian evangelists conducted a recent gospel campaign in this central African nation, south of Libya. An average of 170 people attended 12 public conferences, resulting in 13 baptisms, said minister Feltoing Djonga.

Evangelists also conducted Bible conferences recently in the city of Moundou. Students who participate in Bible correspondence courses and Chadians who listen to a gospel radio program hosted by Djonga attended. Djonga and fellow evangelists Enoch Mbaihondoum and Antoine Kandao taught classes during the conference. Four students were baptized.

ECUADOR

ESMERALDAS — “We know you are here to stay and not just a group that comes in for a while and disappears.”

Kent Marcum hears such statements from villagers along the Cayapas River in this South American nation. Members of Churches of Christ here operate the Kumanii Christian Center, a base for ministry along the river overseen by the Quito School of

Biblical Studies in Ecuador's capital. The center serves the indigenous Chachi and Afro-Ecuadorian people who live in remote villages.

Since June of 2015, Ecuadorian Christians and mission teams



Marcum

from the U.S. have installed seven swing sets and remodeled school classrooms in villages along the Cayapas, said Marcum, director of Operation Ecuador.

“One village received the blessing of a pole-barn church building to provide our brethren a place to worship, getting them out of the rain and sun,” Marcum said.

ST. LUCIA

CASTRIES — Most of Russel G. Bell's international mission trips are to India. But the Topeka, Kan.-based evangelist, who has preached for 50 years, recently made a trip to the Caribbean to speak on leadership and church growth.

Bell accompanied members of the West End Church of Christ

in Knoxville, Tenn., to St. Lucia and nearby St. Vincent and the Grenadines, where he delivered five lessons each on two islands. The two nations in the West Indies, south-east of Puerto Rico, have a combined 17 Churches of Christ, he said, and members of multiple congregations attended the meetings.

UKRAINE

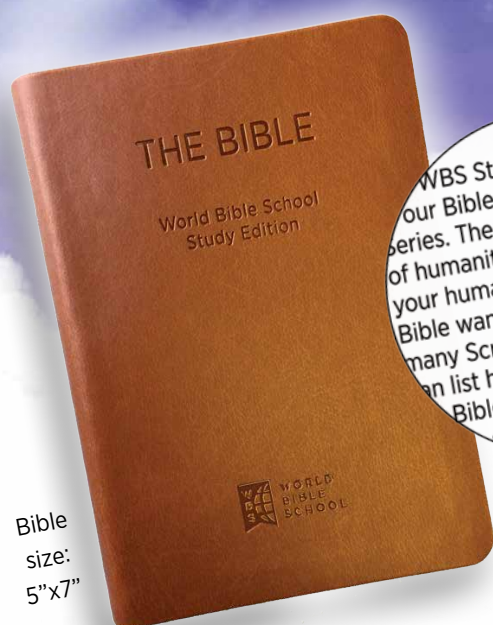
KIEV — “Why man?” “Why Satan?” and “Why the church?” were among the titles of classes taught by Jim Sherman during a recent mission trip to this Eastern European nation.

Sherman, an evangelist from the Shady Valley Church of Christ in Tennessee, spoke on topics from Christian evidences to parenting during his time with the Vinograder Church of Christ. He worked with church members and refugees from the conflict in eastern Ukraine.

Sherman also taught classes at a branch campus of Denver-based Bear Valley Bible Institute. The institute relocated to central Ukraine after separatist troops drove church members from their building in Gorlovka in 2014.

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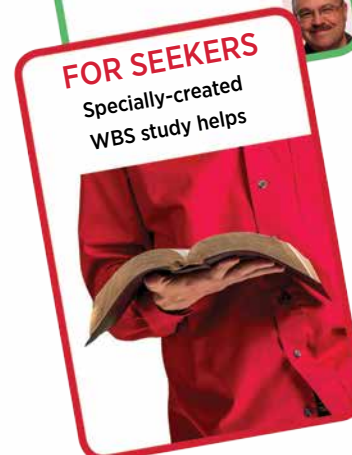
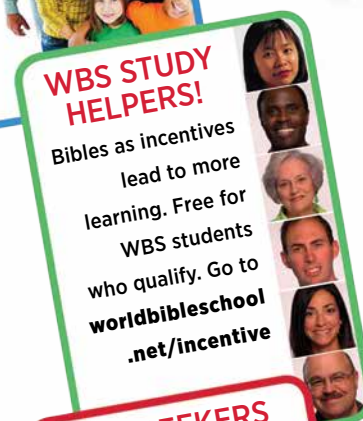
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Children play games and sing songs during a "Kids Lectureship" event at the Bible Lectureship at Freed-Hardeman University. The lectureship also featured classes for teens.

Kid-friendly lectures

HENDERSON, Tenn.

For its 81st annual Bible Lectureship, Freed-Hardeman University stayed up late.

At 10 p.m. each night, the 2,000-student university associated with Churches of Christ hosted special lectures for college-age students on integrity and other spiritual topics.

The five-day lectureship also featured programs for children and teens, plus specialized classes for Christian caregivers and a personal evangelism workshop conducted by faculty members David Powell and Mark Blackwelder. Other classes offered

included sessions titled "Building Better Business Practices for Christians" conducted by the university's business faculty.

Organizers took the lectureship's theme, "Identity in Crisis," from the Old Testament book of Daniel. "Christians should not forget Daniel's vision for the future, even in the midst of a cultural identity crisis," said lectureship director Doug Burleson.

The lectureship was dedicated to the life and work of John W. Dale, an FHU alum who has preached for 52 years, including 39 for the Glendale Road Church of Christ in Murray, Ky.

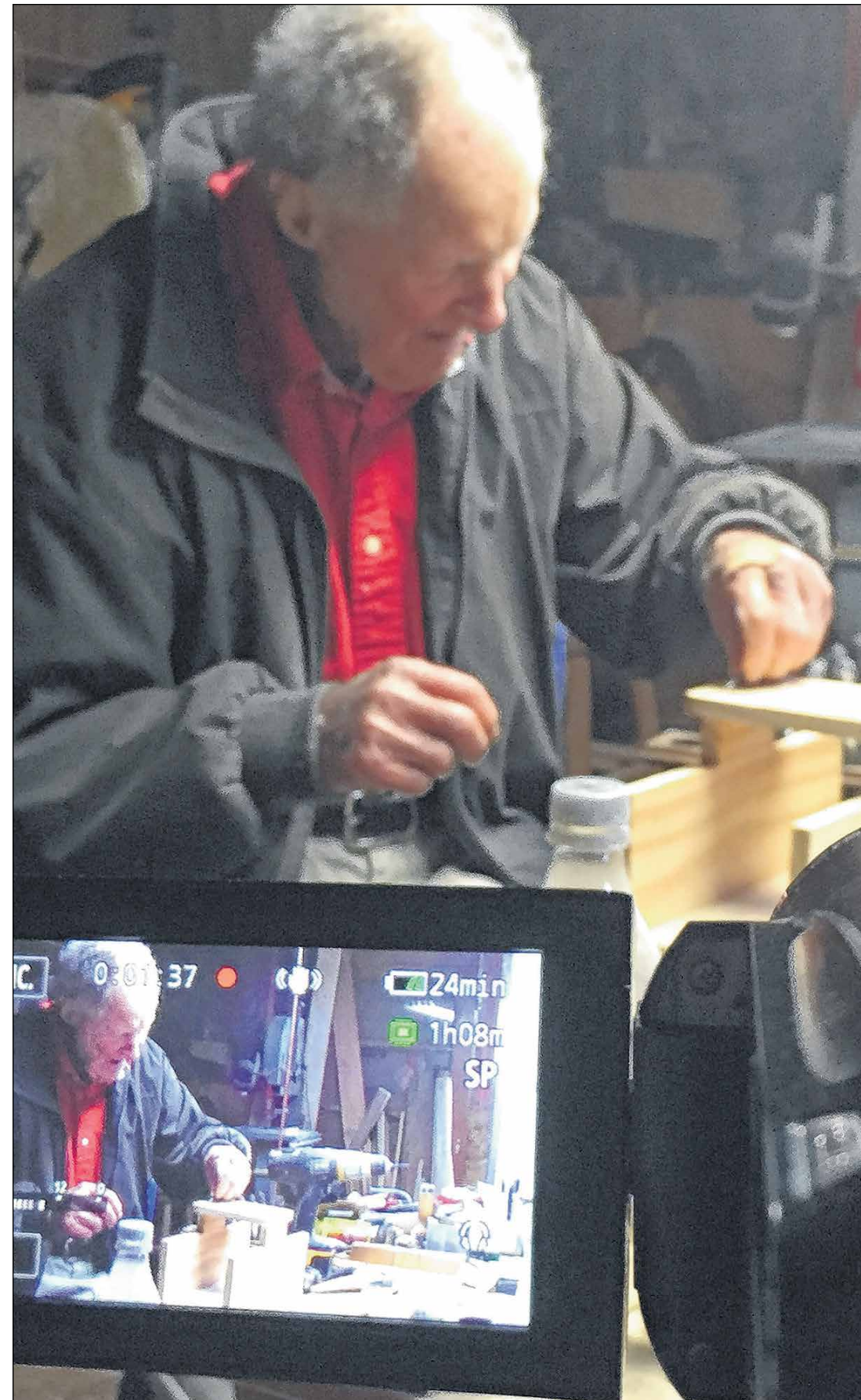


Chattanooga, Tenn., minister David Pharr and his wife, Amber, attend the lectureship.

PHOTOS BY JUD DAVIS



John R. Hall conducts the Lectureship Chorus, a group of students and alumni.



From Preacher to Toymaker: See our exclusive video feature on Ernest Raines and find out more about his life and what led him to make toys at www.christianchronicle.org.



Handmade cars, trucks, planes and other toys fill an outside patio room at Ernest Raines' home in Rosharon, south of Houston.



This jeep is one of the many toys Ernest Raines has made. He said the firetrucks and helicopters are his favorite toys to build.

A toymaker's tale: Preacher's hobby was born from devotion

BY CHELLIE ISON | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

ROSHARON, Texas

At 85, Ernest Raines is not slowing down. “If you sit around, you’re going to mope and groan and not want to get up,” the longtime preacher and carpenter told *The Christian Chronicle*.

His home, about 30 miles south of Houston, is full of wooden toys — cars, trucks, planes — each handmade by Raines himself.

“I love making the toys because it makes so many people happy,” said Raines, who worships with the First Colony Church of Christ in Sugar Land, Texas.

It’s a hobby he’s had for decades. It started out of necessity, building Christmas presents for his nine children when money was tight.

But his hobby really took off when he was in his 70s. His wife,



Married in July 1953, Ernest and Margaret Raines had 57 years together.

Margaret, had a massive stroke. Raines started working on the toys while he cared for her.

“I could make the toys and care for

my wife at the same time,” he said.

He makes it sound simple. According to his children, it was not. The stroke left Margaret unable to talk, chew or swallow. She was paralyzed, left with only the ability to swing her right arm as a signal that she needed something.

Raines couldn’t stand the thought of putting his beloved wife in a nursing home, his children said.

“Dad had to find ways to care for mom that were a result of his varied life experiences as not just a preacher, but also a farmer, mechanic and carpenter,” said Tim Raines, one of Ernest’s sons.

With his son’s help, Ernest Raines built tracks on the ceiling around his home, enabling him to move Margaret from one room to another. He could get her out of bed, bathe her and even put her on an exercise bike to help keep her circulation going.

“Dad had to use a seat belt and

various straps to place her on the exercise bike, which he had to ‘pedal’ with his hands,” Tim Raines said.

He also felt that the expensive, liquid diet doctors had her on wasn’t helping her get well, so he developed a special meal he would feed her three times a day via a feeding tube. He called it “Ernie’s Nourishment Drink,” a mixture of sweet potatoes, oatmeal, peanut butter, yogurt and a small amount of chocolate “for flavor,” he said.

Doctors, his children added, were always amazed how well Margaret was doing.

Then, in April 2011 — almost four years after the devastating stroke — another stroke took Margaret’s life. They were married

for 57 years, during which Ernest Raines kept his vow to love and care for his wife.

“Mom was dad’s best friend,” Tim Raines said, “and her care and happiness were his No. 1 priority in life.”

Along the way they raised four biological and five adopted children as Ernest Raines preached for Churches of Christ across the U.S. He also helped construct church buildings.

After Margaret’s death, Earnest Raines found himself spending more time in his workshop, more time building the toys he loves.

“After my wife died, it was my life,” he said. And it keeps him young.

“I can put a car together in three or four hours,” he said. “Sometimes I can make three cars in a day.”

Despite his own health issues —

multiple surgeries, skin cancer, a broken hip and femur — he keeps going. Another son, Paul Raines, said of his father, “I don’t think there’s too many people his age doing this type of stuff, and I think it’s good for him.”

These days, Ernest Raines sells many of the toys he makes at a Houston-area farmer’s market. His children, all grown with families of their own, help him. They said that their dad’s story is an incredible example of love and devotion — not just to their mom, but to God.

“His ability to lay down his entire life and learn how to be a country boy nurse was the result of daily prayer and submission,” Tim Raines said. “Dad is faithful — to God, to his wife, his family, his friends.”

Ernest Raines, however, doesn’t believe he’s done anything special.

“My opinion’s still the same,” Raines said. “That’s to be a Christian, walk like a Christian, act like a Christian.”

Blessed be the Caregivers

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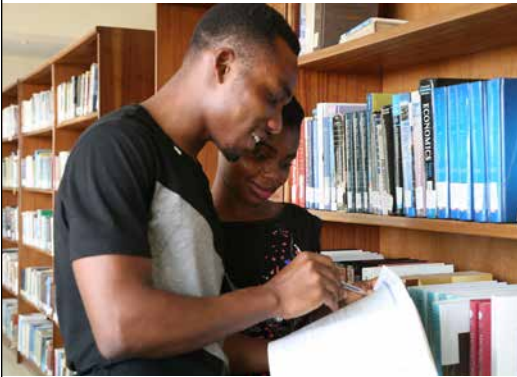
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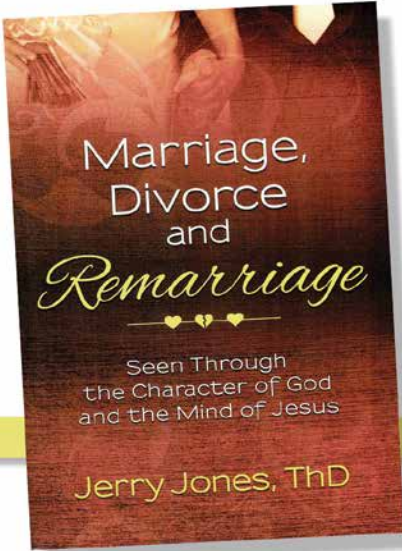
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PHOTO PROVIDED

Reaching the lost online: See our video interview with the Johnson family in Indonesia, and find a link to their YouTube channel at www.christianchronicle.org.

Christians on a YouTube mission

BY CHELLIE ISON | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

Martin and Julie Johnson traveled more than 8,000 miles across the Pacific Ocean to serve as missionaries in Southeast Asia.

The family moved from the U.S. to Jakarta, Indonesia, where they've spent eight years. There, they found another mission field — the internet. Specifically, YouTube.

"It started as a way for me to practice Indonesian on a daily basis," Martin Johnson told *The Christian Chronicle*. "I made a commitment; I was going to put out a video every day in Indonesian, and it really caught on. People really liked it."

The Johnson family's YouTube channel — a website where viewers can find a library of the family's videos — took off. To date they have more than 86,000 followers, a number that continues to grow.

On the channel, all four Johnsons (including children Sarah and Seth) post video blogs of their experiences as they visit Indonesia's national parks and try new foods at restaurants. The videos get rave reviews from subscribers, especially those in Southeast Asia.

"I am glad that somehow I found your family's channel," one subscriber wrote, describing the Johnsons as "so natural and adorable."

"I am wishing all best for this family," the subscriber continued, "and God bless you all the way through the years, in all things you do and plan."

While they don't preach on

YouTube, Martin Johnson takes time to mention his faith and invite viewers to church.

Though the majority of Indonesia's 250 million souls claim Islam as their faith, the country's constitution provides for freedom of religion, and conversion to Christianity is legal.

"Every video has a link to our church's website and our personal website. And on our website, they can find the Gospel there," he said.

Those invitations are working. Several visitors to the Yogyakarta Church of Christ, the congregation the Johnsons serve, have told the family that they decided to visit after watching them on YouTube.

That's how one of the church members, Halasan, discovered the congregation. The young man "started watching our videos and found out we were different" from other short-term travel bloggers, Martin Johnson said. "He showed up one day just to come to church, Bible in hand."

Halasan began studying with the Johnsons and then made the decision to be baptized. He's now an active member of their small congregation.

"We really want to encourage our brothers and sisters in Christ, if they're thinking about it, to start a YouTube channel," Martin Johnson said, "whether it's a Bible study channel, a sermon channel or just sharing their life, their hobbies, their passions and being that example to people who will want to contact them personally."



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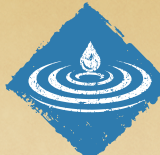
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(Daniel in the lions' den)

Focus: Stand Out (Romans 12:2)

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Bible Text: Nehemiah 4:1-18

(Nehemiah rebuilds the walls)

Focus: Work Together (Nehemiah 2:18)

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(John the Baptist prepares the way for Jesus)

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NEWSMAKERS



PHOTO PROVIDED BY GREATER ATLANTA CHRISTIAN
Alan Phillips, left, receives a plaque from Al Horne recognizing his service to Southern Africa Bible College.

HONORED: Alan Phillips, campaign consultant, for work on the \$3 million “Spreading the Flame” campaign by Southern Africa Bible College in Benoni, South Africa. **Terry Rush**, minister for the Memorial Drive Church of Christ in Tulsa, Okla., retiring from 34 years of ministry at baseball fantasy camps.

APPOINTED: Bruno Valle of Managua, Nicaragua, as Central America coordinator of Hope For Life, a Herald of Truth ministry.



HONORED: Carl Seigenthaler, for entering his 47th year as minister for the New Hope Church of Christ in Florence, Ala. **Freeman T. Wyche, Sr.**, minister emeritus, for 38 years of service to the Liberty City Church of Christ in Miami.

NEW ELDERS: , Scott Lukkason and Bob Alfred, Great Falls Church of Christ in Montana. They join elders Gordon Naylor, Mike Rocheleau and Jerry Covington.



SCOTT LAIRD
Four of the five Great Falls elders are pictured: Gordon Naylor, Scott Lukkason, Mike Rocheleau and Bob Alfred.

Milestones

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

Memorials

James Monroe Elliott
1926-2017

James Monroe Elliott, 90, of Memphis, Tenn., passed away Jan. 24, 2017. He was born Dec. 31, 1926, in Pawnee, Texas.

He was a lifelong member of the Church of Christ and served as a preacher, leader and elder in Florence, Ala., Monmouth County, N.J., and Memphis, Tenn.

In the summer of 1955, Jim met the love of his life, Gloria Brannam, when they were counselors at Camp Shiloh in New Jersey. They chose to make their home in New Jersey for nearly three decades to raise their family and to serve their church family.



Jim was a professional educator, graduating from Freed-Hardeman College in 1946, Harding College in 1949, and earned graduate degrees at Columbia University and Rutgers University. He taught all levels of students throughout his career and served as chair of the business department at Brookdale Community College in N.J.

He is survived by his wife of 61 years, Gloria; a daughter, Debra (Tim) Baird of Searcy, Ark.; a son Don (Julia) Elliott of Marietta, Ga.; three grandsons: Steven, Daniel, and David Baird; three granddaughters: Paige, Jeremy, and Laura Jo Elliott; and two great-grandsons.

Jakie Carl “Bill” Hanna
1944-2017

Jakie Carl “Bill” Hanna was born to Robert and June Hanna on Jan. 30, 1944, in Duncan, Okla. He passed

away Jan. 14, 2017, at Mercy Hospital in Oklahoma City at the age of 72, just over two weeks before his 73rd birthday. He married Patricia Gail Cudd, Sept. 1, 1968. To this union, two wonderful boys were born, Chad Robert and Brad Lesley.

After moving to Edmond, Okla., in 1975, both Bill and Pat knew this was where they wanted to raise their



family. Bill’s pastimes included playing golf, his continued love for cars, watching University of Oklahoma and Oklahoma Christian University basketball while serving with the Booster

Club and being with his family. Bill and Pat were active members of Memorial Road Church of Christ in Edmond, Okla.

He is survived by his wife of 48 years, Pat of Edmond; two sons, Chad (Kim) of Edmond; Brad (Lindsay) of Edmond and their children Hunter and Hallie; his father-in-law, Clarence Cudd; sisters-in-law, Brenda Bridgmon and Susan Hanna and her sons Rick, Sean, Matthew and Alex and their families; and a close-knit family of cousins.

Betty Ann Miller
1922-2017

Betty Ann Miller, 94, of Vienna, W.Va., passed away Jan. 25, 2017. She graduated from Parkersburg High School in W.Va., and Freed-Hardeman University in Henderson, Tenn., and began teaching in 1942 in a one-room schoolhouse in Wadesville, W.Va. Eventually, she spent her career on the faculty of Ohio Valley University in Vienna, W.Va.



She taught English, art, psychology, literature and reading. She retired in 1984, as emeritus professor of English.

Involved in the efforts to establish the university, she was the first president of the Parkersburg chapter of Stepping Stones. Chancellor Keith Stotts said, “She helped us define the term ‘Christian lady’ with the depth of character it implies.”

Betty Ann was a charter member of the 36th Street Church of Christ in Vienna and was a member of Delta Kappa Gamma, an international professional honor society for women educators. OVU has established a scholarship in her honor. Contributions are welcome.

Stanley Morris
1940-2017

Funeral services for Dr. Stanley Lee Morris, 76, of Omaha, Ark., were conducted at the Greenlawn Funeral Home in Branson, Mo., on Feb. 8, 2017.

A veteran of the Air Force, he was buried with full military honors at the Missouri Veteran’s Cemetery in Springfield, Mo. He was a resident of the area for the past 12 years.

He is survived by his wife, Sheila Morris of Omaha, Ark., six grandchildren and six adult children including Mary Beth, Robert, and Kathryn Morris, Erin (Bob) Mistretta of Winter Haven, Fla., Emily (Michael) Daniel of Nashville, Tenn., and Rebecca (Pedro) Garcia, also of Nashville.

Stanley was born June 25, 1940, in Oklahoma City, the only child of Homer and Pauline Horn Morris. A graduate of Putnam City High School in Oklahoma City, he received a bachelor’s degree (magna cum laude) from Oklahoma Christian University in 1963, with a major in Bible and a minor in the Greek



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Milestones

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language. After receiving a master's of divinity degree from Harding Graduate School of Religion in Memphis, Tenn., in 1968 he went on to receive a second master's degree in linguistics from Hunter College in New York City in 1973. Later, he was granted a doctorate of ministry degree in 1994 from Hartford Seminary in Hartford, Conn.

He worked for several years in the translations department of the American Bible Society in New York City. Later he helped to establish the World Bible Translation Center in Fort Worth, Texas. In 1975 he founded and became the president of International Bible Translators, Inc. Blessed with exceptional linguistic abilities, he translated from Greek, Hebrew and Aramaic into a fourth-grade English reading level. His heart was in the mission field, and his primary goal in life was to get the gospel to the world. He also worked at Hartford Insurance Company in Connecticut as a professional database designer for a time.

Stanley Morris was a man of many gifts, talents and passions. He was exceptionally dedicated and passionate about his mission. Positive and enthusiastic about the future, he was always excited to share his next big idea. As his wife Sheila said, "He would have had to live 100 lives in order to do all that he wanted to do."

A dreamer, inventor, singer and performer, theologian and Bible scholar, he was known as "Stan the Man" at the local gym where he loved to play basketball. He was also a devoted friend, father, and husband. He never met a stranger and would strike up conversations with anyone, always looking for a new friend. He loved his family and was generous with his words of love and praise for all. He taught us how to love God and to love life with a child-like love.

We learned from him never to quit something that you believe in. We are forever changed by knowing him and by being loved by him. He taught us to live an authentic life, to be true to ourselves, to sing from the heart,

to laugh loudly and to love deeply. There are no projects or dreams too big.

In 2014, Dr. Morris completed and released the International English Bible (IEB), his translation of the whole Bible which also contains many footnotes. He exited this life for the next exactly the way that he was meant to go, doing the work of translation that he loved with his beloved wife by his side until the end. God used him and will continue to use him to help millions of people beyond our time.

Charles Franklin "Bud" Myer, Jr. 1932-2016

Charles Franklin "Bud" Myer, Jr. went to be with his Lord on Dec. 22, 2016.

Born in McGhee, Ark., he was 84. He attended Abilene Christian University in Texas and graduated cum laude from Harding University in Searcy, Ark. He continued his education at Harding School of Theology, John Hopkins University, and Yale University and earned a Ph.D. from the University of Pennsylvania.

Dr. Myer served as academic dean and taught biblical languages at Northeastern Christian Junior College in Villanova, Pa. He served NCJC for 30 years, where he mentored and encouraged many students. He taught in Vienna, Austria; Kiev, Ukraine; Budapest, Hungary; Prague, Czech Republic, and other European countries.

While living in the Philadelphia area, he served as chairman of the Main Line Chamber of Commerce, helping the organization to earn its national accreditation. Dr. Myer

also served on the boards of the Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce, the American Red Cross and two Christian camps.

Dr. Myer made more than 40 mission trips to locales including Trinidad, Grenada, Honduras, Mexico and Austria. In his most-visited country, Lithuania, he co-founded Camp Ruta with Danny Dodd. The Christian summer camp is now in its 21st year. Since moving to Pensacola, Fla., he has served as an elder of the Gateway Church of Christ. He also preached for the Warrington Church of Christ in Pensacola until the end of August 2016.

Dr. Myer is preceded in death by two sons: Lewis (1961) and Steven Douglas (2013). He is survived by Eva Walker Myer, his wife of 62 years; son Charles Franklin Myer III of Dallas; daughter Melinda Myer (Steven) Gardner of Atlanta; and a foster son Quang Nguyen of Orange County, Calif. He is also survived by grandchildren Chay Armstrong, Morgan and Franklin Myer IV, Garret and Gaines Myer, Meigan and Kaity Gardner.

David Worley, Jr. 1949-2017

David R. Worley Jr. fell into a sweet sleep in the Lord Jesus on Feb. 9 and was buried in a private family service to await the resurrection of the body. A memorial was held Feb. 18, at the meeting place of the Brentwood Oaks Church of Christ in Austin, Texas.

David was born (first creation) in Lubbock, Texas, to David and Iva Lea Worley on Nov. 18, 1949, and was baptized into Christ (new creation) on Feb. 12, 1964, in Fort Worth, Texas.

David was a member of five congregations: Meadowbrook in Fort Worth, Texas; Woodlawn and Minter

Lane in Abilene, Texas; Whitney Avenue in Hamden, Conn.; and Brentwood Oaks in Austin, Texas. He served in planning assemblies, organizing and teaching classes and in various supervisory and ministry works.

The Father above provided David with three faithful sons-in-law: Les McDaniel, Matthew Peterson and Chris Coggin for his three wonderful daughters: Heatherly, Christiana and Elena, who were blessed to have a wonderful mother, Melinda. David prayed for his four grandsons: Owen, Jude, Samuel and Lincoln and six granddaughters: Jane, AnnaLee, Neva, Addie, Gracie and Cailin.

David was blessed with sisters Janet (Dick) Drake and Gay Barton, and brother Brock (Joyce) Barton; with nieces: Sara Black, Karen Barton, Eleanor Hancock and Danielle Daugbjerg; and nephews: David (Laura) Hancock and David, Dain and Damon Drake.

Many people were provided houses and apartments by David. He encouraged, taught, equipped and nurtured believers and congregations in Russia, the South Pacific and the U.S. David served as chair of the Christian Resource Center in St. Petersburg, Russia. David had special concerns about how believers listened to the radio (and experienced entertainment). He urged believers to learn to sing the Psalms. He also was

concerned about the effects of the nature and nurture of sports upon God's dedicated people.

David served in the academy and in business. He was a graced teacher. He had been president and chancellor of Austin Graduate School of Theology, chair of Brentwood Christian School

and a supporter of faithfulness at Abilene Christian University. He was a financial investor, with his priority to help trustworthy friends start and sustain businesses — whether in

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JEFF MONTGOMERY

Wilberforce author speaks at Harding

Conservative radio host Eric Metaxas discusses his book “Amazing Grace: William Wilberforce and the Heroic Campaign to End Slavery” at Harding University in Searcy, Ark. The book was Harding’s “campus read selection” for this school year. Each new student received a complimentary copy. Metaxas said on Twitter that he loved visiting Harding and speaking to a crowd of students, faculty and administrators who had read his book.

Seminar promotes ministry excellence in Pacific Northwest

YAMHILL, Ore. — Fifty-five participants from six states traveled to Camp Yamhill for the annual Expositor’s Seminar.

Rick Oster from Harding School of Theology in Memphis, Tenn., and Doug Peters from the Grace Crossing Church of Christ in Conroe, Texas, were the featured presenters.

Peters taught four sessions on “Purposeful Preaching.” Oster presented four sessions on “The Calling Of Grace” from the Ephesians letter.

Organizers describe the Expositor’s Seminar as the only event of its kind for Churches of Christ in the Pacific Northwest. “It is our desire to promote excellence in ministry, broaden

and deepen our engagement with Scripture, provide support for and foster healthy ministry, and strengthen relationships among those who are committed to the

cause of Christ,” said Mark Johnson, minister for the Olympia Church of Christ in Washington state.

Johnson directs the event along with Jay Hawkins, minister for the Caldwell Church of Christ in Idaho.

The seminar was started by Portland-area ministers in the 1980s. It continued under

the direction of Cascade College through 2008.

“With the closure of Cascade College, there was still a strong desire to see the Expositor’s Seminar continue,” Johnson said.



PHOTO PROVIDED

Rick Oster from the Harding School of Theology in Memphis, Tenn., teaches at the Expositor’s Seminar.

Milestones

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health care, energy, media, transportation, education or the arts. David was president of the family office Thelese Management. David chose the name “Thelese” from a passage in James that expresses the contingency of all business upon the Lord’s willing (thelese) and His breath.

David relies, as do we all, on the mercy of God the Father of our Lord Jesus Messiah. David learned to express grace to all whom he met. He awaits the resurrection, buried in Austin,

Texas, until the Lord Jesus returns to judge, awaiting the inheritance of the saints in light, the new heaven and the new earth, to the glory of God the Father.

Maxine Cudd, 92, Edmond, Okla., Jan. 12. **Nelda Roberson, 76**, Abilene, Texas.

Memorial/Honor Gifts

The Christian Chronicle appreciates and acknowledges a generous gift received in memory of Luke and Vonna Thomas.

Entries should be submitted to milestones@christianchronicle.org or call (405) 425-5071. Rates and guidelines are available upon request (credit card preferred).

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May 14th

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When our hearts break, God's words fall in

Pain often is the best teacher. We are most open to God's teaching when our hearts are broken.

I have had a number of teachers. One of the most important lessons I learned about my relationship with God was in the aftermath of losing a baby in stillbirth. How could God let this happen to me, a faithful servant?

I chose to punish God by turning away from him. But after three years of hanging on to my anger, I realized in my loneliness that having a relationship with God was more important than understanding God's ways. I learned that the only thing worse than going through the loss of my baby was going through it without God. I learned to cling to God.

A few years later, my husband was working with a church that became embroiled in a political battle. I watched as my husband and the other minister were mistreated and wounded. The church was in turmoil, and I could not understand why God did not intervene. So many good people were being hurt.

But in my struggle, I remembered the lesson I had learned after the loss of our baby. I remembered to cling to God. He is faithful to give us what we need to endure.

A gift in this particular struggle was that God opened my eyes to the Psalms. Previously, I viewed it as a long book that slowed down my annual reading through the Bible. But now I saw my words and heart

expressed by the psalmists. The words jumped off the pages and gave me immeasurable comfort. They were a balm to me.

Views



Jackie L. Halstead

And I needed them as I experienced another time of struggle. I was recruited by a retreat center and was thrilled to have the opportunity to pour myself into the oversight of its department of education and programming. I wondered why several of the long-term employees had left, but there were reasons given for their departure.

A few months later, the real reasons emerged. Our treatment at the hands of the executive director was brutal. I was belittled, told I was worthless, discredited. I tried to give her the benefit of the doubt but soon realized that it was her style of leadership.

Unfortunately, the situation continued to escalate. Eventually, I resigned. Those were dark days as I struggled to do my work, grow professionally and live in a Christlike manner. As time passed, I began to internalize some of the negative messages and doubted my worth. I again asked the question, "God, why don't you intervene?"

God was not responding in the way I wanted and thought would best solve the situation. All I could do was again cling to God and plead with him to change the heart of my employer. It took a toll on both my family and on me.

When God's people, the Israelites, lived in slavery, they pleaded with God for 400 years. Finally, God

answered, "*I have heard the cries of my people*" (Exodus 3:7). Had he not heard them every year, every day, since they were enslaved? Was this the action of a loving God?

Another of God's children, Job, cried out to God as he attempted to get his mind around the multiple tragedies he experienced. He wrestled to understand the physical pain, the overwhelming loss of his wealth, his family. I imagine he especially struggled to understand why his children had to die.

Job's friends had the answer for him. It was clear to them that Job had sinned and was being punished. Job did not accept that answer, and God certainly did not.

God ultimately challenged Job on his attempt to understand the ways of God, whose ways are so far beyond us that he cannot explain them in language we can understand. God told Job to let go of his desire to know and instead to simply trust that God was with him.

During my struggles, I began to learn to trust God. I don't know why he allowed these terrible things to happen. What I do know is that what I gained during these times was much more than what I lost. I learned to pray fuller and deeper than I had before, and I learned to lean into God's loving embrace. I learned that, despite the external chaos of my life, I can have internal peace — a peace that transcends understanding, a peace that only God can give.

The questions we ask of God remain, and a part of us yearns to have every situation wrapped up

with a neat little bow. But we accept that God is God, and we are not. His ways are above our ways. We learn to be content in every circumstance, following Paul's words in Philippians.

When I wrestle with the pain and hurt in this world, I cling to the fact that God came to earth to show us how to live in this hurting world and serve as his instruments of love.

Jesus was abused, rejected and ultimately killed. He understands the pain we experience. He showed us how to live in this broken world and triumph. He did not give us a pass on the pain of this life. He gave us the gift of the Spirit to be our counselor, to live in us and to pray for us when we cannot pray. And Jesus promised to teach us — to open the eyes of our heart to see ways that we can continue his work in this world. God is faithful and does hear our cries.

There is an old Jewish tale about a student who asks a rabbi, "Why does Torah say we lay these words upon our hearts? Why does it not say we lay these words in our hearts?" The rabbi replies, "Because God knows that our hearts are closed, so we lay the words upon our hearts. When our hearts break, the words fall in."

JACKIE L. HALSTEAD is the founder and CEO of Selah (selahspiritual.com), a nonprofit dedicated to providing renewal and sustenance for church leaders, offering a Spiritual Direction certificate program and services in spiritual formation, relationship enhancement, body spirituality and wellness and emotional/psychological health. She teaches at Lipscomb University in Nashville, Tenn., and online for Abilene Christian University in Texas.

FROM OUR READERS

Praise and aloha

The Wellspring Fellowship Church of Christ is a great example of godly compassion as they serve the hurting — both within God's family as well as in their surrounding community. (See "The other side of paradise,"

Page 3, February.)

Having the Cady family as coworkers here on Oahu has been a channel of blessings to me and to others that cannot be fully expressed.

STEVE BYRNE is a minister and elder of the Pearl Harbor Church of Christ in Honolulu.

Workshop will be missed

My family has gone to the Tulsa Workshop every year, except one, since 1981. (See "Tulsa Workshop canceled," Page 1, February.) It was our time of spiritual renewal each year. The workshop is often

what kept us alive spiritually. We will miss it more than can be expressed in words.

Rob Ford | Edmond, Okla.

My 25-year experience with the Tulsa Workshop shaped my life and faith.

Gareth Flanary | Agawam, Mass.



Steve Byrne

EDITORIAL

Refugee debate demands a global perspective

Here in the U.S., debates about our immigration policies dominate headlines.

We pray that, in the midst of the confusion and frustration, we don't lose sight of the global epidemic of displaced persons. Worldwide, the number of people displaced by war, conflict or persecution reached a record high of nearly 60 million in 2014, according to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. The U.S., comparatively, resettled 69,933 refugees in fiscal year 2015, according to the Migration Policy Institute.

Many refugees never leave their home country. Recently, the years-long conflict in eastern Ukraine has intensified, forcing men, women and children — many of them orphans — from their homes. In the tiny, central Ukrainian community of Kolentsi, about an hour south of Chernobyl, a ministry supported by Churches of Christ recently took in 22 children and nine caretakers from the war zone, said administrator Andrew Kelly. He and his wife, Jenny, oversee the nonprofit Jeremiah's Hope, which runs a camp for orphans and at-risk kids. Since Ukraine's war began, the camp has served as a temporary home for multiple groups of refugees.

In 2014, when the first refugees arrived at the camp, Andrew Kelly told his wife, "This is why God built this place."

We all are displaced people. We've shared those words before in this space, but they bear repeating. We remember 1 Peter 2, where the apostle urges us — as aliens and strangers, as foreigners and exiles — to abstain from sinful desires and live as a royal priesthood.

In Ukraine, the Kellys help refugees find jobs and resettle in nearby towns or the capital, Kiev. When the Ukrainians say goodbye to their temporary hosts, there are no simple thank-yous, Andrew Kelly said. Instead, they speak for five or six minutes as they praise their hosts, counting the blessings they've received one by one.

Are we as grateful to the God who rescues us, who gives us refuge?



Kelly

'The church hasn't changed a bit'

"For those who eat and drink without discerning the body of Christ eat and drink judgment on themselves. That is why many among you are weak and sick, and a number of you have fallen asleep."
— 1 Corinthians 11:29-30, New International Version

CAP-HAITIEN, Haiti

Every Monday we gather in the living room — eight young women trying to share the Gospel in broken languages. The light above hasn't worked for months, but we don't care. Using the dim light from the kitchen, we huddle close:

- Jenny, exhausted from school, searching for truth.
- Arianne, hunched over, shy, yet completely engaged.
- Myriam, with her pocket-size Bible and mind full of questions.
- Kencia, brave and loud, seizing every moment to make a statement.
- Guerdine, taking notes as if one day she will be given a final exam.
- Marjorie, a foster mom of six young women, in need of wisdom and strength.
- Josie, beautiful and scarred, looking for her one true love.

And me, stumbling over my Creole, pink leather Bible held firm, praying for the Spirit to breathe truth into a dozen hungry ears.

This is my favorite evening of the week.

It all started after one of them confessed her fear of being unforgivable, of being too broken — fear that she was unworthy of the grace offered in communion.

"No one is worthy," I cupped her hands into mine. "No one is worthy of the wine and the bread, but that's what makes it so beautiful. He gives us his body because his brokenness can fix ours."

She still did not believe that such a grace was made for her. Although the girls participate in devotionals every evening with the boys, it was time to personally walk them through Scripture.

We started in 1 Corinthians — a letter to a broken church full of broken people. These girls read chapter 11 and fear that something bad might happen to them if they take the Lord's Supper in an improper manner. It's a fear that runs deep in their Haitian blood. Wrong someone, and you will pay. There are witchdoctors in every community who preach this practice. Why should communion be any different?

We've discussed Paul's words and what they mean.

One Monday, Myriam seemed distraught as we read.

In the Word



Jillian Kittrell

"The Bible is supposed to change people, yes?" she asked, pocket-size Bible pointed straight at me.

So why, she continued, have more than 2,000 years passed, "and the church hasn't changed a bit?"

Her Bible dropped to the floor — accident or coincidence, I'm not sure.

I wanted to tell her that wasn't true, that we have grown, that we have changed, that we have taken Paul's words to heart and become a stronger body. But she was right. We're still a bunch of divided, sinful people. "You're right, Myriam. We are the same church," I said. "And that is why God made sure this letter would be in Bible, because every generation would need it."

Myriam wasn't satisfied.

"But why haven't we changed?" she asked, picking the Bible up off the floor.

"I don't know. Because Satan hasn't changed either. Because we still live in a sinful world." That sounded hopeless, and I knew it.

"Listen," I continued, setting my Bible on the armrest. "The church is still the same, and that is what makes God's grace so amazing — that he would choose to still make us his bride even though we never seem to grow up."

Myriam gave a smirk, still not sold.

In the days that followed, the Spirit wouldn't let this one go, asking me to connect the dots. In order for our girls to truly love the church, brokenness and all, they first need to grasp the truth that God loves them, brokenness and all.

Many see the church's brokenness and give up. They shouldn't. We aren't expected to be perfect. The church is made up of flawed people — and has been since the book of Acts. It will continue to be flawed until Jesus returns.

A few nights later, as I sat on our porch, swatting a half-million mosquitos off my legs, I Skyped with a friend. We talked about the Bible study and the church.

"At some point we have to stop complaining," my friend said, "unless we are willing to be a part of the solution."

The next Monday, as Marjorie passed around a bag of hard candies for us to enjoy, I gave the girls that challenge.

If the church needs to change, be the change.

Maybe together they can work to grow and mature the church in Haiti. Maybe we all can do the same.



HUNTER KITTRELL

Arianne, left, prays before she and her siblings at Emmaus House serve a meal to a community in Haiti.

JILLIAN KITTRELL and her husband, Hunter, serve as administrators of Emmaus House, a ministry that helps orphaned youths transition to independent living. For more information, see www.emmaushousehaiti.org.

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

The **Department of Mathematics** invites applications for a position in developmental mathematics beginning in Fall 2017. An earned master's degree (or completion prior to August 2017) in education (preferred) or mathematics is required. The successful candidate is expected to be an effective teacher and mentor to underprepared students in an undergraduate environment and to have a desire to pursue professional development. Applicants are sought with a background of a minimum of five years of experience teaching mathematics at the high school level. The teaching load is typically 12 hours at the developmental level. Information about the department is available at acu.edu/math.

College of Education and Human Services

Dr. Donnie Snider, Dean, College of Education and Human Services, ACU Box 28276, Abilene, Texas 79699-8276

The **Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders** invites applications for an instructor or tenure-track faculty position beginning Fall 2017. A doctoral degree is preferred but strong candidates with the master's degree in speech-language pathology will be considered. Candidates with a master's should have an interest in/desire to pursue a Ph.D. in communication sciences and disorders or a closely related area. Applicants must hold a current ASHA Certificate of Clinical Competence (CCC-SLP) and hold (or be eligible for) a current Texas SLP license. Responsibilities include teaching undergraduate courses in basic human communication processes such as language and speech development; teaching or facilitating courses for graduate students in the instructor's area(s) of expertise; supervising clinical practicum; and serving on departmental, college and university committees. Tenure-track candidates will demonstrate the ability to engage in research and scholarship in areas of expertise. The department is accredited by the Council on Academic Accreditation through the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. Information about the department is available at acu.edu/comm/disorders.

School of Information Technology and Computing

Dr. John Homer, Director, ACU Box 29304, Abilene, Texas 79699-9304

The **School of Information Technology and Computing (SITC)** invites applications for an instructor or tenure-track faculty position in digital entertainment technology (DET) beginning Fall 2017. DET is an interdisciplinary major catering to students interested in game design and development, cinematics, modeling and animation. ACU's program was recently ranked 27th in the *Princeton Review's* top 50 game design programs in the nation. Faculty responsibilities include engaging with undergraduate students and colleagues in teaching, research and service. A terminal degree in a field related to the teaching discipline is preferred; a master's degree is acceptable if combined with significant professional experience and commitment to ongoing professional development. SITC is a growing academic unit within the College of Business Administration and offers majors in computer science, digital entertainment technology, information systems and information technology. The undergraduate computer science / computing theory and information technology programs are accredited by the Computing Accreditation Commission of ABET. Information about the school is available at acu.edu/sitc.

See acu.edu/academics/provost/positions.html for complete descriptions of these positions. In a letter to the appropriate dean or chair, applicants should address their qualifications for the position. They should include in the application a statement of how faith informs their teaching; a discussion of their spiritual journey; a curriculum vitae; transcripts of all undergraduate and graduate work; and names, addresses and phone numbers of five references. Review of applicants will begin immediately and continue until the position is filled. Nominations of and applications from qualified women and minorities are especially encouraged. ACU is affiliated with the fellowship of the Churches of Christ. All applicants must be professing Christians and be active, faithful members of a congregation of the Churches of Christ and deeply committed to service in Christian higher education. The mission of ACU is to educate students for Christian service and leadership throughout the world. ACU does not unlawfully discriminate in employment opportunities.

Does our aversion to creeds neglect the rule of faith?

Our daughter attends a Christian university and recently went to a large, off-campus Bible class. Somehow the topic strayed onto the Apostles' Creed (*"I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth ..."*), and the teacher asked whether anyone could say it.

As my daughter began to raise her hand, the teacher quipped, "If you can, then you probably didn't grow up in a Church of Christ."

This anecdote illustrates our fellowship's aversion to creeds — and reveals an increasing openness to forsaken features of historic Christianity. I view this openness as a positive development but recognize that we need thoughtful guides to help us as we explore parts of the neglected Christian tradition.

Everett Ferguson, a prominent historian in the Churches of Christ and world-renowned expert on early Christianity, is one of those trustworthy resources. His book, **"The Rule of Faith: A Guide,"** is a fascinating work that specialists and church leaders alike will find intellectually stimulating and practical for the life of the church.

Much of the slender volume is a scholarly, detailed explanation of the "rule of faith," a collective term used to describe the message that post-apostolic Christians preached, confessed and affirmed — often in the face of persecution and threats from dangerous heresies. Ferguson expertly and extensively details the various "rules" of writers such as Clement, Origen, Irenaeus, Tertullian and Augustine. Early Christians viewed the rule of faith as a distillation of the preaching of the apostles and as an expression of the core teaching of the New Testament that could be articulated in different ways while retaining the same message. Most studies of the rule of faith focus on the way that it eventually transitioned into

a formalized creed, but Ferguson emphasizes the function and purpose of these summaries and argues that they remain valid in the 21st century church.

The final chapter brings home this conviction and highlights the continuing relevance of the rule of faith. The ability to succinctly articulate the faith obviously helps with evangelism, but it also helps to equip and hone the thought of leaders who are charged with feeding and protecting the flock. As in the early church, the rule of faith provides parameters for biblical interpretation and can prevent bizarre interpretations of Scripture from gaining a foothold. It can play an important role in protecting the church from major doctrinal challenges.

The rule of faith also has great potential for encouraging unity because it continually encourages us to make distinctions between central and peripheral doctrines. It helps us keep in mind the big picture of what God has done — and is doing — in Jesus Christ.

I also would add that the rule of faith has an important role to play in worldview training for children. Once per week, during family worship, we recite the rule of faith (through a modified version of the Apostles' Creed) to instill the core message of Christianity into the minds and hearts of our children.

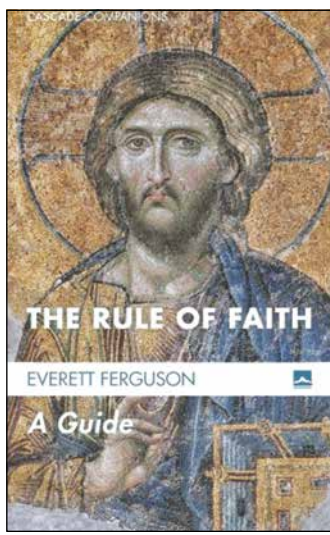
The rule does not replace Scripture but comes alongside it to provide a framework into which specific passages can be placed. We pray it will pay big dividends in the spiritual development of our children as they engage an increasingly pluralistic and secular culture.

For all these reasons, Christians will do well to rediscover and embrace the rule of faith, and we are fortunate to have Everett Ferguson as our guide.

In Print



Darren Williamson



★★★★★
Everett Ferguson. **"The Rule of Faith: A Guide" (Cascade Companions).** Cascade Books, 2015. 104 pages. \$14.

DARREN WILLIAMSON is preaching minister for the Keizer Church of Christ in Oregon. He is an adjunct instructor at George Fox University.

Even when laundry piles up, what you do matters to God

Have you ever felt insignificant, powerless, tired, under-caffeinated, under-appreciated or discouraged?

If so then **"Rocking Ordinary: Holding It Together with Extraordinary Grace"** is for you. Lea Ann Garfias, features editor for *Home School Enrichment* magazine, writes with honesty, humor and insight in a way that had me wondering if she was secretly spying on my life and the lives of my girlfriends.

The book is aimed at women in their 20s to 40s, regardless of their family or career situations. "Rocking Ordinary" will make you laugh as Garfias encourages you that you matter, that what you do matters and that you make a difference even when laundry is piling up, dishes are dirty, kids are crying and you haven't had coffee yet. This book will help you to breathe a sigh of relief that these struggles do not define you.

I have a full-time job in the challenging social services field, am the wife of a minister and have two very strong-willed (stubborn) young daughters. My life feels like a to-do list, and when I go to bed, it's easy to think about what I perceive as failures instead of focusing on victories.

Reading Garfias' book helped me more clearly see that loving my family well, striving for compassion and not comparison with friends and serving where I am is a noble and worthwhile calling.

"God uses ordinary lives in extraordinary ways if we have the courage and the faith to simply obey wherever we are," Garfias writes.

We can all rock at ordinary. We can make an extraordinary difference right where we are, once we are able to look above the piles of laundry, past the fussy children or work stress and into the truth that God shows us.

Read this book and buy copies for your girlfriends and family members who also need this powerful reminder. A leader guide is available for small-group study.

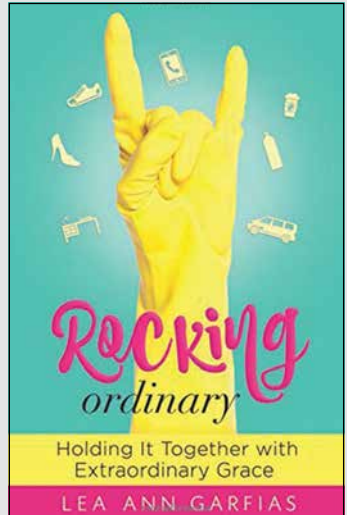
SHILOH JONES is a social worker in Denver, where her husband, Josh, serves as youth minister for the University Church of Christ.

WHAT ARE YOU READING? Share your thoughts on the books, music and films that influence or impact your faith. Send your suggestions to erik@christianchronicle.org.

What we're reading



Shiloh Jones



Lea Ann Garfias. **"Rocking Ordinary: Holding It Together with Extraordinary Grace."** New Leaf Press, 2016. 192 pages. \$12.99.



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HONOR ROLL OF CHURCHES, 2016-2017

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April 29-30, 2017

Attention past and present members: Saturday we will have a fellowship meal at the church building starting at 11a.m. Sunday there will be Bible Study and Worship starting at 9:30 a.m.

Please RSVP to:
Ed Denny at (318) 442-3785 (M-F 8-11a.m.)
If you need hotel information, please call Ed, and he can provide phone numbers.

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East Allen County Church of Christ in New Haven, Ind., is seeking a pulpit minister to work with an established, self-supporting, elder-led, a capella congregation of about 140 members. Applicants must have solid Bible-based preaching abilities to work with a diverse and growing congregation. Ideal applicants will have a bachelor's or master's degree in Bible or theology from a Christian college or university and several years of preaching experience. Family counseling experience is also desirable. Salary is commensurate with background and experience. Send a cover letter, resume, and CD of a sermon to **Joe Nichols at nicholsj@ipfw.edu, (260) 804-5445 or Brad Martz at brad.martz@edwardjones.com, (260) 223-9036.**

Full-Time Minister

Channelview Church of Christ is searching for a pulpit minister to preach solid topical sermons. College degree/certificate from a school of preaching preferred. Salary is commensurate with experience; three-bedroom house is provided. Diverse congregation in East Harris County. Interested candidates should forward a resume and sample of a recent sermon to:

**Channelview Church of Christ
Attn: Ron Bible (preacher search)
1301 Sheldon Road
Channelview, TX 77530
office: (281) 452-7129 or Ron: (713) 829-3131**

Full-Time Preacher

Southwestern Church of Christ in Grove City, Ohio, is seeking a full-time preacher. Grove City is a growing suburb of Columbus, Ohio. We are seeking a Biblically sound evangelist who loves working with all ages and has a passion for lost souls. We are a congregation of approximately 80, and we have a youth program, food pantry and senior ministry. We prefer candidates who have completed a program of Biblical studies at a Christian college, school of preaching or have equivalent experience. Send resume including references and salary expectations to:

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www.arlingtonfamily.org

The elders are functioning as the search committee. The point of contact is Lamar Reinsch:

ReinschL@georgetown.edu

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Predisan Health Ministries, a nonprofit, faith-based organization that provides healthcare and spiritual hope to the people of Honduras, is seeking a Chief Development Officer.

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Prescott Valley Church of Christ in Prescott Valley, Arizona, is looking for a full- or part-time minister. Prescott Valley is a congregation of around 25 members with the potential for growth. We are a Caring Congregation that truly has a Great Love for One Another, our Community and our Faith. We can provide some salary. Our ideal candidate is either a retired minister or a part-time minister who would be willing to work another job part-time in Prescott Valley.

Email resume to:

**Mark Green
kramred@hotmail.com**

March 3-4 Affirming the Faith Seminar. North MacArthur Church of Christ, Oklahoma City. www.affirmingthefaitthok.com.

March 5-9 Faulkner Lectureship. Montgomery, Ala. (334) 386-7660, sgleaves@faulkner.edu.

March 7 Youth Ministry Conference. Lipscomb University, Nashville, Tenn. (615) 966-5787.

March 10-17 Tri City Youth Rally. Gaines Avenue Church of Christ, Albany, Ga. (229) 886-3300.

March 14 Eastern European Mission's Nashville Event. www.eem.org/events.

March 20-23 Abundant Living Seniors College. Searcy, Ark. Kay Gowen, gowen@harding.edu, www.abundantlivingseniors.com.

March 31-April 2 Marriage Seminar. Springfield, Vt., Church of Christ. jaybird_43@yahoo.com.

April 4 Eastern European Mission's Oklahoma City Event. www.eem.org/events.

April 7-8 Central Florida Men's Retreat. Southside Church of Christ, Oviedo, Fla. (407) 296-0155, sscorlando@outlook.com.

April 9-12 Annual Bible Lectureship. Crowley's Ridge College, Paragould, Ark. (870) 236-6901.

April 21-22 Women Walking With God Conference. Wichita, Kan. <http://womenwalkingwithgod.org>.

April 21-23 Senior Seminar. National Association of Celebrated Seniors. St. Louis, Mo. nacs2017@yahoo.com.

April 22 Annual Special Needs Carnival. Raleigh, N.C. sixyoungs@hotmail.com, www.specialatbrooks.org.

April 23 100th Anniversary of the First Street Church of Christ. Lampasas, Texas. Lampasascoc@sbcglobal.net.

April 29-30 Jackson Street Church of Christ Homecoming. Alexandria, La. Ed Denney, (318) 442-3785.

May 1-5 Senior Quest. Pettijohn Springs Christian Camp. (580) 795-5015, manager@pettijohnsprings.com.

May 15-27 Literary & Hymn Pilgrimage. England, Wales and Scotland tour. Oklahoma Christian. www.oc.edu/pilgrimage.

May 26-28 Camp Hunt, 70th Anniversary. Hubbardsville, N.Y. www.camphunt.com.

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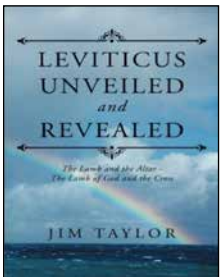
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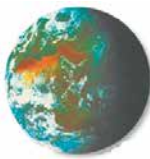
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Clyde and Gwen Antwine

Gwen Antwine is no stranger to The Christian Chronicle's behind-the-scenes operations. She worked as the newspaper's office manager for 12 and a half years. She grew up in Clyde, Texas, and married a man named Clyde, who was also reared in the Lone Star State.

The pair attended Abilene Christian College, now a university, before moving to Zurich, Switzerland, 58 years ago to serve as missionaries. They also lived in the German cities of Augsburg and Munich.

Clyde Antwine, 81, is a missionary-in-residence at Oklahoma Christian University in Oklahoma City. For 26 years he served as director of Helpers in Missions, or HIM, a missionary apprentice program of the Memorial Road Church of Christ in Oklahoma City.

He recently transitioned into a new role as adviser and mentor for HIM workers. He also serves as

a deacon for the Memorial Road church.

When did you first learn about the Chronicle?

Clyde: To my knowledge, our first connection goes back to 1959, when our move to Europe was highlighted in the Chronicle.

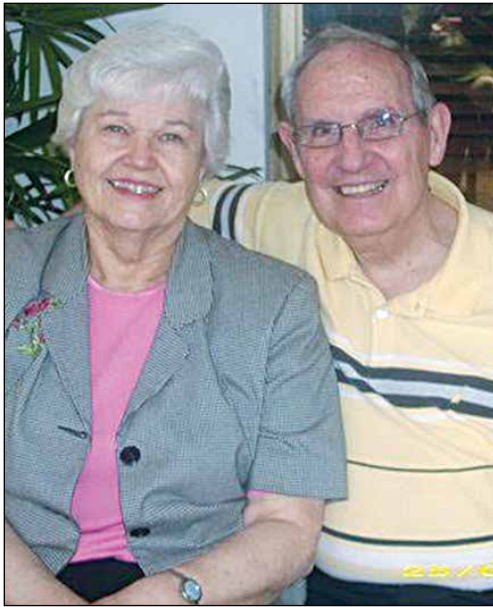
Why do you support the paper?

Clyde: Because we believe in the mission of The Christian Chronicle in reporting good news of the kingdom worldwide, we have

pledged our financial support for the last 27 years. We know from experience that missionaries on the field are greatly encouraged by what they read in the Chronicle.

Tell us about the work you're doing now.

Gwen: We continue to return to German-speaking Europe twice each year to teach, preach and encourage the churches. We want to be used as long as we are able to travel back and forth.



Afraid of falling? We can find balance in our lives through spiritual disciplines

I am afraid of falling. I have fallen only one time in my adult life. My grandson-in-law was giving the family a tour of the school where he had been teaching for two and a half years in Costa Rica. I was carrying his 10-month-old son, and we were on a sloping surface that shifted from concrete to metal when I began to lose my balance.

I fell, clutching Amos so close that he was frightened, but not hurt. I had minor cuts and bruises, but since then I have been very cautious facing stairs without a handrail or footing that feels unsure. I've come to recognize how important balance is to my walk.

Balance in life is important to our wellbeing. All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy, as the proverb goes. It also shortens his life. I have many friends — male and female — who work 50 and 60 hours every week. They shrug it off as not a big deal, but in two or three years I see big changes in their mood and appearance. When I was at that stage of my life, I quickly learned that my creativity and reasoning ability were diminished by that schedule.

I began testing ways to help renew myself. A power nap could make a 12-hour work day more effective, I learned. Shutting out all thoughts of work for a Saturday and just enjoying family made the next week go well.

After about 10 years with that routine, I realized that I needed more time to escape the grind. I was able to arrange my time so that I left the office at noon one Friday a month, so we left town for a few hours of fun. Each person has to find a way to balance work and leisure so that productivity remains high, and life is fun.

The focus of life in America makes education a central part of childhood and young adulthood. But a balanced life must include the growth of the mind throughout life. One of my intellectual heroes is a musician who always is studying the lives of important thinkers and writers. Another friend reads a novel each night for an hour. Casual reading is not the

same as the energetic reading to learn more than the superficial ideas about a subject. Reading outside your comfort zone or special interests will help balance your thinking.

People of faith need time and activities to develop their spiritual lives. Developing a regimen for growing spiritually is really important. I first discovered spiritual disciplines when I was asked to teach a class on prayer for a group at church. I bought several books, but the one that provided the



Bailey McBride

best information and inspiration was Richard J. Foster's **"Prayer: Finding the Heart's True Home."** In the opening, Foster explains the role and power of discipline in developing a life of prayer that goes beyond the basic praise and petition. His analysis of prayer taught me that prayer can deal with a multitude of subjects. More than anything else, he helped show me that every aspect of my life should be the subject of thoughtful, soul-searching prayer.

A second spiritual discipline that can have positive benefit in our efforts to balance our lives is fasting. The idea of the fast is to give something up and put a spiritual matter in its place. A fast may be from food, sex, entertainment, cell phones or internet searches.

I have tried all kinds of fasts to focus attention on God. I get the most benefit from food fasts. Once, after studying Isaiah for more than 14 weeks, I decided I would give up food and focus all my waking time for three days on reviewing the prophet's words systematically. That fast was one of the most meaningful and enlightening experiences of my life.

Other spiritual disciplines that I will discuss in the future are Scripture reading, worship and service.

The world has such a powerful hold on us that we need the spiritual disciplines to help us balance our lives.

CONTACT: bailey.mcbride@christianchronicle.org

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Ted McKissick, President and Treasurer (254) 718-3030,
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BICA still operates preacher/teacher training schools in El Progreso, Honduras, and Guatemala City, Guatemala.

If any church or individual tries to raise funds in the name of BICA, those funds should be sent only to: BICA, PO Box 788, Belton, TX 76513.

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In Him, Ted McKissick
BICA Board President and Treasurer

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- 4/18/17** Waco, TX / Texas Sports Hall of Fame
- 4/20/17** College Station, TX / A&M Church of Christ
- 4/24/17** Midland, TX / The Petroleum Club
- 4/25/17** Amarillo, TX / Amarillo Botanical Gardens
- 4/27/17** Lubbock, TX / Baker Conference Center/LCU
- 5/6/17** Portland, OR / Crowne Plaza - Lake Oswego
- 5/9/17** Raleigh, NC / NC State University Club
- 5/11/17** Winston-Salem, NC / South Fork Church of Christ

EEM is under the spiritual oversight of Prestoncrest Church of Christ