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inspire and unite
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An international
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for Churches of Christ

Great-grandmother takes mission trip around the globe

BY ERIK TRYGGESTAD | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

"You're going alone?" was a question Betty Choate heard more than once as she packed for a trip to three nations in southern Asia.

"Well, no," the great-grandmother replied. "I'll be with Christians — family — the whole time, so I won't be alone."

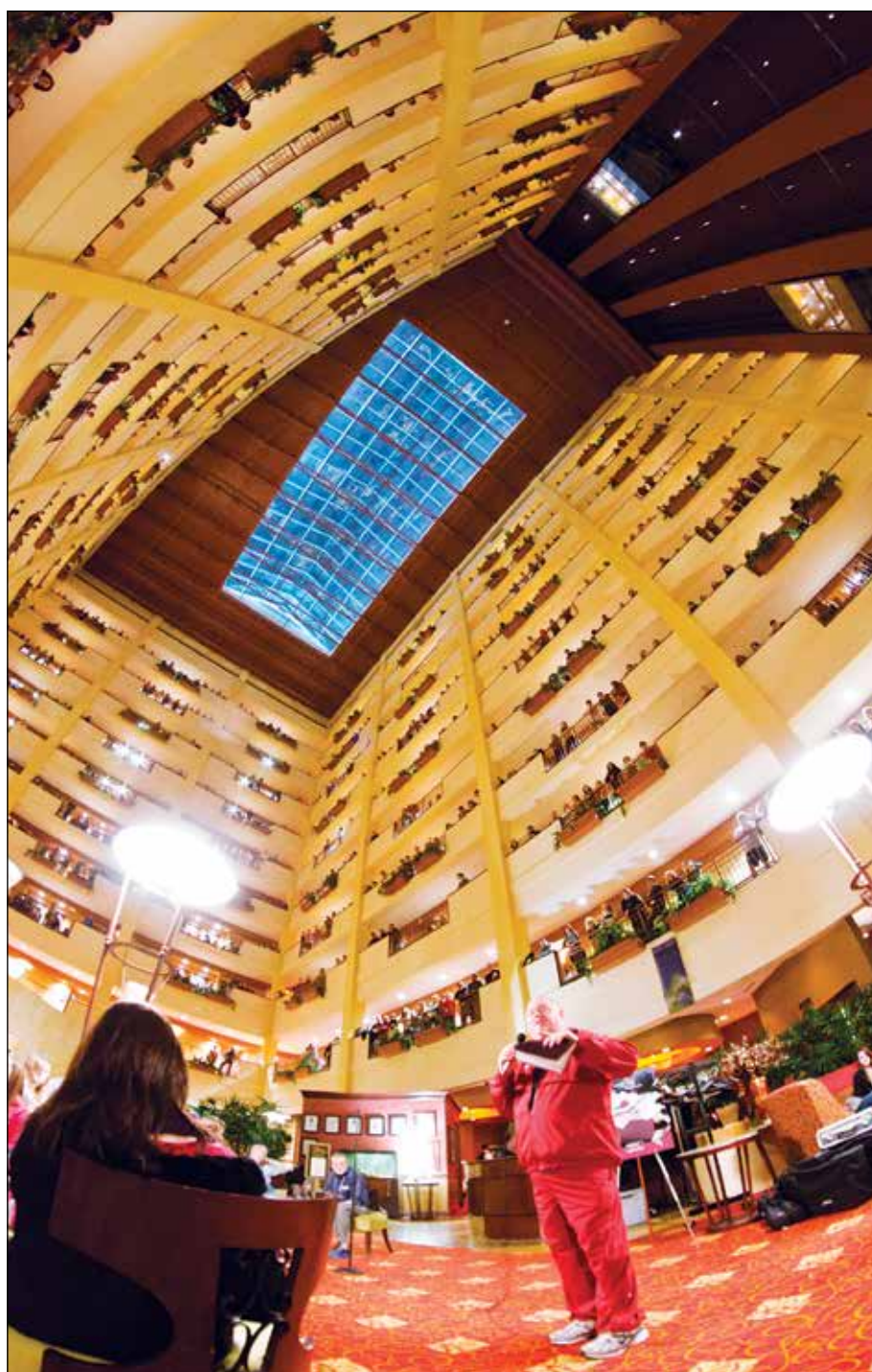
Choate, who describes her age as a "very young 72-and-a-half," returned to Asia for the first time in seven years.

She and her husband, J.C. Choate, served as missionaries in countries including Pakistan, Sri Lanka and India. They planted congregations and initiated TV and literature programs for Churches of Christ throughout the region.

J.C. Choate, a prolific author and ardent supporter of ministry training, died of cancer in 2008. Now other Christians continue the mission work and the couple's publishing ministry, Mississippi-based World Evangelism, which produces *The Voice of Truth International* and *Global Harvest* magazines.

After traveling west and crossing the international date line, Betty Choate was met in Myanmar (also known as Burma) by "some friendly and familiar faces" including local church member Winsome Vertannes. She visited

See **GREAT-GRANDMOTHER**, Page 14



LAURI ANN ITSON

Voices of praise, 10 floors high

Teens from congregations in nine states gather outside their rooms at the 10-story Embassy Suites Hotel in Huntsville, Ala., and lift praises to God. "The Atrium Singing" has become a tradition at Exposure Youth Camp, an annual winter program overseen by the Roebuck Parkway Church of Christ in Birmingham, Ala.

RELATED STORY, Page 6

Teens envision a church more pleasing to God

YOUNG CHRISTIANS tout meatier Bible study, deeper relationships and less judgmentalism.

BY BOBBY ROSS JR. | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

Listen up, faithful adults.

Young Christians have ideas for making the church more like God meant it to be — and they're eager to be heard.

In a national survey, teenage members of Churches of Christ offered advice for a fellowship faced with graying congregations and disappearing millennials — loosely defined as those born in the 1980s and 1990s.

"Students in this study speak of the church with great love, hope, insight and wisdom," researchers Dudley Chancey and Ron Bruner reported in the 2012 Church and Relationship Study by Oklahoma Christian University's Intergenerational Faith Center. "They suggest ways to cope with a changing culture that respect the identity and mission of the church."

Researchers surveyed 482 students at three national meetings: Winterfest in Texas and Tennessee and the Challenge Youth Conference in Tennessee. Among the findings:

- **Teens want** more upbeat worship and meatier Bible study.
- **Teens seek** deeper, more meaningful relationships with adult Christians.
- **Teens desire** to "go out and serve" beyond church walls.
- **Teens perceive** judgmental attitudes as hampering the spread of the Gospel.



ERIK TRYGGESTAD

Young Christians worship at Winterfest in Gatlinburg, Tenn., one of three venues where researchers surveyed teens about Churches of Christ.

See **YOUTH SURVEY**, Page 12

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EEM is overseen by the Prestoncrest church of Christ, Dallas, Texas.

After cancer fight, mother 'safe in the arms of Jesus'

As we go to press with this issue of *The Christian Chronicle*, our hearts ache.

Our friend and colleague Erik Tryggstad, the *Chronicle's* international writer, page design genius, photographer extraordinaire

Inside Story



Bobby Ross Jr.

and assistant managing editor, lost his mother Jan. 17.

We shed tears with Erik, his sister, Amy Bowman, and his father, Tom Tryggstad.

Karen Tryggstad, 64, was a faithful member of the Heritage Church of Christ in Franklin, Tenn. Before her retirement, she had worked as a school secretary. She adored her church family and taught Bible classes for infants and children for many years.

"Karen Tryggstad, the best mom we could have asked for, is safe in the arms of Jesus," Erik wrote on his mom's CaringBridge page the night of her death.

On Aug. 28 last year, Karen was diagnosed with stage 4 pancreatic cancer after going to the emergency room with abdominal pain and weakness. At that stage, the cancer has spread to distant organs, and the prognosis for survival is grim, according to the American Cancer Society.

As her daughter Amy noted, that date — 8/28 — matched one of Karen's favorite Bible verses.

Romans 8:28 reads: "And See **MOTHER**, Page 4

Social justice vs. kingdom work



BOBBY ROSS JR.

Charlie Sells from the Holland Park Church of Christ in Simpsonville, S.C., and Adam Brewer from the Monrovia Church of Christ in Alabama sing during the National Conference on Youth Ministries.

AT A NATIONAL MEETING of youth ministers, the key role of the local church is emphasized.

BY **BOBBY ROSS JR.** | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo. — Love Jesus.

Tolerate the church.

At a time when Americans' confidence in organized religion has hit a 40-year low, that mindset seems particularly prevalent among younger Christians.

At the recent National Conference on Youth Ministries, Scot McKnight — one of the keynote speakers — challenged what he described as the modern tendency to lift up social justice efforts as "kingdom work."

"It's like a tsunami, beginning to overtake the church, and the church is losing significance in local communities because Christians are devoted to changing the world through the political process," said McKnight, a prominent evangelical New Testament scholar and popular blogger.

Showing compassion, feeding the homeless and working for peace are good causes, but kingdom work involves introducing people to Jesus and his church, McKnight told 285 youth ministers from Churches of Christ in 30 states.

That message struck a chord with some of the youth ministers who gathered at the Crowne Plaza Colorado Springs — in the shadow of Pikes Peak.

"We've swung so far from the door-knocking days that we've forgotten to actually

See **SOCIAL JUSTICE**, Page 16

Finding Jesus in an unlikely place: 'Duck Dynasty' fan baptized

BY **JAMES BUCE** | FOR THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE



LORI EASTERLY

Jase Robertson congratulates Brandon Hooks after his baptism at the White's Ferry Road church.

When Brandon Hooks' mother introduced him to "Duck Dynasty," he found the A&E reality series funny and entertaining.

But he did not expect a television show to change his life.

Hooks, 31, seldom attended church while growing up. The only time he went was when his family visited his grandmother's house. Throughout most of his life, he gave faith little thought.

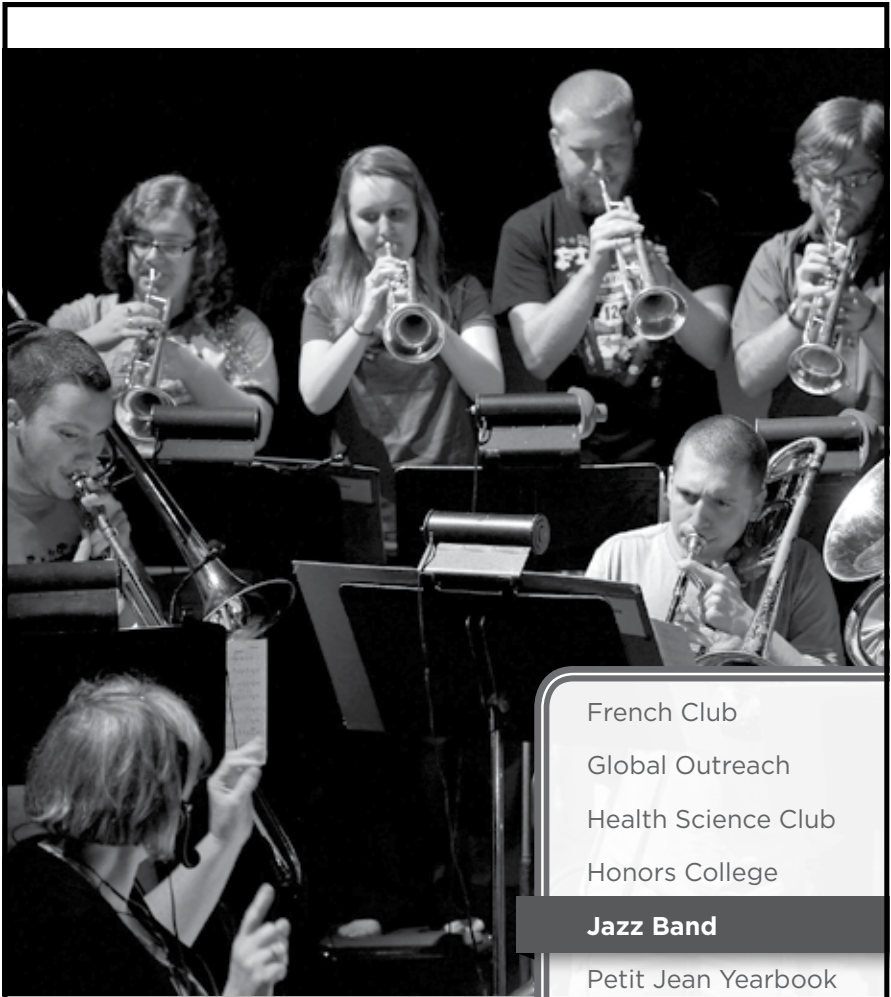
He did, however, grow to love hunting

and fishing. This passion for outdoor activities would help guide him to discover his own faith and love for Christ.

In 2006, Hooks began dating his future wife, Jessica, 29, a member of the Memorial Church of Christ in Houston. He started attending services with her.

After the couple married in 2007, Hooks kept joining his wife at church. He was welcomed with his family and made many friends at the congregation. However, something still seemed to be missing.

See **DUCK DYNASTY**, Page 15



- French Club
- Global Outreach
- Health Science Club
- Honors College
- Jazz Band**
- Petit Jean Yearbook
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- **See a video** of longtime Oklahoma Christian University professor and coach Max Dobson being honored at an Oklahoma City Thunder game.
- **Breaking news:** Don't wait to read all the latest news or check out exclusive online features.



MOTHER: Opportunity to say goodbye a blessing

FROM PAGE 3
we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.”
“Mom’s spirit is strong,” Amy, an administrative assistant for the Brentwood Hills Church of Christ in Nashville, assured family and friends on the day after Karen’s diagnosis. “She has shared with her many, many visitors the peace she feels and the faith she has that ‘It’s going to be all right.’”

I did not know Karen well, but I crossed paths with her a few times when she and Tom visited Erik at the *Chronicle* office in Oklahoma City. I know she was proud of her son, who has dedicated his life to Christian journalism and traveled to 45 nations on reporting assignments for this newspaper.

During Karen’s five-month cancer battle, Erik made a number of trips to Tennessee to spend time with her. On one such trip in late November, he talked about how blessed

the Tryggestads were by the massive amounts of food provided by the Heritage church. “I’ve enjoyed easily the best chicken noodle soup I’ve ever had and absolutely divine potato soup,” Erik said. Erik drove his mom to an appointment at the Vanderbilt Pain Management Center and said he was struck by how absolutely tiny she looked in the facility’s massive wheelchairs. But rather than cry out to God in anger, he counted his blessings.

“This is going to sound weird, but lately all I can think of is how blessed we are to have this time with mom, however long it lasts,” Erik wrote on CaringBridge. “It’s terrible to watch her suffer, and we pray for relief from the pain and nausea. At the

same time, I think about people who have lost family members to sudden heart attacks, accidents, etc. Having the time to say goodbye is a blessing I’m learning to appreciate.”

Christmas proved extremely bitter-sweet for the family. For the first time, the children — Erik and his wife, Jeanie; Amy and her husband, Lamar — were in charge of the holiday meal. They somehow put the turkey in the oven upside down, but it turned out fine. Tom helped by making cornbread dressing. Erik’s daughter, Maggie, and Amy’s son, Luke, amused themselves by playing the Disney Hedbanz game.



PHOTO PROVIDED BY ERIK TRYGGESTAD
Erik Tryggestad holds Maggie in a family photo with Tom and Karen.

“This has been the hardest Christmas, but I’ve never felt more love for family and friends,” Amy wrote. “Each act of kindness (yummy meals, hugs, texts, phone calls, e-mails) warms our hearts.”

“We said several prayers as a family during this trip — all six of the adults,” Erik said. “That was the real highlight.” Karen is the second close family member of a *Chronicle* staff member to die from cancer in the last year. Rebecca Stafford, 20, daughter of *Chronicle* administrative assistant Tonda Stafford and her husband, Barry, lost her three-year battle with Ewing’s sarcoma on March 10, 2012.

Rebecca often babysat Maggie, now 5, and Erik’s daughter loved her. Maggie, of course, does not fully comprehend death, but she misses her friend. And now she’s lost her paternal grandmother, too.

“I’m getting tired of all these people getting sick and going to heaven,” Maggie told her father. So are we, Maggie. So are we.

CONTACT bobby.ross@christianchronicle.org

MARCH 2013

ALABAMA

ROBERTSDALE — “On This Rock,” a free application for Apple and Android products, aims to share the Gospel via the growing number of mobile devices.

Overseen by the Robertsedale Church of Christ, the app allows anyone with a smartphone to listen to a sermon on demand or hear a web broadcast, said Scott Huffaker, a Robertsedale member who leads the church’s technology ministry.

For more information, see www.on-this-rock.org.

COLORADO

BOULDER — A group working to reestablish the Boulder Church of Christ meets each Sunday at an elementary school, minister David Howard said.

The Boulder church grew to about 800 during the 1980s, in part because of influence from the Boston Movement, Howard said. But the church eventually disbanded and sold its building to eliminate that influence.

“We are meeting with about a dozen former members and are trying to reconnect with other former members,” Howard said. For more information, see www.boulderchurchofchrist.com.

FLORIDA

PLYMOUTH — Philip and Ruth Starling said “I do” in 1938.

Seventy-five years later, their marriage is still going strong.

The Starlings plan to celebrate their milestone anniversary with family and friends Feb. 17 at the Plymouth Church of Christ. Their actual



PHOTO PROVIDED BY JERRY STARLING

Ruth and Philip Starling will celebrate 75 years of marriage.



MARK YEAKLEY

Church throws baby shower for missionaries — via Skype

Sophie Tyson waves hello to missionaries Robin and Chrissy Vick during a Skype baby shower given to them by their sponsoring congregation, the Northside Church of Christ in Wichita, Kan. The Vicks are expecting their first child in February. They and their teammates have planted a church in Falkirk, Scotland. Also pictured are Sophie’s grandparents, Bob and Rhonda Eroh, and her brother, Seth. Skype is an Internet video chatting service.

anniversary is Feb. 19.

Philip served as an elder for the Plymouth church for many years and played a leading role in the construction of the church building in the 1950s. Ruth still teaches children’s classes and World Bible School courses.

GEORGIA

NORCROSS — *People* recently shared stories of Americans who have lost serious weight.

The magazine featured Leah Fernandez, director of communications for the Campus Church of Christ, on its cover.

Fernandez is half the woman she used to be — literally — since losing 126 pounds.

Her story of triumph over her weight is coupled with devastating loss. Last May, her husband, T.J., ran a 5K race with her. The next day, he died

in a motorcycle accident.

**Fernandez**

“She has been very faithful and strong during all this,” preaching minister Dusty Rush said of the mother of two young children. “She says his encouragement to finish strong keeps her going.”

NORTH CAROLINA

FUQUAY-VARINA — Christians are mourning the death of Aaron Craig Allgood, who died in a Jan. 3 wreck blamed on a drunk driver.

Allgood, 24, was a member of the Fuquay-Varina Church of Christ. The victim’s parents, David and Kathy Allgood, attend the same congregation.

David Allgood serves as

chairman of the board for Carolina Bible Camp in Mocksville, N.C.

TEXAS

AUSTIN — Texas Gov. Rick Perry has appointed Jeff Boyd, a member of the Brentwood Oaks Church of Christ, to the state Supreme Court.

**Boyd**

Boyd majored in Bible at Abilene Christian University and served as youth and family minister for the Brentwood Oaks church

before attending the Pepperdine University School of Law.

A former Texas deputy attorney general, he worked as Perry’s general counsel and later his chief of staff before the court appointment.

SPOTLIGHT

Teddy bears show love to Newtown

JONESBORO, Ark. — Meagan Cremeens, a member of the Southwest Church of Christ, was a Westside Elementary School student when a massacre at nearby Westside Middle School claimed five lives in 1998.

After the Jonesboro tragedy, Cremeens remembers that students and teachers received cards, letters and gifts of support from around the world.

In the aftermath of the recent shooting rampage at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Conn., Cremeens said she felt an urgent need to “do something to give back.”

She contacted Southwest preacher Jimmy Adcox and told him, “I want to have a teddy bear drive.”

Little did she know that fellow Southwest member Pam Herring, whose daughter Paige, 12, died in the 1998 shooting, also had contacted Adcox.

The two women joined forces and rallied their church family, collecting more than 6,000 teddy bears to send to Connecticut.

They dubbed the project “Project Teddy Bear Love.”

“Most (of the teddy bears) were tied with a card or note of some sort,” Cremeens said, “and every single one had been hugged on and loved on and sent ready to bring healing and comfort to those in Newtown.”



PHOTO PROVIDED

Meagan Cremeens shows off one of the stuffed animals collected.



PHOTOS BY LAURI ANN ITSON

More than 1,700 participants assemble for a group photo during the 15th annual Exposure Youth Camp in Huntsville, Ala. Teens came from more than 100 Churches of Christ in nine states.

Exposure Youth Camp boosts teens

HUNTSVILLE, Ala.

For Savannah Burns, Exposure Youth Camp means a place “where we go and really get a feel for how awesome heaven will be.”

“It’s a boost, push, pull and shove toward the narrow path that we must all travel,” said Burns, a member of the Central Church of Christ in Augusta, Ga.

Jacob Smith, a member of the Austinville Church of Christ in Decatur, Ala., describes the four-day winter program as “a time of spiritual renewal, growth and encouragement ... a joining together of Christians from a variety of backgrounds and areas at one location.”

The camp recently celebrated its 15th anniversary of strengthening and instructing young people. More than 1,700 teens from 100-plus

Churches of Christ filled two Huntsville hotels. They came from Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina and Tennessee.

Participants broke into 36 teams and enjoyed group activities, devotionals and spiritual challenge sessions, said Brendan Chance, youth minister for the Austinville church.

Danielle Brown, a member of the Midway Church of Christ in Jasper, Ala., said she loved “The Atrium Singing.” That annual tradition involves campers gathering on the balconies outside their hotel rooms and singing praises to God.

“It was my first time hearing it like that,” Brown said, “and it was so powerful and beautiful.”

FOR MORE INFORMATION, see www.ExposureYouthCamp.net.



Campers show their excitement over the four-day winter program that mixes group activities, devotionals and spiritual challenge sessions.



LIZ MARGERUM, RENO (NEV.) GAZETTE-JOURNAL

Newspaper honors Nevada church member

Paula Fleming, a member of the North Virginia Street Church of Christ in Reno, Nev., founded a Blue Star Mothers group in her community. The *Reno Gazette-Journal* recognized Fleming as its Citizen of the Year for her work with the group for mothers who have a loved one in the military.

Electrical fire forces 1,600-member church to relocate to Harding campus

SEARCY, Ark. — The 1,600-member College Church of Christ won't be able to meet in its auditorium for up to three months after a fire blamed on an electrical short, pulpit minister Noel Whitlock said.

The short occurred in a baptistery heater shortly after 11 p.m. Jan. 19 in the original part of the 62-year-old building, Whitlock said. He noted that the heater had been replaced in recent years.

"We're either going to have to replace our baptistery or change our doctrine," the minister joked.

Flames were contained mostly to a small area with a lot of plaster and concrete, Whitlock said. However, the entire building — including classrooms — sustained extensive smoke damage.

Several hundred gallons of water spilled out of the baptistery, which probably helped cool the blaze, he said.

Students who noticed smoke coming from the building notified the fire department about the same time as the church's smoke alarm alerted authorities.

The church may be able to resume using its classrooms within a few weeks, but the congregation will worship in Benson Auditorium — on the Harding



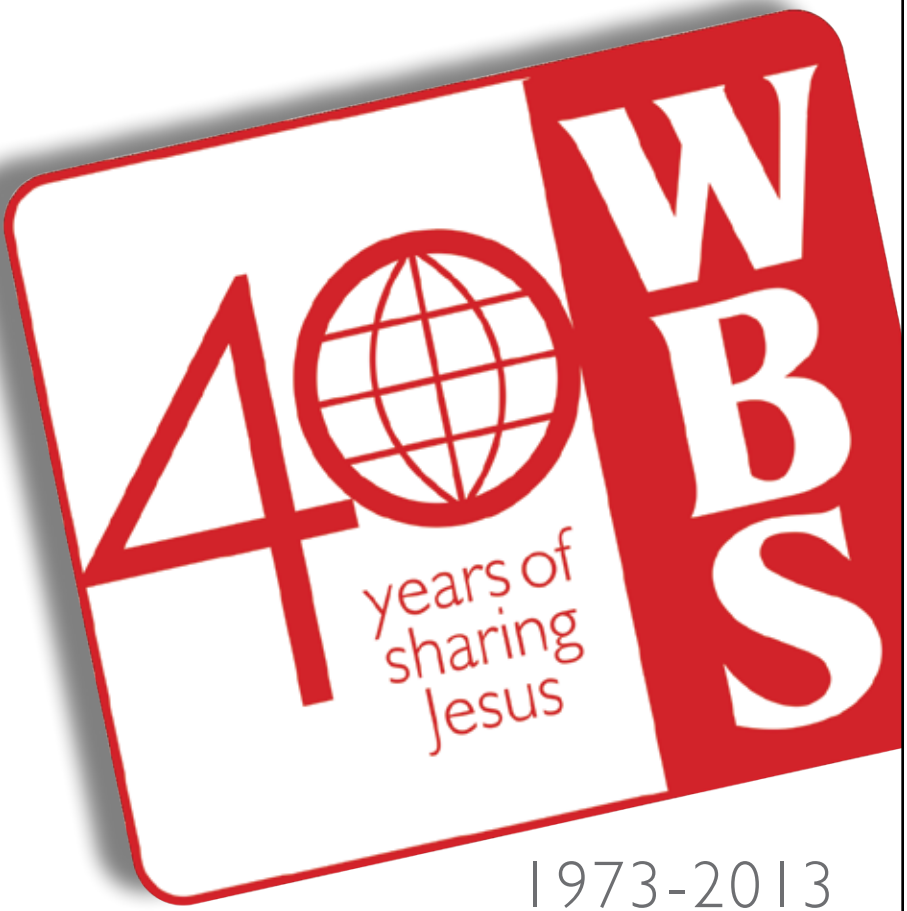
NOEL WHITLOCK

Firefighters respond to a Jan. 19 fire at the College Church of Christ, across the street from Harding University in Searcy, Ark.

University campus across the street — for up to three months, Whitlock said.

"We're blessed that we have Harding University and the big Benson Auditorium nearby," he said.

Damages are insured, but church leaders had no estimate at press time on what it would cost to make repairs.



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ANGOLA

KUITO — Refugees from this southern African nation, who fled to neighboring Zambia during Angola's 27-year civil war, have returned to their homeland and are planting churches.

Danny and Katie Reese, part of a mission team in the city of Huambo, visited a new congregation near Kuito, in central Angola. Cornelius Ngolane, an Angolan converted by Zambian Christians, and other Angolan believers planted the church to serve Kunje, a community of former refugees.

"A simple message from Scripture about following the Bible only is exactly what they want to hear," Danny Reese said. The new congregation "sent us off with a beautiful time of singing, a foot-stomping parade out to the car and bananas," his wife added. For more information, see www.angolateam.org.

BOLIVIA

LA PAZ — Three families — Luis and Damira Garcia, Julie and Ricky Arce and Brad and Katie Brooks — departed for this South American capital recently to serve as a church-planting team. The team is the first sent to Bolivia by Great Cities Missions, a church-supported ministry that serves missionary teams in cities of the Portuguese- and Spanish-speaking nations of Latin America.

Ron and Georgia Freitas, former missionaries to Brazil and trainers for Great Cities, accompanied the families and asked for prayers as they settle into their new home. For more information, see bolivia.brooksmissions.com.

GHANA

ATEIKU — In the past year, the Rural Evangelism Development Project has established seven new congregations and strengthened 24 churches in this West African nation, said Lawrence Oduro, who oversees the ministry, an outreach of the Ateiku Church of Christ.

Oduro

Recently, workers with the project met with members of the missions committee of the Greenville Avenue Church of Christ in Richardson, Texas.

"Our brethren from Greenville ... offered very helpful ideas that the project is determined to apply," Oduro said.



PHOTOS PROVIDED BY MELISSA DODSON

Fellowship, food and 'futbol' in Honduras



Teams from the Mateo Church of Christ celebrate their victories during a recent "futbol," or soccer, tournament in the Central American nation of Honduras.

Youths from churches across the city participated in the tournament, which inaugurated a new "cancha," or walled soccer field, built by Honduran church members and missionaries Bart and Melissa Dodson.

The men's and women's teams from the Mateo church, buoyed by their home court advantage, won their respective tournaments. Melissa Dodson's brother and sister-in-law provided funds for the tournament.

GUYANA

LETHEM — "The Lord's church in every village and a Bible in every hut" is the motto of Amerindian Missions.

Jerry O. Davidson intends to fulfill that promise.

The missionary recently ordered 10,000 Bibles and 500 large-print Bibles for the indigenous people he serves in the interior of this South American nation. Davidson reports 82 baptisms and 55 people restored to their Christian faith in the past year in the villages he has visited, including Lethem. The Summerdale Church of Christ in Alabama supports the work. See amerindianmissions.com.

MEXICO

QUERETARO — Christians in Mexico and the U.S. are mourning the death of Miguel Arroyo, a minister and director of a school of preaching in this city in

central Mexico. Arroyo, who helped establish about 10 Churches of Christ in 30 years of ministry, died in a car accident in the state of Zacatecas. He was 58.



Arroyo

Church of Christ in Nashville, Tenn.

TANZANIA

MBEYA — More than 180 youths from across this East African nation attended a seminar hosted by the Chimala Mission Church of Christ. Missionary Chad Wagner spoke on marriage and participated in a question-and-answer panel. Six of the youths were baptized.

See Wagner's blog at www.wagnertz.webs.com.

SPOTLIGHT

'A song in my heart'

TUBUNGU, Swaziland — When Joan Cheptot came to this tiny country in southern Africa, she already was a preacher's wife, mother and educator.

She had no intention of becoming a student as well.

"I was tired of studying," said Cheptot, who had just completed college exams in her native Kenya before following her husband, Hillary Cheptot, to Swaziland, where he enrolled in African Christian College, a church-supported school.

Those close to her — including her husband and college instructor Janet Allison — encouraged Joan Cheptot to enroll. Christian women at the school took care of her two children, free of charge, as she took classes.

Though juggling classes and the demands of family wasn't easy, the husband and wife persevered and recently graduated from ACC. Joan Cheptot said the school helped her to discover her ministry talents.

Already a gifted song writer, she composed hymns of praise with help from the school's faculty. During a campus talent show, she performed an original piece she wrote about the school. She sang: *Oh, how I love to be part of this home, where men and women are dedicated to serve God with their strength and everything that they have.*

"I leave with a song in my heart," she said. "I am ready to go and serve God in many ways. I am prepared to help churches grow, counsel people in the community, encourage the training of Sunday school teachers, teach women in the church and community at large (and) encourage the training of effective preachers to be counselors in their own churches."

As they returned to Kenya, the couple and fellow graduates stopped in Tombolombo, Malawi, Hillary Cheptot's hometown, and hosted a multi-day workshop and gospel campaign. Hundreds attended, said Brad Carter, president-elect of ACC.

"The attendees said, 'These people have brought God,'" Carter said.



Joan Cheptot

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How to Apply:

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POSITION AVAILABLE

Executive Director for **New Pathways for Children**, a Church of Christ supported Residential Treatment Program for children ages 10-18, located two hours from Nashville, and 15 miles South of Paducah. Licensed capacity is 27 boys, 12 girls, with three group homes. The agency has 35 employees. The annual operational budget is about \$1,500,000. Applicant for this position must have an advanced degree in a human services field (MS, MA, MSW, PhD, or EdD) and 5 years of experience in management of a human service program related to working with families and children. Skills in strategic planning, grant writing, risk management, public relations, fundraising, public speaking, development and management of budgets, and positive interaction with board of directors and staff are essential. Compensation package is negotiable commensurate with similar agencies. Interested applicants should send resume to:

Linda Turner, HR Director
P. O. Box 10, Melber, KY 42069, or e-mail ltturner@npfc.net.

Teens send gifts of education, literacy to Africa

BY ERIK TRYGGESTAD | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

Nolan and Brielle Read live up to their last name. The brother and sister sent gifts of literacy — 33,000 school textbooks and 71 laptop computers — to the people of Malawi, a slender, landlocked nation in southern Africa.

The teens and their family, mother Leah, father Bryson and brother Lincoln, attend the Western Hills Church of Christ in Austin, Texas.

In 2011, Dick and Suzi Stephens visited the congregation and talked about their work with The Malawi Project, a church-supported nonprofit that seeks to help Malawians escape the cycle of poverty through medical, agricultural and educational projects.

Brielle Read, 14, a freshman at Austin High School, decided to help the people of Malawi as a project for her Girl Scout Silver Award, which requires scouts to perform a community service.

"I was trying to focus my project on something to do with education," she said. She brainstormed ideas with her mother, a teacher, and learned that her school district was preparing to replace its textbooks.

Brielle contacted school officials and arranged for the gently used textbooks — mostly language arts and English — to be delivered to The Malawi Project's headquarters in Indiana. A member of the Western Hills church who owns a warehouse provided storage for the books in Austin.



Nolan Read



Brielle Read

Church members collected funds to help ship the books overseas.

In Malawi, students eagerly flipped through the pages of the books at the Nankhunda Primary School. The school had very few textbooks before the shipment, said Wilson Tembo, a Malawian church member who works with Namikango Mission and The Malawi Project.

A 13-year-old boy, Robson Kamwendo, told Tembo that "the shortage of teaching and learning materials is one key setback to a child's success ... to properly skyrocket with their education."

"Pupils depend totally on teacher's lessons," he added, and the textbooks allow them to study on their own.

Nolan Read, 17, a senior at Austin High, asked friends, neighbors and businesses for their used laptop computers — no more than 10 years old — as part of his Eagle Scout project.

He collected 117 machines and, along with his fellow Boy Scouts, set up a workshop and performed quality control tests.

"Only 71 of them were in actually good enough condition so that I could donate them," he said.

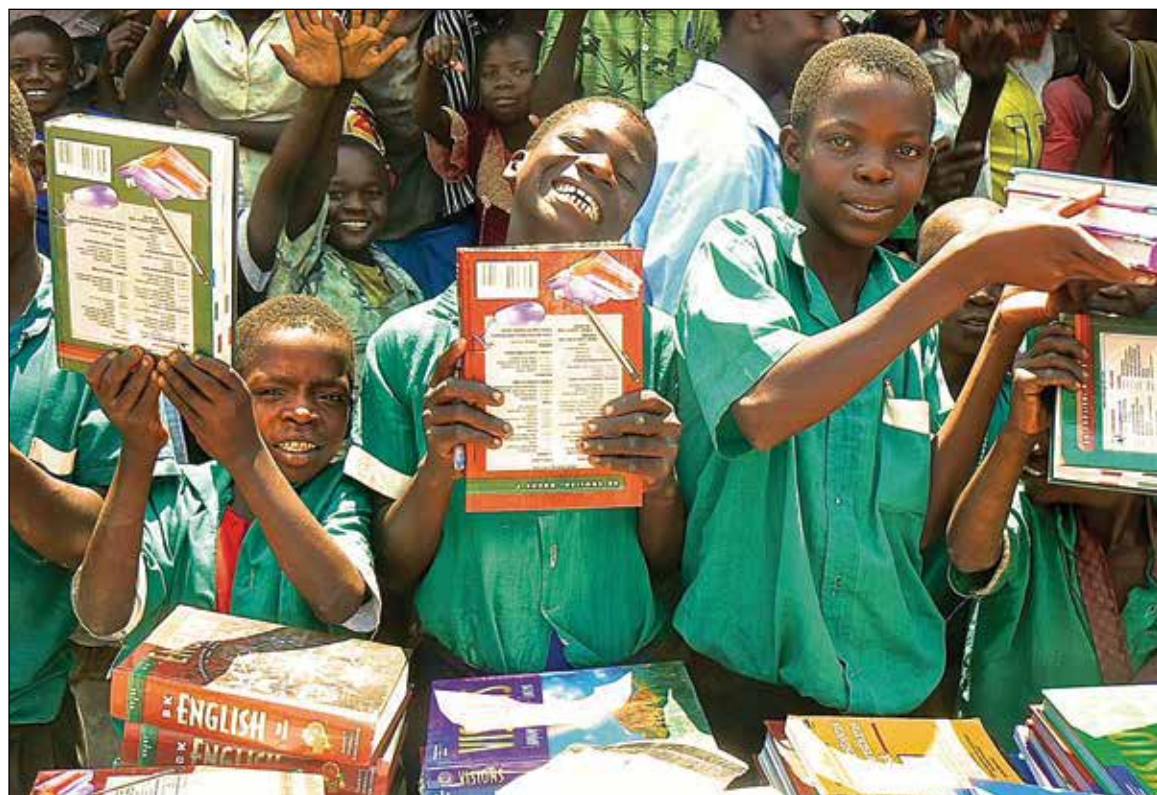
The scouts wiped the laptops' hard drives and installed Linux, a simple operating system that performs well on older computers.

Tembo, who had used his previous laptop to the point where it detached from its screen, received the first of the refurbished computers.

"He was very thankful ... to get on the Internet again," Nolan Read said.

The other laptops will go to Malawi in the luggage of mission groups traveling to Africa, Dick Stephens said.

Malawians, including students at a church-supported school, will use the computers as they train to become teachers, doctors and ministers.



PHOTOS PROVIDED BY NOLAN READ AND THE MALAWI PROJECT

Children at the Nankhunda Primary School in Malawi hold up some of the textbooks collected by Brielle Nolan.

Dick Stephens, who makes regular trips to Malawi, said he has seen firsthand "some of the broken and worn-out things people send to Africa."

"It is a breath of fresh air to see a young man so careful to send only the best," Dick Stephens said. "These computers will last a long time in the hands of the Malawians."

Many Malawians never have seen pictures of the world outside their villages, added Scott Gordon, president of The Malawi Project.

"It is hard for anyone in the developed world to realize the importance of these computers," Gordon said. "For so many, this is the only library they will ever see. ... Now they have the whole world open to view."

For Brielle Read, the experience of collecting the books and computers was faith-affirming.

"I always heard these amazing stories about kids who could do these things and make



Fellow Boy Scouts helped Nolan Read set up a "quality control" lab to test the laptop computers he collected to send to Malawi.

a difference in the world," she said. "But I didn't think I could do anything really big."

Now she knows otherwise.

The teens have inspired other members of the Western Hills church, minister George Bomar said.

"They have set a faith course for all of us to follow," Bomar said. "Their faith has shown us all that with God nothing is impossible."

FOR MORE INFORMATION, see www.malawiproject.org.

As churches soar in Indonesia, U.S. Christians ponder future

GUNUNG SITOLI, Indonesia — Dennis Cady knows of mission works that, five or 10 years after the missionary leaves the field, have few remaining converts and “little left standing.”

Such a demise “is unacceptable in Nias,” he said.

Cady, a member of the Faith Village Church of Christ in Wichita Falls, Texas, and a former missionary to south-east Asia, is working to secure a future for Christians on Nias, an island in western Indonesia.

The Starfish Foundation, founded by Cady, works in Indonesia, Haiti and South Sudan.

T. Laiya, a minister in the Indonesian city of Medan, began ministering to souls in Nias’ capital, Gunung Sitoli, in the mid-1970s. In late 2004, a massive earthquake and tsunami in the Indian Ocean devastated the island. An after-shock caused further damage in 2005.

As Churches of Christ provided relief, people listened to the message of relief workers, including Cady. Now the island, about 75 miles long and 25 miles wide, has 83 congregations — seven

of which were planted in the past year, Cady said.

Recently, 22 men from 18 of those churches gathered for a one-week spiritual seminar, organized by Indonesian evangelists to mature potential leaders. Colin McKee, a minister in Alabama, taught during the seminar.

Churches also offer vocational training for the people of Nias, including computer, tailoring and cosmetology courses. This year churches plan to add a motorcycle repair course.

Church members also oversee a home for 58 children “from the poorest of the poor in Nias,” Cady said. The College Church of Christ in Searcy, Ark., recently provided a year’s worth of rice for the home. Church members also renovated a dormitory for students sponsored by U.S. Christians.

“When we opened the dormitory in 2005, there were only two young people from Church of Christ families in all Nias going to high school,” Cady said.

Now, 94 high school and university students live in four dormitories funded by church members, he added.

SEE A PHOTO ESSAY from Nias on Pages 18-19. For more information, see www.thestarfishfoundation.net.



Cady

Grace Farrar, pioneering medical missionary to Nigeria, dies at 88

LEBANON, Tenn. — Grace Farrar, a medical missionary to the West African nation of Nigeria, died Jan. 11 in an auto accident in Tennessee. She was 88.

Farrar and her husband, Dr. Henry Farrar, were the driving force behind Nigerian Christian Hospital, a church-supported medical mission in south-eastern Nigeria. A native of Indiana, Grace Farrar enlisted in the U.S. Cadet Nurse Corps as a registered nurse and later earned a degree in home economics from Harding College in Searcy, Ark. There she met and married Henry



Farrar

Farrar. She put her husband through medical school on her nursing income.

In 1964, the Farrars moved their family to Nigeria and helped launch the hospital. The couple made regular trips there until Henry Farrar’s death in 2010. Grace Farrar also served in Cameroon, Tanzania and China as a nurse and educator.

“My dad ... always said that he was saved by Grace — twice,” said Marty Highfield, one of the couple’s six children. “She was one amazing woman in this life, and I cannot imagine how amazing she must be now.”

READ AND POST TRIBUTES online. Search for “Grace Farrar” at www.christianchronicle.org/blog.

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Alicia Maners
AGE: 16 CITY: Jackson, Tenn.
MEMBER: Skyline Church of Christ
QUOTE: "Jesus didn't mind that people rejected his teaching, and he didn't teach so that people would like him. He taught what people needed to hear and didn't sugarcoat it."



Andrew Holden
AGE: 17 CITY: Sewell, N.J.
MEMBER: Pitman Church of Christ
QUOTE: "New members and visitors will be more likely to continue coming if they instantly feel at home, as my parents did before I was born at our current congregation."



Jackson Smith
AGE: 17 CITY: Troy, Tenn.
MEMBER: Troy Church of Christ
QUOTE: "I'm convinced that a little friendliness goes a long way. ... Love your neighbor, even if it's a seventh-grade boy who hasn't washed and has grass stains all over his pants."



Melissa Apple
AGE: 17 CITY: Gainesville, Fla.
MEMBER: Campus Church of Christ
QUOTE: "Overall, Church of Christ members are some of the most loving people I know, but it could be incredible if there were a bit more passion for the teens in some congregations."



Rosa Webster
AGE: 17 CITY: Jacksonville, Ala.
MEMBER: Jacksonville Church of Christ
QUOTE: "Adults don't need to change. ... We should act like adults and dig into Scriptures just like adults do. I believe the adults at my congregation do a good job with this."



Shae Pugh
AGE: 17 CITY: Ocean Springs, Miss.
MEMBER: Ocean Springs Church of Christ
QUOTE: "God is all about love. ... When we implement love back into the Christian life, people will notice a difference and want to be a part of it."



Curtis Wilson
AGE: 17 CITY: Enumclaw, Wash.
MEMBER: Kibler Avenue Church of Christ
QUOTE: "With a focus on achieving spiritual maturity and growing outside of our comfort zones instead of a focus on 'fun' activities, our youth would strive to be serious Christians."

YOUTH SURVEY: Teens want to engage, not shun, outsiders

FROM PAGE 1
Students' responses revealed a desire to see the church become more welcoming in attitude and practice, said Chancey and Bruner, co-directors of the Intergenerational Faith Center. "Instead of shunning outsiders, Christians must be adept at reading and adapting to different cultures," the researchers reported, summarizing the teens' position. "Christians should listen to the opinions of others with an open mind and describe their own struggles more openly. Consequently, students watch closely for authenticity in the lives of those who speak for the church; life and lesson must be consistent."

"They don't feel welcome when they walk through the door like they should," Smith said. "We are God's people, and we should be opening our arms up to his children that have gone astray." Alex Free, 17, a member of the Caldwell Church of Christ in Idaho, said her agnostic and atheist friends "feel uncomfortable with the judgments they feel surrounding the tenets I was raised with." "I've always thought that the best way to share the love of Christ was to love, not evangelize," Free said. "With this in mind, churches would, I believe, be better to focus less on sin and more on God's love that is so great that it erases sin."



Free

CHURCH PEOPLE TOO JUDGMENTAL?
Teens interviewed by *The Christian Chronicle* echoed the researchers' findings. Jasmine Marie Smith, 16, a member of the Newnan Church of Christ in Georgia, said her friends view church people as "judgmental and hypocritical."

speak for itself, then that would help the church out," Stitts said. "Also, people within churches argue and debate each other. That only destroys the church, not benefits it." **MANY 'APATHETIC TOWARD GOD'**
Young people abandoning Churches of Christ after high school have contributed to a membership decline nationally. The 2012 edition of *Churches of Christ in the United States* counted 1,554,231 adherents, a number that includes members and children. That's a drop of more than 102,000 adherents, or 6.2 percent, since 2003. In the survey by Chancey and Bruner, 78 percent of students said they were "very likely" to attend a Church of Christ as an adult; 18 percent responded "maybe"; and 4 percent replied that they were "not likely" to do so. "This data ... causes concern for several reasons," the researchers said. "First, many of those students who responded with 'maybe' are likely to become what David

Kinnaman (in his book 'You Lost Me') calls nomads or prodigals, lost at least temporarily, if not permanently, to the church." Another concern: Those surveyed were attending conferences frequented by active members of youth groups. That means, Chancey and Bruner said, that "those who might already be at risk spiritually were not present to participate in this study. Therefore, the real percentages at any particular congregation might be considerably higher." Mike Avery, youth minister for the Memorial Church of Christ in Houston, said the survey "represents the students who are pursuing God actively in their lives, which, in my opinion, is a small minority. "Most students that I encounter are apathetic toward God, church and Christianity," Avery said. "They see it, at



Avery

most, as a part of their weekly schedule like math or science class — except they don't bring their textbook." Brett Petrillo, youth minister for the Bear Valley Church of Christ in Denver, said he was skeptical of the findings and "unclear if there is any agenda behind this survey." "No matter what anyone thinks or feels, we must always follow what Scripture says about worship, fellowship and practice," Petrillo said. A postmodern culture that frowns upon the concept of absolute truth influences teens' thinking, said Jessica Knapp, youth ministry leader for the Mountain Avenue Church of Christ in Tucson, Ariz. Teens want to be inclusive of other people and viewpoints, said Knapp, who described the researchers' findings as "very consistent" with her experience. "A student of mine is interested in being both Wiccan and Christian, not realizing there is a reason for mutual exclusivity," Knapp said. At the same time, young peo-

ple tell Knapp they want to be part of a "passionate church." "They don't want to fellowship with a bunch of believers who have masks on and pretend everything is perfect," she said. "They are not interested in checking a box for attending a routine and boring worship service." Count Caroline Sutton, 17, among those teens. "I know this isn't true of every adult, but the vast majority seem lifeless," said Sutton, a member of the Naperville Church of Christ in Illinois. "In my youth group, people pour their hearts out in song, and you can feel the Holy Spirit moving in the room, and people confess difficult sins and talk about their struggles," she said. "But then during church service on Sunday morning, everybody seems so constricted and still."

'CAPABLE OF DOING HUGE THINGS'
In interviews with the *Chronicle*, teens challenged church leaders to embrace the younger generation. Sammi Whitwell, 16, a member of the Garden Ridge Church of Christ in Lewisville, Texas, said adults too often write off all teens as troublemakers and rebels. "Sometimes, teenagers have great ideas, and nobody would ever know because we are stereotyped as inexperienced and lacking in maturity," Whitwell said. Ruth Lalli, 16, a member of the Park Plaza Church of Christ in Tulsa, Okla., urged adults to ask more, not less, of her generation. "If adults raised their expectations, a lot of teens would rise up to meet them," Lalli said. "Teenagers are definitely capable of doing huge things, but they do need some guidance and encouragement."

Student priorities	
From the 2012 Church and Relationship Survey	
Following Jesus	19%
Raising a family with children that love God ..	14.5%
Taking the Gospel to the world	13.9%
Curing cancer	11.3%
Restoring New Testament Christianity	11.2%
Ending world hunger	11.1%
Helping the church stay relevant with culture ..	9.4%
Stopping global warming	5.7%
Other	3.9%

* Students ranked nine possible life tasks, and researchers used a weighted point system to determine the above list.

'Insightful and surprising' ideas offered by teens in national survey

What could we change, add or take away that would make the church more like the church God meant it to be?" Even the staunchest supporters of the best congregations can usually name changes that they would make if they could, all in the interests of remaining true to Restoration ideals and transforming the church into a body more pleasing to God. At three youth conferences, we asked this question of 482 high school students who are members of Churches of Christ. Although some students would not change the church, most offered ideas that were insightful and surprising. Answers tended to cluster around the concepts of worship, study, relationships, action and attitudes. **• Worship:** Students overwhelmingly called the church to be more upbeat in its worship. They call "people to mean it when they worship" and to show more "life and emotion." Many find the song service to be a matter of routine. Students ask older adults to compromise and allow a better balance of "old" and "new" songs; in any case, worship leaders should lead songs with a livelier tempo. Students also ask those who plan worship to "simplify" and change the "worship structure" so as to "avoid routine." Their complaint is not with the elements of worship, but with the idea of worship either as an unimaginative routine or as an improvised collection of impromptu prayers, random songs and a sermon, each disconnected from the other. In their opinion, the worshiping congregation should more often be full of joy. **• Study:** Students noted that sermons tended to be routine. Students called for "deeper" study, not less. Sermons should "apply to the young and the old," be relevant to the life and the current culture of the church and teach Christians "how to face day-to-day problems." These students seemed particularly concerned that preachers spend more time attending to the faith formation of those in worship and less time making judgmental statements about those outside of it. They also assert that having more than one person speak from the pulpit might help the church. These concerns with sermons are consistent with the call to make study in the church deeper and more mature, consistent with Ephesians 4:11-13. They want more time to "dive into the Bible more." It may surprise

many that students want more study to be with the adults of the church. They want more adults to take up teaching responsibilities and to be unafraid to "talk about the tough stuff." **• Relationships:** The desire for more adult teachers emerges from students' hunger for deeper relationships, especially with adults (Deuteronomy 6). Some students feel invisible in the church; they long for adults to "act like we exist." Others call for adults to "tear down the wall between the adults and the youth." Although students want adults to know their names, they do not want adults to stop there. They long for relationships with adults where each knows the story of the other. Students hope that adults joining in youth work will build relationships with them and model their faith in action. Yet such youth-adult relationships have high standards; students call adults to be authentic, involved, caring, non-judgmental, open-minded conversation partners. **• Action:** Students don't want a church where conversations and relationships exclude outsiders, but seek one where an overwhelming desire for reconciliation and relationship sends its members into action in the community. Such a congregation will "share the love of Jesus with more people outside the church." This move requires the church to both "share the Gospel" and "go out and serve." Students believe that the community should see the church as loving, inclusive and compassionate, not judgmental. Ultimately, students believe in domestic and foreign mission work, but particularly in mission work that requires their personal participation. They want to take part as equal partners in all aspects of the work and worship of the church. **• Attitudes:** In their opinion, communities surrounding congregations too often hear the voice of judgment instead of the Good News. Though largely supportive of the church, their most frequently voiced complaint was against judgmental attitudes among Christians. Those attitudes take shape in the ways some "condemn" students, speak poorly of their peers and demonize members of other faith families. They perceive these negative attitudes to frustrate the spreading of the Gospel and the formation of deeper relationships within the church.



Researchers' report

Dudley Chancey and Ron Bruner



GREAT-GRANDMOTHER: After mission trip, 'my heart is full'

FROM PAGE 1

Vertannes and other Burmese Christians, attended Bible classes for women and caught up on the work of ministry training programs in the Southeast Asian nation.

She then traveled to Sri Lanka, the teardrop-shaped island south of India, and worked with Churches of Christ there.

"They seem to have a burning desire for more knowledge," she said of the Sri Lankans, "and the opportunity to discuss Scriptures is precious to them."

Flying to India, she taught classes for women in the cities of Bangalore, Kangayam, Batlagundu, Madurai, Chennai and Kakinada. She ended the

trip in New Delhi, where she took part in the dedication of the new meeting place of the CR Park Church of Christ. The congregation began in 1968 with the conversion of Sunny

David, now a church elder.

Betty Choate worked with the church in its infancy, and "now we are working with third-generation Christians," she said. "That's victory!"

Back home in Mississippi, Betty Choate acknowledged that life can seem a bit lonely.

"But my heart is full," she said, remembering the time she spent with "people throughout the world that I have loved for these many years."

FOR MORE INFORMATION on Choate publications, see www.worldangelism.org.



PHOTOS PROVIDED BY BETTY CHOATE

Betty Choate shows a plaque of dedication for the new meeting place of the CR Park Church of Christ at New Delhi.



Betty Choate studies the Bible with a visitor at a Church of Christ in Colombo, the capital of Sri Lanka.



Christians in India prepare stacks of World Evangelism literature to send to Indians who respond to a church-sponsored TV program.



Betty Choate attended and spoke at women's meetings across India, including this one in the city of Kangayam.

DUCK DYNASTY: Fan gives his life to Christ

FROM PAGE 3

Hooks still felt unable to make a connection to anyone with whom he could relate spiritually.

Last year, Hooks' mother, Shelia Hooks, introduced him to "Duck Dynasty," which is filmed in West Monroe, La., two hours north of his parents' home in Pleasant Hill, La.

The show — which drew 6.5 million viewers to its final episode of 2012 — follows the Robertson family as they operate a thriving duck call and decoy business while staying true to their family values.

Duck Commander Phil Robertson and his son, Al, both serve as elders for the White's Ferry Road Church of Christ in West Monroe. Other family members also are active with the congregation.

Hooks said he appreciated the values that the Robertsons profess and the family meal — preceded by a prayer — which the family shares at the end of each episode.

Curious about the Robertsons, he checked into their background online. He came across a 15-minute video of Willie Robertson, CEO of the family's Duck Commander business, speaking at chapel at Harding University in Searcy, Ark.

It was then, Hooks said, that he began thinking about God and faith. After hearing Willie reflect on his faith, Hooks listened to several clips of Phil Robertson, the family patriarch, preaching and telling the story of Jesus.

The Gospel message began to click with Hooks. "Phil Robertson really brought it full circle," Hooks said.

Hooks decided that he wanted to be baptized and told his wife of his decision. Without his knowledge, she contacted the Robertsons and told them of the impact they had made on her husband's faith journey.

To her surprise, the Robertsons responded, she said. "Our family decided we would do our best to facilitate requests to baptize those who ask, and we do it by having them come to a Sunday or Wednesday service at the White's Ferry Road building," said Al Robertson, a former longtime preacher for the congregation. "I will typically talk with them about the importance of the Gospel and response to it as well as the importance of emphasizing who they are being baptized into and not who is baptizing them."

Brandon and Jessica Hooks, along with their 3-year-old daughter, Abby, traveled to West Monroe, about 350 miles northeast of Houston, where the Robertsons welcomed them like family.

"What you see on the show is how they are," Brandon Hooks said. "They are all down to earth."

Kay Robertson, Phil's wife and the family matriarch, hugged everyone, telling the Hookses, "We don't shake hands around here."

In front of his family and the White's Ferry Road congregation, Hooks made his public profession of faith in Christ and was baptized by Jase Robertson.

In a small town in northeast Louisiana,

Brandon Hooks' life changed forever — not because of who baptized him, he said, but because of his decision to follow Christ.

"I know some people would say I did this just to meet them or have a famous person do it. That was not it," Hooks said. "I wanted them to do it because I connected with them."

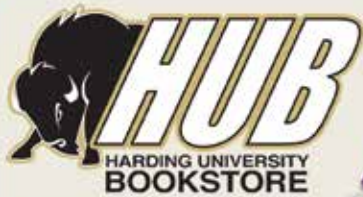
After years of going to church and not feeling connected, Brandon Hooks found faith and began his journey with Christ in the most unlikely of places.

SEE PREVIOUS COVERAGE of the Robertson family and view the Harding video at www.christianchronicle.org/blog. Search for "Duck Dynasty."



LORI EASTERLY

Jase Robertson immerses Brandon Hooks for the forgiveness of sins at the White's Ferry Road church in West Monroe, La.



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SOCIAL JUSTICE: Reactions mixed to speaker's message on kingdom work

FROM PAGE 3

door-knock on the hearts of people and give them the message of Christ," said Lee Langdon, youth minister for the Alameda Church of Christ in Norman, Okla. "Reestablishing that into the hearts of our teens and into their own missions is going to be important."



Langdon

Doug Foster, a church history professor at Abilene Christian University in Texas, said Churches of Christ historically have been "culturally oblivious to the fact that justice — God's kind, not our political agendas — was at the heart of true religion in the Old and New Testaments."

"I am not so sure Scot is on target with his analysis, though he may have a point about many young people becoming frustrated with the lack of concern and sensitivity — and even opposition — to the church's involvement with social justice issues," Foster said.

RIGHTING WRONGS

Joel and Ann Soumar work with 30 teens at the Vero Beach Church of Christ in Florida.

"It's easy for people ... to get excited about social justice and seeing wrongs righted, and it's harder for them to get excited about things that are going on at church," Joel Soumar said.

For example, last year's viral YouTube video supporting the capture of Ugandan warlord Joseph Kony deeply moved a girl in Soumar's youth group.

But the same student showed less interest in being a part of church programs.

The focus on social justice comes at a time when Gallup



BOBBY ROSS JR.

Veteran youth ministers pray for younger ministers during the National Conference on Youth Ministries.

reports 44 percent of Americans have a "great deal" of confidence in organized religion. That's the lowest figure since the polling company started tracking the question in the early 1970s.

As a 20-something youth minister, Nathan McBroom from the Central Church of Christ in Topeka, Kan., said he has become "wrapped up" in the idea of social justice.



McBroom

He even taught his students using a curriculum put out by the International Justice Mission, a human rights organization that rescues victims of violence, sexual exploitation and slavery.

"We actually learned a lot about oppression, God's hatred of oppression, God's love for justice and his desire to set the captives free and all that," McBroom said.

But the Kansan said McKnight's message was like "a slap upside the face," telling him to wake up and remember the centrality of the church.

"He's totally right. (Mahatma) Gandhi didn't do anything in kingdom business," McBroom said, referring to a point made by the speaker.

A Hindu, Gandhi led India to independence and inspired movements for non-violence, civil rights and freedom around the world.

"Sure, Gandhi made some good changes in this world, and God was happy to see his creation find peace in certain places," the Topeka youth minister said. "But the kingdom is all about the lordship of Jesus Christ, and I think I really needed to be reminded of that."

LIFE OF THE CHURCH

David Chenault, family life minister for the South Main Church of Christ in Henderson, Tenn., also said he appreciated McKnight's perspective.

"It did strike me that the only thing we have to offer is Jesus," Chenault said. "We may be able to build houses and provide resources and feed the hungry and shelter the homeless, but our primary job is to introduce the lost to Jesus."

But to James William

McCarty III, McKnight's message seemed better suited for mainline Protestants than members of Churches of Christ.

"I hear what he's saying but think he's speaking to the wrong audience," said McCarty, a Pepperdine University graduate who previously served as a minister and managed a homeless shelter in the Los Angeles area.

Now a doctoral candidate at Emory University in Atlanta, McCarty is completing a dissertation on the ethics of political reconciliation and transitional justice. He's a member of the Federal Way Church of Christ in Washington state.

Historically, McCarty said, Churches of Christ have suffered from a lack of "deep commitments to those aspects of the faith that go beyond what is done in Sunday worship."

"Even our most social justice-oriented ministries tend to remain deeply tied to the life of the local church or churches," he said, citing as an example Made in the Streets, which serves homeless children in Nairobi, Kenya.

Made in the Streets attracts college-age volunteers from

across the U.S., he said. These students see it as "a way to serve the kingdom through a justice ministry."

"However, life at MITS revolves around the life of the Kamulu Church of Christ as much as it does the ministry center in the Eastleigh slum," McCarty said.

This past summer, teens from the Highland Church of Christ in Abilene traveled to Chicago and worked with the homeless.

Besides feeding poor people, the students "stepped way outside of their comfort zones" and struck up conversations with those helped, said Sarah Campbell, the church's director of student ministries.

"A lot of times, our actions carry more weight than our words," Campbell said. "Through our actions and through our relationships with people, then Christ can be shared. Helping our students realize they can start relationships and then share their faith from those relationships — even relationships with people that are not like them — is a really powerful thing."

In Campbell's view, McKnight's keynote address underscored the need to keep Jesus at the center of such undertakings.

But she does not see social justice and kingdom work as an "either/or" proposition.

"I would just say it's something that needs to be a 'both/and' thing, where we're conscious of it and know that the pendulum could swing too far," she said. "Social justice is important, but Christ needs to be at the center of it."



Campbell

READ A FULL TRANSCRIPT of McKnight's remarks and McCarty's response at www.christianchronicle.org/blog. Search for "social justice."



PHOTOS PROVIDED BY PURPLEDOORCOFFEE.COM

Supporters of Purple Door Coffee painted "Cups for a Cause" for the Denver-based nonprofit. The painted cups then were donated to Purple Door and sold as a fundraiser.

A royal mocha, fit for a King

COFFEE SHOP WITH A MISSION: Two young Christians develop Purple Door Coffee as a means to serve the homeless.

BY BOBBY ROSS JR. | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

DENVER

Purple Door Coffee won't be an ordinary coffee shop.

Neither will it be a zoo.

That's the vision of Madison Chandler and Mark Smesrud, 20-something Christians whose shop will employ teens and young adults transitioning away from life on the streets.

"We don't want it to be like, 'Come look at all these homeless people and ask them questions about how hard their lives have been,'" said Chandler, 24, a 2010 graduate of Freed-Hardeman University in Henderson, Tenn.

"A lot of them have been through some really terrible stuff, and we want to create an environment that they're proud of and can learn, grow and be respected in," she added.

Customers who walk through the shop's purple door won't notice a sign labeling the business as a Christian ministry.

Nor will a banner identify the barista as a homeless person.

"If people learn of your mission, they may come once or twice if your coffee's just OK," said Smesrud, 25, a 2010 graduate of York College in Nebraska. "But if you are a great coffee shop and have a great mission, that's actually a better business model."

But make no mistake: Christ — not cappuccino — is the real passion for Chandler and Smesrud. They make no secret of their desire to expose employees and customers to Jesus.

Churches of Christ in the Denver area have helped raise funds to launch the nonprofit Purple Door Coffee — an extension of the Dry Bones Denver homeless ministry.

The shop is expected to open soon in Denver's historic Five Points neighborhood.

"Mark and Madison are seeking a way for their homeless friends to attain job skills and raise their standard of living while retaining their dignity," said Collin Packer, lead minister for the Littleton Church of



BOBBY ROSS JR.

Madison Chandler and Mark Smesrud discuss their work with Purple Door Coffee over — what else? — cups of coffee in Denver.

Christ, south of Denver. "If Jesus were in Denver, it might just be how he would spend his time."

Chandler and Smesrud — friends who became ministry partners — developed the vision for Purple Door Coffee after interning with Dry Bones in the summer of 2009.

"Mark and Madison are exceptional in every way, and we couldn't imagine a better pair to lead this new life-changing endeavor," said Matt Wallace, a Dry Bones staff member.

Chandler grew up in the Campbell Street Church of Christ in Jackson, Tenn., and

was a fifth-generation student at Freed-Hardeman, where she majored in psychology.

Her brother — whose name is Denver, just like the city to which she believes God led her — has Asperger's syndrome.

Now 22, Denver had a hard time making friends, she said.

"I think growing up with a brother who was different opened my eyes to this whole world of people that have a hard time finding where they fit in society," said Chandler, who worships with the Lakewood Church of Christ, west of Denver.

"From as early as I can remember, I always noticed kids who were left out," she added. "When I interned at Dry Bones, I met so many beautiful kids who had been left out. And I loved it so much. These are my people."

After earning a Bible degree at York, Smesrud — who grew up in the Minot Church of Christ in North Dakota — served as a youth ministry resident for the Highland Oaks Church of Christ in Dallas.

But he, too, found himself drawn to the homeless teens and young adults in Denver.

"Even in my youth ministry, I realized the kids I connected with best were the ones that were on the edge of the youth group," he said. "I didn't connect with the kids that were right. Well, I could connect with them, but the ones that my heart really cried out for were the ones on the edges."

Chandler came up with the name Purple Door Coffee.

Purple is the color of royalty.

"We want to treat every person that comes through our door like royalty, no matter if they are an employee or a customer," Smesrud said. "We believe that every person has incredible value, and we want to recognize that in our space and just how we live."



PHOTO PROVIDED BY PURPLEDOORCOFFEE.COM

Purple Door Coffee gave away free coffee while scouting potential locations.



A physician examines a patient before surgery. Two Indonesian physicians, Dr. Pinto and Dr. Jusni, performed 239 procedures during the two-day eye surgery camp on the island of Nias.

‘Fixing our eyes on Jesus’

— Hebrews 12:2



The day after surgery, patients gather to receive follow-up instructions from the physicians.

PHOTOS BY GREG SMITH | FOR THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

The people of Nias, an island of Indonesia devastated by the 2004 South Asian tsunami, have a clearer vision of their future. Surgeons removed cataracts and improved the vision in 239 eyes during a recent eye surgery camp at the Gunung Sitoli Hospital. Church-supported organizations Body and Soul Ministries and TEARS (Tsunami Earthquake American Relief Services) partner with the Caris Foundation to provide the free service. Greg Smith, who works with Caris, traveled to Nias to document the two-day surgery camp. “When walking through a crowd of grateful patients who have just been given their sight, it is very humbling, and it fills one’s heart with joy — to be able to stand on the giving side of human need,” said Dr. John Bailey, Body and Soul Ministries president.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, see www.bandsministries.org and www.carisfoundation.org.



After long journeys from their villages, followed by eye surgery, patients rest. “Jesus bless you guys for helping us,” one patient told the doctors.



A patient rests as she awaits the procedure that will restore her sight.



Patients receive eye drops as they prepare for surgery. The physicians monitor the patients and report few post-procedure infections, said Dr. John Bailey of Body and Soul Ministries.



Arman, a 15-year-old musician, at right, was apprehensive about entering the hospital but hopeful that he would be able to see again. After a severe fever at age 3, he was pronounced blind by age 9. After a doctor operated on one of his eyes, he could see objects up to 10 feet away.





STANDING ON THE GIVING SIDE OF HUMAN NEED

Body and Soul Ministries provides free medical, dental and optical care to those in foreign countries who typically go untreated. This non-profit organization was started by one man, Dr. John Bailey, who desired to volunteer his medical and dental expertise to people without access to the kind of services that are



A young Guatemalan's life was forever changed at the *Health Talents International Ezell Clinic*.

considered common in the United States. Because of his dedicated efforts, an organization of part-time volunteers and financial donors has evolved which, through their generosity, continues to make a profound difference in the lives of people around the world. Whether it is eye surgery camps in Indonesia or cleft-lip and cleft-palate surgeries in Guatemala, *Body and Soul Ministries* tirelessly strives to "stand on the giving side of human need."



If you would like to help, you can donate online or send a check or money order to:
BandS Ministries, P.O. Box 1926, Colleyville, TX 76034

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Arms of Hope is seeking a married couple who has a passion for today's youth and a calling to Christian residential care. At Arms of Hope we have the unique opportunity to serve youth who come from disadvantaged backgrounds and need adult leadership to help guide them educationally, emotionally and spiritually. It is our mission to provide these children with a therapeutic environment in which they can develop and prosper.

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If interested in these positions, please visit **www.ArmsOfHope.org** to obtain an application on the "About Us" page. You can also contact Allen Williams at lawilliams@armsofhope.org.

BY LYNN McMILLON | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

Though they always considered themselves a lively “sports family,” Diane and Norris Cole Sr. never dreamed that their son — Norris G. Cole II — would play in the National Basketball Association.

Such aspirations never were part of the couple’s “grand plan.” What was a part of their plan was their child-rearing strategy, neatly summed up in Proverbs 22:6, “Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he won’t depart from it.”

As a preschooler, young Norris “played church” with his sister and cousins. Since he was the only boy, he did all the song leading, praying and preaching. The girls were his congregation.

When he began playing basketball at age 3, his parents explained to coaches that if there were games or practices on Sunday or Wednesday night, Norris would either need to leave early or not be able to participate because of services at the Webster Street Church of Christ in Dayton, Ohio. There would be no exceptions.

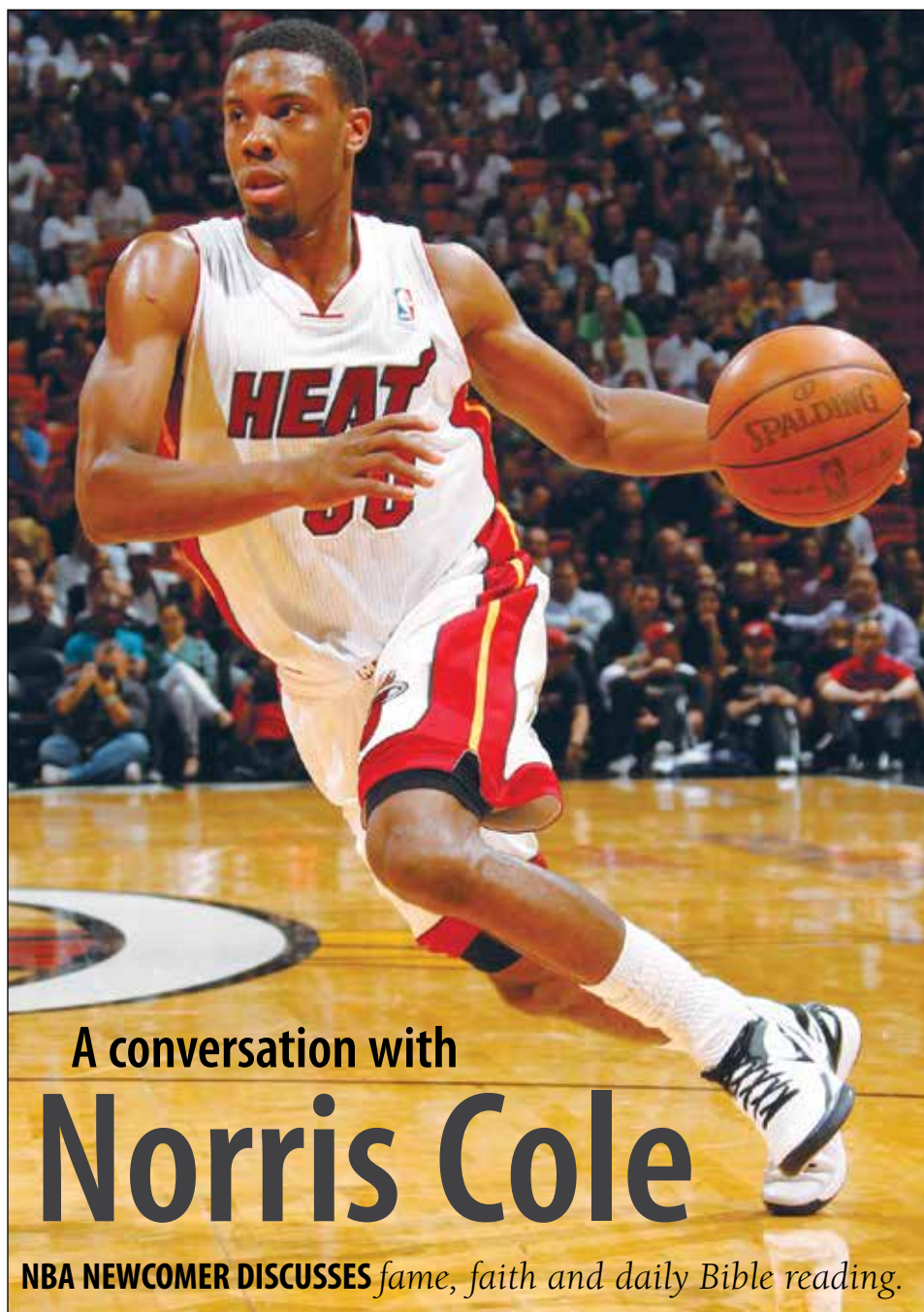
“His coaches respected our choice, and he never had a problem with his teammates teasing him,” his mother said.

A National Honor Society student and an athletic star, he was also an active participant in all phases of church life, often looking to spiritual examples such as his parents, uncles, church friends and minister Richard Melson.

While distinguishing himself as a basketball standout, he also completed a bachelor’s degree in health sciences from Cleveland State University in 2011. Drafted by the Chicago Bulls in the first round of the 2011 NBA draft, he was traded to the Miami Heat in a series of draft-night deals. Norris won his first NBA championship with the Heat in 2012.

Today he leads a frenzied life, but he attends services at the Miami Gardens Church of Christ whenever possible.

Recently, a Miami Gardens elder told his parents, “Norris just doesn’t know what an inspiration he is to the young people here. When they see him on television playing an out-of-town game on Saturday night and then here for services the next morning, they pay a lot of attention to that.”



A conversation with Norris Cole

NBA NEWCOMER DISCUSSES *fame, faith and daily Bible reading.*

NBA PHOTOS

Norris Cole brings the Heat in Miami but makes time for church and inspires young believers.

What does basketball mean to you?

Basketball has meant a lot in my life. It has put me in a position where I can support myself and my family.

Basketball also has allowed me to be a positive influence in my community and where I come from. Here at the Heat, we pride ourselves on reaching out into the local communities through basketball camps, Thanksgiving events, Christmas events, hospital visits, reading to kids, handing out school

supplies and delivering food to the homeless throughout the season.

What is most rewarding about playing in the NBA?

The most rewarding thing about playing in the NBA is that I get the opportunity to — both nationally and internationally — display my faith, my talents and represent my family in a positive manner.

I had another opportunity this past

preseason because we played two games in China — one in Beijing on Oct. 11 and the other in Shanghai on Oct. 14. You can be sure I took my daily Bible readings on those long flights.

Another rewarding aspect to playing in the NBA is being a positive role model to kids that look up to their favorite athletes. The NBA helps me expand my influence in order to reach more kids and be a role model for young persons’ lives.

How do you maintain Christian values in view of the pressure you face on the national stage?

It can be tough to maintain Christian values with the pressure of a national stage, but you just have to be disciplined. I try to shelter myself from different situations, read on a consistent basis and try to attend worship service.

I found a church in Miami that I attend — Miami Gardens Church of Christ. In my hometown of Dayton, Ohio, I attend Webster Street Church of Christ. They give me the strength I need in order to overcome any situation.

What obstacles have you overcome to be where you are today?

Some things I’ve had to overcome include college, going to class, staying on top of my school work and grades — not to mention the physical and mental obstacles. Staying in shape and always being ready to perform can take a toll on your body, so you have to be prepared at all times.

Also, dealing with the fact that I am now a public figure and everybody is watching my every move can be difficult. But it comes with the territory. I pride myself on making the right choices and doing the right things. Those are some of the toughest obstacles that I have had to overcome — and still have to overcome on a daily basis.

Who have been the main spiritual influences in your life?

My main spiritual influences have been my parents. They are the ones that paved the way for me to grow up in the church, attend Bible class and go to service every Sunday and Wednesday.

They taught me to have God in my life first, and everything else will fall into place. I can’t thank them enough for how they raised me, and I strive to make them proud every day.

See **COLE**, Page 22

Accepting Applications for the Position of Dean

B. Ward Lane College of Professional Studies



Dean of the B. Ward Lane College of Professional Studies

Beginning the 2013-2014 academic year. This college consists of the departments of Business, Exercise and Sport Sciences, Natural Sciences, Nursing, and Math and Physical Sciences. It is the largest academic unit of the university. The successful candidate will have a Ph.D. or equivalent in one of the disciplines housed within the college, demonstrate excellent leadership, teaching, and research experiences, and have an active commitment to the University's Christian heritage and mission.

All applicants must be a professing Christian and an active, faithful member of a congregation of the Churches of Christ.

Applicants should submit a letter demonstrating these experiences, a curriculum vita with contact information and four references. At least one reference should be someone with knowledge of the applicant's commitment to his/her faith. References will be contacted only after an initial screening process and notification of the applicant of that intent. In addition, applicants should complete an application for employment.

The application and instructions for submitting the requested materials and a complete job description are available on the website: LCU.edu. Navigate to About LCU, Human Resources, then Employment at LCU. Select open positions.

Review of applicants will begin immediately and continue until the position is filled.

Other faculty positions are available and descriptions are also on the human resources web location.

Rod Blackwood, Provost
Lubbock Christian University
5601 W. 19th Street • Lubbock, Texas 79407
rod.blackwood@lcu.edu • 806.720.7402

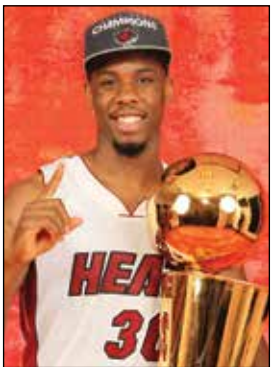
COLE: NBA star on Bible bowls, Christian camps

FROM PAGE 21

Can you share any important church-related experiences from your life?

I participated in Bible bowls with local congregations growing up in Ohio. I was with Webster Street Church of Christ, and we would compete in fun games with Northridge Church of Christ — games where each age group from one church would play against a similar age group of another church. Each team was awarded points based on questions about Scriptures and other facts from the Bible.

Also, growing up in elementary school, I would go to Christian camps. My uncle would always take my cousins and me. We camped, had activities throughout the day and also had a time of day for devotionals. It was both a physical and spiritual camp.



NBA PHOTOS

Norris Cole holds the 2012 Larry O'Brien NBA Championship Trophy.

Do you have any life advice for the many high school and college-level athletes out there?

My advice is to be a well-rounded person. Even though you are an athlete, that doesn't determine entirely who you are. My best advice is to have something else you can relate to, something that can help complete you as a person.

For myself, I was a good student, and I had faith in Christ, which helped to give me balance in my life. It also helped my mind to relax, to know that even if I wasn't able to play sports, I'm not a failure. I'm still somebody. My best advice is, even though you are an athlete, make sure you are developed in other areas of your life.

Do you have a favorite Scripture?

One of my favorite scriptures is Philip-
pians 4:13. "I can do all things through
Christ who strengthens me." It's one of
my favorites because, like the Scripture
says, I can accomplish anything as long
as Christ is first in my life.



We're Changing Lives. Become part of the story.

EDUCATION TRAINING

ADRIATIC CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

DURRES, Albania — Fifty-eight students, ages 9 to 16, are learning English, math and Bible principles through the Adriatic Christian Academy.

The after-school program is a ministry of the Adriatic Church of Christ.

Albanian minister Alfred Zike teaches students at the academy.

His wife, Diana, teaches Bible lessons and singing. Alexander Xoxi, a church member and student at a nearby university, teaches English and math. The academy recently hosted a dedication ceremony for its new classroom facility.

The Adams Boulevard Church of Christ in Bartlesville, Okla., sponsors the work. For more information, see www.adriaticchristianacademy.org.

HIGHER EDUCATION

FAULKNER UNIVERSITY

MONTGOMERY, Ala. — Jean-Noel Thompson is joining Faulkner as its vice president for student services.

Thompson had served since 2007 as vice president for student life and dean of students at Abilene Christian University in Texas.



Thompson

Faulkner President Billy D. Hilyer described Thompson as “a committed Christian, church leader and family man who believes in Christian higher education and will uphold the mission of Faulkner as a Christian university.”

LIPSCOMB UNIVERSITY

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — The biennial Christian College Choral Festival drew more than 300 students to study and perform sacred a cappella choral works.

Chorus groups from Lipscomb, Freed-Hardeman University, Harding University, Ohio Valley University and Crowley’s Ridge College gathered at Lipscomb for combined rehearsals culminating in a group performance.

“The Christian College Choral Festival is an opportunity for students and devotees to hear and learn from groups from many other colleges,” said



BRADY ROSS

Oklahoma Christian professor honored as community hero by Thunder

Mark Wedel, one of Max Dobson’s first special-needs students, holds up the community hero award that Dobson, next to Wedel, received at a recent Oklahoma City Thunder game. Dobson, a longtime Oklahoma Christian University professor, coach and administrator, was honored for his decades of work with special-needs children. Also pictured are Devon Energy’s Michael Palmer and Thunder representatives Clinton Corley and David Jones.

Gary P. Wilson, director of Lipscomb’s choruses and the festival. “In addition, this is one of the relatively rare times that I as an a cappella choral director get to interact with my colleagues and see what new things their ensembles are doing.”

K-12 CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS

OKLAHOMA CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

EDMOND, Okla. — Oklahoma Christian Academy recently celebrated a \$100,000 gift from a donor who asked to remain anonymous.

The unexpected donation will benefit the school’s technology initiative. In addition to classroom upgrades, each faculty member received a laptop computer.

“This great gift gave our teachers new tools, and our students will be the ones who benefit from it,” President Brandon Tatum said.

MINISTRY TRAINING

SUNSET INTERNATIONAL BIBLE INSTITUTE

ALTOONA, Pa. — Sunset’s newest campus will allow students in the Northeast to attend the Lubbock, Texas-based Bible training school full time via satellite.

The new Pennsylvania campus will allow students to study and learn at the Pleasant Valley Church of Christ building while being virtually in the classroom in Lubbock.

“The students are able to see and hear the lectures, their instructors and fellow classmates and interact with them even though they are hundreds of miles away,” staff administrator Terry Clyde said.

The Pleasant Valley church, served by elders Bud Adams, Jerry Stumpf and Bob Steiner, previously had offered Sunset courses through recorded videos.

For more information on the new program, see www.PreachNorthEast.org.

SPOTLIGHT

Bible professor dies

SEARCY, Ark. — Harding University is mourning the sudden death of Bible professor Ken Neller.

Neller, 58, also was a preacher and elder for the Downtown Church of Christ in Searcy.

He collapsed Jan. 10 while playing racquetball. Attempts to revive him were unsuccessful, said Monte Cox, dean of Harding’s College of Bible and Ministry.

“Ken was a beloved husband, father, grandfather, Bible teacher, preacher and elder,” Cox said in a note to colleagues.

Survivors include Neller’s wife, Barbara, and two sons, Colin and Seth.



Neller



Faulkner University continually seeks talented, high energy individuals to help us succeed in these times of growth and we are excited to announce the following open positions.

Multiple Faculty Positions – Available Fall 2013

All candidates must be active members of the church of Christ and committed to Christ-centered Liberal Arts education and Christian service.

College of Arts and Sciences

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College of Business

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College of Education – Available Summer 2013

Chair
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Academic rank for faculty positions will be based upon education and experiential qualifications according to University policy. These positions are full-time, 9 or 12-months. The candidates selected must be available to assume the duties of the positions Summer or Fall of 2013. Applications will be accepted until the positions are filled. The review of applications will begin immediately. Employment is conditional upon a satisfactory background check and verification of work authorization through E-Verify.

Additional details regarding these positions, including application requirements, are available on Faulkner's website: www.faulkner.edu

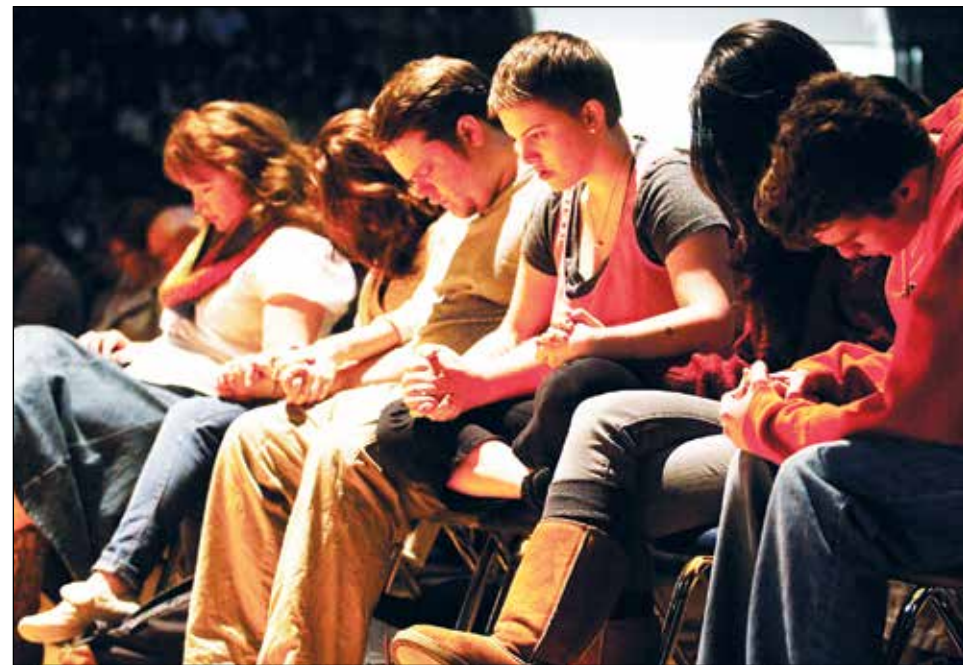
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Pulpit Minister Position Opening

The **Lehigh Valley Church of Christ** is seeking a pulpit minister/evangelist. We are an independent, non-instrumental church. We desire a college degree or formal preacher training with prior pulpit experience.

The position is a full time position and includes health benefits.

Please send your resume with salary history and sample sermon(s) to The Lehigh Valley Church of Christ, 3400 Brodhead Road, Bethlehem, PA 18020, (610) 691-1116, email: info@lehighvalleychurchofchrist.org.



CURTIS CHRISTIAN

Tragedy strikes Abilene Christian University again

Students at Abilene Christian University in Texas pray at a memorial chapel assembly Jan. 28 after an off-campus wreck claimed the life of one student and injured five others. Killed was Lindsey Smith, 20, a junior advertising and public relations major from New Braunfels, Texas. Smith's family attends the New Braunfels Church of Christ. The driver of a pickup that ran a stop sign and collided with the vehicle in which the six students were traveling also died, authorities said. For the ACU community, the tragedy rekindled memories of a 2011 bus accident that killed student Anabel Reid and left nearly a dozen others injured.



Veteran minister named president of Canada's Great Lakes Bible College

WATERLOO, Ontario — Art Ford, a longtime Canadian minister and educator, has been named president of Great Lakes Bible College, a small preacher training school about 70 miles west of Toronto.

Ford, 66, had served as minister for the Fennell Avenue Church of Christ in Hamilton, Ontario, since 2007.

"We look forward to the Bible college increasing its ability to serve the brotherhood with Art's leadership as president," said Max Craddock, chairman of the Bible college's board.

"With the blessing of God, the school can grow and serve the Lord's church in Canada for many years to come," added Craddock, who preaches for the Strathmore Boulevard Church of Christ

in Toronto.

The presidency is a part-time position. Great Lakes Bible College has two full-time staff members: dean and teacher David Knutson and teacher Jim Holston.

Ford, an alumnus of Harding University in Searcy, Ark., taught at Great Lakes Christian High School in Beamsville, Ontario, from 1970 to 1976.

He and his wife, Ruby, then served on the mission field in Papua New Guinea from 1977 to 1987.

When the Fords returned, he served in administrative roles with the high school until 1996, when he assumed the presidency of the high school and Bible college. He retired as president in 2006 — but not permanently, as it turns out.

Don Rose is the high school's chief administrator.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, see www.glbcc.ca.



Ford

NEWSMAKERS

NAMED: Dennis Itson, Hero of Hope by the American Cancer Society. Itson, an eight-year cancer survivor, works for Faulkner University in Montgomery, Ala. **Wayne Scott**, Lads to Leaders/Leaderettes Board of Directors. **Jim Baird**, director of the Honors Program at Oklahoma Christian University in Oklahoma City, Okla. **Melisa Roberts**, Tim Leslie and **Kenneth Stephenson** as members of the Board of Trustees for Lubbock Christian University in Lubbock, Texas.

NEW MINISTERS: Travis Akins, Young Adult Minister, Memorial Road church in Oklahoma City, Okla.

ANNIVERSARIES: 79th: Walter and Eula Logan, Haleyville, Ala. 70th: Freddie and Antoinette Rhodes, Sequin, Texas and James and Mickie French, Buffalo, Texas. 68th: Max and Mildred Dunn, Edmond, Okla. 66th: Roy and Nina Robinson, Augusta, Ga.

BIRTHDAYS: 100th: Jewel Simons, La Mesa, Calif. 96th: Walter Logan, Haleyville, Ala. 95th: Fay McCulley, Alvarado, Texas.

PASSAGES: Sherman Wayne Arnold, 74, Dec. 18, New Orleans, La., served as elder for the Carrollton church in New Orleans, La. Inez Baucum, 97, Jan. 9, Lubbock, Texas, first social worker for The Children's Home of Lubbock, instrumental in helping establish the social work program at Lubbock Christian University. Kurt Conner, 60, Jan. 7, Thompson's Station, Tenn., faithful member of 4th Avenue church in Franklin, Tenn. Opal Ebest, 98, Dec. 14, Mount Juliet, Tenn., oldest member of the Mount Juliet church. Loyd Frashier, 96, Dec. 26, Malibu, Calif., a Pepperdine University Faculty Emeritus member, elder of the Woodland Hills, Calif., church. Max Harper Jr., 90, Jan. 6, Dallas, served as

teacher, deacon and elder for almost 40 years at the Skillman church in Dallas. Tom Marshall, 85, Dec. 11, Edmond, Okla., preacher for more than 60 years. Lou Phillips, 82, Jan. 6, Edmond, Okla., served under five presidents at Oklahoma Christian University, first as Executive

Secretary and later as Special Assistant to the President. Robert Rowland, 86, Jan. 17, Corona, Calif., former president of Columbia Christian College in Portland, Ore.



Itson



Rowland



ABILENE CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY
acu.edu

College of Arts and Sciences

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

The Department of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences invites applications for a tenure-track position as assistant professor of animal science. It is seeking a visionary animal scientist with the earned Ph.D., Ph.D./D.V.M. or D.V.M. (from an AVMA-accredited institution with M.S. in animal sciences or closely related field). Information about the department is available at acu.edu/agenv.

The Department of Engineering and Physics invites one or more talented engineers to apply for its new and rapidly expanding engineering program, whose first class of students entered in Fall 2012. Ideal candidates will have a Ph.D. in engineering or a closely related field and experience in teaching and research. All engineering fields will be considered. Previous involvement with ABET accreditation would also be helpful. Information about the department is available at acu.edu/engineering.

The Department of Journalism and Mass Communication invites applicants for a tenure-track position as assistant professor of journalism and mass communication. The ideal candidate will have professional experience in online news or commercial environments including social media. Applicants who can also teach in public relations will receive particular attention. A terminal degree is strongly preferred, but applicants who are ABD will be considered. Information about the department is available at acu.edu/jmc.

The Department of Language and Literature invites applicants for a tenure-track position as assistant/associate professor with specialization in world literature, literary theory, or new media. Special consideration will be given to candidates with experience in the field of publishing, a demonstrated ability to establish and supervise internships, and/or experience living abroad. ABD considered, Ph.D. preferred. Information about the department is available at acu.edu/english.

The Department of Music invites applications for a tenure-track position of director of choral activities, beginning Fall 2013. Applicants should have an earned doctorate in Music (ABD will be considered) and be accomplished conductors and musicians with demonstrated potential for success teaching at the collegiate level. Preference will be given to candidates with a proven record of success teaching at the secondary level and overseeing all facets of a university choral program. Information about the department is available at acu.edu/music.

The Department of Political Science invites applications for a tenure-track position as assistant professor of political science. Applicants should have a Ph.D. (ABD will be considered). The successful candidate must have a commitment to teaching in an undergraduate environment and demonstrated potential for professional development and/or research activities. Information about the department is available at acu.edu/politicalscience.

The Department of Psychology invites applications for a tenure-track position as assistant professor of school psychology, beginning Fall 2013. Applicants should have a doctorate in the field (ABD will be considered) and be a Licensed Specialist in School Psychology (LSSP) or equivalent credentials. Information about the department is available at acu.edu/psychology.

College of Business Administration

Dr. Don Pope, Chair, Department of Management Sciences
ACU Box 29309, Abilene, Texas 79699-9309

The Department of Management Sciences invites applications for an assistant or associate professor of marketing, management and/or international business, effective Aug. 1, 2013. Applicants should have an earned graduate degree in marketing, management or a related field. A doctoral degree is preferred. (Outstanding ABD candidates will be considered as well.) Information about the college is available at acu.edu/coba.

School of Information Technology and Computing

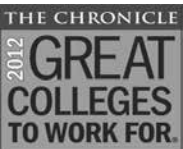
Dr. Brad Crisp, Director
ACU Box 29353, Abilene, Texas 79699-9353

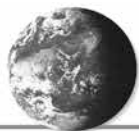
The School of Information Technology and Computing invites applications for a tenure-track position as assistant, associate or full professor of computer science, effective Aug. 1, 2013. Applicants should have an earned graduate degree in computer science, software engineering or a related field. A doctoral degree is preferred. (Outstanding ABD candidates will be considered as well.) 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 vita; transcripts of all undergraduate and graduate work; and names, addresses and phone numbers of five references. Review of applicants will begin immediately and continue until the position is filled. Nominations of and applications from qualified women and minorities are especially encouraged.

ACU is affiliated with the fellowship of the Churches of Christ. All applicants must be professing Christians and be active, faithful members of a congregation of the Churches of Christ and deeply committed to service in Christian higher education. The mission of ACU is to educate students for Christian service and leadership throughout the world.

ACU does not unlawfully discriminate in employment opportunities.





Honor Roll of Churches, 2012–2013

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Oberlin Church of Christ, Oberlin; Pratt Church of Christ, Pratt; Russell Church of Christ, Russell. **KENTUCKY:** Adairville Church of Christ, Adairville; Broadway Church of Christ, Paducah; Mount Vernon Church of Christ, Park City. **LOUISIANA:** Pineville Church of Christ, Pineville; Southern Hills Church of Christ, Shreveport; Maplewood Church of Christ, Sulphur. **MARYLAND:** Church of Christ, Aberdeen; Oxon Hill Church of Christ, Temple Hills. **MASSACHUSETTS:** Greater Springfield Church of Christ, Chicopee; Cape Cod Church of Christ, Marstons Mills. **MICHIGAN:** Beulah Church of Christ, Beulah; Brighton Church of Christ, Brighton; Redford Church of Christ, Detroit; East Main Church of Christ, Kalamazoo; Lapeer Church of Christ, Lapeer; Mount Morris Church of Christ, Mount Morris; Van Dyke Church of Christ, Warren. **MINNESOTA:** Church of Christ, Hibbing; Church of Christ, Wadena. **MISSISSIPPI:** Hanging Moss Road Church of Christ, Jackson; Oxford Church of Christ, Oxford; Sherman Church of Christ, Sherman. **MISSOURI:** Church of Christ, California; 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Chandler Road Church of Christ, Muskogee; Noble Church of Christ, Noble; Central Church of Christ, Nowata; Church of Christ, Okemah; Grand Boulevard Church of Christ, Oklahoma City.

Feb. 15-17 Winterfest Gatlinburg. Gatlinburg Convention Center, Gatlinburg, Tenn. Contact Dudley Chancey at dudley.chancey@oc.edu or www.winterfest.org.

Feb. 22-23 Affirming the Faith Seminar. North MacArthur church, Oklahoma City, Okla. Contact (405) 621-5962 or www.affirmingthefaihtok.com.

Feb. 22-24 Challenge Youth Conference. Gatlinburg Convention Center, Gatlinburg, Tenn. Contact Larry Davenport, (256) 710-7671, ldavenport@hcu.edu or www.cyconline.com.

Feb. 24-27 39th Annual Southeast Institute of Biblical Studies Lectureship. Knoxville, Tenn. Contact (865) 691-7444 or www.seibs.org.

Feb. 25-26 Nurture Conference. Lipscomb University, Nashville, Tenn. Contact (615) 966-5352 or www.lipscomb.edu/ics/Nurture-Conference.

Feb. 28-Mar. 2 National Urban Ministry Conference. North City church, St. Louis, Mo. Contact Jim Harbin at (901) 385-9858 or jim.harbin@nationalurban-ministryassociation.org.

March 4-7 69th Annual Faulkner University Lectures. Montgomery, Ala. Contact www.faulkner.edu.

March 4-7 Youth & Family Ministry Summit. Faulkner University, Montgomery, Ala. Contact sgleaves@faulkner.edu, (334) 386-7660 or www.faulkner.edu.

March 20-23 Tulsa Workshop. Experience Eternal Life Now! Tulsa, Okla., Fairgrounds. Contact workshop@memorialdrive.org or (918) 344-3402.

March 24-28 69th Annual National Lectureship. "Return to the Ancient Order." Hosted by Houston area Churches of Christ at the Hyatt Regency in downtown Houston. Contact Teaster Maloy, Sr. (713) 674-5131 or 69thnaleschip@att.net.

March 29-31 Southern Africa International Lectureship. "Contending for the Faith." UNISA, Ormonde Conference Centre, Soweto, South Africa. Contact www.2013lectureshipjhb.co.za.

April 26-27 40th Anniversary Lariat Creek Christian Camp. Geary, Okla. Contact caretaker@lariatcreek.org or www.lariatcreek.org.

May 3-5 New England Lectureship. "1st Century Christianity in a 21st Century World." Holiday Inn, Taunton, Mass. Contact Maurice Davis (617) 274-2409 or www.newenglandlectureship.org.

May 9-11 The Ascending Voice III. Pepperdine University, Malibu, Calif. Contact www.pepperdine.edu/ascendingvoice.

Honor Roll of Churches *continued*

OKLAHOMA, cont: Oakcrest Church of Christ, Oklahoma City; Hartford Avenue Church of Christ, Ponca City; Farrell Avenue Church of Christ, Shawnee; 12th & Vinita Church of Christ, Sulphur; Wapanucka Church of Christ, Wapanucka; Wetumka Church of Christ, Wetumka. **OREGON:** Circle Church of Christ, Corvallis; Church of Christ, Lebanon; West Main Church of Christ, Medford; Eastside Church of Christ, Portland; Tillamook Church of Christ, Tillamook. **PENNSYLVANIA:** Camp Hill Church of Christ, Camp Hill; Harding Church of Christ, Falls; Glen Rock Church of Christ, Glen Rock; King of Prussia Church of Christ, King of Prussia; Somerset Church of Christ, Somerset. **SOUTH CAROLINA:** Summerville Church of Christ, Summerville; Grand Strand Church of Christ, Surfside Beach. **SOUTH DAKOTA:** Yankton Church of Christ, Yankton. **TENNESSEE:** Antioch Church of Christ, Antioch; Bartlett Woods Church of Christ, Arlington; Athens Church of Christ, Athen; Harpeth Hills Church of Christ, Brentwood; Camden Church of Christ, Camden; Eva Road Church of Christ, Camden; Cisco Church of Christ, Cisco; Graymere Church of Christ, Columbia; West 7th Street Church of Christ, Columbia; Jefferson Avenue Church of Christ, Cookeville; Patty Church of Christ, Delano; Harriman Church of Christ, Harriman; Leoma Church of Christ, Leoma; Maryville Church of Christ, Maryville; Olivet Church of Christ, McEwen; East Haven Church of Christ, Memphis; Southwind Church of Christ, Memphis; Old Hickory Church of Christ, Old Hickory; Fairlane Church of Christ, Shelbyville; Raus Church of Christ, Shelbyville; Coopertown Church of Christ, Springfield; Exchange Street Church of Christ, Union City. **TEXAS:** Adrian Church of Christ, Adrian; Morningside Drive Church of Christ, Alice; Argyle Church of Christ, Argyle; Church of Christ in Hyde Park, Austin; Brownfield Church of Christ, Brownfield; Southern Hills Church of Christ, Buda; Church of Christ, Canton; Church of Christ, Clarendon; Clifton Church of Christ, Clifton; Clyde Church of Christ, Clyde; Elm Street Church of Christ, Coleman; Arlington Heights Church of Christ, Corpus Christi; Crandall Church of Christ, Crandall; Farmers Branch Church of Christ, Dallas; Walnut Hill Church of Christ, Dallas; Eliasville Church of Christ, Eliasville; Airport Freeway Church of Christ, Euless; Southside Church of Christ, Fort Worth; Frankston Church of Christ, Frankston; Gail Church of Christ, Gail; Broadway Church of Christ, Galveston; Saturn Road Church of Christ, Garland; George West Church of Christ, George West; Pecan Grove Church of Christ, Greenville; Haslet Church of Christ, Haslet; Holly Lake Church of Christ, Hawkins; Hempstead Church of Christ, Hempstead; South Main Church of Christ, Henderson; Bering Drive Church of Christ, Houston; Hidden Valley Church of Christ, Houston; Palm Center Church of Christ, Houston; Trinity Gardens Church of Christ, Houston; West University Church of Christ, Houston; Westbury Church of Christ, Houston; Church of Christ, Howe; Huntsville Church of Christ, Huntsville; Iraan Church of Christ, Iraan; College Street Church of Christ, Junction; Ola Church of Christ, Kaufman; Kress Church of Christ, Kress; Church of Christ, La Feria; Lake Jackson Church of Christ, Lake Jackson; Garden Ridge Church of Christ, Lewisville; Lockhart Church of Christ, Lockhart; Alpine Church of Christ, Longview; South Plains Church of Christ, Lubbock; Travis Peak Church of Christ, Marble Falls; Matador Church of Christ, Matador; Maud Church of Christ, Maud; Harvey Drive Church of Christ, McAllen; Fairmont Park Church of Christ, Midland; North Ridge Church of Christ, Mount Pleasant; Tanglewood Church of Christ, Odessa; Church of Christ, Palacios; Main Street Church of Christ, Petersburg; Church of Christ in Porter, Porter; North Bay Church of Christ, Portland; Roaring Springs Church of Christ, Roaring Springs; Roby Church of Christ, Roby; Sabinal Church of Christ, Sabinal; Church of Christ, Seymour; Parkview Church of Christ, Sherman; Western Heights Church of Christ, Sherman; Church of Christ, Sterling City; Walnut Church of Christ, Texarkana; Texpline Church of Christ, Texpline; Throckmorton Church of Christ, Throckmorton; Lake Cities Church of Christ, Van Church of Christ, Van; Trophy Club; Whitney Church of Christ, Whitney. **VERMONT:** Chester Road Church of Christ, Springfield. **VIRGINIA:** Church of Christ, Covington; Church of Christ, Falls Church; Hampton Church of Christ, Hampton. **WASHINGTON:** Twin Cities Church of Christ, Centralia; Federal Way Church of Christ, Federal Way; Kennewick Church of Christ, Kennewick; Lakeview Church of Christ, Tacoma; Washougal Church of Christ, Washougal; First Church of Christ, Wenatchee; Waupaca Church of Christ, Waupaca; Lakeland Church of Christ, Woodruff. **WEST VIRGINIA:** Kanawha City Church of Christ, Charleston; Peytona Church of Christ, Peytona; George Street Church of Christ, St. Marys. **WYOMING:** Lander Church of Christ, Lander; Rawlins Church of Christ, Rawlins; Church of Christ, Thermopolis.

EDITORIAL

Keeping millennials in the church

We have, it seems, evolved into a nation of “Nones” — folks with no religious ties and little interest in organized faith.

One-fifth of Americans — and one-third of adults under age 30 — have no religious affiliation, the Pew Research Center’s Forum on Religion and Public Life proclaimed this past fall.

“Spiritual but not religious” has become the catchphrase of our times.

In our own fellowship, many Churches of Christ are graying as children grow up and leave the fold. There are 102,000 fewer people in the pews nationwide than a decade ago, according to *Churches of Christ in the United States*, published by 21st Century Christian. That figure represents a 6.2 percent decline.

We live in a postmodern era in which critics of our Christian faith would lead you to believe that churches in America are dying.

Not so fast.

Yes, the times are challenging. Yes, the culture is increasingly secular. But we serve an all-powerful Savior whose kingdom is secure. God calls us to plant seeds. He can handle the harvest.

In this issue of *The Christian Chronicle*, our in-depth coverage

provides insight on young Christians and potential strategies for ministering to millennials:

- **Teen survey:** On the front page, we report on the findings of the 2012 Church and Relationship Survey by Oklahoma Christian University’s Intergenerational Faith Center.

Researchers Dudley Chancey and Ron Bruner surveyed 482 high school members of Churches of Christ.

Chancey and Bruner characterized the students’ ideas for making the church more like the church God meant it to be as “often insightful and surprising.”

Some of the ideas relate to teens’ desire for more upbeat worship and less routine sermons. Other findings may be less expected: Teens hunger for more substantive relationships, particularly with older Christians. Teens long for deeper Bible studies that go beyond rote recitation of familiar verses. Often they see our fellowship as too judgmental and desire to share their faith in ways that won’t alienate outsiders.

- **Hands and feet of Jesus:** On page 3, we explore the concept of social justice vs. kingdom work.

As we’ve reported previously, it’s no secret that today’s young

people value hands-on ministry, such as feeding the hungry, painting houses for the elderly and providing coats for the homeless. But what’s the relationship between the labors that occur outside the church doors and what happens in the church pews on Sundays?

Again, we strive to understand the heart of Generation Y — and hope the lessons learned can benefit church leaders concerned about young people.

- **Intergenerational ministry:** On page 31, Tim Pyles, minister for the Broken Arrow Church of Christ in Oklahoma, reviews an impressive book on intergenerational Christian formation.

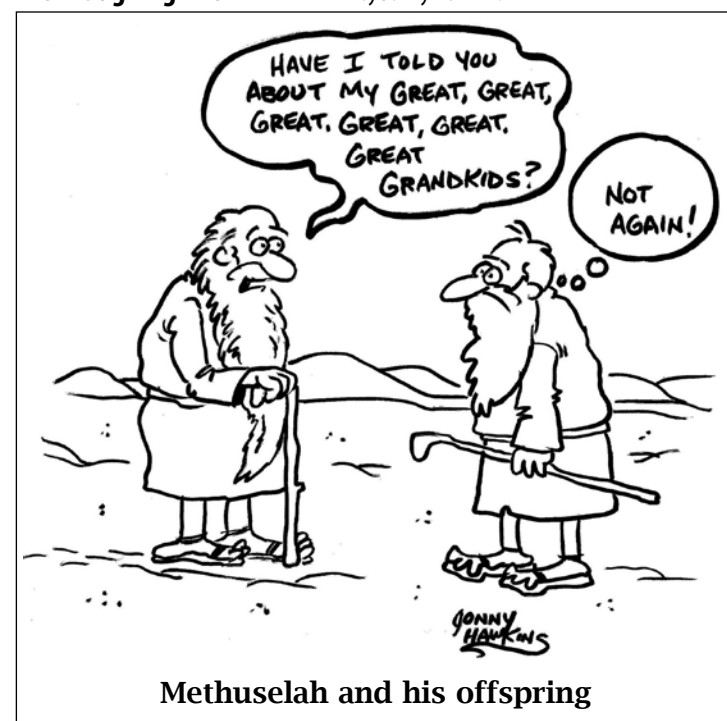
As Pyles notes, many churches have focused so much on age-segregated programming — a youth devotional here, a senior luncheon there — that they have fractured God’s spiritual family.

We must work harder to buck that trend and bring Christians of all ages together for the sake of the kingdom.

If you care about the future of the Lord’s church, we pray that this issue of the *Chronicle* will inspire you to find ways to embrace young Christians and help prepare them for lifetimes of faith and service.

Ever-Laughing Life

by Jonny Hawkins



Methuselah and his offspring

TO OUR READERS

Postage increase takes effect

We shared with you the stunning postage increase we face as of this issue — a rise of \$198,000 annually.

We give our heartfelt thanks to those who have stepped up financial support in view of this development. You may be interested to know that we have made two higher-level appeals to the U.S. Postal

Service. Both were denied. A congressional inquiry yielded the same response.

Meanwhile, your words of encouragement and prayers are deeply appreciated. With this issue, you will notice a slight change in the paper’s appearance — again, related to new postal regulations.

We will keep you informed as further developments arise.



Our mission: To inform, inspire and unite

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Sycamore tree in the Bible story of Zacchaeus becomes a guiding metaphor for youth minister

The story of Zacchaeus was my favorite as a kid. Later in life, I figured it belonged in Vacation Bible School — but certainly not on a blueprint for ministry.

Eighteen years into youth ministry, however, this simple Bible story has become the guiding metaphor for my service.

Early in my ministry, I surrendered to the temptation of defining success as bodies in chairs or names on signup sheets. My ministry was to the “crowd,” with little concern for those who didn’t possess the courage, strength or ability to rise above the distractions around them.

An 8-year-old girl at summer camp made me rethink everything.

I was sharing the story of Zacchaeus at a morning chapel. I chose the smallest kid to play the leading role and a reluctant-yet-stout counselor to provide the branches on which our little Zach could perch. I picked a Jesus. And I assembled a small band of willing volunteers to serve as the crowd.

The drama unfolded.

There were giggles as “Zacchaeus” made his way up the “tree,” hitting a few ticklish spots on his journey. Jesus came to town. Zacchaeus came down. Before turning over the podium to the cabin inspectors, I asked: “What would have happened if Zacchaeus hadn’t climbed the tree that day?”

I’m not sure what I expected, but I got a dose of first-grade theology.

“His song wouldn’t be as much fun to sing!”

It took only a moment to see my question through her eyes. Then I began to hear with her ears. (You’ll have to sing out loud to get the effect.)

*Zacchaeus was a wee little man
A wee little man was he
He started to climb in a sycamore tree
But he didn’t...*

That little girl began something new in me. She helped me realize that my definition of a successful ministry had missed the mark.

I was more interested in the next

retreat or class — completely oblivious to those in my group whose “songs” were not much fun to sing because their faith was so small ... and the crowd was too tall ... and they had no sycamore tree to climb.

At my first church, we had a kindergarten. In the nearby courtyard was a playground. And on that playground was an off-limits tree. A big tree. A tempting tree.

A red line was painted above the second limb from the ground. The children were free to climb to that line, but everything above was forbidden territory. And “Mrs. Wanda” guarded that tree with a watchful eye that would impress an angel wielding a flaming sword.

Each morning I passed that tree on the way to my office. I saw wee little people looking up, peering through the branches in awe. And I was reminded that what they seek is a viewpoint so different from their own. But without the tree, their quest was impossible — and their song was not as much fun to sing.

That’s when it hit me. I had tried to be the savior to the teens God entrusted to me. I had tried to heal them. I had tried to build a ministry that would be truth and light for them.

And all those years I noticed only three characters in the story stuck on the flannel board of my brain since childhood — Jesus the Savior, Zacchaeus the sinner and the crowd of distractions.

I forgot about the sycamore tree. But the sycamore tree is me.

My job is to lift teens above the crowd so they might see the approaching Savior. Jesus simply pleads with me to create an environment where teens will choose to “come and climb” so they’ll be found by him.

The story of Zacchaeus is not about

Views



David Skidmore

‘I had tried to be the savior to the teens God entrusted to me. I had tried to heal them. I had tried to build a ministry that would be truth and light for them. ... I forgot about the sycamore tree.’

a curious tax collector. It’s about a seeking Savior.

Preaching — at least the way I’ve done it — won’t win much of this generation to Christ. But being available when a teen wants to climb higher to investigate the outrageous claims of the Son of God, that will.

In that familiar song we all know, I’m bothered by the way we recreate the moment when Jesus encounters his new friend.

My Sunday school teacher would shake her finger and say, “Zacchaeus, you come down from that tree!” with the vocal inflection my mother used when employing my first, middle and last names along with phrases like, “Wait until your father gets home!”

Jesus’ tone is vital. The voice Zacchaeus hears offers peace, protection and a promise. His invitation seems to say, “Zacchaeus, you don’t belong on a tree. That’s my job.” The response Jesus receives is immediate and sincere.

If the success of my ministry is measured only through numbers or pats on the back, the lost are seldom sought or saved. But as a sycamore tree, I long to hear teens say, “I see him, and I know he sees me.”

Repentance is shouted. Forgiveness is offered. Salvation is delivered.

And it’s the sycamore tree that has a front-row seat to witness the miracle of someone’s song becoming so much more fun to sing.

The calling of youth workers is to lift teens above the crowd so they might see the approaching Savior.

Zacchaeus climbed a tree and hid to get the attention of Jesus. Jesus climbed a tree and died to get ours.

Being a tree is easy.

Being a Savior is not.

DAVID SKIDMORE, his wife, Melissa, and their three daughters live in Murfreesboro, Tenn., where they serve with the North Boulevard Church of Christ. He has been in youth ministry for 18 years. He can be reached at jdskidmore@aol.com.

LETTERS

Donor urges other readers to give \$12

It’s OK that you used my \$12 donation to help you wind up in the black for 2012. I intended it to pay for 12 months in 2013.

I had hoped that you would use my name and example for the other 250,000 people who get the *Chronicle* to follow suit to raise \$3 million to pay postage and keep you in the black.

Most everybody can afford \$12 a year — \$1 a month. God bless.

Bill Boyd | Mariposa, Calif.

Avoid food waste, help poor

If there is spoiled food in my refrigerator, I think of James 5:3, which says that when our gold and our silver become rusty, they are witnesses of our selfishness. (See “Supermarkets and stewardship,” Page 27, February).

So I try to only buy the food that I know our family is going to eat. No more. Besides this, it is good to add in our budget a percentage of our income for the poor (Psalm 41:1). Blessings!

Jose Elmer Pacheco | Silver Spring, Md.

On weight and workouts

I appreciate this article because I have had to leave churches because of comments about my weight, even though I work out daily (“Trimming the fat from the faithful,” Page 6, February).

More programs should be done to help Christians physically, and more people should realize that being overweight is not always about gluttony and indolence.

That is better than those who think they have to go to fellow members and tell them they’re fat.

From my experience, people like to tell me I’m fat because they ignorantly think they are helping or like to say “what I think” to cover bad self-feelings. I have actually been left off church co-ed basketball teams because of my weight, even though I love to play basketball. Programs can encourage struggling people.

Johnny Mullens | El Paso, Ark.

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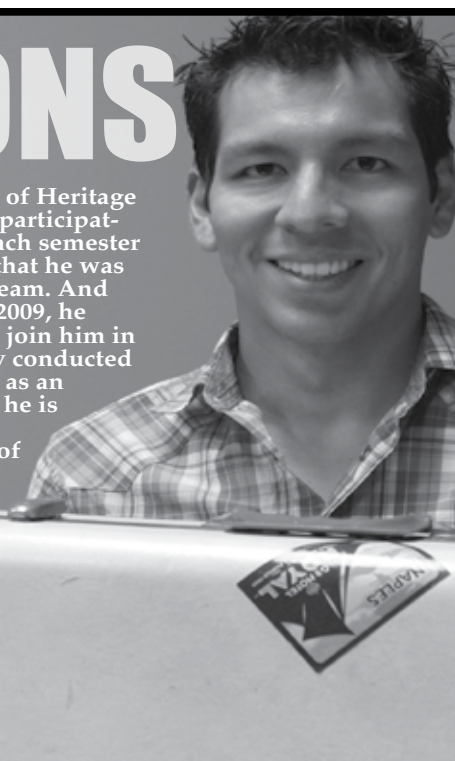
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Ramon Gonzalez defines the concept of Heritage Christian University missions. After participating in the HCU campaign program each semester as a part of his curriculum, he knew that he was capable of leading his own mission team. And he knew just where to take them. In 2009, he organized a team of HCU students to join him in his home country of Peru, where they conducted Bible studies and did outreach. Now, as an HCU alumnus and graduate student, he is planning a second trip. From being led to leading... that's the goal of the Christian Service and campaign programs. Ramon plans to return to Peru after graduation, but he will have left a legacy of leadership... and a dream in the hearts of other students. That's the type of missions experience you can expect from HCU. It's our focus.



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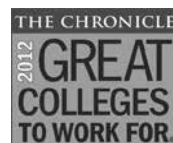
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atten: Elders

P.O. Box 340

Lake Dallas, Tx. 75065

Phone: 940-497-5510

Email: elders@tcoc.net

Blending generations builds a church for the ages

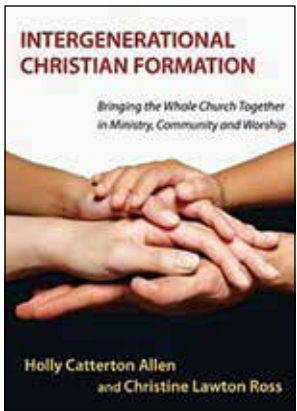
BY TIM PYLES | FOR THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

Blucking societal trends is a challenging proposition. The task can prove even more daunting within the culture of churches, where traditions run deep. Yet that is precisely what Holly Catterton Allen and Christine Lawton Ross courageously and convincingly undertake in their book, **“Intergenerational Christian Formation: Bringing the Whole Church Together in Ministry, Community and Worship.”** Allen, professor of Christian ministries at John Brown University, is a member of the Siloam Church of Christ in Arkansas. She and Ross, professor of Christian education at Concordia University Irvine in California, present a biblically based and thoroughly researched case for greater intergenerational involvement in the body of Christ. The authors draw deeply from a growing body of scholarly literature on the subject and supplement their data with anecdotes and experiences from their own lives of faith. Why should one advocate so passionately for intergenerational Christian life and ministry? Because it’s intrinsically biblical, the authors maintain. “Scripture presumes that faith formation occurs within intergenerational, familial and community settings,” they write. Whether describing the congregational assemblies of ancient Israel or first century churches that received apostolic epistles, the Bible is clear that

these communities of faith interactively involved the very young, the very old and everyone in between. In response to what can be described as the dismemberment of Christ’s body and the fracturing of God’s spiritual family through perpetual age-segregated programming, Allen and Ross seek to infuse these biblical metaphors with their fullest and most authentic meaning through intergenerational interaction. Jesus’ prayerful desire for his followers was that “all of them may be one” (John 17:20). This oneness is not merely mystical, but experiential and relational, extending across generational lines. The authors see the church as a uniquely and divinely designed context where these generational distinctions “are to be transcended rather than reinforced.” Instead, churches should seek to establish “intergenerational faith communities (that) bring together the young, fresh thinkers with the older, wiser veterans, creating an integrated profusion of resources.” Beyond biblical and theological foundations, the authors appeal to extensive research within a wide range of other fields, including learning theory, gerontology and other social sciences. The cumulative weight of this evidence affirms that “interage connections across all the generations foster development cognitively, morally, psychosocially and spiritually,” they write. While this material provides additional validation of the authors’ assertions, these particular sections of the book may

prove to be rather technical and tedious for some readers. Among the greatest strengths of the book is the authors’ fluid movement from the theoretical to the practical. Concepts are translated into concrete suggestions to assist churches in achieving greater cross-generational interaction through worship, learning experiences, story sharing, service projects and missions. Their most comprehensive recommendation involves the formation of intergenerational small groups. The authors include helpful appendices detailing “Forty Intergenerational Ideas” and resources for curricula and activities. Not all of the particulars of their suggestions will find a ready reception or easy implementation in Churches of Christ. However, adaptations can be made that would still embrace and endorse the authors’ premise that “intergenerational faith experiences uniquely nurture spiritual growth and development in both adults and children.” The fact that most congregations of Churches of Christ are relatively small makes them ideal settings for intergenerational models of ministry. The key to becoming “intergenera-

tional” is intentionality, the authors write. Churches already are made up of multiple generations. They simply need to be brought together, “not just occasionally or sporadically, but often.” Allen and Ross urge a balanced “both/and” approach, preserving some traditional divisions based on “age, stage and interest,” but working toward the intentional integration of various generations in 50 to 80 percent of congregational activities. Though many churches may have missed out on the first wave of this growing movement, ample opportunity remains to join the rising tide of restoring God’s intention for intergenerational spiritual formation. This is “not something that churches do — it is something they become,” the authors write. “Intergenerational Christian Formation” provides church leaders with a solid biblical rationale and a reasoned roadmap for cultivating such a culture of intergenerational life, blessings and community in Christ.



★★★★☆
Holly Catterton Allen, Christine Lawton Ross. **Intergenerational Christian Formation: Bringing the Whole Church Together in Ministry, Community and Worship.** Downers Grove, Ill.: IVP Academic, 2012. 330 pages. \$22.

TIM PYLES is preaching minister for the Broken Arrow Church of Christ in Oklahoma. He blogs at www.timpyles.com and may be contacted at tpyles@bacoc.org.

NEW AND NOTEWORTHY

PRISON MINISTRY

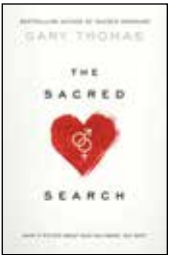
Kirk Blackard. **Love in a Cauldron of Misery: Perspectives on Prison Ministry.** Eugene, Ore.: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2012. 234 pages, \$26.



Blackard, a member of the Bering Drive Church of Christ in Houston, provides knowledge to empower Christians to serve in prisons. The book is divided into an overview of the prison system’s history, people and culture and a four-part advice guide for volunteers and ministries.

SINGLES MINISTRY

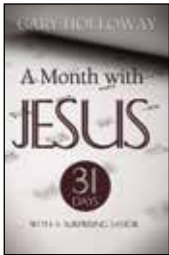
Gary Thomas. **The Sacred Search: What If It’s Not About Who You Marry, But Why?** Colorado Springs, Colo.: David C. Cook, 2013. 256 pages. \$14.99.



This follow-up to 2002’s “Sacred Marriage” is meant for Christian singles. The author argues that, instead of using feelings as a guide to finding a spouse, people should judge potential mates on their spiritual compatibility. Each of the 19 chapters ends with study questions.

BIBLE STUDY

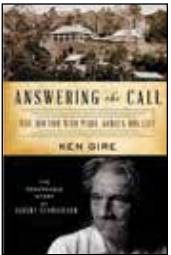
Gary Holloway. **A Month with Jesus: 31 Days with a Surprising Savior.** Abilene, Texas: Leafwood Publishers, 2012. 224 pages. \$14.99.



This book is for people who know their Bible but want to understand the person of Jesus better. Holloway, a former Bible professor at Lipscomb University in Nashville, Tenn., seeks to reveal Jesus through the eyes of his contemporaries, who were often surprised, confused or even offended by his words.

MEDICAL MISSIONS

Ken Gire. **Answering the Call: The Doctor Who Made Africa His Life. The Remarkable Story of Albert Schweitzer.** Nashville, Tenn.: Thomas Nelson, 2013. 208 pages. \$15.99.



Sacrifice, bravery and hard work are all defining traits of Schweitzer, whose century-old hospital in Africa thrives today. This biography is written much like a novel with vivid descriptions of Africa and dialogue of the wide variety of people in Schweitzer’s life.

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HARDING

Church of Christ minister, wife create 'Blue, Red and Gold' Bible

BY KIMBERLY MAUCK | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

Jane Johnson was reading her Bible one evening when she came to God's blessing after Jesus' baptism: "This is my Son, in whom I am well-pleased."

She stopped.

"Why aren't the words of God printed in color?" she asked her husband.

Scott Johnson, the preacher for the East Faulkner Church of Christ in El Dorado, Ark., didn't know, so he searched online.

He learned that the red-letter edition of the Bible, which highlights the words of Christ, was copyrighted and published in 1901. But he found little mention of special treatment for the words of God in Scripture.

That night, the minister said he had an experience akin to God placing the plan for the temple in David's mind in 1 Samuel.

"I don't want to call it a vision, but ... in my mind was placed this plan," he said, to color God's words in blue and the mentions of the Holy Spirit in gold, in Bibles that people could use to better understand the Trinity. "You can't color the words of the Holy Spirit in gold, or the entire Bible would be gold."

Scott Johnson got to work. He copyrighted his idea of the BRG (Blue, Red and Gold) Bible.

He secured a Microsoft Word version of the King James Bible — the only version in the public domain. Then he began the study-intensive process of adding blue and gold to the red-letter edition. He also added red underlining to messianic prophecies and blue underlining to the words of angels.

"All dialogue of a divine creature is in some type of color," Johnson said.

It took two years. Recently, WestBow Press, a division of Thomas Nelson,

released an e-version of the BRG Bible through Barnes & Noble and Amazon.

The project was not easy — and often made the Johnsons wonder if they were the right people for the job, Jane Johnson said. "We asked God, 'Why did you give this to us?'" Jane said. "We're just these little bitty people on a little bitty farm at a little bitty church."

The Johnsons live on a 33-acre farm in Bernice, La., about 30 miles south of El Dorado. Despite the challenging nature of the project, Scott and Jane said they're convinced the coloring of the words will help readers see and understand the Trinity better.

The colors "make it easy to spot elements such as messianic prophecies and the spoken words of God,

Jesus Christ and angels," said Pete Nikolai, director of publishing services at Thomas Nelson. In this way, it "helps busy Bible readers quickly find what they are looking for."

Sales of the e-Bible will determine whether or not Thomas Nelson prints it.

Scott Johnson's hours in Bible study and in front of the computer for this project are in some ways his education in divinity: the East Faulkner church is his first paid preaching work. His career was mostly spent as an entrepreneur.

The couple operated a bed and break-

fast and a pancake house. Later, they marketed a sweet potato pancake mix, created by Jane.

Scott sums up the unexpected trajectory of his career this way: "I like to say we've gone from selling physical bread to providing spiritual bread."

TO SEE SAMPLES of the BRG Bible, go to BRGBible.com or contact Scott Johnson at brgbible@gmail.com.

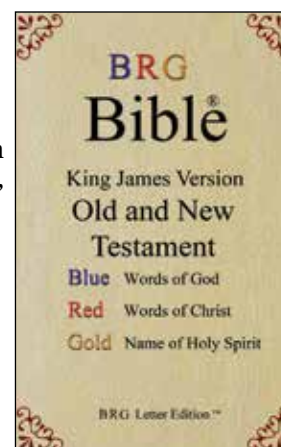


PHOTO PROVIDED BY SCOTT JOHNSON

Scott Johnson and his wife, Jane, created the BRG Bible. They are pictured on a trip to Israel.



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ypsicofc@gmail.com.



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Additional details regarding this position, including application requirements, are available on Faulkner's website: www.faulkner.edu

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View Christian Chronicle website
August 2009

"Little church on the prairies
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S0H 1X0
E-mail: gebell@sasktel.net

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We should echo Jesus' prayer for unity

'My prayer is not for them alone (the apostles). I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you." — **John 17:20-21**

This prayer comes near the end of John's account of the last supper, the Passover meal Jesus shares with his disciples before his arrest and crucifixion. Jesus began this important event by washing his disciples' feet as a reminder of their responsibility to serve.

Jesus has reminded them that one will betray him, and Jesus will deny him, but he has also given them encouragement about a future home he will prepare for them.

He answers Thomas about where he is going with the declaration, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me" (John 14:6). Then Jesus tells them God will send his Holy Spirit, another Counselor, to teach and remind the disciples of all Jesus taught.

Jesus also uses the vine and the branches of grapes to illustrate how connection with him will allow the production of spiritual fruit throughout the world till the end of time. After warnings that the world will hate the disciples just as the world hated them and further teaching about the work of the Holy Spirit, the disciples begin to realize the truth — Jesus is the Messiah, the one who came from God.

At that point Jesus prays, asking God to glorify him so that the Son can glorify the Father. He explains that God granted him authority over all the people so that he could give eternal life to his followers. "Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent." Jesus prays for the disciples, recalling that he has shared knowledge of the Father with them, and asking God to protect them by the power of God's name. He asks God to protect them from the evil one and sanctify them by the truth.

It is at this point Jesus indicates that his prayer is not only for them, but for believers in all future time. Jesus prayed before his apostles for you and me. And the central idea of his message is that we all may be one, just as the Father and Jesus are one.

Jesus' prayer in the first century is just as important for believers today

as it was for the apostles and those brought to belief on Pentecost.

In most communities, dozens of groups mark their building with a cross and profess to be followers of Christ. Yet these groups have no desire for unity. Even in local Churches of Christ, it is rare for the members to be totally unified. The history of most congregations is marked by a rift and division at some point.

Insight



Bailey McBride

In my childhood memories those splits usually occurred over Sunday school or the use of one cup. In the last 60 years divisions have occurred over elderships, worship, church location, ministries to underprivileged,

preachers, song books, Bible translations, mission methods and many other trivial differences. And we can be sure God is not happy with the attitudes leading to those divisions.

The world has never needed Christ more than it does now. The natural disasters, the designs of evil men to destroy others, the loss of civility toward those we disagree with and the disposition of a world intent on evil make life uncomfortable for all.

How great would the influences be if all those who believe in Jesus would study Jesus' prayers and make the goal for unity become the common commitment?

How powerful is the teaching of Jesus in establishing the basic principles for bringing glory to God the Father?

How destructive is it when believers have endless arguments about the nature of God and his kingdom? How much time do believers have to change the obvious disunity and present a unified front in winning unbelievers?

I don't know the answer to most of those questions, but I know how the disciples turned the world upside down in the first 100 years after the death of Jesus as they went everywhere sharing the story of redemption to unbelievers.

I know also that if Jesus prayed for our unity that we all should be echoing that prayer and working to establish a unity to glorify God, our Father and the Father of Jesus.

CONTACT bailey.mcbride@christianchronicle.org

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Contact Dr. Kirt Martin, kirt.martin@LCU.edu

**Assistant Professor
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Contact Dr. Ronna Privett, ronna.privett@LCU.edu

**Assistant Professor
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Contact Dr. LaNell Harrison, lanell.harrison@LCU.edu

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Contact Dr. David Boyer, david.boyer@LCU.edu

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Contact Dr. Charles Stephenson, charles.stephenson@LCU.edu

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Review of applicants will begin immediately and continue until the position is filled.

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