

CONNECTICUT MEMBER SURVIVES SHOOTING

Congregation 'in shock' after school massacre

BY BOBBY ROSS JR. | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

A teacher who attends the Danbury Church of Christ in Connecticut survived the Sandy Hook Elementary School massacre in which 20 students and six school employees died.

Minister Doug Vile identified the teacher as Robin Walker.

"She's a special education teacher and was in a reading class," Vile told *The Christian Chronicle*. "She huddled kids in a corner and read stories to them while the shooting was going on. She kept them safe and together and calm until the police came."

"Bless her heart, she loves those kids," he added.

On the Sunday after the Dec. 14 attack, the 100-member congregation conducted a special "lament service" focused on Scripture and prayer. The church is about eight miles



Melillo

northwest of the Newtown, Conn., school.

"The mood was obviously very somber," said deacon Rob Melillo, who has a daughter, Kaley, 7, the same age as the children who died. "In reality, everyone is just still in a state of shock."

Amid that shock, Danbury church leaders voiced appreciation for the hundreds of fellow Christians across the nation who called and e-mailed after the shooting.

"We're just thankful for all the love and support that have been expressed," Vile said.

At press time, the church was making plans for a candlelight vigil to pray and remember the victims.

"We haven't figured out what our role is going to be in helping the community get back on its feet," the minister said. "When the national emphasis goes on to someplace else, we're going to be here to pick up the pieces."

RELATED COLUMN, Page 3



PHOTO PROVIDED BY JADE ALIVIO AND MARVIN MANGLIMUTAN

Christians sort through memories after typhoon

A girl in the Philippines picks up a waterlogged doll in her home after Typhoon Bopha ravaged homes across the Southeast Asian nation, a frequent target of deadly storms. The typhoon claimed more than 900 lives on the southern island of Mindanao and destroyed homes, farmland and the buildings of several Churches of Christ, said Salvador Cariaga, a Filipino church member doing relief work on the island.

"Amid the devastation, kids and adults resort to begging along the highway," Cariaga said. "Donors choose to drop bags of food for anyone who asks, not knowing who needs them most."

"By the looks of the devastation, everyone does," he added.

RELATED STORY, Page 12



Serving children

Teacher shares what she's learned from students. 19



Faith and fitness

More congregations tout physical and spiritual health. 6



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'As our nation weeps, so do I,' minister says

Dear Lord, no. Please. Not again.

Just as we prepared to go to press, gunfire shattered the innocence of a Connecticut elementary school. The unfathomable death toll included 20 precious children and six dedicated school employees.

Inside Story



Bobby Ross Jr.

For Christians who have witnessed similar manifestations of evil up close, the Sandy Hook Elementary School carnage brought back haunting memories.

"These kind of things always stir up old emotions," said Seth Terrell, who was a 21-year-old campus minister for the Blacksburg Church of Christ when the Virginia Tech massacre left 33 people dead in 2007. Now the associate minister for the North Broad Street Church of Christ in Albertville, Ala., Terrell reflected on the lessons he learned:

"I had to quickly realize that the utter feeling of despair and loss could not be ignored — we needed instead to be completely honest with ourselves by putting away all pretenses and just grieving with every ounce of our beings."

"Deep sorrow and grief are not sinful. We grieved the loss of life. We grieved that we were in a state of confusion and chaos. All we could do as Christians at that point in time was to offer the invitation to the community that we will hurt with you. We will

See **SHOOTING**, Page 4

Christians launch Gospel toward North Korea

BY ERIK TRYGGESTAD | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

North Korea's recent launch of a multi-stage rocket across the East China Sea drew international condemnation and raised fears of a nuclear war.

Less than two months earlier, Church of Christ members in South Korea launched something they believe to be more powerful than any missile into the airspace of their northern neighbor.

Near the demilitarized zone that separates the two Koreas, the Christians released 17 large helium balloons carrying sacks filled with copies of the Gospel of Matthew. The believers made sure that the wind's direction would carry the balloons into the North.

One of the Christians, who fled to South Korea during the Korean War, financed the production of 1.2 million copies of the Gospel, printed in the Korean language on large plastic pages.

The Christians also launched sacks of the "waterproof gospels" in 2010, whispering "Hallelujah" as each balloon drifted into the heavens.

A church member who assisted in the effort and asked that his name be withheld said that the man who financed the project hasn't seen his family since he crossed the border in the 1950s.

"It is still his dream to meet his family, who might still be alive somewhere in North Korea," the church member said.

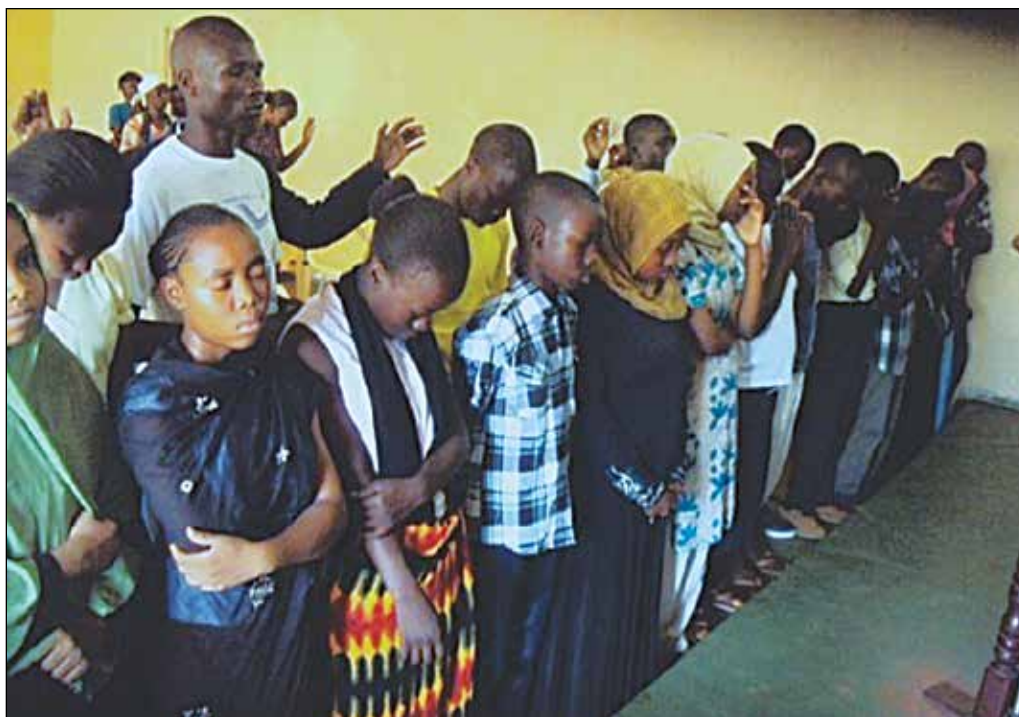
"He is now 86. With many tears, he said



PHOTO PROVIDED

"Waterproof" sheets of plastic bear the Gospel of Matthew in the Korean language.

to me, 'I pray that many people find this Good News on these waterproof plastic papers — hopefully my family also.'"



PHOTOS PROVIDED BY JOHN CHEGE

Muslims fill Kenyan church to pray for their children

John Chege was surprised to see his church filled with Muslims on a recent Sunday. The minister for the Ujamaa Church of Christ in the Muslim-dominated city of Mombasa, Kenya, had planned a special prayer service for eighth-graders — as did churches across the country — in advance of the national exams Kenyan students take for admittance to high school.

Muslim students and their parents attended — and outnumbered the Christian students, Chege said. "When I called all students to come forward for prayers, the Muslims came also, and we prayed for them. This was so encouraging."



Shelly to leave Rochester post

ROCHESTER HILLS, Mich. — Rubel Shelly will step down as president of Rochester College in 2013.

The college, which is associated with Churches of Christ, has launched a national search for Shelly's successor.

William Anderson, chairman of the board for the college once known as Michigan Christian, said the target date for announcing a new president is this spring.

In Shelly's five years at the helm, enrollment has increased from 850 students to more than 1,200 students. For 27 years, Shelly served as pulpit minister of the Woodmont Hills Church of Christ in Nashville, Tenn. When he left in 2005, he joined Rochester's religion faculty part time, voicing a desire to help prepare future preachers. He became a full-time professor the next year.

But in 2008, trustees asked Shelly to fill a much larger role, tapping him as president when the former head, Mike Westerfield, resigned. Shelly, 67, intends to assume the role of chancellor, oversee the transition of leadership and "return to his most cherished roles of teacher-author within the college community," according to a news release.



Shelly

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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
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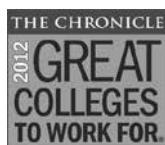
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• **See an expanded interview** with church member Carlee Doggan, who once weighed 600 pounds, on how she shed 400-plus pounds.

• **Breaking news:** Don't wait to read all the latest news or check out exclusive online features.



SHOOTING: Tragedy rekindles haunting memories

FROM PAGE 3

suffer with you. We will lose sleep when you don't sleep. We will open our ears to your questions of anger and sadness.

"Furthermore, we hold onto the memory of the victims. We remember them in small ways long after they are gone. And when praise and worship become difficult, we allow our lamentation to be our only form of worship for a time period, and we do not apologize for that."

Jessica Knapp serves as youth ministry leader for the Mountain Avenue Church of Christ in Tucson, Ariz., where six people died and 13 were wounded outside a supermarket in 2011.

Among those killed was Dorwan Stoddard, a devoted member of the Mountain Avenue church.

Knapp offered this advice for any congregation faced with such a tragedy:

"First, I would remind the folks that everyone grieves in these situations. I would encourage members to look out for people who might be overlooked but need help. Some are grieving the loss of a loved one, others the loss of innocence and their sense of safety, but in Tucson we had so many who needed help who were not immediately identified."

"Second, God did not plan this. It is not his will. He can use it to his glory, but we as Christians should be clear evil did this, and we should work daily to be light in a world filled with evil, not promote the idea that God's plan was for these babies to be brutally murdered."

"Third, every victim is valuable. Some stories will be more tragic or more heroic, but the families and friends of every victim should be cared for. We are to love and care for them all. It is easy for people to be angry and hurt as the media pay more attention to some."

Larry Wishard preaches for the Southeast Church of Christ in Aurora, Colo. He ministered to victims' loved ones after the 1999 Columbine High School massacre and reached out again this past July after a gunman opened

fire at a theater, killing 12 people.

Wishard shared these words:

"Jesus leads us to look for healing beyond the horror. People can be changed in these windows of tragedy and sorrow by those who are simply present for them. Jesus is the healer, and we are not. It is simply being there to be an instrument for Jesus to use. ... Our work perhaps is just to encourage them, by our being there, to hold on for one more step."

"My difficulty in both situations here in Denver was that I wanted to know what I was supposed to do and say. I came to learn through prayer that I simply had to take one step at a time. Put on your clothes. Get the key to the car. Drive to the place and offer to help. God will do all the rest."

John Dobbs, minister for the Forsythe Church of Christ in Monroe, La., reacted to the Connecticut tragedy on a more personal level. He lost his son John Robert Dobbs, 18, in a 2008 interstate accident.

Dobbs wrote on his personal blog:

"Parents tonight lie in beds unable to sleep. Down the hall are empty beds where the hopes and dreams of families should be asleep. But they are not there. A silence louder than anything they have ever heard is ringing in the ears of parents and grandparents. This is the one fear they could never bring themselves to ruminate upon. But the Enemy has struck with deadly force."

"Before we draw our lessons, make our politics, point our fingers or dig up Bible prophecies about the end times ... can't we just hurt with them? This is a time to gather our children, love on them and know that for tonight we have the richest possession of all ... the gentle rise and fall of the sleeping child down the hall."

"And for those of us who have lost our children too, we must simply pray from that raw unhealed place deep in our hearts. We know."

"As our nation weeps, so do I."

CONTACT bobby.ross@christianchronicle.org

FEBRUARY 2013

ALABAMA

ROGERSVILLE — The Southside Church of Christ is mourning the stabbing death of Sharon Wellington, a 32-year-old church member described as a “dear and faithful sister.”

Wellington was found dead in her apartment Nov. 30. Police had made no arrests by press time.

“Sister Sharon’s presence and passion for God will be greatly missed by all of us,” church leaders said in a post on the congregation’s Facebook page. “We know that God is willing and able to see us through this very trying time.”

To read tributes, see www.christianchronicle.org/blog and search for “Wellington.”

**Wellington****ALASKA**

JUNEAU — A combined group from two Alaska congregations — the Juneau Church of Christ and the Valley Church of Christ in Wasilla — made an eight-day mission trip to Leon, Mexico.

Many of the young people on the trip had never traveled outside the United States, except to Canada, and had their eyes opened to life in a different culture, church member Pete Baker said.

“Working in a children’s home and two low-income housing projects allowed them to see that young people living in poverty are able to live without the things most American youth acquire or desire,” Baker said.



PHOTO PROVIDED

The Alaska team poses for a group photo during the Mexico trip.

CALIFORNIA

SAN DIEGO — *Rejoice!*

That’s the name of an a cappella trio comprised of members of Churches of Christ and invited to sing at the White House during the holidays.

Lisa Caswell and Katha Winter, members of the Canyon View Church of Christ, and Patty Alley, a member of the Lakeside Church of Christ, sang Christmas carols and holiday favorites before the national tree lighting ceremony.

INDIANA

COVINGTON — Fourteen new souls were added to the church as the result of a recent We Care Ministries campaign.

The baptisms increased the size of the Orchard Hills Church of Christ to 49 members, up from 35, elder Ray Nasser said.

“Our flock was increased by 40 percent,” Nasser said. “Each has a mentor who continues to teach and work with them.”

The Orchard Hills church seeks a domestic missionary to come work with the congregation. The church can provide a house but can’t afford to pay a salary, Nasser said. Leaders pray that a larger congregation will decide to sponsor the work.

MISSISSIPPI

BATESVILLE — Lula Ford Wallace waited longer than most to accept Christ.

When she was baptized in 2011 at the Norris Road Church of Christ in Memphis, Tenn., Wallace was 108 years old.

“I feel God has kept her around this long for a reason,” her daughter Virginia Mack, a member of the East Frayser Church of Christ in Memphis, told *The Christian Chronicle* at the time.

The new babe in Christ died Nov. 29 at age 109. Funeral services were conducted in her hometown of Batesville.

To read the full story, go to www.christianchronicle.org/blog and search for “Lula Wallace.”



PHOTO PROVIDED BY RYAN BEARD

48-hour run to fund 48 adoptions

Ultra-marathoner Ryan Beard, a member of the Westover Hills Church of Christ in Austin, Texas, finishes 46 hours on a treadmill. In all, he ran 48 hours to raise money to help fund 48 international adoptions. Beard and his wife, Ashley, both graduates of Harding University in Searcy, Ark., are adopting two Ethiopian children. For more information, see www.48lives.com.

OREGON

YAMHILL — The annual Expositor’s Seminar has a simple goal: bring first-class teaching of Scripture and methods of preaching to the Pacific Northwest.

“Since its beginning, organizers have conducted the Expositor’s Seminar in the belief that solid biblical

preaching and teaching is a foundation for healthy congregations,” said Mark Johnson, minister for the Olympia Church of Christ in Washington state.

Until its closing in 2008, Cascade College directed the seminar. Since then, the seminar has moved to Camp Yamhill with financial

SPOTLIGHT**‘Success Before Sex’**

SEWELL, N.J. — In high school, Sharnice Jones won a statewide contest with an essay she wrote encouraging teenage girls to delay sexual relationships and focus on their futures.

Fellow members of Jones’ home congregation — the Pitman Church of Christ — encouraged her to publish the essay in book form. “Success Before Sex” is now available at Amazon.com.

“The adults around Sharnice saw immense value in having a teenager

write for other teenagers about these very sensitive topics,” said Katherine Cooper, wife of Pitman minister Dan Cooper.

Jones, now 18 and a pre-med major at Drew University, also has started a not-for-profit organization designed to empower teen girls.

It’s called “Success 1st!” “God wants us to wait until marriage to have sex,” Jones said. “Understanding that not everyone is going to believe this is pivotal to get a message across.”

To read an expanded interview, see www.christianchronicle.org/blog and search for “Sharnice Jones.”

**Jones**

support from the Northwest Endowment Fund.

The next seminar will be Jan. 28-30 and feature speakers Kevin Youngblood and Craig Altrack.

For more information, contact Jay Hawkins at (208) 459-2281 or jayhawkins05@gmail.com or Johnson at (360) 528-1850 or yellowstone80@comcast.net.

By outward appearances — her size 62 dress notwithstanding — Carlee Doggan was on fire for the Lord.

She faithfully attended every worship assembly. She taught a Bible class. She served on church committees and traveled to gospel meetings and crusades.

"I brought souls to Christ and even helped souls already in the body stay," said Doggan, a member of the Monroe Street Church of Christ in Chicago. "Yet I was getting bigger and bigger physically and more estranged from my King."

"I was not following my own advice," she added. "I had once stated in a church that I hated a liar and a hypocrite, and I was the biggest one I knew." Quite literally.

She weighed 600 pounds.

Doggan's story of overcoming an eating addiction provides an extreme example of a challenge faced by many Americans — including Christians.

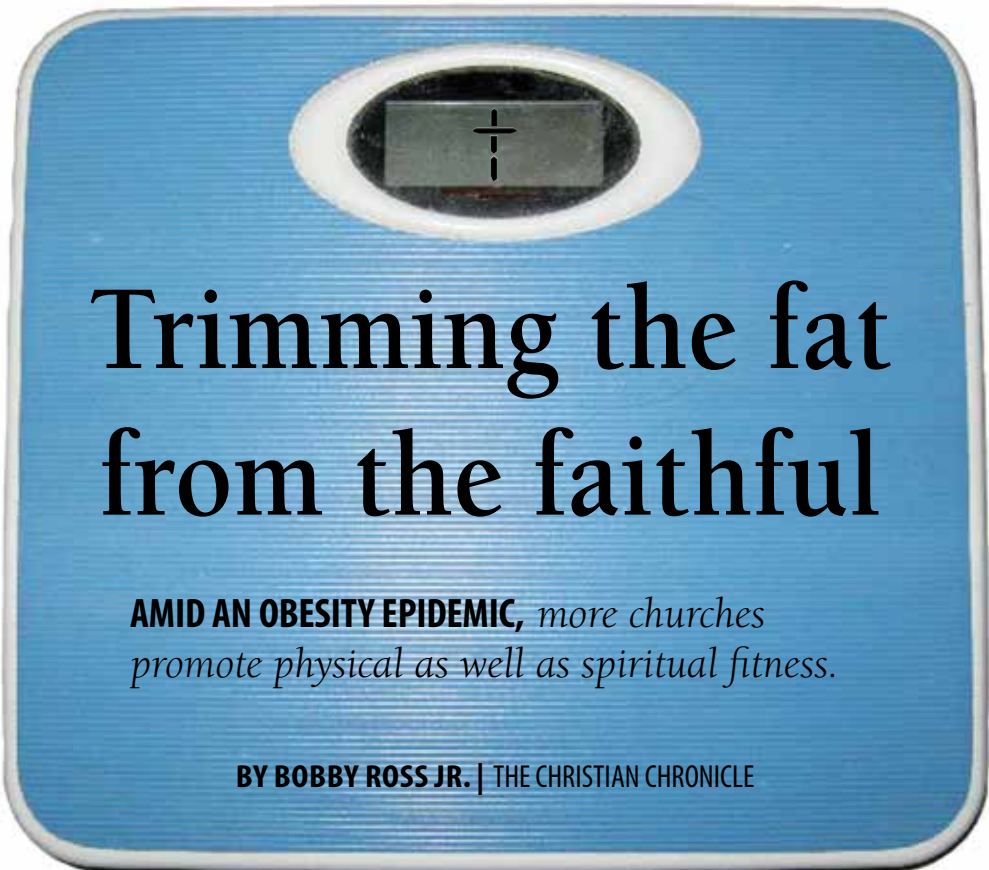
Even as medical advances allow people to live longer, unhealthy behavior and preventable illness threaten quality of life, according to the 2012 America's Health Rankings.

Nearly 28 percent of the population is obese, and more than 26 percent get no exercise, according to the study of the nation's health, published jointly by the United Health Foundation, the American Public Health Association and the Partnership for Prevention.

A separate study by Northwestern University linked religion to obesity in young adults.

According to the 2011 study, young adults who frequently attend religious activities are 50 percent more likely to become obese by middle age than young adults with no religious involvement.

"It's possible that getting together once a week and associating good works and happiness with eating unhealthy foods could lead to the development of habits that are associated with greater body weight and obesity," said Matthew



Feinstein, the Northwestern study's lead investigator.

STEPPING OUT IN FAITH

To help combat the nation's obesity epidemic, an increasing number of Churches of Christ are introducing programs and ministries to promote

physical as well as spiritual health, leaders told *The Christian Chronicle*.

"I think we are getting better at this, but we still have a long way to go," said Kyle Vath, a deacon for the Central Church of Christ

in Cincinnati who works with a non-denominational Christian health center.

"The poor often are the most unhealthy," Vath said. "They have poor access to care, cheap foods are often least healthy, and many work two and

three jobs and have little time to exercise. We, as the church, need to step in and take care of the poor and their health."

The Sylvan Nook Church of Christ in Richmond, Ind., hosts a fitness walk through its neighborhood on Sunday afternoons. Members also walk on Tuesday nights and ride bicycles on Thursday nights.

"The reason we chose to promote walking was it allowed all ages and fitness levels to participate," minister Mike Ballard said.

"The fitness walks have been a good way for our members to improve their spiritual health," he added. "During the walks, we are able to encourage and minister to one another."

Rachel Curtis, a graduate of Lubbock Christian University in Texas, started a program called P31 Fitness, tied to the woman of noble character described in Proverbs 31.

"I think every woman struggles with weight, eating, self-image and more," said Curtis, who recently moved to Trenton, Texas, and is looking for a church home. "We developed this program to help women see themselves as God created (them) and to make the most of their health each day."

Through a program called "Fit for the King," members of the Collegieside Church of Christ in Cookeville, Tenn., meet for exercise and Bible study.

Chip Pugh, a Collegieside member and head strength and conditioning coach for Tennessee Tech University, oversees the CrossFit Faith program.

"It is our goal to use these sessions for evangelism and in serving young people as a mentoring opportunity," said Pugh, a former Ohio University offensive lineman.

BODY AND SOUL

At the Memorial Road Church of Christ in Oklahoma City, Heather Bowlan teaches a Body and Soul ladies' fitness class, mixing spirituality and sweat.

"I do not believe physical and spiritual fitness are exclusive of one another," Bowlan said. "If our bodies are God's temple, are we not required then to do what we can to take care of them on Earth? If we are in better physical shape, we can do the Lord's work better than we could if we were sedentary."

Zina DiTonno, a member of the Newark Church of Christ in Delaware, said she has a passion for health and fitness "God's way."

A graduate of Lipscomb University in Nashville, Tenn., she serves as a personal trainer and encourages physical activities such as yoga.

"Some people have an issue with the word 'yoga,'" DiTonno said, "but the way I use the name is to refer to a style or type of exercise, not a New Age

religious practice. I want there to be no mistaking that I pray to the one true God and acknowledge Jesus and the Holy Spirit in my life."

She's working on a manual titled "Inside Out Bible Health," touting a worshipful approach to fitness, nutrition and wellness.

"I believe that even eating and exercise, if done to the glory of our heavenly father, is a form of worship," she said.

A WEIGHT-LOSS JOURNEY WITH GOD

Bread. Pasta. Chocolate. Soda pop. All of the above ranked high on Carlee Doggan's list of favorites as she consumed six meals a day.

In 1989, at age 40, she went to lunch with her mother and ordered a



Carlee Doggan, left, once weighed 600 pounds. Doggan, right, has relied on God to help her lose weight. She's pictured at 167 pounds but was down to 155 at her latest weigh-in.



PHOTO PROVIDED BY CARLEE DOGGAN

Double Whopper, super-size fries and a Diet Coke.

After finishing the meal, Doggan recalls looking her mother in the eyes and remarking, "I just don't seem to be able to lose any weight. It seems like everything I eat sticks to me."

"If I were you, Carlee, I just wouldn't eat anything to see if I could lose something," her mom replied.

Through a series of weight-loss programs and a 40-day fast, Doggan figured out how to drop pounds — 100 here, 75 there.

However, she said, her weight yo-yoed up and down for years until she finally committed herself fully to God.

At the same time, she discovered the power of sharing her successes and trials with a group of confidantes, whose identities she protects.

"My support group helps me focus on my quest to get closer to God," said Doggan, 63. "It allows me to express

myself when I need to, and I can call someone when a crisis occurs.

"I ask God for everything now, and I wait until he gives me the answer," she said. "I am not my own. I don't know what is best for me. He is directing my path, and I move out of his way. I love him so hard at times that it scares me."

Now, she limits herself to three meals a day, rations meat servings and eats salads. She wears a size 8 blouse and size 12 pants.

On her latest weigh-in day, Doggan came in at 155 pounds.

In a recent three-part seminar, she shared her story at the Monroe Street church.

She's producing a weight-loss journal/workbook called "Freely Eat, A Gift From God."

"My ministry is to let God's people know and the world know," Doggan said, "that if we humble ourselves before him, he can lift any challenge we are having off of us."

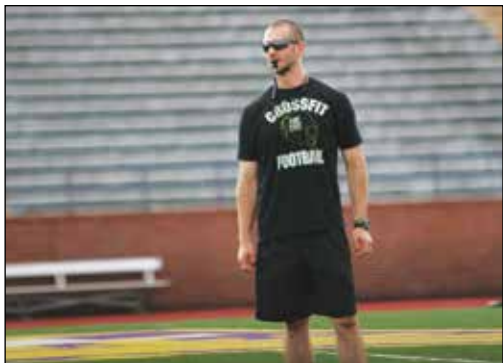


PHOTO PROVIDED BY CHIP PUGH

Collegeside church member Chip Pugh serves as head strength and conditioning coach at Tennessee Tech University in Cookeville, Tenn.



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Children's homes expand services

BY BOBBY ROSS JR. | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

CLAREMORE, Okla.

On pastureland overlooking a neighbor's grazing cows, Hope Harbor Children's Home cares for a dozen boys and girls in two large, modern group homes.

Founded in the aftermath of World War II, the former Turley Children's Home — which relies on financial support and food pantry donations from Churches of Christ — has provided residential care for 65 years.

But like many Christian children's homes across the nation, Hope Harbor has expanded beyond simply housing, feeding and educating at-risk young people on its northeast Oklahoma campus.

Embracing new opportunities to serve, Hope Harbor operates an off-site family counseling center, organizes parent training seminars at churches and even goes inside jails and prisons to teach inmates how to be better fathers and mothers.

"Our mission is to restore hope and to equip children and families for lives of meaning and purpose," said Ralph Richardson, Hope Harbor's executive director. "Everything that we're doing still fits within that mission."

Arms of Hope — formed with the 2009 consolidation of Medina Children's Home and Boles Children's Home, both in Texas — still houses at-risk children and single mothers and their babies in group homes.

But the Texas-based nonprofit also sponsors a sports ministry program in inner-city San Antonio, Houston and Dallas.

And, in partnership with the Highland Oaks Church of Christ in Dallas, Arms of



WES KANE

Basic household chores help prepare residents of Hope Harbor Children's Home for responsibilities later in life.

Hope's family outreach ministry helps indigent families meet physical, emotional and spiritual needs.

"By having a variety of programs and geographic diversity, Arms of Hope is truly able to put a dent in the homeless and hurting population," said Troy Robertson, chief operating officer.

"Our driving force behind the change was simple," Robertson added. "How do we use the financial blessings ... to share the Gospel of Christ with the most people while still making a meaningful difference in their lives?"

DOLLARS AND REGULATIONS

High costs of operating group homes, particularly in poor economic times, have contributed to the national trend, children's home administrators told *The Christian Chronicle*.

At the same time, group homes have come under fire in some states, as child welfare officials emphasize family reunification and frown on residential care.

"The recession pointed out that group care for children is one of the most expensive forms of care," said Ray Crowder, executive director of Sunny Glen Children's Home in San Benito, Texas. "In addition, every child removed or placed outside of the home suffers a trauma with the separation."

For homes once focused entirely on residential care, Crowder said, diversification of services not only appeals to a wider donor base but also provides "more possibilities for excellence in care to the children and families."

As Kenny Holton, executive director of Raintree Village children's home in Valdosta, Ga., puts it, "Group homes like ours are having to provide a more diverse continuum of services in order to survive and serve."

Robert Kimberly, executive director of Southeastern Children's Home in Duncan, S.C., sees serving families through community-based counseling centers as an extension of the home's ministry.

However, he voices concern

about the pressure to reunite families without regard for the circumstances.

"In many states, such as South Carolina, I believe children are being left in unsafe homes in the name of keeping families together," Kimberly said.

STRETCHING LIMITED FUNDS

In the last year, Hope Harbor provided residential care to 21 children.

But the home helped more than 2,000 individuals through its other services.

"If we want to reach literally thousands of kids, the money is not there to establish children's homes for 2,000 kids," Richardson said. "But for a relatively small amount of funds, you can look and find other, additional ways to reach out."

Hope Harbor has experienced a steady decline in church contributions during the recession and was forced to lay off some employees, he said.

To help with funding, the home opened a thrift store in downtown Claremore. At the store, most donated clothing

items sell for \$1 each. The Blue Starr Church of Christ hosts Hope Harbor's off-site counselor, James Baumgardner.

Bill Hamrick, a longtime preacher and former Hope Harbor director, teaches parenting classes at the Tulsa County jail and a state prison in Hominy, Okla.

Misty Lemons, 36, said she was in jail on credit card fraud and burglary charges when she met Hamrick.

Lemons blames a drug addiction — "meth, cocaine, speed" — for taking her away from her young daughters and landing her in prison. As a result of meeting Hamrick, she was baptized and turned her life around.

"He's like a grandfather to me," she said of Hamrick. "He's been a real blessing in my life."

Lemons said she did not grow up in a religious family: "I didn't know anything about Jesus or God or that there was a way for me to be forgiven.

I just held all this darkness and hatred. I had been so jaded by my upbringing and just the cards that life had dealt me."

But now she's sober and working in the oil business. She and her husband are back together. She's reunited with her children. And she's a regular Sunday worshiper.

She credits God — and Hope Harbor.

"There's just such a huge need for education and assistance with parenting," Lemons said. "It's just hard, and it's not something that comes easily for some people.

"What they're doing is definitely a good thing, and I feel blessed that we came in touch — very blessed."



Lemons



Richardson

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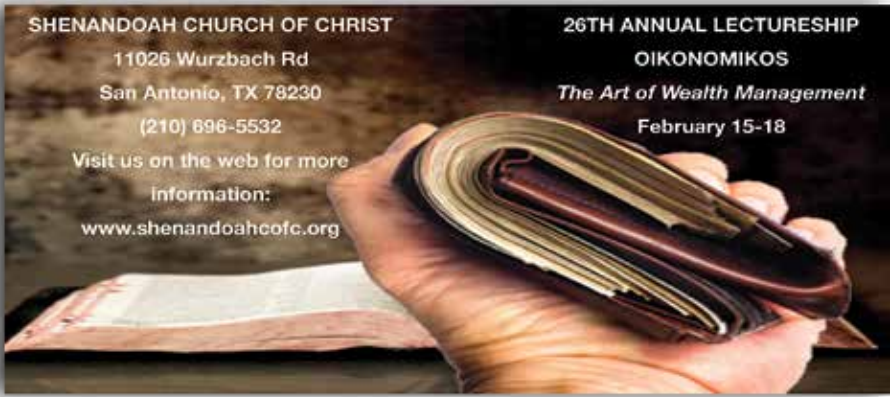
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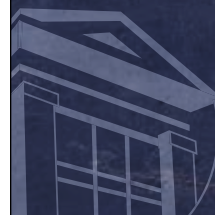
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DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

SANTO DOMINGO — Christians from across North and South America gathered in this Caribbean nation, which shares the island of Hispaniola with Haiti, for the 49th Pan American Lectureship.

Nearly 2,000 Christians from the Santo Domingo area gathered with lectureship participants for Sunday worship.

“What a wonderful way to have your spiritual battery recharged,” said Allen Dutton Jr., a missionary in Campinas, Brazil.

FRANCE

LYON — The Church of Christ in Lyon hosted a screening of “Courageux” (“Courageous”). The popular Christian film tackles the importance of fathering.

The church hosted a time of discussion and refreshments after the film.

“The next day I did a follow-up sermon on the resolutions made in the movie about their responsibilities as fathers,” missionary Arlin Hendrix said.

INDIA

BONGAIGAON — This city and several others in the northeastern state of Assam endured severe flooding in mid-2012. Churches of Christ across southern India responded, collecting money and relief supplies for the victims.

Four ministers distributed the aid, which included rice, flour, dhal (lentils), sugar, cooking oil, soap, toothpaste and tea through Churches of Christ in Assam.

The supplies aided 217 families, said David Martin, a minister in Chennai, India.

ISRAEL

JERUSALEM — Fear and uncertainty are part of daily life for Arabs and Jews in this Middle Eastern nation, said Joseph Shulam, a Christian minister.

Fighting between the Israeli military and Islamist groups in the Gaza Strip has claimed lives. Recently, the United Nations General Assembly voted to formally recognize Palestine as a nonmember observer state. Some applauded the vote while others, including U.S. officials, called it detrimental to the peace process.

Shulam asked Christians worldwide to pray for peace in the troubled region. His ministry, Netivyah, is supported by Churches of Christ.



GARY GARDNER

Bear hugs bring smiles to Angels in Mexico

A girl at Ciudad de Angeles (City of Angels) in Cozumel, Mexico, hugs a gift she received from a sponsor. The nonprofit, associated with Churches of Christ, provides a home for children who are orphaned, abandoned or abused. Churches in Georgia, Alabama, North Carolina, Texas and Minnesota are “anchor congregations” for the work. For more information, see ciudaddeangeles.org.

LIBERIA

GANTA — Peace has prevailed in this West African nation, nearly 10 years since the end of a decades-long civil war, minister David Kolleh said.



Alvarez

Churches of Christ in the country’s rural communities are taking advantage of the nation’s stability, gathering in one village twice per year for fellowship, door-knocking and evangelism.

About 150 church members representing a dozen congregations gathered in the village of Ganta to help the small church there reach its community with the

Gospel. The campaign resulted in three baptisms and many new contacts, said Kolleh, who preaches for the Iron Gate Church of Christ in Gbarnga, Liberia.

NETHERLANDS ANTILLES

SABA AND STATIA — Church members are working to win souls and plant churches on these islands in the Caribbean, according to Bren White, director of Operation French World, a ministry of the Laurel Church of Christ in Maryland.

Marlon Lawrie, minister for the Phillipsburg, St. Marten, Church of Christ, and his wife, Subrena, are partnering with the ministry in the work, White said, as are students from Lipscomb University in Nashville, Tenn.

SPOTLIGHT

Bountiful Benin

COTONOU, Benin — Twenty years ago, George Akpabli, a native of Ghana, moved to this former French colony in West Africa to spread the Gospel.

On a recent Sunday, more than 700 people gathered in a pavilion to hear Akpabli preach about the past two decades of ministry.

The gathering was part of a celebration, spread over two weeks, during which church members in Benin prayed, fasted and hosted an evangelistic seminar. Church members produced TV commercials and did interviews with local media to promote the events.

More than 100 church leaders met on the campus of the Bible Training Center in Cotonou to reflect on the past and make plans for the future.

For Akpabli, who preaches and oversees the training center, the highlight of the celebration coincided with a public holiday in Benin, when police close the roads to vehicles. On the streets, church members “marched, drove, sang, preached and made as much noise as we could in the city,” Akpabli said.

“The temperature was 85 degrees with high humidity,” Akpabli said, “but the brethren did not feel it. We provided vehicles for those who could not walk, but they would not use them. ... They were running to keep up with the police escort. With megaphones, they kept preaching.”

The church members distributed 10,000 gospel tracts during the march.



Akpabli



PHOTO PROVIDED BY GEORGE AKPABLI

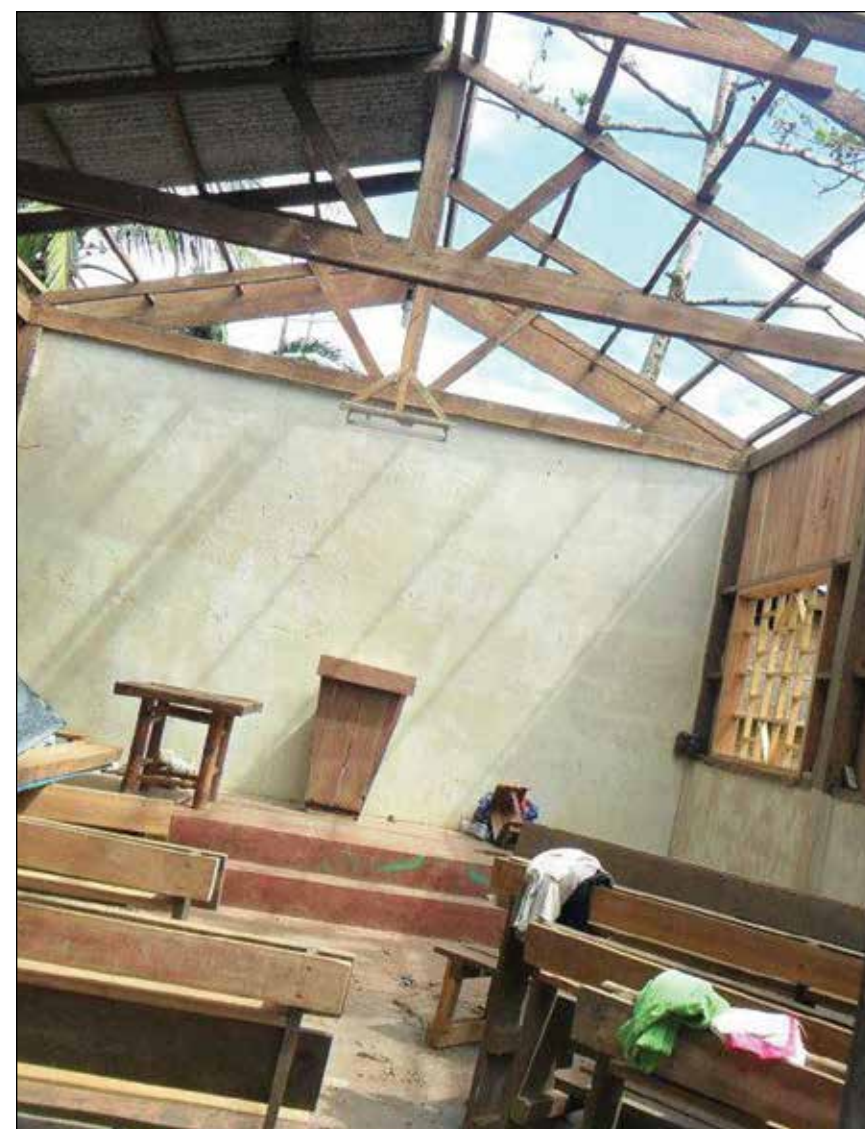
Church members wear green shirts and hats as they celebrate 20 years of “les Églises du Christ” (the Churches of Christ) in Benin.



The typhoon left 80,000 people homeless.

Boys rest and eat lunch in the middle of a banana plantation that was leveled by the storm.

Children beg for donations in Mindanao.



Light from the heavens pours into the auditorium of a church building in the Compostella Valley. Winds of nearly 100 mph tore away the building's roof.

Disaster strikes Philippines

BY ERIK TRYGGESTAD | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

Pounded by tsunamis, typhoons and floods, the islands of the Philippines rank third on a list of the world's most disaster-prone countries, behind the South Pacific nations of Tonga and Vanuatu, according to a recent study by environmental groups.

It's "a distinction we do not cherish," said Filipino Christian Chito Cusi, "but something that we ... have to live with."

The latest disaster, Typhoon Bopha, swept through the island of Mindanao, which rarely experiences such storms.

The typhoon killed 902 people, with an additional 934 missing, according to the Philippines' government. The storm left nearly 80,000 homeless.

"You can smell death as you walk the mud-covered streets of Compostella Valley," Christians who surveyed the damage told Cusi, who coordinates MARCH for Christ.

The ministry, comprised of relief and medical workers from Churches of Christ in the Philippines, sent funds to the communities of Trento and Veruela, where six Churches of Christ and about 200 members were affected by the storm. The ministry also sent funds to a survey team led by Alan Gesulga.

A member of the team, Mercyditia

Naparuta, lost both of her parents in a landslide on the island of Leyte about seven years ago, said Salvador Cariaga, a church member who works with Shepherd's Hill International, another church-supported nonprofit.

Cariaga traveled to Mindanao to assess needs and distribute aid. The island's poverty and a lack of preparation for the storm "made this calamity even more of a disaster," he said.

"I would like to focus on giving seeds and teaching livelihood," Cariaga said. "The soil here is among the best in the world. There is no reason why people have to be poor."

As church members respond to disasters in the Philippines, those they help come to know Christ, Cusi said.

Recently, at an evangelism workshop in the country's capital, Manila, Christians who were baptized after natural disasters in the past three years shared their stories.

"One man said he was touched when brethren from the Church of Christ waded through floodwaters to give aid ... something his own blood relatives did not do," Cusi said. "Responding and being there in people's time of need opens doors."

FOR MORE INFORMATION, see www.shepherdshill.org. Search for "MARCH for Christ" at facebook.com.



PHOTOS PROVIDED BY SALVADOR CARIAGA

The meeting place of a Church of Christ in Trento, Philippines, was destroyed.

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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 postions. **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**
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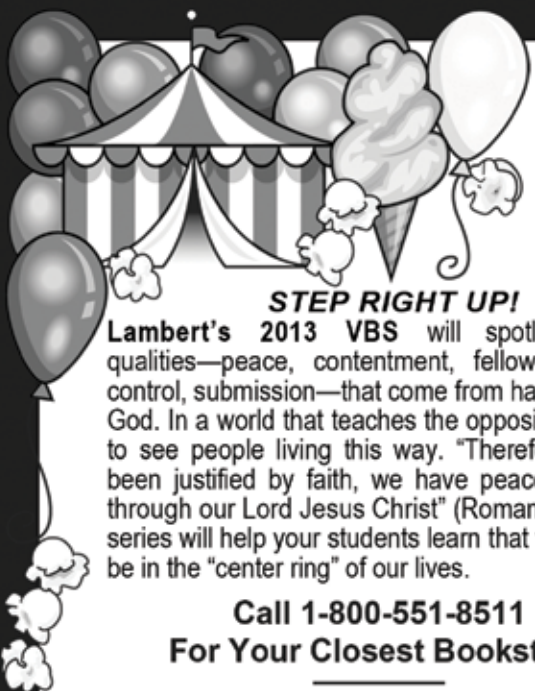
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BALTIMORE

Nobody realized Cliff Holladay was in trouble. But when the ocean waves pulled back, the minister was lying unconscious at the edge of the water.

Bystanders and medical personnel rushed into action to save his life. His wife and son looked on, not yet knowing that he was paralyzed.

Clear blue skies and warm water welcomed Holladay and his family to the beach in Ocean City, Md. The minister for the Westside Church of Christ in Windsor Mill, just outside Baltimore, was enjoying a short vacation with his wife, Becky, and 11-year-old son, Caleb.

"Caleb and Cliff were both riding the waves in" on boogie boards, Becky Holladay said. She watched them closely, aware of the danger posed by riptides along the Atlantic coast. "I saw Cliff come in on one wave, and he got up and was smiling," she said. "He went back out and caught the next wave." It was just after 4 p.m.

No one saw what happened next, but doctors at Baltimore's R. Adams Cowley Shock Trauma Center believe that the minister's head went into the sand in shallow water as the wave pushed his body, cracking his second vertebrae and severing his spinal cord.

"He was being very safe about what he was doing," said Alan Deckard, an elder at the Westside church. But, in a split second, Cliff Holladay's life changed.

Earlier that summer, the minister had preached through Ecclesiastes. In one of the final sermons he preached before the



Waves from the Atlantic crest near the shore in Ocean City, Md., where minister Cliff Holladay was paralyzed.

TEX JOBE, U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS, VIA WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

'God is already using him'

JUST MONTHS AFTER a devastating injury, a minister's family finds blessings in his time of suffering.

BY MICHAEL L. RAY | FOR THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

accident, he said, "Don't take life for granted," Deckard recalled.

"Solomon tells us to enjoy the time that God has given us but also recognize that within that joy there is also darkness. There is suffering," the minister said.

At the beach, a group of vacationers pulled Cliff Holladay out of the water and started CPR. The ambulance crew trans-

ferred him to a helicopter that flew him to the trauma center.

By the time Becky Holladay had driven the three hours to the Baltimore hospital, word of the accident had spread throughout the 100-member congregation.

Two elders and other church members were at the hospital before she arrived.

Cliff Holladay's injury left him unable to move his arms or legs. He couldn't breathe without assistance — first from a ventilator and later from a device that

stimulates his diaphragm.

Other church members and area ministers have preached for the congregation in the months since the accident. In a way, the misfortune has helped the church accomplish one of Cliff Holladay's longtime goals.

"Cliff was always interested in unity and trying to help us find ways to work together," said elder Morris Wilson. The minister had helped organize meetings and discussions aimed at building unity and fellowship among area churches.

In the U.S., spinal cord injuries happen once every 82 minutes, according to the National Spinal Cord Injury Statistical Center. About 16 percent of those injuries result in quadriplegia. Medical expenses average over \$1 million the first year.

Cliff Holladay's medical expenses likely will be more than \$2.5 million over the course of his life. While the family has health and disability insurance, they anticipate significant expenses that their insurance won't cover, including having to remodel their home to accommodate a wheelchair.

The Westside church has responded "with overwhelming love," Becky said. The church has paid the minister's salary but will have to stop when it hires a new minister. The church had a special contribution to help the Holladays, as have other area congregations.

The Westside church started a fund to assist the Holladays, but "they need more than just money," said elder John Hunt. He suggested notes or words of encouragement from others who were in similar circumstances would be appreciated.

Months after the accident, Cliff Holladay was moved to

a rehabilitation facility, but recently he had to be returned to the intensive care unit.

Despite the setback, his wife said the minister "is truly putting things in God's hands."

Before the accident, he was a physically fit and active 61-year-old. He hiked, hunted and loved playing with his son.

"He can't do those things anymore," Becky Holladay said. "The things he can do are all going to be from his head. He can still preach with technology. He can use a voice-activated computer. He can look up Scripture with his software."

But that's all in the future.

"We'll have to figure out how to get that done," his wife said. "Cliff's biggest thing right now is he wants to preach again."

The family is leaning on God, Becky Holladay said, and they see evidence that those around them — neighbors and family — also are learning to trust God.

"I've told Cliff this, and he just smiles. It makes him really happy," she said. "So God is already using him."

Andre White, a church member who has preached in Cliff Holladay's absence, said he's confident that God has a plan.

"I know he is passionate about his ministry," White said of the minister. "I know this isn't going to keep him down."

FOR MORE INFORMATION on the Cliff Holladay Fund, contact the Westside Church of Christ, 7009 Johnny Cake Road, Windsor Mill, MD 21244.



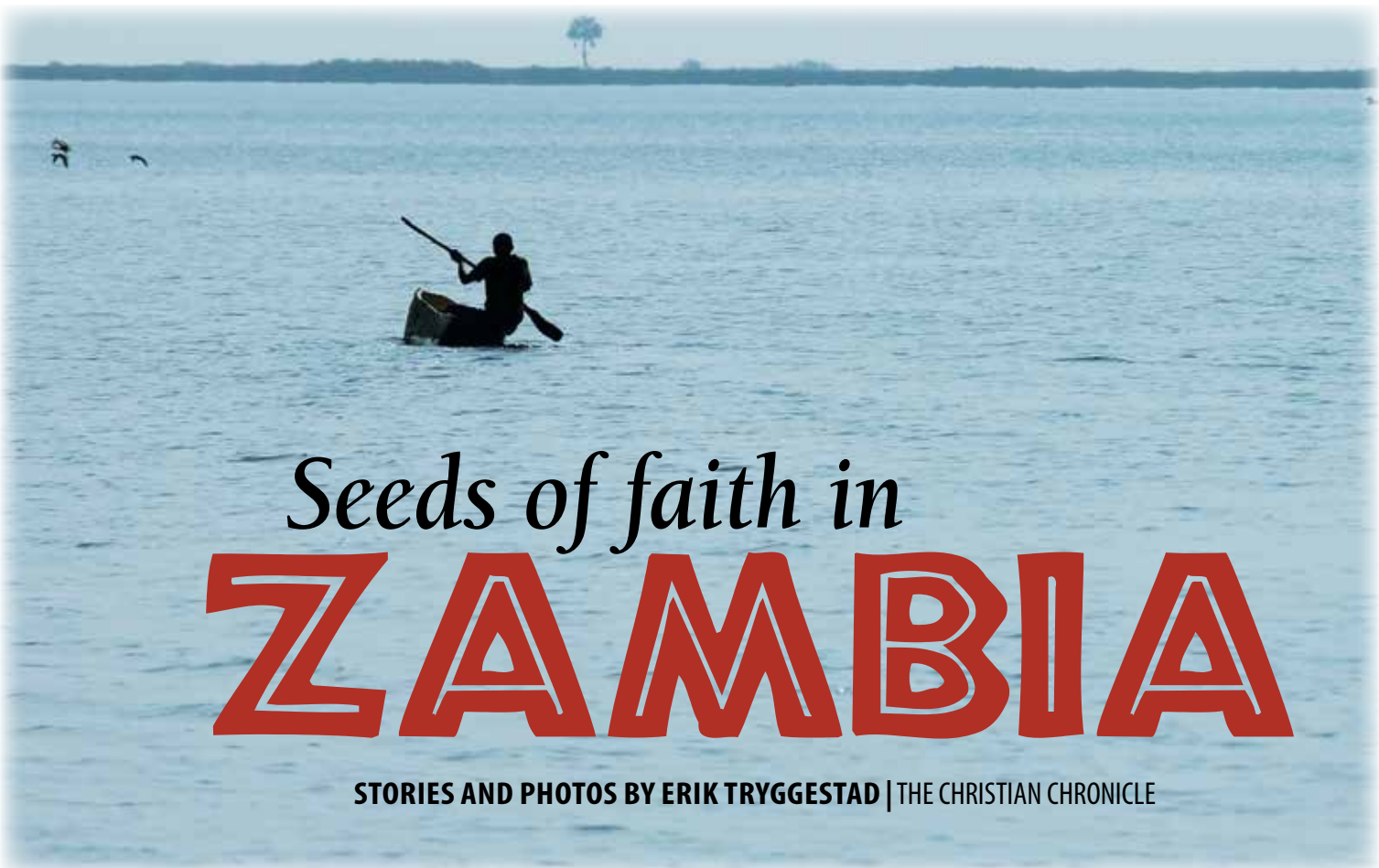
PHOTO PROVIDED

Cliff Holladay and his son, Caleb, enjoy a paddle boat ride near Ocean City, Md., hours before the accident.



PHOTO PROVIDED

Baltimore minister Cliff Holladay and his wife, Becky, before the accident.



Seeds of faith in ZAMBIA

STORIES AND PHOTOS BY ERIK TRYGGESTAD | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

A Zambian paddles a small fishing boat in a lake near Lusaka, Zambia. Over-fishing in the lake has increased the need for high-yield farming.

CHILANGA, Zambia

At Mapepe Bible College, every knee bows, every tongue confesses, and every hand gets shaken.

Early on a Sunday morning, the college's students sing and spin, high-fiving each other in time with a rhythmic, a cappella hymn of praise.

After services, the students participate in a tradition found in Churches of Christ large and small, urban and rural, across this southern African nation.

One by one, they exit the building and line up along its brick walls, shaking the hand of every worshiper that follows.

Person-to-person contact has defined Churches of Christ in this nation of 13.4 million souls, once known as Northern Rhodesia. In the early 1900s, Peter Masiya, a native of neighboring Malawi, moved to Southern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) to work for John Sheriff, a Christian stone mason from New Zealand.

One night Sheriff found Masiya reading his Bible and offered to study it with him. Masiya became a student in a preacher-training school operated by Sheriff, who later sent the African Christian to plant churches in Northern

Rhodesia. Missionaries from the U.S. followed, including Alvin Hobby, Dow Merritt and W.N. Short. They planted churches and Christian schools in Sinde, Kalomo and Kabanga.

When the country gained independence from Britain in 1964, Churches of Christ operated 26 primary schools. The new government asked church members at Namwianga Mission in Kalomo to build and operate a secondary school.

By 1980, Zambia had 211 Churches of Christ, according to workers at Namwianga. In the next decade, Americans turned over much of the work to Zambian evangelists. Churches experienced rapid growth. Now the country is home to about 1,500 congregations.

"The Zambians are a zealous people ... eager to share the Gospel with their fellow man," said Roy Merritt, a missionary who grew up in Zambia.

Zambian Christians have transitioned from students to teachers. In 2007,

Harding University in Searcy, Ark., launched a study abroad program at Kalomo. Twenty-six students returned to the U.S. recently after learning from Zambian church leaders for six weeks.

The country needs more leaders, said Wellington Mwanza, a native Zambian working as a missionary in the country's eastern province.

"The opportunities for evangelism in Zambia are endless," Mwanza said.

The 50 students at Mapepe Bible College are learning ministry and vocational skills, including farming.

"We are not a preacher-training school," said missionary David French, who oversees the work. "We're trying to train church leaders and disciple-makers."

Dominic Kaoma, a father of seven who came to the college from Zambia's northern Luapula province, said he's eager to pass on what he's learned as a student and to plant new churches.

"I want to be a part of this work that is of God," he said. "The harvest is plentiful, but the planters are few."



Thomas Simubali shows off a crop of cabbages at the Chanyanga Community Garden. He says showing villagers how to farm effectively results in opportunities to share the Gospel.

Giant cabbages stand in rows in the Chanyanga Community Garden.

To Thomas Simubali, they are more than a means of feeding hungry people. They are a means of spreading the Gospel.

Simubali, director of outreach for Mapepe Bible College, travels to communities surrounding the Zambian capital, Lusaka, and asks villagers how many grow enough food to sustain themselves.

In most places, 15 percent or less raise their hands, he says.

It frustrates Simubali. "If God has given us enough land and rain, God will give us enough food," he says.

A large lake near Chanyanga used to provide sustenance, but it has been over-fished, Simubali says. He helped the community plant the garden to show the value of drip irrigation, a farming

method that uses minimal water. Healing Hands International, a church-supported ministry, provided instruction and equipment. The effort, Zambia Agricultural Ministry, is supported by the Forsythe Church of Christ in Monroe, La.

Zambians have seen the fruits — and vegetables — of their labor. One villager, Moses Mulenga, has planted a similar garden nearby. He's feeding his family and selling his excess onions and carrots.

"This makes me very grateful," Mulenga says.

In Zambia, "the days when a missionary can walk into a village, preach and baptize ... I think those days are over," Simubali says. "Now we need to engage the community, build relationships."

When Zambians see a Christian working to improve their lives, "I've earned my right to be heard."

Thomas Simubali



Klaus Mueller teaches the value of farming and marketing at a seminar for church leaders.

Klaus Mueller

Let's face it, farming is one of the most biblical occupations we have," Klaus Mueller tells a room full of African Christians at a ministry conference.

The German-born believer is evangelical about good agriculture — not only growing bountiful crops but pricing and marketing them with savvy.

A native of Augsburg in Germany's Bavaria state, he moved to Zambia with his wife, Christiane, in 1979.

His parents joined the couple in 1996. Mueller's father raised funds to build a primary school. Mueller took up farming and now directs the Twin Fountains Agriculture Training Institute near Namwianga Mission.

"He is teaching Zambians to farm, to raise cattle and chickens and to serve the Lord," said Evertt Huffard, dean of the Harding School of Theology in Memphis, Tenn., who recently taught in Harding University's Zambia program.

In 2011, Mueller and his family added a carpentry workshop to the primary school to teach vocational skills.

Despite widespread poverty in Zambia, unsold crops often sit on roadsides and rot. Mueller urges his students to practice competitive pricing — to feed those in need and maximize their profits.

Good agriculture isn't limited to the countryside, he adds. Christians in Lusaka and other booming African capitals can grow flowers in small urban gardens, boosting their income and their ability to spread the Gospel.

"Don't complain about the market being flooded," he says. "Be better competitors."

Shepherd and Ruhtt Mbumwae

While other Christians encourage Zambians to improve their crops, Shepherd Mbumwae and his wife, Ruhtt, encourage them to improve their physical and spiritual lives.

Shepherd Mbumwae is hospital administrator for Namwianga Mission. Each year the ministry hosts a large-scale medical campaign.

In 2012, the mission included 110 volunteers from North America and more than 250 volunteers from Africa. The medical team conducted six days of clinics and treated 20,220 patients.

Mbumwae met his future wife in 1993, while attending Abilene Christian University in Texas on an academic scholarship. Ruhtt, a native of the South American nation of Peru, came to ACU on a track scholarship and was baptized there.

In 1996, Ruhtt had the opportunity to

compete for her home country in the Olympics in Atlanta. Instead, she moved to Zambia and married.

Here, she's helped establish at least 15 schools for children, including those in underserved communities.

In 1998 the couple found a community of blind people huddled near a roadside, abandoned with no shelter or food. They mobilized students at Namwianga's George Benson Christian College to build housing and start a church.

Now the community has a school that serves more than 400 area children.

The Mbumwaes stress the need for Zambian Christians to find ways to address the challenges they face without relying on donations and charity from overseas.

"It's time for people to start doing their own for God," Ruhtt Mbumwae says.



Shepherd and Ruhtt Mbumwae grew up on two continents — South America and Africa. They live in Kalomo, Zambia, and work for Namwianga Mission. They have three children.



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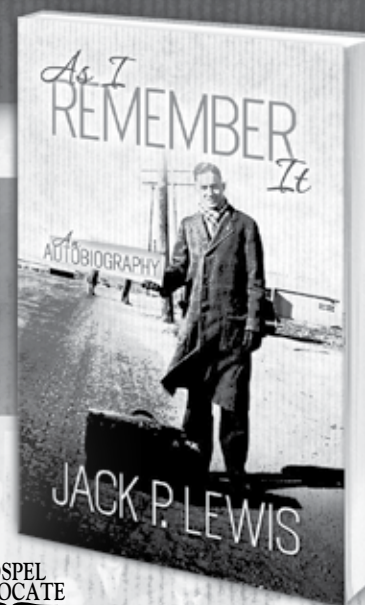
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BY LYNN McMILLON | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

The world is Haley Chrisman's classroom. The 22-year-old Freed-Hardeman University education major has taught students from Henderson, Tenn., to the Central European nation of Romania. She learned Spanish to be able to talk to children on mission trips to Costa Rica and the Dominican Republic.

She's part of a blended family — one of six siblings — and was baptized at age 10. In high school she served as regional state president of Future Business Leaders of America. At Freed-Hardeman she has served as president of the Student Teacher Educator Association and sophomore class representative to the student government. She has served as a judge on a peer teen court and directed school plays.

After graduation, she wants to continue ministering to children — at home and abroad. She plans to earn a master's and doctorate in education to teach at the university level.

"Overall, I hope to live my life in a way that brings others to Christ by following my example," says Chrisman, whose home congregation is the Park Avenue Church of Christ in Memphis, Tenn.

What was it like growing up in a blended family?

I have two older sisters and three younger brothers — with most of us being around a year apart.

After our parents got married, they told us that we could choose to be siblings or not. We chose to be siblings. These are some of the things I learned:

- Love is a decision.
- You can love someone even if you don't like them.
- You don't have to be related by blood to be family.
- Laughter and tears are close kin.
- When there is chaos in the family, God is still in control.
- You can have an argument and still love someone.
- Life is not always fair.
- The world doesn't revolve around me.
- Family "disasters" can make humorous stories.

With our blended family, we had a lot more people to love and argue with. We depend on each other spiritually. I am so blessed to be from such a loving and supportive large family.



KRISTY MONTAGUE

Haley Chrisman is in her senior year at Freed-Hardeman University in Henderson, Tenn.

A conversation with Haley Chrisman

22-YEAR-OLD TEACHER *discusses life in a blended family and faith like a child*

Why is educating others your passion?

For as long as I can remember, I have loved learning. I am deeply encouraged by issues that challenge our world and drawn to the dilemmas and potentials of the young people who come into class each day.

I attempt to live in a way that exemplifies Christ so my students know I am a Christian without my saying anything.

One day at school, one of my students said that no one cared about him. Another student quickly responded, "Ms. Haley cares because she is a Christian." Since then, I continually remember that my passion is to teach everyone that is around me about Jesus Christ, whether by word or example.

Tell us a touching experience you have had.

On my first mission trip to the Dominican Republic in the summer of 2011, we were unsure how receptive the children would be to Vacation Bible School because it had never been done there

before. Our second day, our mission team had car trouble, so we got to the church building late. All of the children turned around as the team walked into the building and gave us a standing ovation. Some of the children told me that they were worried that we were not going to return. We do not always realize the impact we have on others.

Later, we learned many of the parents of the VBS students returned with their children after we left and many had Bible studies and became Christians.

Does ministry provide a real opportunity to lead children and families to Jesus?

I truly believe that ministry leads families and children to Jesus. "Train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old he will not depart from it."

My goal of any ministry I participate in is to teach children and adults about God's word. I fell in love with ministry because it provides an opportunity to help others come to Christ and become more interested in developing their own

faith. Ministry can also help families come together as they develop spiritually.

My life's goal is to get to heaven and bring as many people as I can with me. The only way I can bring people with me is by teaching them the Gospel no matter what age they are. Many times that means just being an example.

What attracts you to impoverished countries?

People in developing countries have brought me to the realization of the unimportance of earthly things. They are searching to fill their lives because they do not have very many things.

Traveling to these countries has taught me that God will provide for me exactly what I need — not what I think I need. These people are content living on what I consider bare necessities.

When they learn about God, it is as if they are complete. Traveling to developing nations has allowed me the opportunity to be filled spiritually and help others in the same way.

What have children taught you?

Children are constant reminders of how we should be caring and loving to everyone. Small children do not judge each other on physical features or where they are from. They are friends to everyone. Children truly exemplify "for whatever you wish that others would do to you, do also to them."

Children have also taught me to put my trust in God no matter what I may face in life. They have faith. They do not worry about every little trifling event in life or things that have not occurred. They are flexible. They exemplify Philippians 4:6, "Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication, let your requests be made known to God."

My students have also taught me not to be afraid to try. When an adult says they "can't" do something, sometimes they are saying they are too afraid to try because they do not want to look foolish. When a child does not succeed the first time, they keep trying until they are successful.

Children teach me about prayer because their prayers are heartfelt and very specific. Their prayers remind me that it is OK to talk to God about anything.

Children teach me about evangelism. They have faith easily. Once a child learns about God and salvation, they immediately want to tell everyone they know.



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HIGHER EDUCATION

ABILENE CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY
ABILENE, Texas — The ACU Museum, overseen by Women for ACU, has undergone major renovations, including the addition of a small conference center and rental space.

“It is the dream of the Women for ACU and the museum board to create a museum that will become a destination point in Abilene,” said Roberta Bender, a museum board member. “We believe ACU’s history has much to offer visitors and residents. We’re excited about where these renovations might take us.”

LIPSCOMB UNIVERSITY
NASHVILLE, Tenn. — December commencement ceremonies were extra special for a mother and daughter.

Lynn Hopkins, a teacher at Lipscomb Academy, and her daughter Kelcee Hopkins, a Spanish and international business major, both received degrees.

Lynn Hopkins earned a master’s in special education, while Kelcee Hopkins was awarded her bachelor’s degree.

“It is kind of a fluke,” Lynn Hopkins said of the timing. “Neither one of us had planned for it to fall this way.”

HARDING UNIVERSITY
SEARCY, Ark. — A YouTube video of “Duck Dynasty” star and Harding University alumnus Willie Robertson discussing his faith during a recent Harding chapel assembly went viral.

The video, posted by Missouri church planter Wes Woodell, was approaching a half-million views at press time.

The reality series, featuring members of the White’s Ferry Road Church of Christ in West Monroe, La., drew 6.5 million people to its Christmas episode, setting a new viewership record for A&E.



JEFF MONTGOMERY

Wednesday isn’t “Duck Dynasty” night, it’s church night, Willie Robertson told students.



WWW.SFSEINC.ORG

Ministry helps Central America see the light

Jonathan Holland tests the sight of a girl in a Nicaraguan village. The minister and his wife, Sheila, worked alongside Mision Para Cristo, a church-supported ministry that provides medical and spiritual support to the people of the Central American nation.

The Hollands oversee “Lentes Para Todos” (“Lenses for All”), which works with Lions Club International Sight Programs to provide underserved populations with recycled eye wear that has been cleaned, sized and packaged for reuse. The program, a branch of the Hollands’ Sight for Sore Eyes Foundation, also provides adjustments for those already wearing glasses.

“There is nothing like the response of someone seeing clearly,” said Benny Baker, director of Mision Para Cristo. For more information, see www.sfseinc.org and www.misionparacristo.com.

To view the Harding video, go to www.christianchronicle.org/blog and search for “Willie Robertson.”

SOUTHWESTERN CHRISTIAN COLLEGE
TERRELL, Texas — Southwestern honored President Jack Evans Sr. for 45 years of service during the college’s recent annual Founders Day program.

John Dansby, chairman of Southwestern’s board of directors, recognized Evans, whose four-plus decades as president were described as unprecedented in modern higher education.

Vice President James Maxwell bestowed upon Evans an honorary doctorate of humane letters. Administrator and Bible professor



Evans

Ben Foster paid tribute to Evans on behalf of the college’s staff, student body and alumni.

K-12 CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS

COVENTRY CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS
POTTSTOWN, Pa. — Longtime Coventry Superintendent Mark Niehls is transitioning to a new role as advancement director for the Christian school.

At a recent dinner, new Coventry head Paul Fisher announced the creation of the Mark E. Niehls Endowed Scholarship, which Fisher said will allow generations of children to benefit from Christian education.

Besides his role with Coventry, Niehls serves as an elder for the Chesmont Church of Christ, which meets in the school building.

SPORTS

Equestrian champ

WICHITA FALLS, Texas — Harry Patterson’s team won a record number of awards at the Missouri Fox Trotting Horse Breed Association’s fall show and celebration.

The awards included nine world championships, six reserve world championships, four reserve grand world championships and the open versatility world grand championship.

A Texas automobile dealer, Patterson is a deacon for the Faith Village Church of Christ in Wichita Falls and serves as a trustee for Oklahoma Christian University in Oklahoma City.

On his team were fellow Texan Billy Ray McCalip and Missouri residents Janet Johnson and Wade Hightower.



PHOTO PROVIDED BY JODY STYRON

Harry Patterson rides the gelding Cold Hard Cash during the Missouri horse show.

WORSHIP MINISTRIES

ACAPPELLA MINISTRIES
OKLAHOMA CITY — Do you love to sing? Can you carry a tune?

Acappella Ministries is looking for talented singers to help with its next congregational recording.

The recording will be in April at the Central Church of Christ in Amarillo, Texas.

“If your church is like mine, there are people who miss singing in school and university choirs and thrive upon opportunities to use their singing talent,” Acappella’s Keith Lancaster said. “Professional recording projects can also be an adventure for gifted volunteers.”

For more information, see www.acappella.org.

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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.



PHOTO PROVIDED BY OKLAHOMA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

Jim Gebhart, president of Mercy Hospital Oklahoma City; Rebecca Stafford's parents, Barry and Tonda Stafford, and sister, Lauren Keck; and Oklahoma Christian University President John deSteiguer announce the Rebecca Stafford Endowed Scholarship for Nursing.

Oklahoma Christian scholarship honors legacy of Rebecca Stafford

OKLAHOMA CITY — Rebecca Stafford lives on eternally. Now her legacy will live on in the lives of nursing students who dedicate themselves to serving others.

Oklahoma Christian University announced recently the Rebecca Stafford Endowed Scholarship for Nursing.

Stafford, 20, died March 10, 2012, after a three-year battle with cancer. She completed her first year of studies at OC while undergoing chemotherapy and radiation treatments for Ewing's sarcoma.

She is the daughter of Tonda Stafford, longtime administrative assistant for *The Christian Chronicle*, and her husband, Barry. The family attends

the Memorial Road Church of Christ in Edmond, Okla.

"Rebecca wanted to spend as much time as she could as a normal student. Students and people three or four times her age saw her and were inspired," OC president John deSteiguer said. The scholarship "is a remarkable tribute to the donors, to the family, to Rebecca and to God."

Nursing students and faculty rallied around Rebecca as she battled cancer.

"During Rebecca's illness, nurses were family," Tonda Stafford said. "This scholarship can work for the good after everything she went through. It's what we see is needed because good Christian nurses are amazing."

FOR MORE INFORMATION, see www.oc.edu/news.



Rebecca Stafford

Could a Minnesotan be Texan of the Year?

ABILENE, Texas — Brittany Partridge may not be a native of the Lone Star State, but Abilene Christian University nominated the senior from Annandale, Minn., for Texan of the Year.

Recently, Partridge became the first-ever student to be awarded two academic honors — the Truman Scholarship and the Marshall Scholarship. But it was her work to end human trafficking worldwide that ACU's director of public relations, Grant Rampy, highlighted in

the nomination letter he sent to *The Dallas Morning News*, which sponsors the Texan of the Year competition.

In 2009, Partridge launched the Red Thread Movement. Students purchase red-thread bracelets, made by girls rescued from human traffickers in Nepal, to raise awareness of the problem and provide income for the girls. The movement has spread to 75 campuses and countless businesses, Rampy said.

Eternal Threads, an Abilene-based nonprofit, partners with a Nepal-based organization, Kingdom Investments Nepal, to rescue the young women and sell the bracelets.



Partridge

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"I am so grateful for the Spiritual Direction training program. I feel like I am learning to help others in a way that is desperately needed. While many of the practices are ancient, they are new to me and, I'm sure, to others as well."

— 2013 participant

NEWSMAKERS

ANNIVERSARIES: **71st:** John and Mary Catalina, Abilene, Texas. **70th:** Lionel and Tommie Jo Walker, Edmond, Okla. **66th:** Eugene and Evelyn Perry, Beamsville, Ontario. Roy and Nina Robinson, Augusta Ga. **62nd:** Charles and Bonnie Sheppard, Abilene, Texas. **65th:** Wendell and Gaye Hughes, Oklahoma City. **60th:** Louis and Bernice Gotcher, Edmond, Okla.; Howard and Marilyn Leftwich, Edmond, Okla.; G.C. and Lola Thompson, Carlsbad, N.M. **55th:** Don and Joy McCombs, Yukon, Okla. **53rd:** Richard and Ellen Brewer, Edmond, Okla.; Ralph and Barbara Courtney, Edmond, Okla. **52nd:** Larry and Floy Smith, Oklahoma City.

BIRTHDAYS: **91st:** Aileen Boyce, Durham, Ontario. John J. Catalina, Abilene, Texas.

PASSAGES: **Bernie Baur**, 92, Aug. 3, Palestine, Texas, preacher for churches in Texas, Missouri and New Mexico, final pulpit position with the Crockett Road church in Palestine, Texas. **Steve Carlton**, 59, June 17, Garland, Texas, Army veteran and active member of the Saturn Road church in Garland, Texas. **Doris Darling**, 96, Dec. 12, Virginia Beach, Va., faithful servant of the Lord and wife of the late evangelist George Darling Sr. **Donna Eckhart**, 81, Dec. 8, Edmond, Okla., tireless worker in the international ministry of the Stillwater, Okla., church. **Herbert Hartman**, 84, Nov. 22, Sayre, Okla., elder of the Sayre church. **Nell Rose "Susie" Kidd**, 83, Nov. 26, Clarendon, Texas, wife of J.E. Kidd Jr. and member of the Clarendon, Texas, church. **Raymond Lock**, 81, Dec. 4, Tintern, Ontario, pioneering missionary to Papua New Guinea. **James Jacob Rapp**, 86, Sept. 17, Texarkana, Ark., longtime elder of the Fairgrounds Road church in Jefferson City, Mo. **Cecil Rix**, 83, Dec. 9, Houston, elder, minister and office manager for the Memorial church in Houston. **Aubrey L. Shouse**, 87, Nov. 25, Frisco, Texas, former elder of the Parkview church in Odessa, Texas, and deacon of the Westside church in Midland, Texas.



Eckhart



Lock



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Jan. 6 Praise Him 2012. Sponsored by Shawnee, Okla., Churches of Christ. Heart of Oklahoma Expo Center, Shawnee. Contact robprater@sbcglobalnet or (405) 273-3065.

Jan. 7-11 North Brazil Missionary Conference. Hotel Campestre de Aldeia, Camaragibe, Pernambuco, Brazil. Contact randy.kathyshort@gmail.com.

Jan. 16-21 North Coast Enrichment Seminar. Coffs Coast church in Coffs Harbour, New South Wales, Australia.

Jan. 18-19 31st Annual Medical Missions Seminar. Hosted by IHCF African Christian Hospitals. Crowne Plaza — Dallas Market Center, Dallas. Contact ihcf.net/seminar.

Jan. 18-20 Winterfest Arlington. Arlington Convention Center, Arlington, Texas. Contact Dudley Chancey at dudley.chancey@oc.edu or www.winterfest.org.

Jan. 28-30 Northwest Expositor's Seminar. Camp Yamhill, Ore. Contact Jay Hawkins (208) 459-2281 or jayhawkins05@gmail.com or Mark Johnson (360) 528-1850 or yellowstone80@comcast.net.

Feb. 1-2 Women of Hope Conference. "A Sisterhood of Hope." Embassy Suites, Murfreesboro, Tenn. Contact hhi.org/womenofhope.

Feb. 3-7 Freed-Hardeman University Lectureship. Henderson, Tenn. Contact (731) 989-6622, lectureship@fhu.edu or fhu.edu/lectureship.

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 or ldavenport@hcu.edu or www.cyconline.com.

Feb. 24-27 39th Annual Southeast Institute of Biblical Studies Lectureship. Southeast Institute of Biblical Studies, 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.

COMPLETE CALENDAR at www.christianchronicle.org



HARDING

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FACULTY POSITIONS AVAILABLE

All candidates must be active members of the church of Christ and committed to Christian education.

COLLEGE OF ALLIED HEALTH. Seeking full-time director for to-be-established occupational therapy program. The successful candidate will possess a doctoral degree, eight years of clinical experience in the OT field, administrative experience, and three years in a full-time academic appointment at the post-secondary level. Responsibilities include program development and implementation under the guidelines of the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education.

Submit a letter of interest to Dr. Rebecca Weaver, dean, at bweaver@harding.edu or Box 12287, Searcy, AR 72149.

COLLEGE OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION. Seeking full-time faculty member to be the director of international business department. The successful candidate will possess a minimum of a master's degree, although a doctorate is preferred; have global work experience; and have teaching experience. In addition to directing the program, responsibilities will include teaching international business and economic development courses.

Submit a letter of application and curriculum vitae to Dr. Bryan Burks, dean, at bburks@harding.edu.

DEPARTMENT OF CHEMISTRY. Seeking full-time lab technician/supervisor. The successful candidate will have at least a bachelor's in chemistry. Responsibilities include preparing solutions and setting up and supervising freshman chemistry labs with some grading.

Submit a letter of interest to Dr. David Cole, chair, at cole@harding.edu.

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION SCIENCES AND DISORDERS. Seeking full-time faculty member. The successful candidate will possess a Ph.D. and hold the Certificate of Clinical Competence from the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. Clinical supervisory experience and experience working with adult populations with communication disorders are highly desirable.

Submit letter of application and curriculum vitae to Dr. Dan Tullos, chair, at tullos@harding.edu.

DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC. Seeking full-time faculty member in music with emphasis in vocal/choral, strings or music education. The successful candidate will have a doctorate in music, although master's is considered; five or more years of successful teaching experience; and at least one other area of teaching expertise (choral, theory, histo-

ry, Kodaly, etc.). Responsibilities include teaching appropriate courses; teaching private lessons; teaching in additional areas based on candidate's expertise; participating in recruiting, advising and other departmental activities.

Submit a letter of application and curriculum vitae to Dr. Mike Chance at mchance@harding.edu.

DEPARTMENT OF PHARMACY PRACTICE. Seeking full-time faculty member. The successful candidate will possess a Pharm.D. as well as residency/fellowship training. At least two years of academic experience is preferred. Eligibility for pharmacy licensure in Arkansas is required. Responsibilities include creating, coordinating and delivering instruction in the pathophysiology, pharmacotherapy, and patient-centered care didactic curriculum; developing and maintaining innovative clinical practice sites; conducting scholarly activity in an area of expertise; and engaging in service to the college and community. Applicants from all clinical backgrounds will be considered. Candidates with expertise in adult internal medicine, community practice, ambulatory care, cardiology, hematology/oncology, or pediatric practice are encouraged to apply.

Submit a letter of application and curriculum vitae to Dr. Julie Kissack, chair, at jkissack@harding.edu.

PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT PROGRAM. Seeking full-time faculty member. The successful candidate will possess a minimum of master's degree in physician assistant studies or similar field. Three years of clinical experience and one year of teaching experience preferred. NCCPA certification and eligibility for licensure as a physician assistant in the state of Arkansas is also necessary. Applicants with other clinical training should have corresponding professional certification and be eligible for professional licensure in the state of Arkansas. Responsibilities include participating in the teaching of the program's core curriculum; advising and mentoring students; assisting with hands-on practical training of students in various clinical skills needed in clinical practice; maintaining clinical competency through practice at the program's affiliated clinic site; conducting scholarly activity in the faculty's area of expertise; and engaging in service to the college, university and community.

Submit a letter of application and curriculum vitae to Dr. Michael Murphy, chair, at mmurphy1@harding.edu.

EDITORIAL

Scheduling things that matter

How many Christmas parties did you attend this year?

The wife of one of our employees attended three such galas, hosted by various departments at her work. She and her husband

had a dickens of a time (pardon the seasonal pun) scheduling a holiday party for their Bible study group. Other parties kept getting in the way.

Now, as we pack away the tinsel and holly, we realize that, quite frankly, we're exhausted.

And the new year isn't likely to grant us much rest. As we rush into a new year

packed with goals, meetings and expectations, we must find a moment to pause and refocus. It is critical also to take time to be truly introspective and grateful for our blessings, even as we continually strive to do better.

It is too easy to fill our schedules with the activities life seems to require of us — even church-related activities — only

to look up from our planners or mobile devices and realize another year has passed. Let's purposely schedule time alone with God, meditating on his word as we make plans for 2013.

As parents, it's great to give our children the opportunities to interact with peers and get exercise. But all the dance classes and soccer practices in the world can't replace time spent studying the Bible or serving others as a family.

The recent tragedy in Connecticut shows us clearly the importance of time with our children. They need *us* more than they need things.

Even simple events — making dinner together, playing board games — give us opportunities to live out our faith alongside our children.

We acknowledge that the work of the church is vital. But all of the committee meetings and small-group Bible studies in the world can't replace the simple acts of kindness shown to those who never knew our God.

Schedule time to do good deeds for others — whether it's

shoveling snow from a neighbor's driveway or inviting a work acquaintance over for dinner.

What about the poor or underprivileged around you, those with names you don't know but whose faces you see daily? Could you pay for their tank of gas — or their groceries?

We are closer today to Christ's triumphant return than at any point in history. The time we have here could be decades, years, days or minutes. The Evil One seeks to steal those minutes away from us, keeping us mired in the mundane so that we lose sight of the eternal.

C.S. Lewis expresses this through the character of Screwtape, a demon charged with tempting men away from their divine calling and delivering them to "Our Father Below."

In "The Screwtape Letters," the demon advises his nephew, a junior tempter, to fill the life of his "patient" with activities that are ultimately meaningless. The goal is estrangement from the divine, with this man looking back and saying, "I now see that I spent most of my life in doing neither what I ought nor what I liked."

May that not be said of us. May we dedicate 2013 to doing what we ought — proclaiming the good news of Jesus.

'The time we have here could be decades, years, days or minutes. The Evil One seeks to steal those minutes away from us, keeping us mired in the mundane so that we lose sight of the eternal.'

Ever-Laughing Life

by Jonny Hawkins



TO OUR READERS

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Supermarkets and stewardship: Does God really care how much I spend on groceries? Absolutely!

Sixty percent of families I asked don't have any form of a written household budget.

Of the 250 families who participated in an online survey, more than half spend more than they think they should on groceries every month. Of course, if you spend more than you make, you should take immediate steps to get things under control.

But what if your income is such that even without a budget, you do OK? Does it matter how much you spend?

The average American family spends more on food than anything except housing. That's a lot of shopping, which means a lot of opportunity for overspending — or saving.

Every time you head to the store, odds are good you're going to grab more than one item that wasn't on your list (assuming you use a list). As a result, you check out with more in your cart than you intended.

Does God really care how much you spend on groceries? Is it possible to have money left each month and still mismanage your spending? Absolutely.

The Bible tells us that all things belong to God. We are simply stewards of what he gives us. That includes our grocery money. With this in mind, wouldn't we plan, shop and save money in a way that he would consider proper?

Sometimes this is easy to see: Spending money to help a family in need does the Lord's work and brings glory to him.

Sometimes, though, it's not so easy to see: There's nothing wrong with treating

yourself every now and then, but if occasional splurges become the norm, is it possible you're wasting money?

Views



Karee Blunt

Could it be you're overindulging in certain areas of your budget when you could be using that money to build God's Kingdom? Could you be donating to orphan care charities or supporting a missionary? Not only would such generosity bring glory to the Lord, but it would be wise stewardship.

Taking control of your grocery budget doesn't have to be

arduous. You can take specific steps to help you spend wisely, and you don't have to clip a single coupon to do it — although that certainly could help:

- **Get organized:** Whether you have a large walk-in pantry to store several weeks of groceries or a few small cabinets that hold just a few days' worth, develop a system that works for you.

Do you know what's in your freezer?

An unorganized pantry or freezer may not seem like a money problem, but if you constantly buy things only to discover you already had several of them, the price tag really can start to add up.

- **Plan ahead:** Let's face it, being prepared to feed a family three meals a day and snacks in between can get pretty tiring. But not being prepared can get downright expensive!

Using a menu and creating a shopping list from it not only eases the stress of not knowing what you're going to fix for dinner, it also saves money on unnecessary splurges because you weren't prepared to fix anything.

The next time you get ready to head to the grocery store, spend some time planning out at least a week's worth of meals. You'll be surprised how much easier you find staying within your grocery budget.

- **Don't shop when you're hungry:**

We're far more prone to buying junk food or the "quick fix" when we're hungry. This can really add to your bill.

- **Buy generic:** Amazing savings available here.

- **Don't buy prepared foods:**

Usually, the more a food item has been processed, the more expensive it is, and the processed foods are never as healthy.

- **Buy on sale:** However, don't fall into the "It's on sale, so I have to buy it trap." If it's on your list or you know you really will need it soon, then buy it and buy it in bulk. Many things (like cheese) can be frozen. Also, much of the time you'll find name-brand items on sale, but the store brand will still be cheaper.

- **Avoid buying something just because it seems cool:** Any time an item's main function is geared toward convenience (single-serving mac and cheese, for example) or a cool appearance, that item will cost you more.

Simple steps, when put into action, can make a big impact on how well you steward your money. God does care how much we spend on groceries, so be sure you spend wisely!

KAREE BLUNT attends the Skagit Valley Church of Christ in Burlington, Wash., with her husband, Rodney, and their five children. She co-founded www.BuildaMenu.com, an online menu planning service. Contact her at Karee@BuildaMenu.com.

LETTERS

Mixed reactions to 'politics-free zone'

Wonderful article: What a breath of fresh air ("One church's vote for Jesus," Churches That Work, January). I've gotten so tired of hearing my brothers and sisters in Christ talk about their political ideology rather than their love for Jesus Christ.

Gary Villamor | Fresno, Calif.

To say that social relations involving authority or power is not allowed in a setting of believers is naive and grandstanding.

We should not boot people out of bodies of believers for bringing up issues and taking stands but encourage thoughtful and civil discussion as it pertains to God's Word.

Jeff Davis | Owasso, Okla.

Thoughts on print vs. digital

Seems to me that, if folks value the hard copy, they will pay for the increase in postage. (See editorial, Page 29, January.)

Otherwise, send us a digital copy. Drop those who don't want to pay and don't want the online version.

Ralph Walker | Temple Terrace, Fla.

Stories remind that God is love

Your issue has so many stories of love and compassion — stories of people finding God's way, stories of people ready to show God's way, so many generous hearts ready to serve others. God is love.

Marcy Ludwig | La Vernia, Texas

VOICES

Does your congregation promote physical as well as spiritual fitness?

Asked by Bobby Ross Jr. via www.facebook.com/christianchronicle



Our preacher is also a health coach, and he has just started a fitness class on Wednesday night. It includes Bible study and help to live a healthier life.

Linda Beach Pearson | Statesville, N.C.



With the approval of our elders, my daughter and I are hosting a TOPS (weight-loss) group and a HELP (Healthy Everyday Living Plan) group using our fellowship hall as the location for our community. It is a work in progress, and we hope to use spiritual wellness in our programs.

Dixie Nan | Plainview, Ark.



I started taking karate at Kenpo for Christ at Sherrod Avenue Church of Christ in Florence, Ala. The karate was free, and it was used as a ministry to share Christ with others. The preacher was the instructor.

Amanda Daniel | Florence, Ala.



We have had fitness ministries in the past, and currently we have quite a few members that bike and run marathons together. ... Our elders are greatly focused on the general health issues of the congregation.

Deidre Malcom | Overland Park, Kan.

Idol, tool or mission field? New books explore role of technology

BY MIKE MAZZALONGO | FOR THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

For the first time in history, it is possible to share one's faith with more than 2 billion people at once.

Such is the power and potential of the Internet age. Exploiting that potential is the subject of two recent books that review how we can use this technology to preach the Gospel to all nations and how this same technology affects our thinking.

In **"@Sticky Jesus: How to Live out Your Faith Online,"** Toni Birdsong, partner in Birdsong Creative, and Tami Heim, president and CEO of the Christian Leadership Alliance, provide a primer for online ministry and issue a call to use social media to share our faith.

The title refers to one of the most sought-after website qualities: stickiness — the ability to draw visitors back repeatedly because of the value of its content or the comfort level people experience using the site. The search engine Google is a prime example of this sticky quality, with over a billion visitors returning to use its services each day.

Heims and Birdsong apply this 21st century concept to Jesus, arguing that his Gospel is the stickiest of messages, captivating people for 2,000 years, even today, with attention spans perhaps shorter than ever.

"Jesus proved that the stickier your message, the more followers you will have," they write. The Christian social media user, therefore, should create interest about Jesus and his Word on the web through blogs, Facebook, Twitter and other social media.

As marketing professionals, these

writers have leveraged new media to sell products. Here they share their personal experience using the same approach to encourage, teach and minister to friends and followers online.

They accomplish this by employing a conversational style of writing that describes the sharing of one's faith online as doable and rewarding.

"In thinking of ministering online," they write, "recognize that communities will be the virtual places where God will use you to teach, touch, pray for and empower others. Sometimes, you may be speaking to nonbelievers; other times, to believers in dire need of God's truth."

The book is useful for full-time ministers and individuals who want to effectively share their faith online. The authors provide a variety of helpful resources that include a glossary of web terminology for novices and a very helpful etiquette guide for online missionaries who want to avoid unintended offenses in the digital world.

The book also includes testimonials from Christians who are experiencing success with this form of ministry. In the manner of a true guidebook, the authors provide step-by-step instructions on how to use social media sites like Facebook and Twitter.

Both authors come from an evangelical background and espouse a pluralistic view of Christianity that is in marked contrast to the beliefs and practices in Churches of Christ. This being said, "@StickyJesus" remains a very helpful resource on Internet ministry as well as a timely call to bring Christ to the fastest growing and most densely populated place in the world — the Internet.

In as much as "@Sticky Jesus" provides an optimistic view of the

possibilities of the Internet, the more sobering **"From the Garden to the City: The Redeeming and Corrupting Power of Technology"** describes how the Internet can take advantage of us.

Author John Dyer, a web developer with a background in theology, weaves the role and meaning of technology into the Bible narrative from Genesis (the Garden) to Revelation (the City).

The main idea of the book is that technology is not neutral. It has an effect on us aside from the reason or result for which we use it.

An example of this is seen in Dyer's view of the rapidly increasing use of texting, which he says is useful to stay in touch without the need to call and speak but rewires our brains to be more adept at processing large volumes

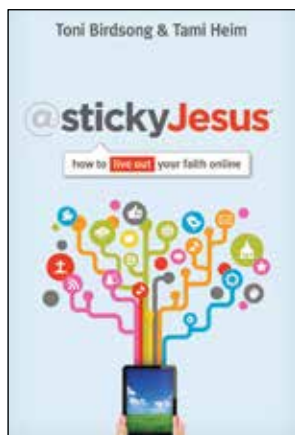
of short messages, but less able to stay focused on a single idea for a sustained period.

"Technology has the power to transform the world into the one we imagine," he writes, "but it also has the power to transform our bodies, our mental capabilities and our relational worlds."

This challenging book would be an easier read if the summarizing material in the final chapters were placed at the beginning. Despite this difficulty, the author has succeeded in

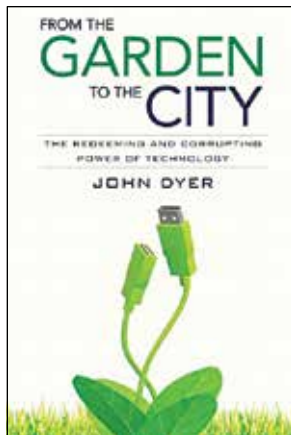
sounding the alarm against this present generation's temptation to make the technology it has created into its "iGod."

MIKE MAZZALONGO is education/media minister for the Church of Christ in Choctaw, Okla. His teaching website, BibleTalk.TV, is ranked No. 1 on Google for free Bible media.



★★★★☆

Toni Birdsong and Tami Heim. **@Sticky Jesus: How to Live Out Your Faith Online.** Nashville, Tenn.: Abingdon Press, 2011. 195 pages, \$21.99.



★★★★☆

John Dyer. **From the Garden to the City: The Redeeming and Corrupting Power of Technology.** Grand Rapids, Mich.: Kregel Publications, 2011. 192 pages, \$13.99.

NEW AND NOTEWORTHY

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Dr. Matthew Sleeth. **24/6: A Prescription for a Healthier, Happier Life.** Carol Stream, Ill.: Tyndale House, 2012. 203 pages, \$12.99.



Because God took an entire day to rest, so must we, contends Sleeth, a former emergency room physician and chief of a hospital medical staff, now a preacher and an advocate of good stewardship. Using memorable anecdotes from emergency and operating rooms and Old and New Testament Scriptures, he shows the need for Christians to "unplug" and rest for one day each week. He enters the oft-feared territory of when to observe the Sabbath and how Jesus observed the Sabbath.

URBAN MINISTRY

Timothy Keller. **Center Church: Doing Balanced, Gospel-Centered Ministry in Your City.** Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 2012. 400 pages, \$29.99.



Keller, known as a leading authority on Scripture-centered exegesis and pastor of a New York City megachurch, presents a guide for church leaders on making a congregation's urban ministry serve the city in which it is located.

The book shows how to connect a church's theological vision — which the author leaves up to the church — to the ministries the church offers.

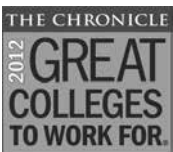
CHRISTIAN FICTION

Andrew Klavan. **If We Survive.** Nashville, Tenn.: Thomas Nelson, 2012. 352 pages, \$14.99.



Klavan, a rising Christian suspense author, is hooking almost as many adults as teens.

Set in Central America, the book's main character, high-schooler Will Peterson, and three friends journey to Central America to help rebuild a school. The mission trip turns dangerous when a rebel group tries to overthrow the government — and the teens try to get home alive.



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 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.

College of Education and Human Services

*Dr. Donnie Snider, Interim Dean
ACU Box 29008, Abilene, Texas 79699-9008*

The **School of Social Work** invites applications for a tenure-track position beginning in Fall 2013. Applicants must have an MSW and an earned doctorate in social work or related field (required). Responsibilities include teaching social work courses at both the B.S.S.W. and M.S.S.W. levels, pursuing scholarly research, and performing service for the university, profession and community. Applicants

should have experience in diverse areas of social work practice, be able to teach across the curriculum, and effectively engage the broader community with which the school partners. Information about the school is available at acu.edu/socialwork.

School of Information Technology and Computing

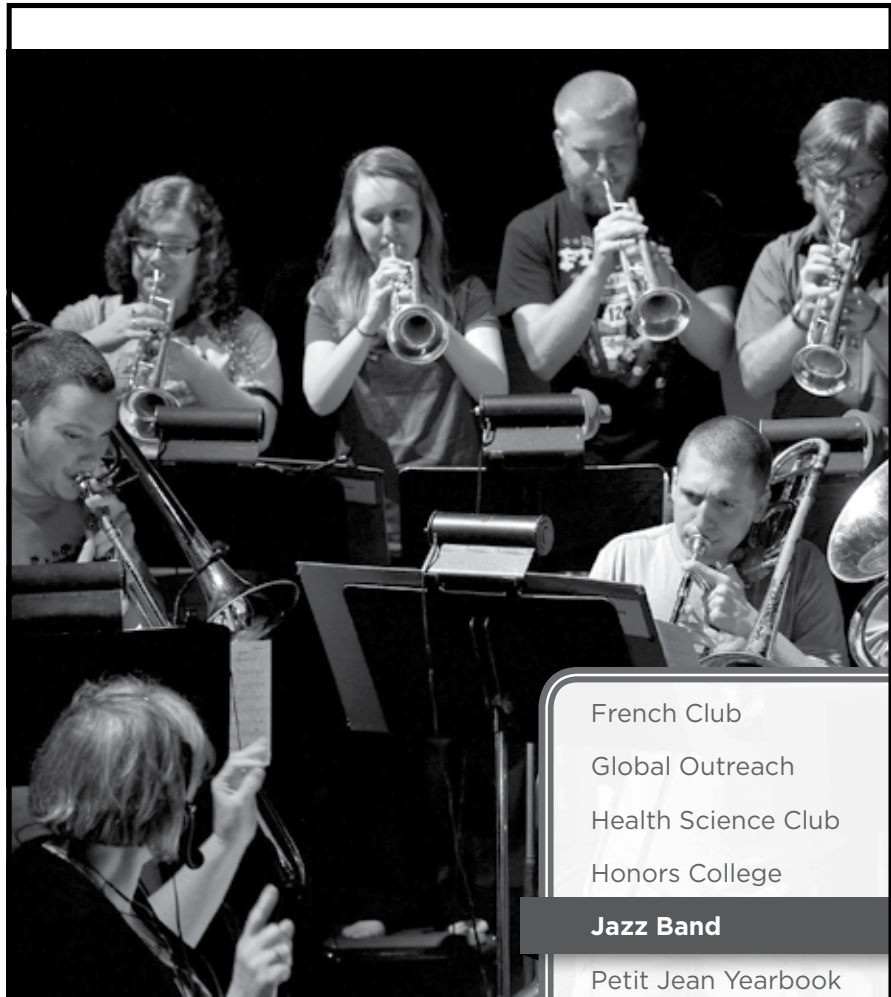
*Dr. Brad Crisp, Director
ACU Box 29353, Abilene, Texas 79699-9353*

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 and/or administration; 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.

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Examining Christ's 'I am' statements

The power of John's gospel is so great because he is working to establish clearly that Jesus existed before his conception as a human. The opening phrase echoes the opening of Genesis with "In the beginning."

In my previous column, I mistakenly wrote that Jesus existed from the beginning of time. In fact, Jesus, like the Father, has neither beginning nor ending, but he has a 30-plus year interlude when he lives as a human being.

John strengthens the connection with God's existence by recording seven statements that echo God's identification of himself in the Old Testament, when Moses talks to God from the burning bush. Moses uses several ploys as he tries to avoid the assignment God gives him. He tells God that he'll need to explain to Pharaoh which god is sending him.

God replies, "I am that I am." The eternal God does not have a name that is a noun, but a verb — a form of the verb "to be," signifying his continual being. The idea still teases me to try and understand the marvel of this God.

Jesus echoes that in John's gospel when he declares, "I am bread of life" (6:35), "I am the light" (8:12, 9:5), "I am the gate" (10:7 and 9), "I am the good shepherd" (10:11-14), "I am the resurrection and the life" (11:25), "I am the way, the truth and the life" (14:6) and "I am the vine" (15:1,5) — a statement to be examined next month.

Through all these statements, Jesus is trying to help his disciples understand how profoundly fundamental he is to the existence of mankind.

Throughout Bible times bread was fundamental to existence. Even in our times we think of bread as a life-sustaining food. Jesus is not a physical food, but his teachings are spiritually nourishing. His followers, from start to finish, gain knowledge and spiritual strength from him.

In the context of this statement, Jesus has fed thousands after he has taught them all day. The next day, when the crowds find he has already moved on, they follow him, and he gets to the heart of their motive: they want to be fed again. That is when Jesus declares, "I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hungry." Although his followers have often had empty stomachs, the hearts and minds of believers are sustained by who Jesus is and what

he reveals about the human spirit.

Later Jesus spoke to the people, declaring "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life." The first element spoken into existence in Genesis 1 is light, even before the sun was created. Light is power and a force for all living things. Light sustains

Insight



Bailey McBride

all botanical life and is a necessity for the biological life. So the spirit of man needs light for nourishment: throughout the Christian era seekers and pilgrims have honored light as the physical presence of God.

In the next chapter, after Jesus makes this statement, he heals a man who has been blind from birth, again making the point that light is so important for direction and understanding.

In chapter 10, Jesus uses the metaphor of the primitive sheepfold where the gate is the shepherd protecting and restraining the sheep. The message of love and concern for mankind is obvious.

The next chapter recounts the resurrection of Lazarus, the most impressive of all the miracles, so powerful that the Jews determine that they must destroy Lazarus to wipe out the evidence of Jesus' power. Jesus teaches in the wake of the miracle, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever believes in me will never die."

Jesus addresses one of the great concerns of man. All understand death is inevitable and inescapable. But what comes after that? Lazarus was raised, but he died again. In contrast, Jesus died and was resurrected to live eternally. Jesus promises a resurrection that leads to the eternal dawn for those who believe and obey him.

When Jesus was preparing his disciples for his death, Thomas asks him where he is going. In response, Jesus explains, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to Father except through me." Thus he connects his identity to that of God the Father, an idea John has set out to clarify the divine nature of the man called Jesus.

And the Word was God.

CONTACT bailey.mcbride@christianchronicle.org.

Academic Positions Available at Lubbock Christian University

We're changing lives. Become part of the story,



For the 2013-2014 academic year, Lubbock Christian University is accepting applications for the following positions

Assistant Professor Biology Or Biotechnology

This position in the Department of Natural Sciences will support majors in the sciences and also support courses in other departments such as nursing or exercise science. An expertise in genetics/biotechnology is preferred.

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

Assistant Professor Technical Communication

This position in the Department of Humanities will support majors in the areas of technical communication and technical writing. Many of these courses are also considered support courses from many departments across campus. An expertise in grant writing is preferred.

Contact Dr. Ronna Privett, ronna.privett@LCU.edu

Assistant Professor Nursing

This position in the Department of Nursing will primarily support courses in the area of undergraduate nursing. An ability/interest in teaching graduate nursing students is also desirable. LCU is also looking to begin a nurse practitioner Master's degree and will also be seeking candidates for this position.

Contact Dr. LaNell Harrison, lanell.harrison@LCU.edu

Assistant Professor Education

The School of Education is seeking a faculty member with a strong background in secondary education. The SOE offers Bachelor's degrees in Elementary-Middle School-Secondary Education, as well as Master's degrees in Teaching-Leadership-Special Education.

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

Assistant Professor Biblical Studies

This position supports undergraduate majors in Bible but also should be able to teach graduate courses. A strong background in spiritual formation and/or theology and/or church history is preferred. The Department of Biblical Studies at LCU is seeking ATS accreditation and is looking to increase the number of Bible faculty.

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

Successful candidates will have a Ph.D. or be able to demonstrate excellent leadership, teaching, and research experiences, and have an active commitment to the University's Christian heritage and mission. Any applicant must be a professing Christian and an active, faithful member of a congregation of the Churches of Christ.

Applicants will be asked to provide a letter of interest, curriculum vitae, transcripts, and a list of three references in the application process; one of the references should be from someone who can speak to how the applicant's faith commitment relates to LCU's mission statement. The letter of interest, teaching philosophy, and other relevant materials should be submitted by February 1, 2012.

In addition, applicants should complete an application for employment. The application, complete job description and instructions for submitting the requested materials are available at the following link:

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