



KATE BOWSMAN

A toothy precious moment at special-needs carnival

Luke Flanders grins as he holds a bunny at the 12th annual carnival for children with special needs organized by the Brooks Avenue Church of Christ in Raleigh, N.C. More than 800 guests, 170 volunteers and dozens of vendors and costumed characters — including “Wolfpack” mascots from nearby North Carolina State University — made the recent carnival a huge success, said Melinda Oldham, who coordinates the church’s special-needs ministry. “The rain held off until 15 minutes after the carnival was over,” Oldham said. “The Lord was all around.”



Man on a Mission

Dan Bouchelle on changing roles for global churches. **21**



After the honeymoon

How can busy, distracted couples rekindle affection? **31**



A day at the dump

Ministry serves Honduras’ hardworking poor. **18**

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Is your church visitor-friendly?

MOST EVERY CONGREGATION characterizes itself as welcoming. Guests don’t always see it that way.

BY BOBBY ROSS JR. | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

When Sarah Stirman and her family moved to the Dallas area last summer, they visited half a dozen congregations.

At each, their experience was basically the same.

“Our family sat alone and was ignored before service started. If we were lucky, we were greeted during ‘shake and bake,’” she said, referring to the forced greeting period when the worship leader asks everyone to stand and welcome those around them.

Undoubtedly, no Church of Christ would describe itself as unfriendly.

Too often, though, congregations fail to show Christ’s love to strangers, said many members and leaders interviewed by *The Christian Chronicle*.



TERRY RUSH

A sign at the Memorial Drive church in Tulsa, Okla.

“Most congregations are filled with very pleasant Christians who are so enjoying each other’s company that they often don’t notice those who visit their assemblies,” said Mark Blackwelder, a Bible professor at Freed-Hardeman University in Henderson, Tenn. See **VISITORS**, Page 14

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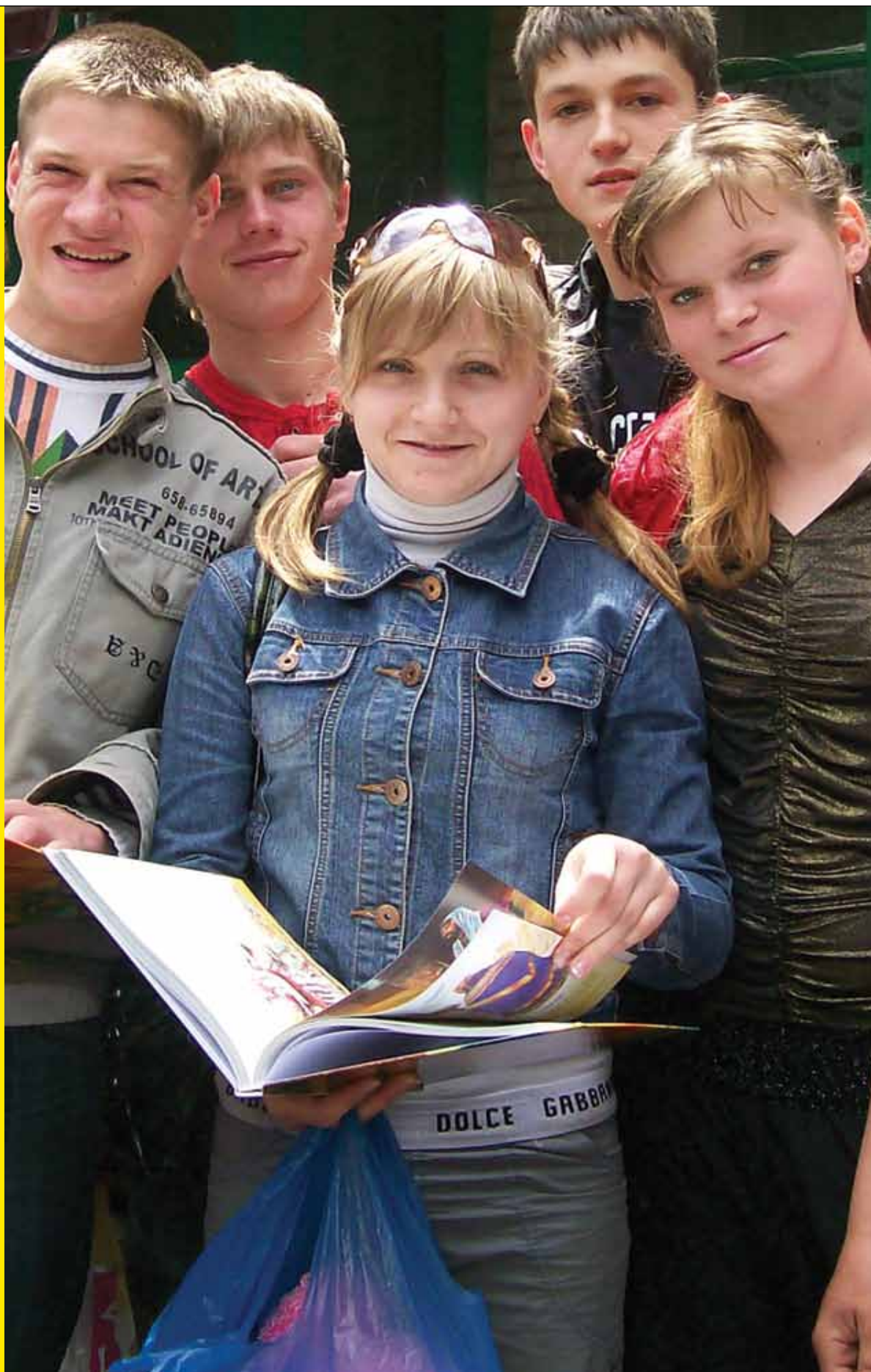
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Seeing church through eyes of an outsider

About 15 minutes before the Sunday morning worship assembly started, I pulled into the parking lot of a red-brick, tree-shaded Church of Christ in the Midwest.

Through my ministry with *The Christian Chronicle*, I am blessed to visit congregations all over the nation. Most of the time, though, somebody knows I'm coming, and



Bobby Ross Jr.

I receive a warm welcome.

In this case, I had attended an early service with a different group of Christians but decided to visit a second congregation — unannounced — before I flew home.

I had heard great things about the second church and even connected online with the preacher. He had helped me a few times when I e-mailed requests for sources and ideas to my *Chronicle* feedback list. I thought it would be neat to meet him in person and maybe even grab lunch if he happened to be free.

When I arrived, I noticed a sign for "Guest Parking."

"How sneaky," I thought with a chuckle, expecting someone to greet me quickly as I got out of my rental car.

But I made it to the main door without anyone saying anything — and without anyone noticing me, even

See **GUEST**, Page 4



PHOTOS BY ERIK TRYGGESTAD

Jerry Rushford gets a standing ovation before he delivers his final lecture as director of the Pepperdine Bible Lectures. The university honored Rushford for his 30 years of service to the lectures.

The world comes to Malibu

Overlooking the gorgeous Pacific coast in glamorous Malibu, Calif., Christians talked about ministering to the poor alongside native believers from Haiti, Uganda and Cuba.

The 69th annual Bible Lectures at Pepperdine University included speakers from more than 30 countries. More than 5,000 church members attended. On the final night, attendees received a book commemorating Jerry Rushford's 30 years as director of the lectures.



Philippe Dauner, minister in Marseilles, France, delivers a keynote address.



Attendees learn "A cappella songs for a new generation" during a class in Pepperdine's Stauffer Chapel.



University President Andrew Benton presents an award to Oji O. Oji, minister and publisher in Nigeria, and his wife, Ngozi.

Berkeley Hackett, missionary to Kenya, dies at 70

BY ERIK TRYGGESTAD | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

Berkeley North Hackett earned the nickname "Rhino" for his tenacity and tirelessness as he served souls in the East African nation of Kenya.

In 1970, the Detroit native and his wife, Charlotte, committed to two years of mission work in Kenya, said longtime friend Vincent Doan. That two years, Doan said, became "a 42-year lifetime of service."

Berkeley Hackett died of a heart attack May 21 in Kenya's capital, Nairobi. He was 70.

He attended Michigan Christian College, now Rochester College, and earned degrees from Harding University and the University of Alabama. In Kenya, he and his wife worked with the Church of Christ that meets in Nairobi's Eastleigh neighborhood. Seeking a way to train Kenyan Christians to support their ministry, he founded the Kenya Christian Industrial Training Institute, or KCITI.

In 2011, he handed the reins of the institute to Lydia Wanjiku, who grew up in the slums of Nairobi and was the first student to enroll at KCITI.

News of the missionary's death generated a flood of responses on *The Christian Chronicle's* news blog.

"What Mr. Berkeley Hackett has done for my life is unforgettable," said Martin Mulimbwa, a native of the Democratic Republic of Congo. "He helped so many Congolese refugees like me regain control of our lives after fleeing civil wars in our countries of origin."

The missionary "gave me hope," said Mulimbwa, who now lives in Canada, "and the training I received at KCITI shaped my future. Today I have life, hope and peace because of Christ, who utilized Berkeley Hackett."

A MEMORIAL SERVICE is scheduled for 2 p.m. June 23 at the Woodson Chapel Church of Christ, 5800 Edmondson Pike, Nashville, Tenn.



Hackett

www.christianchronicle.org


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GUEST: A disappointing experience for visitor

FROM PAGE 3

though I arrived at the same time as a handful of members.

Just inside, a nice, older lady handed me a colorful worship program. She smiled but did not introduce herself.

I walked slowly through the foyer and noticed small groups of people mingling and visiting with each other. After standing by myself for an awkward few moments, I made my way to the restroom and then led myself on a tour of the church building, hoping to run into my minister friend.

Feeling a little invisible, I headed into the auditorium and grabbed a seat at the end of an empty row. A family sat down in the pew in front of me but did not say anything — until another family arrived and joined them. The two families appeared to be wonderful friends, and they enjoyed catching up.

I searched my brain and confirmed that I *had* showered that morning and even shaved. So it couldn't be that I was turning off fellow Christians with an unsavory odor, right?

I had ironed a blue dress shirt and black pants and put on shiny black shoes. Could it be that I looked too *churchy*?

Just before the service started, a woman approached me, and I couldn't help but think that this might be my big moment. I was actually going to meet someone. My anticipation built.

"Are these seats taken?" the woman asked, referring to the rest of my empty row.

"No," I said, enjoying the longest conversation of my visit to this 200-member church 750 miles from home.

I finally saw my minister friend when he stepped to the pulpit to welcome everyone to the assembly.

He said he especially wanted the visitors to know how much everyone appreciated our attendance. In fact, he urged us to be sure to go to the welcome desk and receive a free gift.

My minister friend preached an excellent sermon. After the service, I went up to meet him.

He was talking with a member, so I stood beside the two of them, not wanting to interrupt and figuring someone would notice me standing there. But before I had a chance to say anything, another member passed in front of me,

stuck out his hand to the minister and told him how much he always enjoys his lessons.

Once or twice, I felt my minister friend glancing at me, but he never acknowledged me or said anything. He just kept talking to the other person. Maybe I really was invisible?

I finally gave up and walked to my car in the visitor parking lot. I couldn't help but feel

pretty disappointed as I drove away.

A few minutes later, I received a much more enthusiastic welcome.

As I turned into an off-airport parking lot to return my rental car, a man with a big smile spotted me immediately and waved me forward.

"How was your trip, Mr. Ross?" a second employee asked as he rushed to carry my bags to a waiting shuttle van.

"Come on in here, and we'll get you ready to go," said a third employee who poked his head outside an office door.

Sixty seconds, and three people already had made me feel at home. Next time I'm in town, you can bet I'll visit again.

The rental car place, that is.

CONTACT bobby.ross@christianchronicle.org.



PHOTO PROVIDED

A guest parking lot at a different church from the one visited.

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- Youth & Family Minister at Downtown Church of Christ in Searcy, Ark. (1995-2008)
- Spiritual Formation Minister at Fairfax Church of Christ in Fairfax, Va. (2008-present)

CLASSES SCHEDULED FOR FALL 2012

- Advanced Bible Study Techniques with Tim Westbrook
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- Spiritual Formation and Discipleship with Phil McKinney
- Congregational Ministries with Scot Crenshaw

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BAYOU LA BATRE — Daphne German always figured that by the time she turned 70, she'd be done with hard work.

"I'd walk on the beach like the old ladies with the floppy hats," said German, a great-grandmother.



German

Instead, she gets up every day at dawn to ready the food pantry at the Hemley Road Church of Christ, the *Press-Register* reported.

As a founder of the nonprofit Bayou Recovery, German believes that the restoration of Bayou La Batre, beaten down by Hurricane Katrina and the Deepwater Horizon oil spill, is far from over.

Four mornings a week, folks line up at the church pantry for a box of food. A truck ministry takes food to shut-ins.

NEW MEXICO

ALAMOGORDO — Cuba Avenue Church of Christ members organized a recent "Read the Bible Marathon."

The reading occurred in a gazebo at Alameda Park on White Sands along the city's main highway.

Volunteers took turns reading out loud, continuing through the night for four days, church member Elise Haley said.

"Young children, grandparents, teens — those of all ages — took a turn," Haley said.

NEW YORK

ROCHESTER — Franklin Florence, senior minister for the Central Church of Christ, holds a special place in Rochester's history.

He also holds a special place in the hearts of many people, the *Democrat and Chronicle* reported.



Florence

That was clear as more than 700 people gathered recently for a community recognition dinner that featured U.S. Rep. Jesse Jackson Jr., D-Ill., as keynote speaker. "It's humbling, very humbling to have this kind of outpouring of appreciation," Florence said. "It certainly is very special."

The minister is known for leading civil rights struggles and mobilizing thousands during prolonged battles that led



DONNA WATSON

'Bear Hugs Project': Missouri children donate teddy bears to police

Police officers Randall Hey and Jeff Loberg accept a donation of 250 teddy bears from children at the Hollister Church of Christ in Missouri.

Through the "Bear Hugs Project," the children raised money to provide bears for police to carry in their cars and give to children in crisis situations, member Donna Watson said. Loberg, a member of the Hollister church, thanked the children for the donation.

"When we get a call where children are involved, they are often very frightened," Loberg said, "and if we can kneel down in front of them and give them a bear to hug while telling them that everything is going to be all right, it makes a huge difference."

to Eastman Kodak Co. hiring hundreds of African-Americans in Rochester.

WASHINGTON

ABERDEEN — The Aberdeen Church of Christ traces its origins to 1944, when a small group of Christians began meeting for fellowship and worship.

The congregation recently celebrated its 68th year with a homecoming, said Reda Redding, wife of minister Lawrence Redding. Former ministers Al Robison, Melvin Byrd and Stanley Sherman delivered short messages.

"The afternoon was full with a potluck meal, a memory video and a time of sharing memories," Reda Redding said.

WEST VIRGINIA

SISTERSVILLE — The Pursley Church of Christ had diminished to about 15 members by the time minister Tom Butterfield arrived in 2006.

"There were no children," said Butterfield, who also serves as church

relations director for Ohio Valley University. "Things looked bleak."

But in time, things changed, Butterfield said, and the 120-year-old church is enjoying a revival.

The congregation's motto: "A place of new beginnings for all who come!"

Membership has grown to 115, with a mix of young families and "darling older Christians," the minister said.

"I've never been happier," he added.

WYOMING

LANDER — Radio advertisements focused on marriage, parenting and God's love have helped the Lander Church of Christ become better known in the community, the *Rocky Mountain Christian* reported.

The ads are just one outreach approach used by the 100-member church, which has added 10 people in the last year, evangelist Triston Jacobsohn told the newspaper.

For more information, see www.landerchurchofchrist.com.

SPOTLIGHT**Mission-minded at 100**

BRADENTON, Fla. — Nerve pain from postherpetic neuralgia has kept Lee Watkins from attending services lately at the 53rd Street Church of Christ.

But Watkins, who celebrated his 100th birthday May 4, remains vitally interested in mission work and still contributes to his favorite ministries, such as the Christian Home and Bible School in Mount Dora, Fla.

"His top interest is building (a radio) tower in Madagascar by World Christian Broadcasting," said his daughter Marilyn Watkins.

In his younger years, Lee Watkins started Churches of Christ in Panama and throughout south Florida.



Watkins



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REBEKAH LAZAR

Pennsylvania camp adds a college-age session

Chelsea Anderson reads her Bible during morning quiet time at "Camp College" at Camp Manatawny in Berks County, Pa., about 45 miles northwest of Philadelphia.

For more than 40 years, Manatawny, operated by members of Churches of Christ, has offered sessions for first- through 12th-graders. The recent Camp College — the idea of Andrew Cooper, a deacon for the King of Prussia Church of Christ in Pennsylvania — marked Manatawny's first-ever program specifically for college-age campers, assistant director Rebekah Lazar said.

Besides enjoying games and worship, campers put faith into action through two service projects.

Obama highlights journey of Missouri church member

JOPLIN, Mo. — A year after a tornado devastated this southwestern Missouri community, President Barack Obama highlighted the journey of high school senior Quinton Anderson.

Anderson, 18, attends the 26th and Connecticut Church of Christ, where his father served as a deacon. Quinton's parents, Bill and Sarah, were among the 161 people who died.

"In a lot of ways, Quinton's journey has been Joplin's journey," Obama said in a May 21 commencement address at Joplin High School.

"When the tornado struck, Quinton was thrown across the street from his house," the president said. "The young man who found him couldn't imagine that Quinton would survive such inju-

ries. Quinton woke up in a hospital bed three days later. It was then that his sister, Grace, told him that both their parents had been lost to the storm."

Obama described how Quinton faced five weeks of treatment, including emergency surgery, but left the hospital determined to carry on his life and be there for his sister.

"Over the past year, he's been a football captain who cheered from the sidelines when he wasn't able to play," Obama said. "He worked that much harder so he could be ready for baseball in the spring. He won a national scholarship as a finalist for the High School Football Rudy Awards, and he plans to study molecular biology at Harding University this fall."

"Quinton has said that his motto in life is, 'Always take that extra step,'" the president added, urging Quinton and all of Joplin to pursue their dreams.



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Dr. Bruce McLarry
"Not Ashamed of Our Hope"
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Dr. David Young
"Not Ashamed to Live Out Loud"
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I Corinthians 10:4



JENNY GARRISON

New Orleans children follow Jesus' example

Liv Burkhardt washes the feet of Wade Rogers during a Wednesday night class at the Carrollton Avenue Church of Christ in New Orleans. "The point of the lesson was to follow the examples that Jesus set for his disciples — show people we love them by serving them and praying for them," said teacher Jenny Garrison, wife of minister Kirk Garrison. Also pictured are Alanna Slate, in the pink shirt, and her sister, Elaine Slate, in the white shirt with flowers.

Texas church helps 450 needy families

GLADEWATER, Texas — Economic woes have hit this East Texas community hard.

Many people have lost jobs, and families are hurting, said Joe Chase, minister for the North Loop Church of Christ.

"We had one lady who visited us who lost all she had in a robbery of her home," Chase said. "She didn't even have shoes to wear."

She does now, thanks to the 100-member North Loop church.

The congregation provided more than 450 families with clothing, appliances, bicycles and household goods through its recent "Give Away Day."

"Our church families have been saving up to give to people in our neighborhood," Chase said. "We wanted to give away high-quality gifts to people in



JOE CHASE

Aaron Regalado Jr. reaches for a drink after receiving a new bicycle from the church.

need. Many of our items still had store tags on them."

The church plans to make the give-away an annual event.



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Maxwell Ave. Church of Christ in Ardmore, Okla., is seeking a Youth & Family Minister.

Our desire is to have a spiritually mature person who is able and eager to work with youth and young families. Due to the Lord blessing us, groundbreaking for a new building will begin in September 2012.

If interested, please send resume to maccfamily.org.

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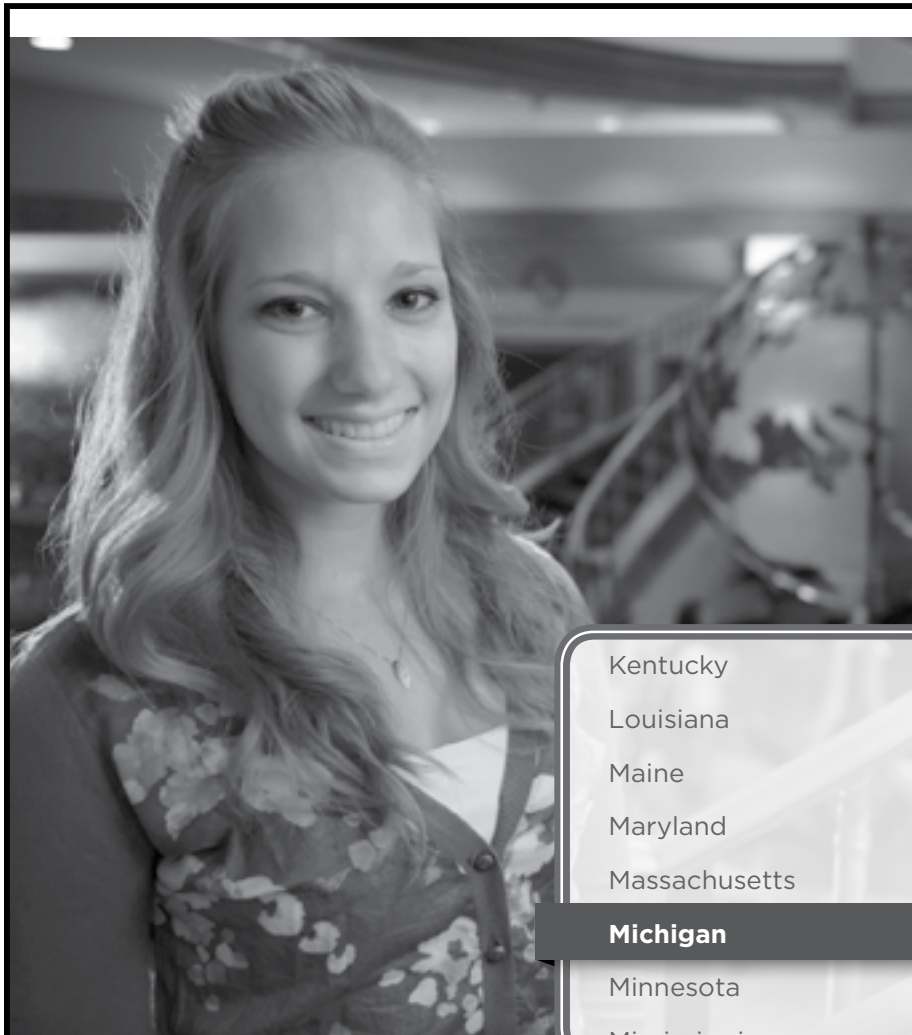
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Maplewood Church of Christ

is seeking a minister. We average 75 in attendance on Sunday morning. Send resume to 3530 Falling Springs Rd., Cahokia, IL 62206 or tferg@htc.net.

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Minister Needed

The Sonora church of Christ is seeking a full-time minister solid in the word and ready to work with our 75-member congregation to preach the Gospel. Interested candidates may submit a resume to the attention of Search Committee. Ed Howard Sr. or Barry Blaylock c/o Sonora Church of Christ, P.O. Box 3111, Sonora, CA 95370 or call Barry Blaylock for more information at (209) 586-8995.

Youth Ministry Position Available

The Northside Church of Christ in San Antonio is searching for a minister to lead our youth ministry far into the future. Northside is a Christ-centered, Spirit-led, grace-based, people-loving, forward-looking family of believers, consisting of approximately 750 members in attendance, including about 100 young people in Middle School and High School. Our church family is currently served by sixteen elders, five ministers and a host of servant-minded ministry leaders. The ideal candidate we're praying God will send our way would have a degree in Youth and Family ministry (or the equivalent in experience) and have a heart for cultivating relationships with young people and helping families navigate the challenges of our culture. Potential candidates should visit our website at www.nscoc.org to learn more about us. If interested, please send a resume, written philosophy of ministry, three references and a transcript to Dr. Johnnie Rosenauer, chair of the search committee, at jodaro@gvcc.com or call 210-275-8828. The deadline for inquiries is May 15.

ALBANIA

BERAT — Albanian evangelist Bledi Valca and U.S. church member Bill Morgan visited five congregations in the Berat region of south-central Albania.

"The churches in the area are losing their financial support at the end of July," Valca said, "and we wanted to ... meet with each preacher and talk about the needs of the church (financial, emotional, physical, training, resources, etc.) and encourage them to keep strong."

Meanwhile, 240 youths from 12 Albanian churches attended an annual youth rally. Kody Speer, youth minister for the MacArthur Park Church of Christ in San Antonio, was the guest speaker.

AUSTRALIA

MANSFIELD — "It's not the End of the World" was the theme for the annual Victorian Autumn Camp at Lake Nillahcootie in southeastern Australia.

Fifty-eight Christians from 10 Churches of Christ in five Australian states participated.

INDIA

NEW DELHI — Sunny David ministers for a Church of Christ in India's predominantly Hindu capital city. He recently produced a CD with a gospel presentation, "All About the Bible," to teach the people of his home country about Jesus. The minister plans to translate the lesson into Hindi, the dominant language of the region.

The church is constructing a new meeting place, scheduled for completion in October.

ISRAEL

JERUSALEM — Members of Netivayah, a Messianic Jewish ministry supported by Churches of Christ, celebrated Pentecost ("Shavuot" in Hebrew) with a cheesecake competition, minister Joseph Shulam said. The Christians also gave food to the needy.

"It is a very important biblical feast," Shulam said, "connecting



BILL WESTERBERG

House church in Philippines yields new souls, big smiles

Church members Emelio Macalisang, in white shirt, and Jonathan Echavez, to his right, wade and smile in the waters of the Philippines with five young men they baptized — Nimrod Echavez, Perlito Gemang, Jason Torres, George Jaculbe and Pepito Alinar. The baptisms followed Bible studies with a house church in Talisay City, Philippines.

Missionary Bill Westerberg asked Macalisang to take care of Sunday house church assemblies while Westerberg was on a two-month visit to the U.S. "I taught him and his wife how to make the communion bread," Westerberg said. "I made some Bible lesson outlines for him. ... Emelio did all of that and more. He taught and encouraged the visitors and World Bible School contacts to the point that some of them were ready to be baptized when I returned."

the giving of the Torah in Mount Sinai, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in Jerusalem and the harvest time."

TANZANIA

MOSHI — The Riverside Church of Christ, a 45-member congregation that meets at the foot of Mount Kilimanjaro, appointed its first pulpit minister recently.

Immanueli Laurenti Msangi will serve the 13-year-old congregation, planted by missionaries Ken and Ann Bolden in partnership with Charles and Florence Ngoje, Mark and Eunice Sure and Ryan and Lynda Hammitt.

"With this appointment, the



Msangi

church has made a significant step toward turning their hopes from the missionaries to themselves as Tanzanian nationals," said Charles Ngoje, who now works at the Nairobi Great Commission School in Kenya.

His brother, Ken, is the sole missionary still working with the church. He plans to phase out of the work soon and return to his home in Winyo, Kenya.

UKRAINE

KIEV — The Obolon Church of Christ in this Eastern European capital reports numerous baptisms through its outreach to area prisons.

"We believe that, through this plan, we see the hand of God," said Viktor Schuka, a prison minister for the church. "God will raise a pipeline of new ministers to save new souls."

UNITED KINGDOM

COLERAINE — The government of this borough in Northern Ireland — once the site of deadly clashes between British troops and the Irish Republican Army — has recognized the efforts of minister Robert Ritchie to promote peace and reconciliation. Ritchie, who preaches for the Church of Christ in Coleraine, received an award from the city's mayor councillor, Maurice Bradley.



PHOTO PROVIDED

Robert Ritchie with Coleraine Mayor Councillor Maurice Bradley.

SPOTLIGHT

Mercy mission to Moldova

CHISINAU, Moldova — This small, former Soviet country, sandwiched between Ukraine and Romania, is considered the poorest nation in Europe.

It's also ground zero for human trafficking on the continent, according to faith-based nonprofit Justice and Mercy International.

A team of 11 women from Lipscomb University in Nashville, Tenn., traveled to Moldova recently to assist an organization called Beginning of Life.

The organization, overseen by Moldovan Christians, works in the country's public schools, speaking out about the dangers of human trafficking. Beginning of Life encourages children to follow their dreams without giving in to the temptations of drugs and prostitution.

"Our mission is to serve women who have never been served by creating relationships with them, showing them the love of Christ and having a chance to grow as sisters in Christ together," said Alex Shumate, a member of the Woodmont Hills Church of Christ in Nashville.

The team also distributed bags of food to hungry families in Moldova.

SEE UPDATES on the team's blog at lumoldovamission.blogspot.com



LIPSCOMB.EDU/MISSIONS/MOLDOVA

An all-female team seeks to work with Moldovan girls to "grow as sisters in Christ together."



PHOTOS PROVIDED

Goats of joy: Texas church provides Zambian villagers with a self-sustainable source of income

Church members in Mpepo, Zambia, show off the goats they received from their brothers and sisters in Christ across the ocean. The Westside Church of Christ in Texarkana, Texas, has supported the church since the early 1990s, when it was established by Zambians who studied Scripture through the World Bible School correspondence program.

Few of the church's 24 families had enough to eat. A minister who visited the village recom-

mended that, instead of buying food, Westside members provide funds for goats, which villagers can use for milk and, eventually, income as the goats breed. The church provided funds for the goats and enough food to get the Zambians through the next harvest.

"The members of Mpepo are rejoicing that God has provided them with what they needed to survive," said Westside member Cherry Lloyd. "Westside was blessed with the joy of giving."

Christians in Nigeria, Greece mourn minister who died saving woman

BY ERIK TRYGGESTAD | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

Christians in Nigeria are hailing minister Adebawale Ajagunna as "a good shepherd who died at his duty post, guarding his sheep."

That's how one Nigerian, Modupe Aladeniyi, described her countryman on *The Christian Chronicle's* news blog.

Ajagunna, known as "Debo," died May 1 from a gunshot wound.

The minister had returned recently from Greece to be with his family and was helping organize a gospel campaign in the southwestern Nigerian city of Ikare-Akoko.

As they made plans for the event, Ajagunna and a group of Christians were assaulted by gunmen, apparently bent on robbery. Ajagunna was shot while attempting to aid a pregnant woman in the line of fire. The woman and her baby were uninjured.

A global community of church members — in Africa,

Europe and the U.S. — mourned the loss.

"Debo was a faithful and joyful Christian man," said Eleni Melirrytos, a member of the Omonia Church of Christ in Athens, Greece. She and her husband, minister Alexander Melirrytos, regularly visited Ajagunna and his congregation on the island of Crete.



Ajagunna

The Church of Christ that meets in Crete's largest city, Heraklion, was launched about five years ago by another Nigerian immigrant, John Adesoye.

Adesoye, a former Pentecostal minister, first encountered Churches of Christ through a search on Google that led him to World English Institute, a U.S.-based ministry that helps people improve their English using the Bible.

After several studies, Adesoye was baptized by Athens minister Dino Roussos.

In Crete, Ajagunna worked alongside Adesoye. The two ministers shepherded a congregation of expatriates — mostly Nigerians — in Heraklion.

In 2010, the Melirrytoses visited the church along with Tom and Cheryl Black, missionaries in nearby Bulgaria.

"We organized a celebratory dinner to share the joy and success of Debo's graduation with his doctorate degree," Eleni Melirrytos said.

One Nigerian who knew the minister, Babalola Joseph Oluwadamilola, described him as a vibrant worship leader.

"He really followed the footsteps of our Lord Jesus Christ," Oluwadamilola said.

Eleni Melirrytos is collecting funds to care for the minister's wife and children.

TO CONTRIBUTE, contact Melirrytos through her website, www.cookwitheleni.com.



ERIK TRYGGESTAD

Dottie McBride and her husband, Louis, stand with daughters Rachel and Jessie at their home near Cuenca, Ecuador, in 2009.

Dottie McBride dies at 67

CUENCA, Ecuador — Christians in North and South America are mourning Dottie McBride.

McBride, who served with her husband, Louis, as a missionary in Ecuador for more than 35 years, died from illness April 30. She was 67.

A native of Nacona, Texas, Dottie McBride attended Abilene Christian University. She and her husband lived in Cuenca, Ecuador, and served Churches of Christ throughout the South American nation.

Their daughter, Rachel Montesdesca, works with the Key Way Foundation, which helps deal with social problems in Ecuador "by providing a haven through which children can receive food, shelter, medical aid and emotional and spiritual support," according to the foundation's website.

MEMORIAL CONTRIBUTIONS may be made to the Ecuador Fund or the Key Way Foundation, both addressed to Nocona Church of Christ, 311 Cooke St, Nocona, TX 76255.



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ABILENE CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

‘Mystery guests’ help assess friendliness at Tenn. church

BY BOBBY ROSS JR. | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

At his favorite coffee shop, Dale Jenkins identifies his target: the stranger he'll invite to be a “mystery guest.”

The preacher will offer the person two \$10 gift cards to visit his church that Sunday — one card now and the other when the guest reports back Monday.

“I tell them we are needing some help determining if we are a friendly church,” said Jenkins, minister for the Spring Meadows Church of Christ in Spring Hill, Tenn., which started with 40 to 45 people seven years ago and has grown to 450 to 500.



Jenkins

He gives limited instructions: Keep up with how you're welcomed. Count how many speak to you. Track where you're greeted, be it the parking lot or foyer.

“I have used a form but have found a conversation is more revealing if they will keep notes during their visit,” Jenkins said. “Some may think this is too gimmicky, and it may be, but it is so hard for us to get an honest read on how we make guests feel.”

‘SECRET CHURCH SHOPPER’

Thomas Harrison provides “secret church shopper” services on a professional basis.

Presbyterians, Southern Baptists, United Methodists and others across the nation hire Harrison.

“I evaluate every portion of the (visitor) experience from entering the parking lot to exit from the church,” Harrison said.

Common weaknesses that he finds:

- **Clutter:** “Welcome areas, offices, foyer, Sunday school rooms often are magnets for clutter. Guests will visit restrooms and Sunday school classes before they visit your worship space.”

- **Lack of signs:** “Signage is neither informational or directional. Guests may not know where to park, which door to enter or how to navigate the halls.”

- **Embarrassment:** “Some churches embarrass a guest by making them stand up to identify themselves.”

- **Inadequate follow-up:** “If

churches do not have a system of gathering a name and address of the guest, how can follow-up occur? Once you have a name and contact information from a guest, follow up.”

Wayne Kilpatrick preaches for the Heritage Place Church of Christ in Irondale, Ala., which in eight years has grown from 60 members to 210.

First impressions are crucial, he said, and extend beyond friendliness and “Wow!” worship experiences. “It is very important that the church grounds are mowed and edged, shrubbery trimmed and classrooms neat, clean and attractive,” Kilpatrick said.



Harrison

Moreover, sermons require a “So what?” aspect.

“Preaching must be biblical and personal,” he said. “Those who preach need to remember that we preach to instruct, convert and convict, not to impress.”

‘THE ELECTRONIC VESTIBULE’

Before ever turning into a church's parking lot, most guests will check the congregation's website, Jenkins said.

“It has become the electronic vestibule,” he said.

That means that churches should make sure their website is visitor-friendly, Jenkins said.

For example, are driving directions and worship times easy to find? Does the site highlight activities such as Vacation Bible School and Children's Bible Hour that might appeal to a family new to town?

On Mondays, the Tennessee church follows up with “no guilt visitation” — taking guests homemade banana nut bread and a keepsake such as a keychain or pen featuring the church logo.

“We don't go in unless they insist,” Jenkins said.

Along with old-fashioned home visits, the church uses cutting-edge technology to connect. To each guest for whom he can find an e-mail address, the minister sends a personalized, video “thank you.”

READ EXPANDED INTERVIEWS with Jenkins, Harrison and Kilpatrick at www.christianchronicle.org.



ERIK TRYGGESTAD

In Nigeria, foreign visitors to a rural Church of Christ receive gifts of eggs and fruit.

In Africa, visitors receive warm greetings – in words and song – from church members

BY ERIK TRYGGESTAD | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

Visit a church in the landlocked, West African nation of Burkina Faso, and you'll likely hear this song, sung in Dagara, the local language:

Children of Christ, a visitor has come to our church. We greet you in the name of Jesus Christ!

Go to them, and let's grab them.

Don't worry. “Grab” basically means “shake hands,” says missionary Andy Johnson. Visitors, especially those from nearby villages, “are treated like they belong, almost like they've always been there,” Johnson says.

Often, they're given a task to help ready the church for worship.

“How do you get a visitor to stick around? Put them to work!” the missionary says.

Across Africa, where Churches of Christ have grown exponentially in the past half-century, visitors are viewed as “God-sent possible converts,” says Arnold Dzah, a native of Ghana working as a missionary in the predominantly Muslim nation of Senegal.

In Senegal, visitors are introduced by name during the congregation's announcement time, “for the whole congregation to wish them welcome in unison,” Dzah says.

It's almost an expected treatment, the minister says. When a member of his congregation traveled to a foreign country and wasn't greeted in such a manner, the visitor found a church elder

and expressed his disappointment.

In Gambia, a tiny West African nation completely surrounded by Senegal, visitors to the Kanifing Church of Christ also hear a special song, minister David Thoronka says.

At one point in the song, members rise, seek out guests and shake hands.

“Members always sing this song with passion and affection,” Thoronka says, “to let the visitors know that we appreciate them and wish them to come back.”

In the southern African nation of Malawi, visitors come to the front of the congregation, often before the Lord's Supper, said missionary Marc Veary. Church members introduce each visitor.

It's a similar procedure at the Nyamue Church of Christ in Kenya, minister David Marube says. Greeters sit in the back of the auditorium to keep guests from leaving without a welcome. After services, Marube's wife, Bassy, invites visitors to their home for lunch.

Back in Senegal, Dzah invites visitors to his office after worship for beverages and conversation. He gives them his phone number and, sometimes, walks them back home.

“This has brought many visitors back to the church, and some have become converts,” he says.

One former visitor now serves as a preacher for a village congregation.

“If we open a church door for visitors to come in, let's close the other door to keep them from going out,” he says.

VISITORS: The average Joe Schmo is 'usually only minimally engaged'

FROM PAGE 1

Michael Ray, minister for the Laurel Church of Christ in Maryland, said churches like to talk about how friendly they are. "What they really mean is that they're friendly to each other. But guests? Not so much," said Ray, who urges members to observe a "two-minute rule" after the closing prayer and talk only to people they don't know before seeking out friends.

John Scott spent 19 years as minister for the Saturn Road Church of Christ in Garland, Texas, before going to work for Christian Care Centers last year. Scott and his wife, Teresa, have visited about 30 congregations in the past 15 months — often with him as the guest preacher.

"We have been dismayed by the rampant self-delusion of local congregations about their perceptions of themselves," he said. "Sure, folks are friendly and gregarious — to the people they know.

"But the poor Joe Schmo that wanders in not knowing anyone is usually only minimally engaged by the congregation despite our fancy 'welcome centers' or coffee bars."

ALL ALONE ON A PEW

It happened years ago.

Still, Laura Tokosh remembers being a young mother with an infant and visiting a church where no one spoke to her.

"It left such an impression on me that I always try to reach out to others, whether I'm a visitor or not," said Tokosh, an Ohio resident who worships with the Ravenna Church of Christ on Sundays and teaches a Wednesday night class at the Kent Church of Christ.

Two decades ago, Laura Leach was the "new girl" at church who came in late, sat in the back and left early.

Now, her husband, Rick Leach, preaches for the Central Church of Christ in Bedford, Ind., and she makes greeting visitors a priority.

"The first 10 minutes someone steps in your building will determine if they ever return," Laura Leach said.

"Too often, churches are stuck in cliques and cannot get past their few friends to say hello to any new folks,"

she added, stressing that she was speaking in general terms and not about her home congregation.

Nonetheless, such stories abound.

Steven Hunter, minister for the Tompkinsville Church of Christ in Kentucky, won't ever forget one church where he spoke.

The preacher who invited Hunter greeted him but excused himself to take care of a class situation.

"When left to myself, not one person acknowledged me," Hunter said. "I often wonder what they thought after I was introduced and got up to speak. I told my wife that if I had been a visitor looking for a church home, they would have been ruled out."

STRATEGIES FOR CONNECTING

Besides teaching at Freed-Hardeman, Blackwelder serves as a minister for the

Estes Church of Christ. He described moving to a rural community years ago.

The community had two mid-sized churches. Blackwelder and his wife, Dana, decided to visit both.

The first church had a nice building and an appearance of prosperity and progress, he said. But only one person besides the preacher greeted the couple.

The second church met in an older facility in a less-affluent part of town.

"We were warmly greeted by many, and one of the families invited us to their house for lunch," Blackwelder said. "You can guess which church we chose."

Blackwelder, who presents seminars on church growth, recommends three specific strategies to reach out to visitors:

• **First, the church's** culture must be shaped to focus on *others*. "An outreach mentality should be developed so that Christians see their primary function not

as maintenance but growth."

• **Second, leaders must** overtly exhort members to approach others. "This is a function of communication. The members need to hear from the leadership that we can do better and why it is important."

• **Third, specific actions** must be enacted to ensure contact. "This can include the usual greeters and 'goodbyes,' but it needs to extend beyond that. Inviting guests to sit with you, expressing genuine interest in the visitor through more extended personal conversations and invitations to lunch, pizza, coffee, etc., are examples of specific actions."

Blackwelder stressed that such strategies primarily affect transfer growth.

"Most people who are not already members of Churches of Christ are unlikely to be comfortable visiting church services anyway," he said. "Growth among the unchurched or denominational sectors generally comes through personal contact away from the building. However, that important transition from non-Christian to new Christian ... can be heavily influenced by the church's friendliness and a growing number of meaningful relationships with members."

After their Dallas-area visits, Stirman, her husband, Troy, and their two teenage children chose the Greenville Oaks Church of Christ in Allen, Texas. "We landed at a church where we knew a few folks and were greeted warmly," she said.

Hebrews 13:2 says: "Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers, for by so doing some people have shown hospitality to angels without knowing."

The experience of Stirman's family has heightened her awareness of potential angels.

"When we wear the name of Christ, it is our responsibility to be hospitable to those who walk into the building where we worship," she said. "Granted, some Sundays we need the love and comfort of our church family to surround us more than we can be the hands and feet of Christ to others. But if each of us took this simple action seriously, each visitor would be welcomed every time they walked into the building."



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Portraits painted by Roy Leandro, a Costa Rican Christian and artist, show the smiling faces of seniors at assisted-living facilities. Leandro painted the portraits during a 2011 visit to the U.S.

Christian artist paints portraits of ministry



ERIK TRYGGESTAD

Roy Leandro uses his iPad to show portraits he painted. The church member hopes one day to use his talents to help the needy in Africa.

COSTA RICAN CHURCH MEMBER finds 'better blessings' as he serves seniors

BY ERIK TRYGGESTAD | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

LA FORTUNA, Costa Rica

Roy Leandro has an iPad full of wrinkles and smiles.

Taking a brief respite during a gospel lecture-ship in this Central American resort town, he flips through a collection of portraits on his tablet computer. Each represents an old soul — a resident of a nursing home visited by the Costa Rican artist last summer.

"What I want to do is make them feel happy and comfortable with their own image," he says. "I want them to know, 'You are a piece of art.'"

Portrait painting, on its surface, doesn't seem an obvious way to help the elderly. It didn't seem that way to Leandro, either.

Leandro, 34, is a member of the Sabanilla Church of Christ near Costa Rica's capital, San Jose. He says the idea for his unique ministry came during a trip to visit his sister in Sweden.

"I told her I was not interested in doing tourist stuff," Leandro says. Instead, he wanted a chance to serve others — perhaps volunteering at a nursing home. He envisioned busing tables and sweeping floors, but workers at the home were fascinated by his art.

He spent time with the home's

residents and started sketching them.

"It was my vacation, but it was not like a vacation," he says.

It was better.

"I was able to use art to serve people. It was a great way to encourage the residents."

Leandro's commitment to art — and to God — was born out of boredom. His mother was a strict disciplinarian, determined that her son would not get into trouble like many of his peers.

As a teenager, he was grounded multiple times. Art was a form of expression that didn't require him to leave the house.

Nonetheless, the groundings seemed eternal. He pleaded with his mother, who said, "The only way you can go outside is if you go to church with me."

He started attending services and sensed that the Lord was changing his heart. A few years later, a girl he dated introduced him to the Church of Christ.

There, church members convinced him "to commit myself to the Bible — not the things a preacher or a pastor or anyone is talking about — the things God can show me through the Word."

After his baptism about 10 years ago, he interned at an advertising agency, but he disliked the prospect of creating posters for

cigarettes and beer. He worked in a call center, thinking of it as a way to help people while improving his English.

Then came the Sweden trip.

At the nursing home, "I was using my time to do something very effective," Leandro says.

Last summer, he cobbled together funds to fly to the U.S. Staying with church members and friends, he traveled to six states, painting portraits at assisted-living facilities.

"Roy did a great job here in Chattanooga," said Rachel Cortez, who served with her husband, Hector, as a missionary in Costa Rica and now lives in Tennessee.

"God has obviously given him a heart for the elderly and a very artistic gift," she says. "He has chosen to use both for God's glory. I'm impressed with his dedication and sincere care for each person he meets."

Leandro plans to return to the U.S. this fall, traveling from New York to Kansas, painting portraits at eight nursing homes. He will host art shows at each one and donate the portraits.

He seeks support to expand the work and encourages other Christian artists to use their gifts for ministry.

"If I am serving other people," he says, "the one who is receiving the better blessings is me."

Showing Christ in a Honduran dump

THE HARDWORKING POOR in this Central American nation receive food, funds and faith from a Christian ministry



Trey Morgan, minister for the Childress Church of Christ in Texas, pulls plastic bottles from the trash at the dump.

STORY, PHOTOS BY ERIK TRYGGESTAD
THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

TEGUCIGALPA, Honduras

You smell it before you see it.

The scent of rotting garbage wafts down from a hilltop dump in this Central American capital.

On a Wednesday morning, Marc Tindall and a small group of Christians from the U.S. walk the winding path that leads to the landfill, past tiny, clapboard homes infiltrated by the odor. The people who live here don't seem to mind.

Neither does Tindall, a retired executive for the U.S. snack giant Nabisco. He and his wife, Terri, moved to Honduras about five years ago to oversee a children's home and serve as missionaries

to those in need.

Now, he's a regular at the dump. Shouts of "Marco! Marco!" greet him as he passes.

As the U.S. Christians crest the hill and arrive at the landfill, at least 70 Hondurans are here already — clad head to toe in hoodies, gloves and stocking caps, driven by need to sort through other people's garbage.

They work side by side with vultures. As the birds circle overhead, diving for scraps of rotting food, the Hondurans search for scraps of metal, cardboard, plastic bottles — anything they can sell to recyclers to support their families.

One woman, spotting a pair of toddler-sized blue jeans, carefully folds them and places them in a bag, separate from the green bottles she's collecting.

Many of the women here are

single mothers, explains Melissa Rivera, a 22-year-old Honduran Christian who works with Tindall. Born into poverty, they are forced from their homes as teens when their mothers can't afford to feed them.



Christian, age 11, digs through the garbage at the Honduran dump.



Lourdes Alvarez provides shade for missionary Marc Tindall as they take a break at the Honduran dump.

On the streets, they meet men who promise them money and security. They know it's probably a lie, but "when you have nothing, you go," Rivera says. Within a year, they are pregnant and abandoned. The Tindalls do what they can

to help the people at the dump, providing meals, showers and education through their ministry, Honduras Hope.

Christians in the U.S. are involved, including Trey Morgan, minister for the Childress Church of Christ in Texas. Morgan sponsors an online "Dump Day" fundraiser. The latest one yielded more than \$40,000, with help from Bread for a Hungry World, a church-supported nonprofit.

Though he's been here many times — handing out food and setting up chairs for a "Jesus Banquet" at Christmastime — Morgan has never experienced the day-to-day life of the people who work at the dump.

So, on this Wednesday morning, Morgan and his fellow U.S. Christians pull on work gloves

and join the line of Hondurans — waiting for the next garbage truck.

DUMP CULTURE

A few Hondurans grin at the sight of the tall gringos picking through the trash but gladly accept the help. They caution the newcomers to stand back as the massive dump trucks empty their contents.

They are professionals, and they have a system. When a garbage truck arrives, two or three scamper to the top and throw the largest pieces of cardboard to their compatriots below. As the truck ejects its cargo, one Honduran "surfs" the wave of trash as it slides to the ground.

The workers then take their places around the pile, tossing their finds into old dog food bags or garbage sacks. When the



James Gillim searches for pieces of cardboard. His sister, Christina, is an intern at Casa de Esperanza, a children's home near Tegucigalpa, Honduras.

bulldozer arrives to shovel the pile into the back of the landfill, they retreat to their "stations" near the dump's entrance, sorting their wares until the next truck arrives.

Nearby, small trucks wait to receive the recyclables. Their drivers give the hardworking poor a few lempiras, Honduran currency, in return.

There's civility — even camaraderie — among the Hondurans. When the Honduras Hope food truck arrives, they form two orderly lines as the Tindalls' coworkers shovel out bowls of steaming beans, rice and tortillas.

It wasn't always this way, says Terri Tindall, who first visited the dump with her husband on their daughter's birthday — Feb. 19, 2008. The Tindalls, who oversee Casa de Esperanza in nearby Santa Ana, were doing

relief work near the dump and asked about the mass of people they saw headed up the hill toward the landfill.

Don't go up there, the Honduran Christians advised. It's dangerous. They went anyway.



Honduran Christians prepare a free lunch for workers at the garbage dump.

"We were just shocked at what we saw," Terri Tindall says. They returned a few days later with beans and bread.

"I was scared to death," she recalls. "I just sat and prayed all the way. And they just swarmed

the truck, and there was fighting and pushing. It was very chaotic.

"It was hard being able to look in their eyes," she adds, "seeing the hopelessness and despair."

Despite the negative experience, the Tindalls didn't quit.

They returned with more food. Now their ministry makes twice-weekly visits to feed the workers.

The Tindalls also got to know the people. They help with child-care and baby formula for the single mothers who work here. Marc Tindall tells them he doesn't want to see children at the dump.

When the bulldozer accidentally ran over a young boy collecting trash, Honduras Hope paid for the surgery that kept the boy from losing his leg.

Recently, the ministry completed a bathroom and shower facility

CONTINUED



Vultures take flight as Hondurans pick through the garbage at the Tegucigalpa dump, looking for cardboard, metal, plastic and other materials they can sell to nearby recyclers.

next to the dump for the workers to use, free of charge.

As a result, the culture here has changed, Terri Tindall says. Now her husband “can call them by name, and they can call him by name.”

The Tindalls’ daughter, Nicole Fitzgerald, and her husband, Matt, also work with the ministry. The couple plans to open a new children’s home, similar to Casa de Esperanza, in the next year.

Meanwhile, they help with the feeding program at the dump.

“I’m to the point where I don’t see the dump or notice the smell,” Matt Fitzgerald says as he drives the food truck between two feeding sites.

“I see the people.”

BIG DREAMS AND BIBLE STUDIES

Among the hardest-working souls in the dump is an 11-year-old boy named Christian.

He started coming to here about a month ago to help feed his 10-member family. He says he doesn’t mind sorting through the trash, but he dreams of someday becoming a bricklayer.

Julio Lobo also is here, but he’s not working. He’s on a break from school and came to the dump to say hi to his U.S. friends.

Lobo, 15, left the dump and enrolled in school, thanks to a scholarship program provided by Honduras Hope.

Crouching on a trash pile, careful not to get his jeans dirty, Julio talks about his plans

to finish school — and become a lawyer.

Marc Tindall wants more Honduran children to have big dreams for their lives — on earth and in the hereafter. The ministry has opened doors for the Gospel, he says.

When workers express an interest, local preachers join the journey to the dump and conduct Bible studies. In the small community below the dump, Honduras Hope plans to construct a feeding center and church building.

ONE MOTHER’S FIGHT TO SURVIVE

On a break between trash trucks, Marc Tindall finds Lourdes Alvarez, a 22-year-old single mother. She has set up a broken car bumper as a make-

shift sorting station.

Morgan and the other U.S. Christians help her separate clear plastic bottles from green, and metal from cardboard.

On a good day, she can earn 200 to 250 lempiras (\$10 to \$13) for her work. She’s here as often as six days a week, walking two hours each way, to support her 18-month old daughter, Meilyn, her handicapped sister and her mother. Honduras Hope provides formula for the baby.

Despite her severe need, Alvarez spends part of her time at the dump helping others. When another trash truck arrives, she stops scavenging to help a fellow Honduran pull a splinter from his hand. She has worked at the annual Jesus Banquet, Morgan says.

After serving the Hondurans lunch, Morgan and the other U.S. Christians change clothes, discarding the ones they wore at the dump, and eat lunch at Marc Tindall’s favorite restaurant in Tegucigalpa — the same one that provides food for the Jesus Banquet.

“We’re officially done with our day at the dump, but not Lourdes,” Morgan says. Sometime later today she’ll walk two miles back to her home and change her clothes. In the morning she’ll put those same nasty, stinking, filthy clothes back on and go do it all again.

“That breaks my heart.”

TO SUPPORT MINISTRIES that serve people at the Honduran dump, see www.givebread.org or treymorgan.net.

BY LYNN McMILLON | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

Churches of Christ do a lot of things well in global missions.

Dan Bouchelle wants to make sure that they benefit from each other's wisdom — and stay focused on Christ's commission to "go and make disciples of every nation."

For the past two years, he has served as executive director of Missions Resource Network, established in 1998 "to discover how the mission efforts of Churches of Christ could be improved without violating the autonomy of the local church," according to the Texas-based ministry's website.

Bouchelle, who started preaching in his early teens, seemed an unusual choice for MRN, known mostly for its foreign mission work. He didn't spend years "on the field" in Tanzania or Brazil. Instead, he served for nine years as senior minister for the Central Church of Christ in Amarillo, Texas. Before that, he ministered for churches in Norman, Okla., and Abilene, Texas.

But Bouchelle doesn't see a divide between foreign and domestic work. Through his role with MRN, he hopes to help churches obtain a global view of their mission — whether they're working around the corner or across the ocean.

"There just isn't as much difference between Lubbock, Los Angeles, Lagos and Luxembourg as there used to be," Bouchelle says.

Bouchelle has authored three books — "The Gospel Unleashed" and "The Gospel Unhindered" by College Press and "When God Seems Absent" by Hillcrest Press. He and his wife, Amy, have three children.

What time is it now in the development of global missions? What is the proper role for the American church in global work?

There are four stages in taking the Gospel to any culture or country:

1. **Sending workers** (pioneer missionaries).
2. **Training workers** (schools for national church leaders).
3. **Equipping local designers of mission** (turn the responsibility over to nationals to make it better fit their culture).
4. **Network and resource mature national churches with the global church** (share learning and resources).

In most parts of the world, the first two stages are completed or are well underway. The challenge today is



WAYNE STEEL

Dan Bouchelle speaks at Missions Resource Network's offices in Bedford, Texas.

A conversation with Dan Bouchelle

MISSIONS RESOURCE NETWORK *director discusses the changing roles of the global church.*

moving to the last two stages. This is difficult because it means releasing control and trusting national leaders to do things in their cultural context instead of in an American way.

Too often, Americans think of the U.S. church as the "adult church." The explosion of the Christian movement in the Global South illustrates the potential of mature, indigenous-led evangelistic efforts to produce movements of churches that plant churches.

Rather than trying to teach the international church to be like us, we need to learn from them.

How does Missions Resource Network help churches in missions?

We help church leaders develop a common understanding of who they are in God's mission and how they can more effectively advance the Kingdom.

We help connect them to partner churches and ministries with whom they can jointly accomplish God's mission. We help them screen their potential missionaries, equip them to be excellent sending churches, and train them in how to disengage from a mission effort well.

We offer practical resources on our website, provide missionary care services and have become a one-stop-shop for missions in Churches of Christ.

What is MRN doing to promote more active evangelistic efforts at home and missions efforts abroad?

The key is to encourage churches to think and act like missionaries instead of just supporting missionaries.

We have church-equipping workshops we do on location. Some will soon be online to help churches rediscover the God of mission, the mission of God, God's process of making disciples and then set a course to live on mission.

We help churches think through how to make everything they do grow out of their God-shaped mission — so that what they do locally is a fit with what they do globally.

Globally, what are the most exciting projects or congregational efforts you've witnessed in missions?

I have witnessed outward-thinking churches on several continents. These churches are obsessed with getting the

message of Jesus out and planting new churches in every community.

In other countries, the focus does not seem to be on being successful as an institution but rather on the expansion of the Kingdom through investment in new churches. I've seen churches that don't complete their own buildings because so much of their money and energy is going into gospel planting. They are not burdened with the need to validate themselves as much as make sure everyone has an opportunity to learn the freeing truth about Jesus.

Are there any domestic mission efforts that you find exciting?

What thrills me is when I see churches selflessly pouring themselves into their community. I love to see churches continuing what Jesus "did and taught" (Acts 1:1).

The growth of ministries of compassion, investment in the poor, speaking up for those with no voice, loving the hard-to-love, speaking against injustice, etc., is very exciting and long needed. However, it must be done in the name of Jesus and as a demonstration of God's heart. We need to be thinking of planting churches among those in need as well as inviting them to join the churches we have.

Since U.S. churches often are inwardly focused, how can they be encouraged to evangelize?

I don't have the answers. Perhaps some of the problem is a matter of confusing membership recruitment and disciple making. In an age of great distrust of all institutions, the church is viewed with suspicion. Christians may value the role the church plays in their life, but we should not expect people far from God to find it as attractive.

We need to encourage our people to develop relationships with people who are far from God. We need to free up our people from so many church activities so they have more time to invest in relationships with non-believers and equip them to serve people far from God.

If we are making disciples, the church will emerge on its own in a variety of forms. But if we are only investing in church growth or membership recruitment, we will have a hard time getting people to follow us in this era when many do not trust church. We need to get the focus off of building up our institutions and focus on making disciples.

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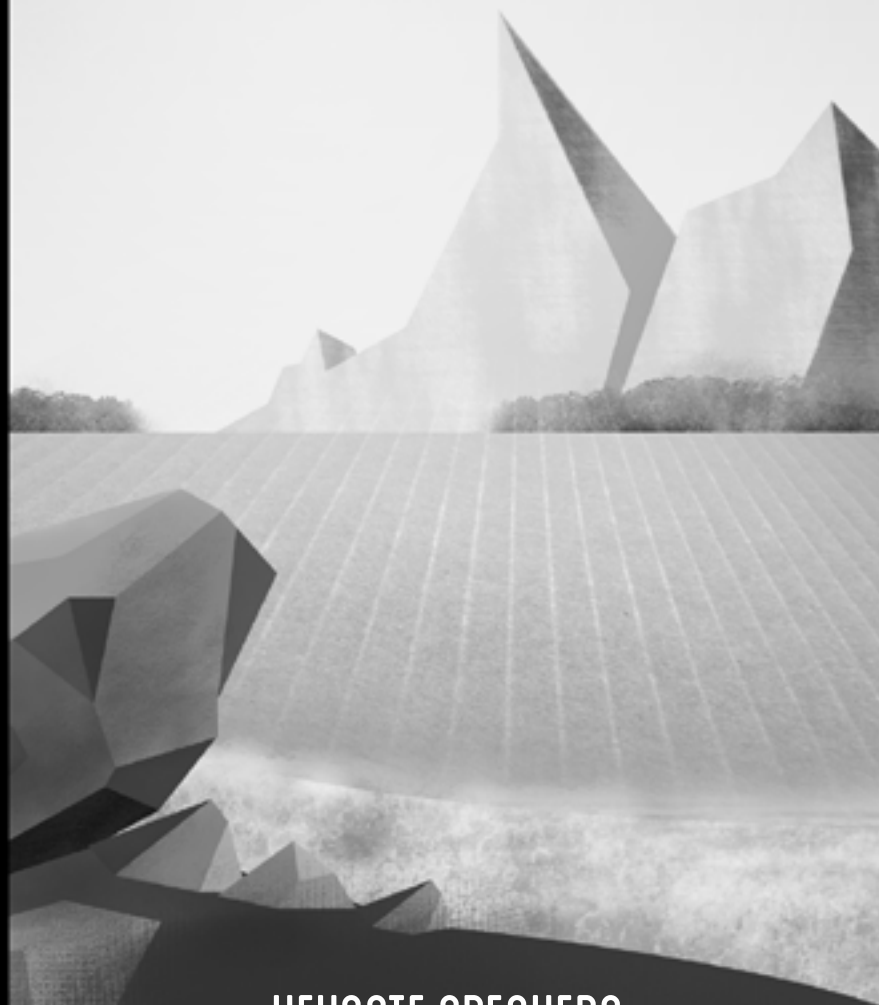
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BIBLE CAMPS

GANDER BROOK CHRISTIAN CAMP

RAYMOND, Maine — Gander Brook plans a memorial service at 4 p.m. June 24 — the Sunday of its annual Work and Worship Week — to celebrate the life of Cecil Perkins.

A beloved figure to generations of campers, Perkins died Jan. 9 at age 58. He was a member of the White Station Church of Christ in Memphis, Tenn.

For more information, e-mail cecilgbmemorial@gmail.com or call (603) 623-5559.

CAMPUS MINISTRY

EKKLESIA CAMPUS MINISTRY

KIRKSVILLE, Mo. — The Kirksville Church of Christ's Ekklesia campus ministry recently marked the 100th anniversary of the Titanic's sinking with a party at Truman State University.

At the Saturday event, partygoers received first-, second- or third-class tickets and competed for seats on a lifeboat, church elder Barry Poyner said.

That Sunday at church, students studied the biblical account of Paul's shipwreck, Poyner said.

CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

ARMS OF HOPE

MEDINA, Texas — Kevin McDonald, president and CEO of Arms of Hope, resigned effective June 1.

McDonald and his wife, Nathalie, recently moved to Houston to care for their infant daughter Marlie Ruth, who is undergoing treatment for brain cancer.

Under McDonald's leadership, Arms



PHOTO PROVIDED BY KEVIN McDONALD

Marlie Ruth McDonald, who is undergoing treatment for brain cancer, with her mother.



KRISTI JONES

Lipscomb graduates 26 Malagasy students

Joel Randrianasolomamonjy receives his degree May 5 from Randy Lowry, president of Lipscomb University in Nashville, Tenn. The graduate is one of 26 students from Madagascar who spent the last four years at Lipscomb and earned a college degree paid for by the Malagasy government.

of Hope was formed in 2009 with the consolidation of Medina Children's Home and Boles Children's Home, 40 miles northeast of Dallas. Since the consolidation, the ministry has added two urban programs in the Dallas area.

"This has been a very difficult decision because I dearly love serving socially disadvantaged children through Arms of Hope," McDonald said.

HIGHER EDUCATION

ABILENE CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

ABILENE, Texas — Four ACU professors attended a special White House briefing on "Advancing the Common Good at Home and Abroad."

The recent event, hosted by the Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships, focused on topics important to the faith community.

"It is important that as religious educators we hear from government policymakers and that they hear from

us," said Mark Hamilton from ACU's Graduate School of Theology.

Other attendees included Jerry Taylor and Chris Hudson from the Department of Bible, Missions and Ministry and Carisse Berryhill from the Brown Library.

HARDING UNIVERSITY

SEARCY, Ark. — Harding will begin offering scholarships to incoming freshmen who have attained the highest levels in scouting programs in the U.S.

Jim Carr, executive vice president, announced the \$1,000-a-year scholarships at the recent annual board meeting for Members of Churches of Christ for Scouting.

OKLAHOMA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

OKLAHOMA CITY — Oklahoma Christian is opening a Texas office in the Dallas area.

The office on the sixth floor of Las Colinas Tower One in Irving, Texas, will serve as a local hub for student recruiting, church relations, fundraising

SPORTS

Best 18 holes ever

OKLAHOMA CITY — Former Oklahoma Christian University golfer Rhein Gibson shot a 55 on May 12 at River Oaks Golf Club, tying for the lowest known 18-hole score in history.

Gibson, a native of Linsmore, Australia, shot 16-under-par, making 12 birdies, two eagles and four pars. He had only 19 putts in the round.

The Edmond, Okla., resident was a four-time first-team NAIA All-American while at Oklahoma Christian from 2005 to 2008. He plays on the *Golfweek* National Pro Tour, a development tour.



OKLAHOMA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

Rhein Gibson enjoyed a dream day on the golf course, shooting a record-tying 55.

and outreach to Oklahoma Christian's Texas alumni.

Alumnus Alan Phillips will lead the office as the university's new vice president for Texas operations.

K-12 CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS

CHRISTIAN HERITAGE SCHOOL

SAN ANTONIO — By any standard, Christian Heritage's Class of 2012 had an unconventional senior year.

When the 180-student school lost its lease a year ago, many were crushed to see it close. But an agreement with an area private school allowed eight seniors to finish their studies in what they affectionately dubbed their "one-room school," the *San Antonio Express-News* reported.

Christian Heritage recently held its final graduation ceremony at the MacArthur Park Church of Christ, where the school opened the doors of its first site 34 years ago.

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Nigerian Christian school celebrates 25 years

Public officials and administrators at Obong Christian High School in southern Nigeria cut a cake celebrating the school's "Silver Jubilee." Principal Essang Akpanudo stands at center. To his right are his parents and the school's founders, Moses and Jessie Akpanudo. The school provides Christian education for about 1,000 students in grades seven to 12. Recently, a team of students from the school won first place in a science competition, besting students from 62 other schools in their state. The Mount Morris Church of Christ in Michigan supports the work.

Chronicle wins seven 'Best of the Christian Press' awards

CHICAGO— *The Christian Chronicle* won seven awards — including top honors in five categories — in the annual "Best of the Christian Press" contest sponsored by the Associated Church Press.

The national awards, recognizing work produced in 2011, were presented at the religious press association's recent annual convention.

"These awards are one indication of the journalistic quality that we are committed to bringing readers in print and online," said Lynn McMillon, the *Chronicle's* editor, president and CEO.

Winning entries included:

- **First Place, In-Depth Coverage**, for "The Gospel in South Sudan," by Erik Tryggstad.

- **First Place, News Story**, for "Arizona shooting victim was a hero to his church family," by Bobby Ross Jr.

- **First Place, Feature Article**, for "Suicide: Healing a wounded town," by Ross.

- **First Place, Biographical Profile**, for "Air Force chaplain welcomes the fallen home," by Tryggstad.

- **First Place, Newspaper Design, Spread or Story**, for "Currents: Latin America," by Tryggstad.

- **Second Place, Convention or Meeting Coverage**, for "Saving Sin City," by Ross.

- **Third Place, Best in Class, National or International Newspaper**, for *The Christian Chronicle*.



ERIK TRYGGSTAD



PHOTO PROVIDED BY PAMELA STEWART

There was no shortage of preachers when Benjamin Skiness and Valari Stewart married. Their grandfathers, from left, are Bill Stewart, Doug Hall, Larry Treadwell and Jerry Skiness.

A bride, a groom and four preachers

BY BOBBY ROSS JR. | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

When Benjamin Skiness and Valari Stewart were dating, he took her to hear his grandfather Larry Treadwell preach at the Beebe Church of Christ in Arkansas.

"The conversation started about preachers in the family," said Valari, 24, daughter of Murray and Keli Stewart of Kearney, Mo.

There was certainly plenty to talk about. The couple's four minister grandfathers boast a combined total of 130 years of pulpit experience in Churches of Christ.

When Benjamin and Valari decided to marry, they knew exactly whom they

wanted to perform the wedding ceremony: all four of their grandfathers.

"We decided that if all of them were willing, we could not pass on an opportunity to be united by all four pillars of our two families," said Benjamin, 24, son of Brian and Stacey Skiness of Nevis, Minn.

The couple's grandparents are:

- **Doug and Helen Hall**, who live in Vernon, Texas, and have been married for 62 years. A graduate of Bear Valley Bible Institute in Denver, he preached for 47 years.

- **Bill and Pamela Stewart**, who live in Denver and have been married for 51 years. He has preached for 37 years and serves as an instructor and regional

director of development and recruiting for Bear Valley Bible Institute.

- **Jerry and Dona Skiness**, who live in Akeley, Minn., and have been married for 51 years. A graduate of York College in Nebraska, he retired from a secular job and preached for the Kandiyohi Church of Christ in Minnesota for five years.

- **Larry and Sharon Treadwell**, who live in Beebe, Ark., and have been married for 46 years. He attended Sunset International Bible Institute in Lubbock, Texas, and has preached for 41 years.

Benjamin and Valari met at Harding University in Searcy, Ark. They married April 28 and attend the Westport Road Church of Christ in Louisville, Ky.



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Benjamin and Valari, who met at Harding University, pose for a wedding photo.

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NAMED: Alfred Branch, Lynn Mitchell and Dwayne Simmons, the board of trustees, and Risa Forrester, vice president for admissions and marketing, Oklahoma Christian University, Oklahoma City. Marie Byers, librarian, NationsUniversity, a church-supported, distance-learning program headquartered in Brentwood, Tenn. Jonathan Sheahan, principal, Lipscomb Academy Elementary School, Nashville, Tenn. Bert Alexander, chaplain for the Farmers Branch, Texas, fire department. David Smith, chairman of the board for Mars Hill Bible School, Florence, Ala.



Forrester

HONORED: Meg Woodard, Midland, Texas, High School senior, by the Midland Downtown Lions Club.

NEW MINISTER: Charlton Taylor, Trenton, Mich. church.

ANNIVERSARIES: 70th: John and Minnie Kooiker, Minneapolis. 65th: Clifford and Reba Reeve, Okmulgee, Okla. 64th: Al and Mary Jolly, Hilltop Lakes, Texas; Seth and Vonna Ragan, Stratton, Neb.

BIRTHDAYS: 93rd: Grace Dempsey, Altus, Okla. 90th: Eugene Perry, Beamsville, Ontario. Boyd Taylor, Dallas.

PASSAGES: John W. Anders, 90, March 23, member of the West Erwin church, Tyler, Texas, and a minister for more than 60 years.

Ray B. Ballard, 76, April 24, Keller, Texas, Army veteran and elder of Keller church.

Kenneth R. Bowers, 79, May 7, longtime member of Laurel church, Knoxville, Tenn.

Cheryl Frost, 60, March 17, longtime member of Trenton, Mich. church and co-founder and director of Children's Outreach Detroit, Mich.

James W. Hutson, 77, April 25, former elder of the Knight Arnold church in Memphis, Tenn., and the Karns church in Knoxville, Tenn.

Comfort Osei-Hwedie, 62, March 13, minister's wife in Kumasi, Ghana, worked with churches in the region and the Kumasi Care Center, providing counseling services for Ghanaians.



Anders



Osei-Hwedie

June 11-14 EldersConnect. Retreat for elders and wives. Faulkner University, Montgomery, Ala. Contact slong@faulkner.edu.

June 15 Acappella concert, special guests Deltacappella and TurningPoint. Christian Brothers High School, Memphis, Tenn. Proceeds benefit African evangelist and cancer patient Abiodun Adegroye. Contact klong@sycamoreview.org.

June 20-23 Eighth annual Omonia Church of Christ family retreat. "In Spirit and in Truth." Kalamaki Beach Hotel, Corinth, Greece. Contact emelirry@aol.com.

June 22-24 50th Anniversary Celebration Weekend. "Solid Foundation, Bright Future." Grandville, Mich., church. Contact 616.534.8884 or grandvillecoc.org.

June 24-29 Lads to Leaders/Leaderettes 2012 Leadership Camp. Faulkner University, Montgomery, Ala. Contact ladsoffice@lads-to-leaders.org.

June 28-July 1 Spiritual Growth Workshop. "Not Ashamed." Rosen Centre Hotel, Orlando, Fla. Contact www.spiritual-growthworkshop.com.

June 29-July 1 Houston-Gulf Coast Women of Wisdom Conference. Westin Houston-Memorial City. Contact www.wowc2012.com.

July 20-21 Central Texas Bible Teachers Workshop. "Creating a Legacy of Faith." Cameron Road church, Austin, Texas. Contact or crcaustin.org/ctbtw.html.

July 26-29 Lads to Leaders/Leaderettes 2012 Leadership Camp. Freed-Hardeman University. Contact ladsoffice@lads-to-leaders.org.

July 26-29 National Campus Ministries Seminar. "God on Campus." Texas Tech University, Lubbock, Texas. Contact campuscrosswalk.org.

Aug. 4-8 Campaign for Christ. George R. Brown Convention Center, Houston. Contact houstonchurchesofchrist.org.

Aug. 11-12 50th anniversary, East Park church. Danville, Ill. Contact (217) 442-2386.

Sept. 9 50th anniversary, Center Road church (formerly Alto Road church), Kokomo, Ind. Contact 765.453.1448 pennyr@centerandpark.org.

Sept. 21-22 Global Leadership Summit and French World Mission Workshop. Laurel, Md., church. Contact ofwmissions@gmail.com.

Sept. 30-Oct. 3 Harding Lectureship. "Faith for a New Place & Time: Studies in Joshua." Harding University, Searcy, Ark. Contact 501.279.5123, Lectureship@harding.edu or harding.edu/lectureship.

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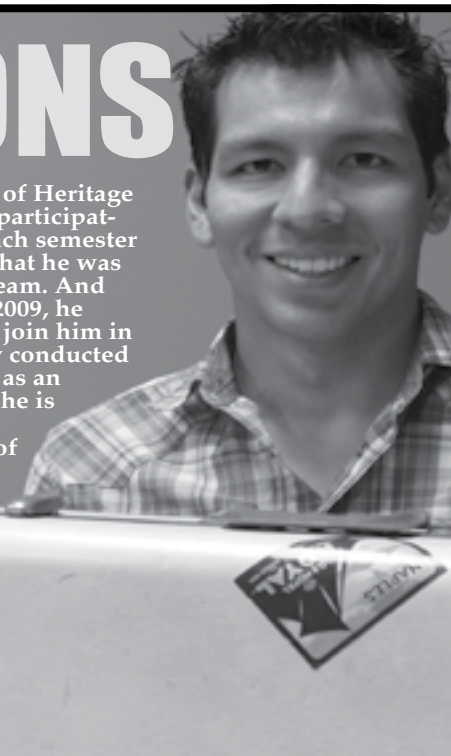
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MISSIONS

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



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EDITORIAL

A stress-free vacation — with God

Going on vacation this summer?

Don't forget to pack your Bible.

That may sound awfully "preachy," but hear us out.

We're trying to make your trip less stressful.

Vacations, at their best, include elements of the quiet, reflective periods we read about in the Bible. Scripture offers us many examples of Jesus retreating to solitary places, away from the crowds that followed him everywhere. Read Mark 1:35, Mark 6:32 or Luke 4:42.

Jesus spent countless hours in prayer, speaking with his divine father, sorting out his priorities.

Is that the kind of vacation you're taking this summer?

Not likely.

If anything, the vacations we subject ourselves and our families to these days induce more stress than they alleviate.

Stand in an airport security line for five minutes if you want proof. Or listen to a rental car agent describe the five types of additional insurance offered by the company — for only five

times the price you agreed to pay. Stressful indeed.

In a recent poll, half of Americans said they were more exhausted *after* going on vacation than before they left, according to Dr. Edward T. Creagan, who writes the "Stress Blog" for the Mayo Clinic in Minnesota. (That's right. Stress has a blog.)

"Seems that relaxing is hard work," Creagan writes. "What can you do?"

We offer a few suggestions:

• **Shift your focus to**

include service: Many of us participate in mission trips, but have you considered ways to turn your vacation into an opportunity to serve?

Take time to look at the needs and ministries in the places you intend to visit. You might be surprised how putting others first in your mind reduces the pressure to assemble the "world's greatest vacation."

• **Make worship a part of your plans:** Christians

who live in towns near beach resorts have told us that they find it irksome when vacationers use their churches as a place to take communion before

scooting out the back door.

Vacations give us opportunities to fellowship with our brothers and sisters from across the country. Find a church and stay after services to meet the members. Bless each other's lives with your stories of faith.

(On an admittedly selfish note, local church members can be invaluable sources of advice for the best places to eat.)

• **Stay where you are:** Why must we be on the road to be on vacation?

Take time off from work and find things to do in your hometown. There likely are museums or attractions nearby that your friends from out of town have visited, but you haven't.

Avoid the temptation to turn your "stay-cation" into an around-the-house work camp. Sure, there are projects at home that need doing, but they can wait.

Regardless of where you spend the coming weeks, remember that each new day is a gift from God — and an opportunity to glorify his name.

May we all find time this summer to relax, refresh and recharge our batteries. Most importantly, let us refocus on the work God has called us to do — proclaiming the good news of his kingdom.

Ever-Laughing Life

by Jonny Hawkins



"It's an awareness ribbon for the sickness of sin."

TO OUR READERS

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Church visitors: Members share ideas, experiences

Readers of The Christian Chronicle offer thoughts and insights on church visitors:

At the Walled Lake Church of Christ, we have tried a number of programs with varied but not long-term success.

What is working right now is the elders and deacons making sure they are reaching out to visitors and then reintroducing them to others. If leaders are not setting the example, it won't happen.

I do not meet with folks on church business between Bible class and worship so that I am in the lobby greeting and meeting. This seems to be catching on.

Roger Woods | Walled Lake, Mich.

We have several ministries aimed at helping guests and members feel welcome.

The first is a "valet parking" ministry where volunteers park cars for the elderly and those who have trouble walking. The volunteers also help everyone when the weather's bad, and they help people carry in food dishes and other items. We also have a greeters ministry.

These ministries are definitely not perfect as sometimes a guest can slip through the cracks. But when it's working, a guest will get several "touches" during his or her visit.

Mark Yeakley | Wichita, Kan.

In Hawaii, we're unique in that we're U.S. but also a unique culture. We give *leis* to each first time guest. *Leis* are used here to honor or celebrate, and we consider it both an honor and a celebration when guests visit with us.

Because of our location, we don't get many off-island guests (tourists). We mainly get island residents whom we call *kama'aina* (of the land). We treat them all the same. We show plenty of *aloha*.

David Cady | Waipahu, Hawaii

There is a congregation that I have visited for the past five years while on vacation. Not once has anyone said anything to me — except a girl in the youth group who once ran up and gave me a hug thinking I was someone else.

I don't feel like I need any special



A greeter opens the door and welcomes those gathering for worship at the Dalton Gardens Church of Christ in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho. The photo was taken on a fall day in the mountains.

TAMIE ROSS

treatment or anything. But if you can make a full-time minister — dressed like everyone else in your congregation, who knows church lingo and can guess where the auditorium is — feel out of place, imagine what people who might not know much about your congregation or the church at all might be thinking.

Paddy Flanagan | Brentwood, Tenn.

Believe me, if you are a 30-year-old, single woman with no children, you can easily visit a church, and no one will notice you.

Name withheld by request | Norman, Okla.

We are small in number but big in heart. You come here as a visitor, and you are always given the royal treatment.

Raymond Coats | Rio Vista, Calif.

My solution would be to identify a half-dozen of those gifted with warmth and gregariousness — "never met a stranger" kind of folks. Form a wolf pack and turn them loose on Sundays just to nose out visitors and engage them.

That would be their ministry, just meeting, greeting and connecting people with people. Nothing fancy.

Far too many lonely, wounded people stagger through our doors each Sunday

and flinch when they hear all our bravado about our "church family."

It's foolish to blather on about evangelism when we can't even find the energy or will to smother our guests with Christ-like warmth and interest.

Jim Bullock | Coal Hill, Ark.

Our congregation is small, so if you visit you stand out like a sore thumb. We have always done well greeting people. Our men are doing better at greeting and spending time talking to people, something we have not always done well. In the past we have spoken and returned to our friends for conversation.

Some years ago, a young man who was here in the Navy visited with us for quite some time, and one of our men spoke to him on three different occasions, greeting him as though they were meeting for the first time. The third time this happened, the young man spoke directly to him, letting him know that he had been attending for so many weeks.

We only have one opportunity to make a first impression.

Charlie Harrison | Brunswick, Maine

We have a very loving congregation at the Central Church of Christ. No visitor comes in without a friendly hello and welcome. We love visitors!

Laurie Reeves Barbee | Davenport, Iowa

We have an "official greeter" assigned in the bulletin. This person is tasked with handing out bulletins, sermon outline sheets and newcomer letters.

Second, one of the elders or deacons stays in the foyer during services. Unfortunately, this is as much a security issue due to the neighborhood in which we live and some things we've experienced, but it also ensures any latecomer gets greeted by someone.

Third, the elders and deacons meet at the foyer after the sermon in order to ensure that no one gets out without having someone greet them and talk with them. Funny story — the first time we did that, all the elders and deacons walked back to the foyer with me right after the invitation. Several people, including the elders' wives, thought they were angry with me and wanted to know what I had said or done during the sermon that was so serious!

Jay Kelley | Levelland, Texas

We attend the North Jackson Church of Christ. We have around 700 in attendance and are always growing. We are very visitor-friendly and try to make everyone feel welcome.

We moved here nine years ago and tried another congregation where we were not even spoken to by anyone. We couldn't wait to get out and leave!

Sherry Ellen Carwile | Jackson, Tenn.

When my husband moved to town, he visited a congregation that spoke about fellowship with visitors during Sunday school. When he left the Sunday school class, no one acknowledged him, and he wasn't greeted before or after the worship service. Talk about irony!

He then left and went to the current congregation where he and I now have worshiped for about four years due to how we were greeted the first time we walked in the door. I consider those people my family now just because I was so warmly greeted when I first started going to church with my husband. It *does* make a difference.

Stephanie Hart | Louisville, Ky.



After the honeymoon: Can exhausted, distracted parents rekindle the newlywed spirit of affection?

My sister is getting married in July. Not two years separate us in age, but I sometimes feel like we live on different planets.

A doctorate-holding psychology professional, she lives and works in a major metropolitan area. She spends her days at her desk, in meetings and on conference calls. Her meals are usually cooked for her, either by a restaurant or her fiancé.

A hundred miles away, I live in a small town and juggle cooking, cleaning and caring for our three kids with teaching college students, editing a newspaper page and writing magazine articles.

As she chooses flowers and cake frostings, I decide between diaper brands and applesauce flavors. While she plans for a honeymoon week on the beach, I hope for a movie night with my husband.

And, perhaps most importantly, while she spends her evenings with the love of her life — dining at urban restaurants, laughing and chatting, making dessert and coffee together — my husband and I are lucky to enjoy five minutes talking on the couch before we both sink into an exhausted stupor.

During this season of expressing vows of lifelong love, it's easy to reflect on those carefree newlywed days. It's also startling. How did we get from *there* to here? Can we ever reclaim the ability to enjoy being together, just the two of us, day after day, week after week?

The truth is, we will have to in 20 years or so. For many years after our children leave the house, Lord willing, we will have only each other. So making our kids the center of our lives is a mistake. Giving them every ounce of my energy and leaving nothing for my husband is failing in my duties as a wife.

The husband has a certain amount of "affection due him," and so does the wife. See 1 Corinthians 7:3: *"The husband should fulfill his marital duty to his wife, and likewise the wife to her husband."*

So this summer, let's be inspired by these newlyweds, whether

we're exhausted parents or retired empty-nesters.

When I catch myself being cynical of my sister's eyelash-batting at her fiancé, I always remember the episodes of "Everybody Loves Raymond" when Robert and Amy were newlyweds. Ray and Deborah would roll their eyes at their brother and sister-in-law's obvious enjoyment of being in each other's presence.

Like with most jokes, it's funny because it's true. But I don't think it should be. We shouldn't scoff or envy them their basking in the glow of their love. We should reclaim it for our own.

Can we really travel back to that strange world that seems eons away — the world of newlyweds? Can we erase the years between, filled with all those memories, some bitter and lonely?

It's impossible to start a love over, with a clean slate — isn't it? Yet when we sin, God doesn't secret those trespasses away, waiting to wield them against us.

No, he flings them "as far as the east is from the west" (Psalm 103:12).

This summer, I commit to making my love for my husband as pure and new as my sister's wedding dress. Here's how we'll celebrate our first years this summer, when the embossed invitations and dreamy-eyed vows make me nostalgic for young love.

Our first movie date was to see the live-action "Scooby-Doo" in 2002. That movie is now one of our five-year-old's favorites in our DVD cabinet, and my husband makes a mean bowl of popcorn. I see a date night on our

couch in the near future.

Our first group date was to the Sand Bass Festival in Madill, Okla. That festival still happens every summer, and a dual stroller won't stop us from having another mullet-counting contest (the haircut, not the fish).

While we were engaged, we went to an excellent production of "Fiddler on the Roof" at our local college. (My husband did stand up at intermission and say, "Well that was a good show," but he still says he really enjoyed that play.)

This summer, the main production at our college is "Romeo and Juliet." Just last night, I mentioned to my husband that we haven't gone to see a play since Fiddler, and he said, "It's not because I haven't wanted to."

We're not star-crossed lovers, and honestly, I don't want to be. Nor

would I want to erase eight years of learning to love each other more honestly and selflessly.

But those early years were a time when we had one thing exactly right: we were each other's favorite source of human companionship. And that's the way it should be.

So maybe these summer date nights will be a huge production of babysitters, strollers or just hanging out when we should be working in our home offices.

Or maybe they'll help move our relationship back to the center, where kids, jobs and hobbies have replaced it during these last hectic years.

Maybe they'll help us remember those flowers, that cake, that dress, and most importantly, our vows.

KIMBERLY MAUCK is Reviews Editor for *The Christian Chronicle*. She and her husband, Jay, have three daughters. They are active members of the Northwest Church of Christ in Durant, Okla.

Views



Kimberly Mauck



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LETTERS

Advice from Brazil missionary lauded

Being a longtime "short-term" missionary, I really connected with Cris Carpenter (Dialogue, Page 25, June).

I am a married woman, and my husband completely supports the mission in Ukraine. I have been working in Ukraine almost every year since 1997.

Cris' insights into short-term missions was spot on. I hope she inspires many other women to boldly enter the mission field.

Jackie Aguilar | Mesquite, Texas

Appreciation for Secret Sisters' talent, faith

Thank you for the story of the Secret Sisters — very motivating (Page 3, June). Yes, we continue to praise God for the talents he has given us.

Praise be to God.

Nancy Sailo | Suva, Fiji

There are those in the church who will give these ladies a hard time for contributing anything to Hollywood. They have done it to others over the years, and so Christians have been discouraged from pursuing those careers. As a result, Hollywood has mostly been influenced by those of little or no faith, much to the detriment of our society.

We should be encouraging these sisters and others to enter into the mission field of the music and movie industries. Perhaps they can influence many to turn to the truth or at least to influence those in those industries to show some respect to those who follow Christ.

Lowell White | Santa Rosa de Copan, Honduras

Chronicle helps give Africa's martyrs a voice

I am thrilled to see this article published ("In Nigeria, anti-Christian violence on rise," Page 3, June) as I work at Voice of the Martyrs, www.persecution.com. Our mission is to be the "voice" of our persecuted brothers and sisters.

I so appreciate *The Christian Chronicle* in being the "voice" as well. Thank you.

Brenda Matlock | Bartlesville, Okla.

Connecting Sunday to Monday: Books urge workplace faith

BY RALPH WILLIAMS | FOR THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

The average Christian spends a few hours a week in church. However, most spend roughly 40 hours a week at wage-earning jobs.

Three new books suggest that we should be glorifying God and building his kingdom in our work.

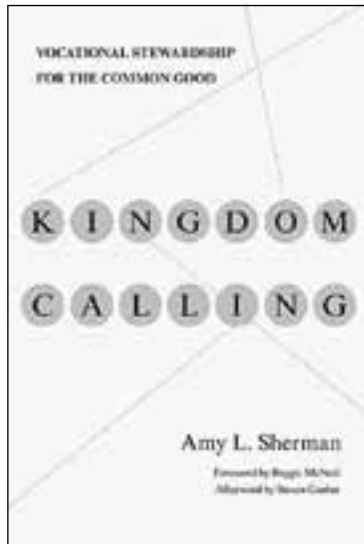
"We haven't done a good job helping people connect Sunday to Monday," says Amy Sherman, a director of Sagamore Institute's Center on Faith in Communities in Indianapolis.

Her new book, **"Kingdom Calling: Vocational Stewardship for the Common Good,"** provides a rich theological background for emphasizing vocation as ministry. Her theology looks for ways to participate in God's work of renewal, of bringing justice and "shalom" to our communities.

She starts with Proverbs 11:10: "When the righteous prosper, the city rejoices." The righteous, or Hebrew "tsaddiqim," are more than "good" people, Sherman writes. They are completely committed to the Kingdom of God. They focus their "vocational power," the prosperity and influence afforded through their jobs, for the common good.

Sherman's primary audience is preachers and church leaders, trying to overcome the secular-sacred divide from the top down, but she recognizes that, in many cases, the real leadership in this area comes from members, not ministers. Christians in the workplace are finding ways to be missional in their approach to their work.

Sherman points out ways that the church can aid members to



★★★★☆

Amy L. Sherman. **Kingdom Calling: Vocational Stewardship for the Common Good.** Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 2011. 271 pages, \$16.

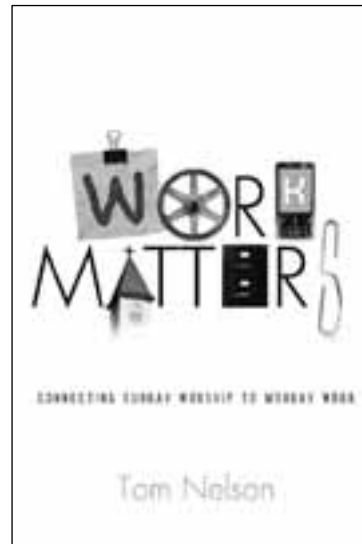
find ways to serve God through their work. She outlines paths for churches to encourage vocational ministry.

She uses Christ Community Church in Leawood, Kan., as an example. Its pastors make a conscious effort to bridge the gap between worship and work. Tom Nelson, who serves as senior pastor of the church,

"Work Matters" is a call to view our full-time work as full-time ministry. (The author) challenges the notion of a distinction between sacred and secular work.'

is the author of **"Work Matters: Connecting Sunday Worship to Monday Work."** "Work Matters" is a call to view our full-time work as full-time ministry. Nelson challenges the notion of a distinction between sacred and secular work. In this approach, Nelson and Sherman have much in common.

Nelson's theology is based in the creation narrative. He points out that man was



★★★★★

Tom Nelson. **Work Matters: Connecting Sunday Worship to Monday Work.** Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway Books, 2011. 221 pages, \$15.99.

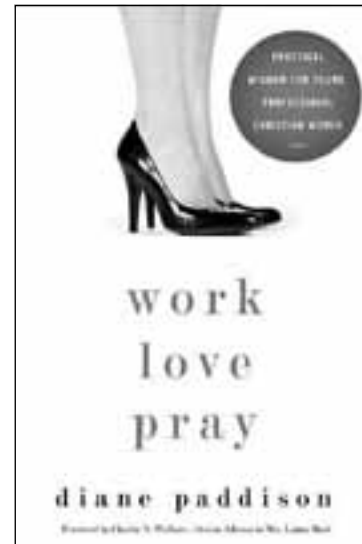
"created with work in mind."

"Humans were designed by God to exercise proper dominion over creation," Nelson writes. Mankind was "designed by God to be his image-bearers, to uniquely reflect who God is in his good world."

Nelson writes about the changes Christ Community Church made — in practice and in its choice of language — to connect ministry and work. Nelson and the ministry staff at emphasize the sanctity of work, as epitomized by cultivating the garden of Eden, or the work of a carpenter, fisherman or tentmaker.

They celebrate diversity of vocation, making a conscious effort to develop Christians to be faithful within their vocation. They eliminate language that distinguishes "secular work" from "ministry," "clergy" from "laity" and "church staff" from "members."

In Nelson's view, all godly work should be considered ministry. Each chapter ends with a first-person narrative by Christians who have found a



★★★★☆

Diane Paddison. **Work, Love, Pray: Practical Wisdom for Young Professional Christian Women.** Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan. 256 pages, \$14.99.

calling to God's work in their secular jobs. These are stories of people who chose a career because of life experiences that led them to God or who designed their business as platforms for ministry or who found ways to use their professional skills to help others.

"Work Matters" is a practical book, intended for individual or group study. It is rich in theology, but even its theology is expressed in a practical, work-a-day way.

"Work Matters" may be the most personally challenging of the books reviewed here — and the most oriented to change within a congregation. It could be used as a study book for a Bible class or small group.

Both "Kingdom Calling" and "Work Matters" are excellent books in their own right, but they are a complementary pair, better together than alone.

"Work, Love, Pray: Practical Wisdom for Young Professional Christian Women" by Diane Paddison provides a motivational

message. Written for young professional women by a professional businesswoman, this book narrates Paddison's experience as a Christian woman in "C-suite" positions (CEO, CFO, etc.).

This book is also designed for individual or group study, with discussion questions and a wealth of resources.

Since Paddison spent much of her career in executive-level positions, some of her experiences may not resonate with the average worker. Yet she provides good advice for dealing with common issues, without seeming "preachy."

Her advice is partly about how to succeed in the business world and partly about how to be a faithful Christian while in business. It transcends her primary audience; men may find this book as useful as women.

Unlike the other two books in this review, "Work, Love, Pray" takes for granted a division between sacred and secular. Paddison does not see her work as an extension of her faith. Rather, she expresses a need to nurture one's individual faith and to establish boundaries that keep faith and work in balance.

"Kingdom Calling" will equip church leaders as they look for ways to encourage vocational ministry.

"Work Matters" is a workbook, challenging all Christians to adopt a new paradigm of ministry that transcends the Sunday/Monday gap.

And "Work, Love, Pray" will inspire Christians to do well — and to do good — in the workplace

RALPH WILLIAMS is an adult Bible class teacher and a communication adviser for a Fortune 500 corporation. He is a member of the White Station Church of Christ in Memphis, Tenn., and a former missionary to Ukraine and among the First Nations People of Canada.



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Dr. John B. Weaver, Dean of Library Services
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The Margaret and Herman Brown Library invites applications for a tenure-track position as instruction and outreach librarian beginning Fall 2012. The Instruction and Outreach Librarian will lead the library's instruction and information literacy program for undergraduate and graduate students using best practices in face-to-face, hybrid, and online teaching and learning. This faculty member also promotes the library through workshops and other innovative initiatives that

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In a letter to the appropriate dean, 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.

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

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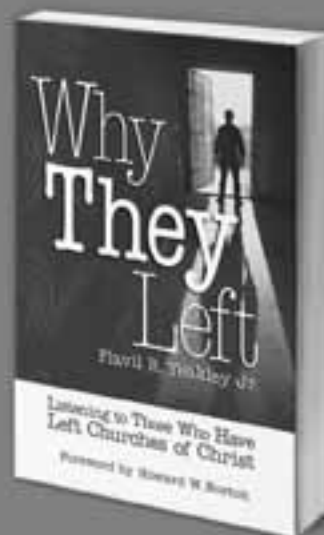


When Someone Leaves the Church, It's Important to Find Out ...

Why They Left

Prominent church statistician Flavil Yeakley describes why members are leaving churches of Christ. His research through surveys and essay questions provides an opportunity for dialogue about ways to keep members faithful and help them understand their differences.

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Parents and grandparents: Urge your children to pursue Christian education

I have devoted at least one column every two years to encouraging parents and grandparents to promote Christian education for their children and grandchildren.

Sixty years ago this August, I moved to Bartlesville, Okla., to re-enter college after dropping out of my hometown university when I found myself unchallenged in all the courses except Spanish, which was to be my major. I dreamed of learning Spanish and going to Mexico to work as a missionary, but I soon realized I could not hear or make some of the sounds. My entrance to Central Christian College was a life-changing event. I met a professor who would be my lifelong friend and mentor, Stafford North. I was also inspired to be a serious Bible student by Roy Lanier Sr. and Hugo McCord. James O. Baird, the dean, became the source of inspiration for many of my life goals. I made friends who have gone around the world for the sake of Christ. Because the college was new and had no reputation, the entire faculty worked extremely hard to make courses strong and challenging.

Four years later, Joyce and I returned to Central Christian where I would have my first experience as an English teacher. Even though I was a novice, I think I made a difference in the lives of many students who are still good friends as they continue their journeys of faith. After two years I returned to graduate school as the college moved to Oklahoma City and became Oklahoma Christian College and then University. I completed a doctorate and taught at two other major universities where I realized the unique place of Christian education. I returned to OC in 1966 where I have had a wonderful career as professor and chief academic officer. I had a chance to know the people at other Christian universities and their dedication to lives of faith and service for themselves and their students. The Christian education communities are all different but united in this effort.

I believe Christian institutions offer quality education that is superior to the education of typical secular institutions. That superiority grows from a desire of the Christian faculty members to offer interesting and challenging classes. We

try harder because we want our graduates to excel when they go on to graduate schools or into professions. Most faculty members think of themselves as mentors of the whole student — intellectual, spiritual and social. They give

Insight



Bailey McBride

of their time in and out of class so that they can have meaningful relations with students. Christian universities usually have smaller classes, especially for upper division students, and that arrangement allows faculty to know students better.

At a time when Bible knowledge seems to be decreasing with each generation, Christian universities offer students the opportunity to learn with outstanding scholars of the Word and to learn not only how to study the Bible but also what the Bible teaches. They understand that no question is off limits, and so with dedicated teachers they search for fuller understanding of eternal truths. Since the religious world seems extremely confused about what is most important, the great Bible teachers of Christian universities are keys to the next generation's intellectual and spiritual growth.

The environment of student life at Christian universities offers great opportunities to serve, to develop leadership skills, to begin lives of scholarship and to make friends. No one at Christian universities is perfect, but most come seeking to find a place where spirituality is valued and where doing the right thing is the commonly accepted standard. Students lead mission organizations, group Bible studies, tutorial sessions for other students, student government, club organizations, professional organizations and humanitarian efforts. The environment of Christian universities is right for helping students mature in many ways. Perhaps the greatest value is making friends with good men and women who will be lifetime friends and encouragers.

Christian universities can help families prepare their children for dedicated service to God and mankind.

CONTACT bailey.mcbride@christianchronicle.org.



Lower School & Upper School Principal

Lower School Principal is primarily responsible for K – 5 and the **Upper School Principal** for 6 – 12. Each Principal is responsible to interpret and implement the mission of Clarksville Christian School in his/her respective grade levels. Each principal is the chief instructional officer and visionary leader and serves as manager of all personnel, programs, facilities, and resources related to

the assigned grade level. Positions report to the Board of Directors. Interested candidates for this position should possess:

- A Master's Degree in Education in Administration and Supervision.
- Administrative experience in an academic setting, ideally in target grade levels.
- Administrative License or Certification required.
- Experience in developing or coordinating respective grade level curricula.
- Strong interpersonal skills with a sense of calm authority.
- Proficient speaking and writing skills.
- A breadth of knowledge and a passion for implementing educational best practices and technology across the curriculum.
- Must demonstrate a passion for Christian education and be an active member of the church of Christ.

Send resume to rogernell@clarksvillechristianschool.org. See www.clarksvillechristianschool.org for more information about CCS.



How can we best assure the next generation of Christian leaders?

Thousands of universities across the nation want to train the next generation of America's leaders. But only our Christian universities and colleges are equipped to train students for success in **both** their chosen field *and in life*—in the contexts of faith and family.

In addition to the tremendous advantage of teaching and mentoring from a Biblical worldview—assuring that faith is strengthened and not undermined—our Christian educational institutions compare very well academically and athletically. This is done not merely to compete or “keep up” with other institutions, but to glorify God in everything they do! The existence of the next generation of Christian leaders is up to us. It's time to challenge conventional (and worldly) wisdom.

Consider Christian higher education, the true open mindedness.

Abilene Christian University

Amridge University

Austin Graduate School of Theology

Crowley's Ridge College

Faulkner University

Freed-Hardeman University

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Lubbock Christian University

Ohio Valley University

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Pepperdine University

Southwestern Christian College

York College



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"In Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, and you have been given fullness in Christ, who is the head over every power and authority."

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"Women of Good Works"

"Women of Strength"



www.oc.edu/connect



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