



## THE GOSPEL IN SOUTH SUDAN

# In world's newest nation, Africans plant churches

BY ERIK TRYGGESTAD | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

**JUBA, Sudan** — A sign welcoming visitors to the “193rd country of the world” is the second thing most people notice when they step off the plane at the Juba international airport.

The first is the temperature — about 102 degrees Fahrenheit.

On July 9, this East African city — hot and dusty during the dry season — becomes the capital of South Sudan.

After decades of armed conflict between Sudan's Muslim north and its Christian and animist south, people here voted for independence in a January referendum.

Now, the world's newest nation faces a host of challenges. At Juba's airport — about the size of a small strip

mall — immigration officers write visitors' names in worn notebooks as luggage arrives on a cart pulled by a tractor.

On one of the few paved roads in the city, Isaya Jackson points to stands of pineapples and melons. Most of them are imported, he says.

But what the country lacks in infrastructure, it makes up for in enthusiasm, says Jackson, a Sudanese native who worships with a small Church of Christ in his home.

“The coming independence means freedom from slavery at last,” he says. “It means the end of religious persecution, the

See **SOUTH SUDAN**, Page 15

### MORE COVERAGE

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EDITORIAL: A LEGACY TO REACH THE LOST ..... 30



ERIK TRYGGESTAD

**Janet Adotey helps a young Sudanese find a verse during a Bible study in Juba.**



## Milestone in Brazil

Celebrating  
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Church volunteers respond in  
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Recovering addict says many  
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TED PARKS

## Counter-protest draws thousands to Tennessee church

Holding U.S. flags, bikers, military personnel and entire families crowd the grounds of the Woodmont Hills Church of Christ in Nashville, Tenn., before Marine Sgt. Kevin Balduf's funeral. About 2,000 people gathered in opposition to a protest by three members of the fundamentalist Westboro Baptist Church of Topeka, Kan.

**RELATED STORY**, Page 5

## Camp mixes fun, training on how to preach

BY BOBBY ROSS JR. | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

**DENVER** — The campers brought swim trunks, basketballs and Bibles.

They cheered on the Colorado Rockies baseball team at Coors Field and toured Invesco Field at Mile High, home of football's Denver Broncos.

They grilled burgers and praised God against

the backdrop of Denver's bright lights and the Rocky Mountains' snow-capped peaks.

Yet this weeklong experience qualifies as no ordinary church camp — evidenced by the dress shirts and ties that participants must wear each weekday, along with suit jackets on Sunday.

Welcome to the Bear Valley Church of Christ's  
See **PREACHER CAMP**, Page 10

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## Missouri church mourns losses, counts blessings

JOPLIN, Mo.

**P**erspective. The monster tornado that cut a six-mile swath through this southwestern Missouri community provided it.

Just around the corner from the 26th and Connecticut Church of Christ, a giant chunk of this city of 50,000 looks like a vast wasteland — plowed into ugly piles of bricks, tree limbs and shredded furniture as far as the eye can see.

### Inside Story



Bobby Ross Jr.

But on a recent Wednesday night, as the church assembled inside its damaged building for the first time, elder Doug Douthitt offered Scriptural perspective.

He read from 2 Corinthians 6:10: *"Sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; poor, yet making many rich; having nothing, and yet possessing everything."*

"This sums up the Christian life," Douthitt said in his devotional thoughts. "We can have nothing, absolutely nothing. But as children of God, we can have everything."

That biblical message resonated with a church reeling from the nation's deadliest single tornado in 60 years. The May 22 storm destroyed 7,000 Joplin homes, damaged hundreds more and claimed 158 lives, including two of the 26th and Connecticut church's members.

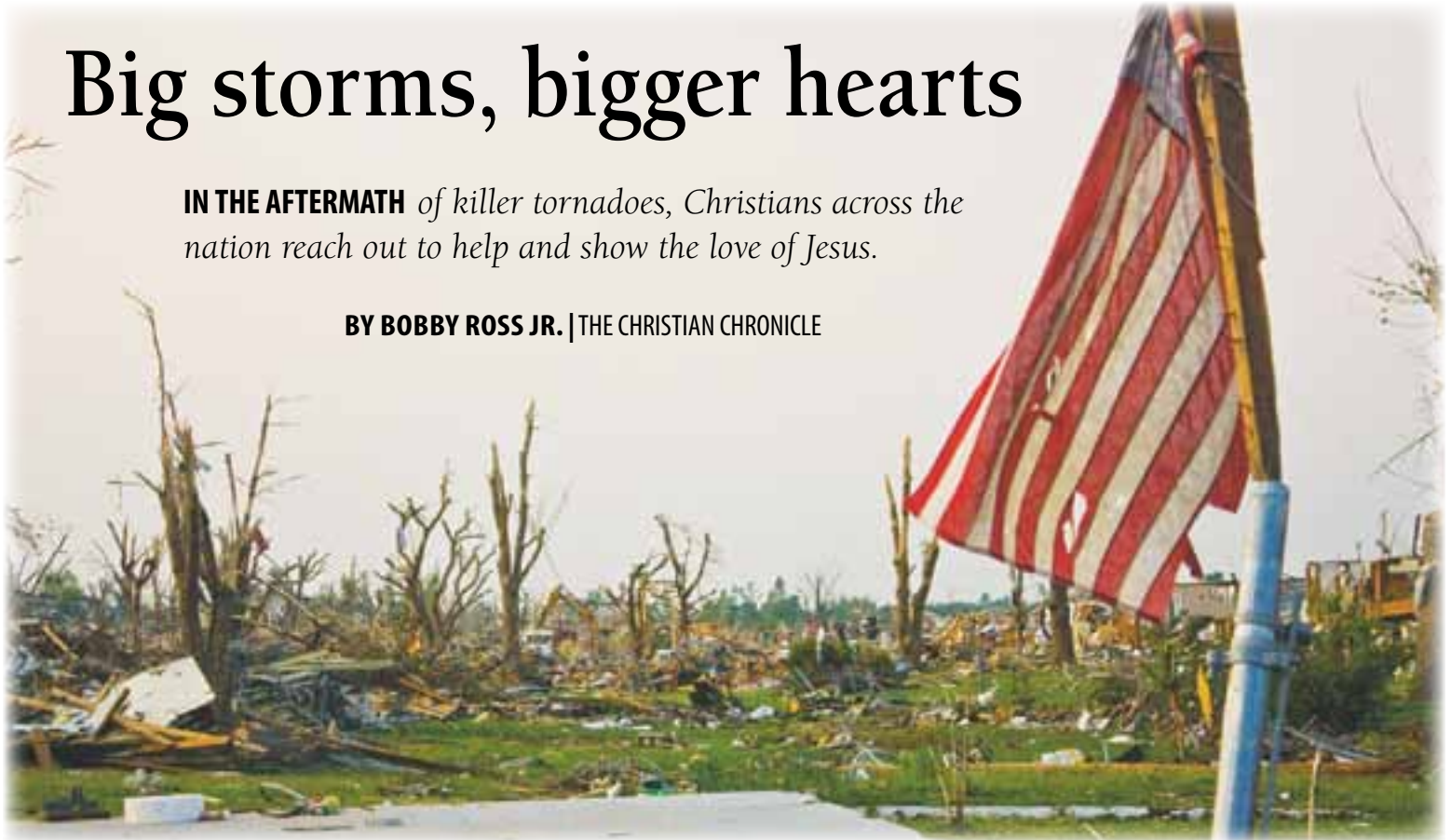
That Wednesday night,

See **JOPLIN**, Page 4

## Big storms, bigger hearts

**IN THE AFTERMATH** of killer tornadoes, Christians across the nation reach out to help and show the love of Jesus.

BY BOBBY ROSS JR. | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE



PHOTOS BY ERIK TRYGGESTAD

A tattered flag flies over the remains of homes in Joplin, Mo. The May 22 tornado destroyed 7,000 homes and damaged hundreds more.

WEBB CITY, Mo.

**T**he Joplin tornado's path of destruction can be seen all along Range Line Road, where a Home Depot, Walmart and other businesses lie in ruins.

Yellow "Caution" tape and shreds of wood flutter in the breeze amid bulldozers clearing debris and smashed vehicles abandoned after the May 22 twister that claimed 158 lives and left thousands homeless.

Drive a little farther, though, and a different scene unfolds.

"Disaster relief distribution," say the bold black letters on a portable sign pointing residents two blocks off the main road to the Mt. Hope Church of Christ in Webb City, just north of Joplin.

In the shadow of the church's white steeple, cases of bottled water are stacked outside the family life center, alongside boxes of all-purpose cleaner and diapers.

Inside the building, volunteers sporting red "Churches of Christ Disaster Response

Team" T-shirts fill grocery sacks, help victims pick out shoes and blankets, prepare meals for chainsaw crews and provide stuffed animals for children whose families lost all their belongings.

While nine member families' homes were destroyed, the twister's path bypassed the Mt. Hope building. As a result, the church quickly became a hub for relief efforts.

In the kitchen, Karen Fozard, a member of the Carbondale Church of Christ in Illinois, works alongside Joy Cole, a Mt. Hope member for 38 years.

"Our congregation has a heart to help," said Fozard, who drove six-plus hours to Joplin, joined by Carbondale preacher's wife Becky Shaffer and Shaffer's children, Jacob, 15, and Caroline, 12.

For Cole, the relief effort is more personal. She can barely drive down Range Line Road without crying.

"This is my home. Joplin is my home," Cole said through tears. "I had my children here. They went to high school here," she added, noting that the tornado blew away the school. "So I want to do all I can."

See **STORMS**, Page 12



Cole



Members of the 26th and Connecticut Church of Christ worship in their building's foyer — on pews used to distribute relief during the day.



HARDING GRADUATE SCHOOL OF RELIGION IS NOW



## HARDING SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

**Harding School of Theology** has been chosen as the new name for the Harding University Graduate School of Religion in Memphis, Tenn. The change comes at the end of a two-year process involving the dean, faculty, staff, alumni, advisory board, University president and board of trustees.

The process sought to reflect better the School's goal of equipping and inspiring servants of Christ with deeper faith and higher standards of scholarship.

The name change has no associated administrative or academic changes. The school remains under the leadership of the Harding University president and board of trustees, and maintains its vibrant connection to churches of Christ.

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- **Devastation in Joplin:** See video from the 26th and Connecticut Church of Christ.
- **South Sudan:** See video and additional photos from Erik Tryggestad's reporting trip to this emerging nation, recovering after decades of civil war.
- **Breaking news:** Don't wait to read all the latest news or check out exclusive online features. Sign up for e-mail news alerts. Contact [tamie.ross@christianchronicle.org](mailto:tamie.ross@christianchronicle.org).

## JOPLIN: Church focuses on what was lost, and gained

## FROM PAGE 3

amid boxes of relief supplies and trash bags full of donated clothes, about 65 men, women and children squeezed into salvaged pews arranged in a V-shape in the church foyer.

Church members prayed for victims. They sang hymns such as "My Faith Looks Up to Thee," "The Church's One Foundation" and "His Grace Reaches Me." They shared hugs and tears.

As they focused on what was lost in the storm, they also reflected on what was gained.

"It's unfortunate that sometimes it takes a catastrophic event for people to talk about God and Christ," Douthitt said. "But I'm glad that people are now thinking about Jesus."

Since the storm poked holes in the auditorium's roof, the 150-member

church has met at a nearby La Quinta Inn on Sundays. The first few Wednesdays, members gathered to sing and pray under a church awning that overlooks a railroad bridge. The raised earth supporting the tracks may have kept some flying debris from hitting the church building.

Already, repairs have been made to the church's roof, but the carpet underneath has been stripped. Pews were removed and taken away for repairs, allowing the auditorium to be transformed into a disaster relief warehouse serving hundreds of Joplin families.

A sign that hangs over the baptistery — "Trust and Obey" — survived the mighty winds intact.

As bad as the tornado was, blessings have come, Douthitt said.

"They've got a renewed sense of being," the elder said of the congregation. "You know, they've lost a lot of

stuff, but we've had so much support from people, and I think the congregation's kind of gotten a shot in the arm from what's happening. ... I think most everybody, their faith's been strengthened through this."

Seven 26th and Connecticut church families lost their homes, as did the

families of six regular visitors, leaders said. Worst of all, two church members were killed: deacon William Austin "Bill" Anderson, 53, who worked for Office Concepts in Joplin for 30 years, and his wife, Sarah Lee Anderson, 46, a secretary at South Middle School in Joplin for 10 years.

The Andersons died at their home. Their son, Quinton, 17, a senior at the high school destroyed by the twister, survived. He's recovering from surgery on the

bone under his eye and faces surgery on his leg. The couple's daughter, Grace, 22, was not home when the storm hit and suffered no physical harm.

"These were humble people, the nicest people," deacon Dale Hoggatt said of Bill and Sarah Anderson. "They would do anything they were asked."

"At the last minute, too," added church member Leon Johnson. "You could ask him to do anything at the last minute, and he'd take over."

"Anything but sing, because he couldn't carry a tune in a bucket," Hoggatt added with a chuckle. "But I'll miss that behind me — that off-key singing."

But someday, Hoggatt has no doubt, he'll hear Bill Anderson sing again — this time in perfect harmony.

**CONTACT BOBBY ROSS JR.** at [bobby.ross@christianchronicle.org](mailto:bobby.ross@christianchronicle.org)



ERIK TRYGGESTAD

**Church elder Doug Douthitt shares devotional thoughts.**

**AMERICAN SAMOA**

**TAFUNA** — Church members from this U.S. territory and the mainland attended the sixth annual South Pacific Lectureship, hosted by the Nu'uuli Church of Christ.

Barry Pritchard, minister for the Lake Travis Church of Christ in Lakeway, Texas, presented



PHOTO PROVIDED

**Dean Willis and Kristen Miller in American Samoa.**

lessons on “Love: It’s not what you think” from Romans 12. Churches also sponsored Camp Alofa and a Vacation Bible School for children during the lectureship. Helping were Dean Willis and Kristen Miller, students at Abilene Christian University in Texas and interns for the Tafuna Church of Christ in American Samoa.

**FLORIDA**

**CRESTVIEW** — Three girls who attended the Airport Road Church of Christ with their mother, Jenny Furr-Higdon, were killed in a car wreck June 14.



PHOTO PROVIDED BY TOM DUGAN

**Danielle, Savannah and Janelle died in a wreck.**

Thomas R. Dugan, the congregation’s prison minister.

**KANSAS**

**WICHITA** — The fifth annual “Women Walking With God Conference,” hosted by the Northside Church of Christ, brought together 920 women, organizers said.

“The conference is not a ladies’ day, a lectureship or a workshop,” said Cindy Tandy, a member of the three-person management team. “It’s an intense two days of learning the deep things of God, of learning his purpose for our lives.”

The recent conference sold out for the third straight year.



PHOTO PROVIDED BY RICH CLARKSON &amp; ASSOCIATES

**Rockies rookie described as respectful, humble**

The Colorado Rockies have promoted Rex Brothers to the big leagues. The 23-year-old relief pitcher, a former star at Lipscomb University in Nashville, Tenn., was the No. 34 overall pick in the 2009 draft. He’s a member of the Chapel Hill Church of Christ in Tennessee. “He’s just absolutely a really neat young man,” preacher Stan Butt Jr. said. “He’s super respectful and super humble. When he’s home, you wouldn’t know about his success at all because he’s very down to earth.”

**LOUISIANA**

**CALHOUN** — Three Ouachita Parish congregations are joining together for worship on three Sunday nights this summer. The Calhoun Church of Christ, Forsythe Avenue Church of Christ and University Church of Christ will meet once at each location.

“We did this last year, and it was very successful in reuniting old friends, sharing fellowship time together, lifting our voices in song and hearing a great message,” Forsythe Avenue minister John Dobbs said.

**MASSACHUSETTS**

**BURLINGTON** — When the Boston Bruins recently won their first Stanley Cup since 1972, goalie Tim Thomas was recognized as the most valuable player in the playoffs. Thomas is a member of the Burlington Church of Christ.

**Thomas**

“Obviously, much more important than his athletic prowess is the fact that Tim loves the Lord and the church and is devoted to his family,” said Tony Thompson, the congregation’s preaching minister.

**MONTANA**

**LAUREL** — The *Laurel Outlook* recently noted the sign outside the Laurel Church of Christ: “Helping people see Jesus more clearly by loving God, loving each other and loving our neighbor.”

In a front-page story, the newspaper reported that the church lived up to its sign by helping re-roof the home of a single neighbor who couldn’t do the work herself.

**SPOTLIGHT****Despite protest, Marine honored**

**NASHVILLE, Tenn.** — Kevin Balduf was a senior at David Lipscomb Campus School on Sept. 11, 2001. As students arrived for chapel that day to pray for the victims of the terrorist attacks on U.S. soil, Balduf grabbed an American flag and waved it. His classmate, Matt Dickerson, told *The Tennessean* that Balduf “always knew what he was going to do. He was going to be a soldier.”

The Marine sergeant, 27, died May 12 in Afghanistan while supporting fellow Marines in combat as a radio operator. “This young man embodied the character we want for all of our students — a strong faith, integrity and a commitment to service,” Lipscomb University President Randy Lowry said.

**Balduf**

An extremist Kansas church known for picketing the funerals of U.S. military personnel announced that it would protest at Balduf’s funeral June 13. In response, nearly 2,000 people gathered on the grounds of the Woodmont Hills Church of Christ to oppose the Westboro Baptist Church’s message. Three protesters from the Kansas church picketed near the church’s property for less than 10 minutes before leaving.

Balduf’s grandfather, Charlie Newsom, thanked the counter-protesters.

Inside the church building, a crowd of mourners remembered the fallen Marine, survived by his wife, Amy, and daughters Stephanie, 5, and Eden, 3.



TED PARKS

**Motorcyclists join the counter-protest.**

**Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit.**

**Ephesians 5:18**

### **The Principle:**

**Focus on the important things, avoid the things that cause you trouble.**

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(Excerpt from *The Bible and "Social" Drinking* by W.D. Jeffcoat page 192)

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## Jimmy Judd, pioneering missionary to African nation of Malawi, dies

BY ERIK TRYGGESTAD | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

On visits to the U.S., James D. "Jimmy" Judd crisscrossed the Southeast, talking nonstop about the growth of the Gospel in Africa. He hauled massive slide carousels — filled with photos of bugs, snakes and the smiling faces of new Christians.

Judd, a missionary to the southern African nation of Malawi, died June 10 in Juliet, Ga. He was 85.

A native of Kentucky who served in the U.S. Marine Corps during World War II, Judd moved to Malawi with his family in 1957. The Judds, along with the Doyle Gilliam and Andrew Connally families, built Lubagha Mission in the village of Rumphu.

Judd and his wife, Clydene, initially agreed to serve in Malawi for three years, but stayed there for more than 45.



**Judd**

The missionary baptized thousands of Malawians and established the Church of Christ Bible College at Mzuzu. The Judds' son, Randy, now oversees the work, sponsored by the Thomaston Road Church of Christ in Macon, Ga.

Currently, Malawi is thought have about 4,000 Churches of Christ — and the highest number of church members per capita in the world.

David Israel, a member of the North Macon Church of Christ, traveled to Malawi and saw the Judds' influence.

"I have been to countless churches there that either he built or was present and active in building," Israel said. "More importantly, he supported their spiritual growth and would 'teach them all things.'"

Wilson Tembo, a minister in Thondwe, Malawi, said Judd's death is "a great loss to the Christ's body in Malawi and the world over. His dedication for the work of the Lord will be remembered by all."

## Mike Nix, minister for 800-member Alabama congregation, dies at 55

**DECATUR, Ala.** — Mike Nix, minister for the 800-member Beltline Church of Christ since 1998, died June 25. He was 55.

"Our hearts are sad," church leaders said in a note to members, indicating that Nix developed a blood clot after a recent leg surgery.

The *Decatur Daily* reported that Nix stepped into a hole and hurt his leg two weeks earlier while performing a wedding. The day before he died, he had performed another wedding with a cast on his leg, his first time to leave home since the surgery.

"If you wanted to see Jesus Christ, you could just look in Mike Nix's eyes," church member Calvin McBride told the Decatur paper. "That's the kind of person he was. I know that's a huge comparison, because there was only one perfect person, but every day of his life, Mike lived to try to be like Christ."



**Nix**

Dozens of readers offered condolences and shared memories of Nix on *The Christian Chronicle's* website.

"If you did not have the honor of knowing Mike Nix, you lost a great opportunity," Beltline worship leader Scott Fuller wrote. "I have never seen someone that I thought walked the Christ-like life like he did. His legacy is flawless, his life is complete, and his memory is eternal."

Dino Roussos, a missionary in Greece, said Nix and his wife, Mary Lynn, traveled to Athens a few weeks before his death. On the trip, Nix preached for the Glyfada Church of Christ in Athens.

"I guided (Nix) to the biblical city of Corinth," Roussos said. "He was so happy to walk in the steps of Paul. May the Lord comfort his family and the Beltline Church of Christ."

Besides his wife, Nix is survived by his daughter, Natalie. To read more comments see [www.christianchronicle.org/blog](http://www.christianchronicle.org/blog) and search for "Mike Nix."

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## Church in Bahamas reaches out to suffering Haitian community after fire

A man walks through the ashes after a fire in an impoverished community known as "The Mud" on the Abaco Islands of the Bahamas. The blaze destroyed at least 15 homes in the shantytown, home to immigrants from Haiti, said Jason Quashie, minister for the Marsh Harbour Church of Christ in Abaco. About 35 to 50 people attend church services each week, and

nearly one-half of them are of Haitian descent, Quashie said. The congregation has provided clothes for the fire victims.

Church members across Abaco also endure shortages of clean water and high fuel prices — more than \$6 per gallon — Quashie added. The minister preached a sermon recently on finding joy in suffering.

### CHILE

**SANTIAGO** — The story of the Ethiopian eunuch played out at a Chilean gas station recently, missionary Jeff Hatcher said.

Chilean evangelist Claudio Zalaquett met a man named Roberto and "somehow, while filling up, these two started a conversation that went immediately to the spiritual side of life," Hatcher said.

Roberto told the minister that, "from what he could tell from his own studies, he needed to be baptized," Hatcher said. "Rather than following the example of Acts 8:36-38, Claudio proposed that they get together and study the Scriptures — just to make sure he knew what he was doing.

"After two months of study, Roberto finally took the opportunity to confess his faith and be baptized into Christ."

### CROATIA

**SPLIT** — Mladen Jovanovic and his wife, Dragica, worshiped with a congregation of Dalmatians — that is, people

who live in Dalmatia, a region of southern Croatia thought to be the birthplace of the spotted dog breed. The Jovanovics visited with a Church of Christ in the region's largest city, Split.

"The worship hall was packed both days of our visit," Mladen Jovanovic said. "Dragica also met with a group interested in knowing more about teaching children's Bible classes. The church was full of children, the great hope for the future."



PHOTO PROVIDED

Christians worship in Split, Croatia.

### GHANA

**ACCRA** — A 21-member team from Oklahoma joined students from Heritage Christian College, a ministry training institute in this West African capital, for

three days of evangelism.

"It was great (to work with the Americans) as they went from house to house, knocking doors," said Alfred Beyan, a student at the institute and minister for the minister of G.S.A. Road Church of Christ in Monrovia, Liberia.

The team also sang for a group of women from a Church of Christ in Tema, Ghana.

"The women purchased two acres of land and intend to build a clinic, vocational school and a church," Beyan said.

### INDIA

**NALGONDA** — Prabhu Kumar asked for prayers for this southern Indian town. Kumar works with World English Institute, a ministry that helps students improve their English using the Bible. While inaugurating a branch of the ministry in Nalgonda, Kumar and other Christians were threatened with beatings by a group of Hindus.

"Please pray for these people, so that God may work on their hearts," Kumar said.

### SWITZERLAND

**ZOFINGEN** — About 30 young Christians attended a recent youth retreat, organized by Churches of Christ in the Swiss cities of Bern and Thun. Ivan Voser, a minister in Thun, was the guest speaker.

"I remember the time, when I enjoyed going to the Zofingen retreat as a youth," Voser said.

### THAILAND

**KHON KAEN** — A seminar on Christian families drew 130 people from 20 congregations to the Ban Kum Hai Church of Christ, missionary Kim Voraritskul said. Prateep Witeerungrot, minister for the church and director of the Songkla Bible School, conducted the seminar.



Witeerungrot

"Brother Prateep's lessons were full of Thai examples that fit well with our Thai Christian lifestyle," Voraritskul said.

## SPOTLIGHT

## Among ashes, cross remains

**MBALE, Uganda** — Sparks from an electrical fuse box started a fire in the home of Phillip and Laura Shero, members of a mission team in this East African country since 1998.

"The fire raged until the entire roof collapsed into our house," Phillip Shero said. "Couches, beds, even appliances like coffee makers were reduced to dust and ashes."

Church members rallied to help the missionaries and their three children — Malachi, Israel and Annalise. The family posted a wish list on Amazon.com and supporters launched a Facebook group to raise awareness.

The Sheros received new beds for the children. A piece of art the couple bought on their honeymoon was replaced, free of charge, by the artist's gallery.

The fire destroyed everything in the family's living room except a metal cross that hung on the wall.

"The only permanence in this world is found in Christ and the message of his cross," Phillip Shero said. "This remains true, no matter what tragedy assaults us, even if our world — literally — falls down around us."

**DONATIONS** may be sent to: Shero Fire Replacement Fund, c/o The Hills Church of Christ, 6300 NE Loop 820, North Richland Hills, TX 76180.



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A metal cross remains on the wall in the ruins of the Sheros' home.



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# PREACHER CAMP: Young ministers develop talents



MICHAEL HITE

Teenagers prepare sermons during the Future Preachers Training Camp sponsored by the Bear Valley Church of Christ in Denver.

## FROM PAGE 1

Future Preachers Training Camp, an annual summer event designed to “fan the flame for preaching” among young men ages 13 to 18.

“It’s just a great way to learn more from the Scriptures and to be around these young men for a whole week, doing nothing but studying the Bible and learning how to present God’s Word more effectively,” said Alex Warnes, 20, a camp counselor and student at Bear Valley Bible Institute of Denver, a preacher training school associated with the 380-member church.

## THE ‘FUTURE’ IS NOW

The 39 campers from 12 states slept on cots and sleeping bags at the church. They learned terms such as “exegetis,” the critical explanation of a text, and “homiletics,” the art of preaching.

They spent long hours in the Bear Valley library poring over assigned passages. They used pens and pencils — not keyboards — to write out six- to eight-minute sermons.

“There are not as many preachers out there today. God put me here to preach and spread the Word,” said Matt Dove, 15, a member of the Lake Norman Church of Christ in Huntersville, N.C.

Dove boarded his first flight to attend

the Bear Valley camp. He titled his first sermon “The Extreme Makeover” and preached on the role of baptism.

“I was happy about it, but I’m not the best public speaker,” he said. “I think I could have done a better job, but I did all right. It was my first time up in front of that many people.”

That Friday, all 39 campers preached — one right after the other.



BOBBY ROSS JR.

Lee Hanstein, Kathy Pollard and Sheryl Turner take a break from working in the kitchen at the Bear Valley camp.



MICHAEL HITE

Matt Dove, 15, a member of the Lake Norman Church of Christ in Huntersville, N.C., delivers his first sermon during the Future Preachers Training Camp.

“You want to have several Cokes ready during the breaks,” joked David Sanders, 15, a member of the Brown Street Church of Christ in Waxahachie, Texas.

Sanders spoke on “Can We Neglect Our Great Salvation?” He described his life as a mess before his exposure to preacher training camp.

“I had made a lot of bad decisions,” the third-year camper said. But his teachers and fellow campers helped him turn his life around.

“It made me realize what I was missing out on,” he said. “Because I thought (Christianity) was just something, you know, you get baptized, and then you eat the cracker, you drink the grape juice, and that’s the end of it. But it’s not.”

For years, church member DeAnn Wilkie prepared the meals.

But when she couldn’t make it, Kathy Pollard, Sheryl Turner and Lee Hanstein stepped in to make favorites such as fried chicken, chili dogs and chicken quesadillas.

The “camp moms” praised the teens’ servant attitudes and dedication to God. “We need to take the ‘future’ out of Future Preachers Training Camp because these young men are already preachers,” said Pollard, wife of Bear Valley minister Neal Pollard, the camp’s director.

## NEXT GENERATION OF PREACHERS

More than a dozen years old, the Bear Valley camp traces its roots to a minister training camp started by the Pennington Bend Church of Christ in Nashville, Tenn., roughly 40 years ago.

Across the nation, other congregations that host such camps include the North MacArthur Church of Christ in Oklahoma City, the Washington Avenue

Church of Christ in Evansville, Ind., the Lewisville Church of Christ in Texas and the Graymere Church of Christ in Columbia, Tenn.

Before moving to Denver in 2006, Neal Pollard oversaw a Christian camp in

Virginia for about a decade.

“I loved that,” Pollard said of Camp Idlewild. “But it’s much different from here because it’s an outdoors, traditional Bible camp. You have, a lot of times, the boy/girl drama that goes on during the week. You don’t have that here. There’s a little less distraction.”

A few years ago, though, Bear Valley began incorporating a few activities — such as the Rockies game and the cookout — that involve other Christian teens, he said.



Sanders



MICHAEL HITE

Bear Valley minister Neal Pollard dribbles the basketball during recreation time at the camp. He’s guarded by Jabari Lance from the Lake Norman Church of Christ in Huntersville, N.C.

Girls, in other words.

“But, by and large, it’s a concentrated week for these young men to be together ... to see that preachers are normal,” Pollard said.

“You can’t help but just be encouraged and optimistic when you see these guys and how well-rounded they are,” he added. “They’re ballplayers. They’re articulate. They’re smart. They’re sociable. And so they’re not wallflowers or awkward, backward boys that can’t do anything else.”

Darrick Shepherd, minister of the Old Main Street Church of Christ in Newton, Kan., helped his uncle Roger Shepherd start the Bear Valley camp. The 30-year-old preacher remains active in mentoring campers.

“I have a desire to take young men ... and help them and mold them and shape them into hopefully becoming preachers,” Shepherd said.

Shepherd leads a nightly “spoken English” routine where campers must talk off the cuff about any given subject.

“That helps them to overcome their stage fright,” Neal Pollard said. “It’s rewarding to see the change in a week.



Wine

It’s also rewarding to see ... guys who either go to a Christian college or a school of preaching and become preachers because of the seeds planted here.”

Of course, not all the campers aspire to become preachers. But all desire to serve as church leaders, said Brett Petrillo, Bear Valley’s youth minister.

While different from Bible camp, Petrillo said, “what makes preacher training camp the same is that on-fire feeling that you get at the end.”

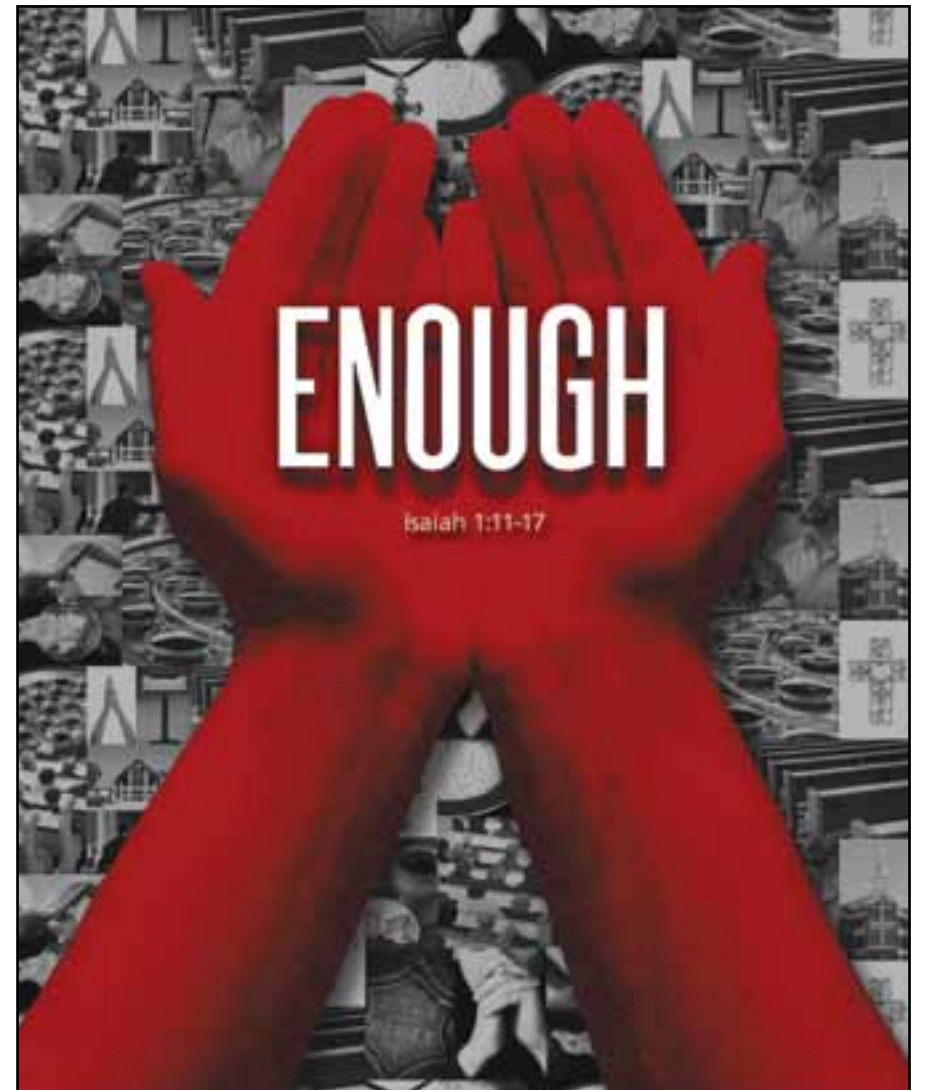
Take Armand Wine, for example.

“I really like what I see,” said Wine, 15, a member of the Chesapeake Church of Christ in Virginia. “I think we’re building a strong generation of preachers.”

Wine came to Denver from Knoxville, Tenn., where he attended an East Tennessee School of Preaching camp.

Also on the high school junior’s summer agenda: camps at the Memphis School of Preaching and Freed-Hardeman University, both in Tennessee.

“I want to learn more about the Word. I don’t necessarily want to be a preacher, but I want to learn how to preach the Gospel,” said Wine, who is interested in youth ministry. “You don’t have to be a pulpit preacher to preach the Gospel. We need all the people out in the field preaching, too.”



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Relief supplies line the auditorium of the 26th and Connecticut Church of Christ in Joplin.

FROM PAGE 3

It's a scene repeated over and over: A devastating storm strikes a community. A Church of Christ steps up to help in a big way — with assistance from fellow Christians near and far.

- It happened in April when tornadoes killed 24 in North Carolina.
- The Brooks Avenue Church of Christ in Raleigh joined with relief ministries and volunteers from area congregations to distribute food and supplies.
- It happened later that month when twisters killed more than 300 and injured thousands across the South.

Despite losing its own building, the Central Church of Christ in Tuscaloosa, Ala., launched a long-term relief effort that has provided 40,000 hot meals to victims and relief workers.

Mike Baumgartner with Disaster Assistance CoC, sponsored by the Lake Jackson Church of Christ in Texas, oversees the feeding project.

This summer, the Central church expects to host 2,000 volunteers — many from youth groups. The volunteers' backbreaking task: moving mountains of debris to residents' curbsides.

# STORMS: Churches mobilize volunteers



A car with "We love Joplin" painted on its back window drives through the devastation on Main Street.

"I had a woman with no connection to the church say, 'Of all the people, the Church of Christ are the ones who really came through,'" Central campus minister Trae Durden said. "That was encouraging to me."

- It happened in June when twisters hit Massachusetts, killing three and damaging hundreds of properties.
- Almost immediately, Gareth Flanary, minister of the 50-member West Springfield Church of Christ, received a message from Churches of Christ Disaster Relief Effort in Nashville, Tenn., asking if the community needed help.

Within two days, a semi-truckload full of food, water, cleaning supplies and baby products arrived at the Massachusetts church building, less than two miles from where the tornado struck.

The delivery came on the heels of the Nashville ministry sending 51 tractor-trailers with emergency items to 39 cities in 11 states during April and May.

"Not only were we able to get the supplies quickly, we were surprised by how we were able to mobilize volunteers," Flanary said. "All of our members have just been

energized," he added. "It's given them a vision of what we can do as a church within the community."

### SHOWING CHRIST AMID THE CHAOS

Back in Joplin, donations poured in to the 26th and Connecticut Church of Christ, ranging from a kindergartner who sent \$3.97 to a check for \$10,000.

Elder Doug Douthitt fumbled for words to describe the love and support shown by Christians.

"It's just kind of mind-boggling ... my



Khali, 8, looks at toys at the Mt. Hope church while a volunteer with the church watches.



Donated water waits for distribution outside the Mt. Hope Church of Christ.

little check that I send to New Orleans or Tuscaloosa," he said. "You know, now it's happening to me. And it's just overwhelming."

At the Mt. Hope church, the Churches of Christ Disaster Response Team, sponsored by the Melbourne Church of Christ in Florida, helps organize volunteers.

Despite the inevitable chaos after a disaster, most congregations respond in a remarkable way, said team leader Mark Cremeans, who came to Joplin after working in Raleigh and Tuscaloosa.

"It's a normal thing that a congregation that's never done this before, they're going to do their best," said Cremeans, a whiteboard behind him covered with names of churches planning trips to Joplin, along with dates and numbers of volunteers expected.

"Without going through it as many times as we have, they have no idea where to start," he added. "We bring in the knowledge of being able to come in and set up a relief effort and help them run it."

A beehive of activity reflects the mammoth effort by the Mt. Hope church.



Kaylee Adams, 10, sorts canned goods in the fellowship hall at the Mt. Hope Church of Christ. Adams, along with her mother and sister, traveled seven hours from Oklahoma to volunteer.

Donna Griffith and other volunteers transformed church classrooms into shoe, clothing and toy stores — only with the items given away for free.

"The rubble is starting to be discarded and cleaned up, and we're now into the grieving stage," said Griffith, a longtime Joplin resident and Mt. Hope member. "The funerals are happening and all, but people are starting to find a place to live and move ahead, and so we're starting to see them pour into here."

Eight-year-old Khali smiled as she came to a classroom filled with dolls, stuffed animals, bubbles and other toys.

The tornado destroyed her family's home, and her parents, James and Tawnja Johnson, said they were grateful for the church's help.

"We were kind of amazed at how many donations came in and how many people came to help," Tawnja Johnson said. "It's overwhelming."

### YOUNG AND OLD USE THEIR TALENTS

Delbert Towell, 72, and his wife, Helen, members of the University Church of Christ in Abilene, Texas, are Sojourners who travel the country in their recre-

ational vehicle and help congregations, church camps and Christian schools.

"People were hurting here. I, like everyone else, have a little bit of talent that I don't want to bury," said Delbert Towell, who joined a chainsaw crew.

Jill Adams, a member of the Hooker Church of Christ in the Oklahoma Panhandle, has family ties to Joplin. She and daughters Makiah, 16, and Kaylee, 10, drove seven hours to volunteer.

"We just wanted to be able to help any way we could," the mother said as she and the girls sorted canned goods.

It's exhausting physical labor — not exactly the way middle-school teacher Sarah Craig planned to spend her summer vacation.

But the reaction from victims when volunteers roll out carts full of groceries eases any weariness that sets in, the Mt. Hope member said.

"Sometimes, it's pretty emotional because people see us come out with the carts, and they just, the tears start flowing," Craig said. "It's very humbling, but it's uplifting at the same time."

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In a letter to the 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.

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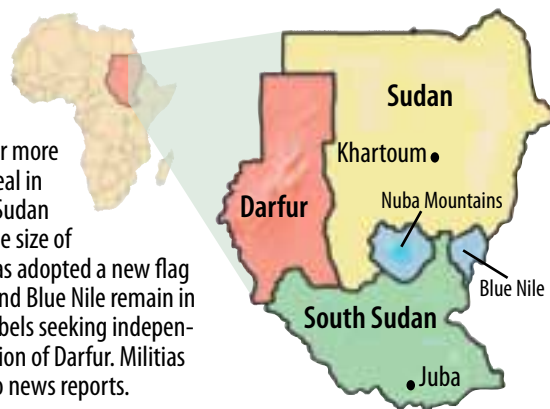
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## Despite independence, conflicts continue

On July 9, Sudan loses its status as the largest nation on the African continent. The country splits into two nations — the Republic of Sudan and the Republic of South Sudan. Conflicts between the north and south date back to Sudan's independence in 1956. After more than 1.5 million deaths due to war, opposing forces signed a peace deal in 2005. In January 2011, more than 99 percent of the people in South Sudan voted for independence. The population of the new country, about the size of Texas, is estimated between 8 million and 10 million. South Sudan has adopted a new flag (at left) and a national anthem. The regions of the Nuba Mountains and Blue Nile remain in dispute. In recent months, the Sudanese government has attacked rebels seeking independence in those regions. In 2004, an anti-government uprising began in the western Sudanese region of Darfur. Militias supported by the Sudanese government have killed hundreds of thousands in Darfur, according to news reports.



SOURCES: CIA World Factbook (cia.gov), BBC World Service, *The New York Times*

## SOUTH SUDAN: New government welcomes churches

FROM PAGE 1

end of second-class citizenship, no more forced Islamization. It means southern Sudanese will, for the first time, be in charge of their own destiny.”

### CROSSES IN GOVERNMENT OFFICES

Jackson, who was baptized as a refugee in the U.S., isn't the only church planter in Juba. Isaac and Janet Adotey, natives of the West African nation of



Biar

Ghana, moved here about a year ago, sponsored by the Nsawam Road Church of Christ in Ghana's capital, Accra, with financial support from a Church of Christ in Arkansas.

Isaac Adotey, 57, leads Jackson and a group

of U.S. visitors into an office of the Government of South Sudan to meet Zechariah Manyok Biar, a government official with ties to Churches of Christ.

“I'm Anglican,” Biar says as he shakes hands with the guests, “but I'm praying for the Church of Christ.”

Born in Juba, Biar fled to Ethiopia at age 13 as the war raged. He joined the Sudan People's Liberation Army, or SPLA, and was a machine gunner.

Later, he was a translator for Dr. Mike Smith, a U.S. physician who did medical mission work in Sudan. Smith helped Biar gain admission to Abilene Christian University in Texas. Biar returned to Sudan to help his new government implement its first laws.

Biar says he's encouraged by the work of Churches of Christ in South Sudan. In the town of Nimule, south of Juba, Christians from Uganda have established benevolence works and planted congregations. To the north,



ERIK TRYGGESTAD

Modesto Silvano, right, asks a question of Don Humphrey as Isaac Adotey, standing, listens.

church member John Gak and the Swope Parkway Church of Christ in Kansas City, Mo., are building a school and church in Gak's home district, Bor.

“If you would like the Church of Christ to grow, concentrate on the rural areas,” Biar tells the visitors. The new nation has freedom of religion, though Biar cautions against pulling people away from other Christian groups.

During the war, Christianity was a sustaining force for the SPLA. “In one attack, I lost almost all the members of my church,” Biar says. “Sometimes I think it wasn't because I was a better soldier. I think God saved me for a reason.”

“Today, if you go to any office of the government, you will find the cross there,” he adds.

### BIBLE STUDIES IN ARABIC

Later, the church members travel a long, dirt road to the Adoteys' neigh-

borhood on the outskirts of Juba.

There, about a dozen Sudanese emerge from stick-and-mud shelters to hear minister Don Humphrey conduct a Bible study. Modesto Silvano translates Humphrey's words into Arabic — a language South Sudanese were forced to learn when ruled by the Muslim majority.

Janet Adotey hands Bibles to the younger Sudanese and helps them find Scriptures. The missionary wife is learning to sing in Arabic so the group can add praise songs to their devotionals.

As the study concludes, Silvano asks Humphrey questions about baptism. He is intrigued by the minister's words and says he's glad that he now lives in a nation where he can study the Bible freely.

Living in Juba isn't easy, “but some people have to take the risk,” Isaac Adotey says. “It's good we are here.”

## Believer shares story of his abduction, survival and salvation

BY ERIK TRYGGESTAD | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

**JUBA, Sudan** — Fleeing one war, James Sokiri was immersed in another.

Sitting in a hotel restaurant, the young Sudanese man recalled the night he was abducted from his refugee camp by the Lord's Resistance Army, rebels fighting the Ugandan government.

Violent and brutal, the LRA raided camps in northern Uganda, forcing girls into sexual slavery and brainwashing boys to become child soldiers.

“I don't know which Lord's they are,” Sokiri said with a slight chuckle. Then, in hushed tones, he described the night he heard footsteps in the camp. He was



Sokiri

studying for exams and thought his neighbors were out hunting white ants — a local delicacy. Then he heard the cock of machine guns.

All he remembers next is white light and shouting. LRA soldiers bound his hands and dragged him from his house. He didn't fear. In his own mind, he already was dead.

As his captors led him away from the camp, the man holding him let go briefly to steal chickens. Sokiri bolted and hid, face down, in a garden of cassava roots.

“I was praying all the time,” he said, “because I know there is no power anywhere except from God.”

After what seemed like hours, he heard gunfire and rocket-propelled grenades. The Ugandan army had arrived. The rebel soldiers fled.

Sokiri left the camps and moved to Juba in 2006, where he writes for a United Nations publication. He searched the Internet to learn about the Bible and found World English Institute. He studied Scripture with a Church of Christ member in Kentucky.

On Aug. 29, 2010, Sudanese evangelist Isaya Jackson baptized Sokiri in the waters of the Nile River.

“I felt as though something physical were removed from my body,” Sokiri said. “I imagined the time Jesus was baptized in the Jordan River ... and how happy I will be with him in eternity.”

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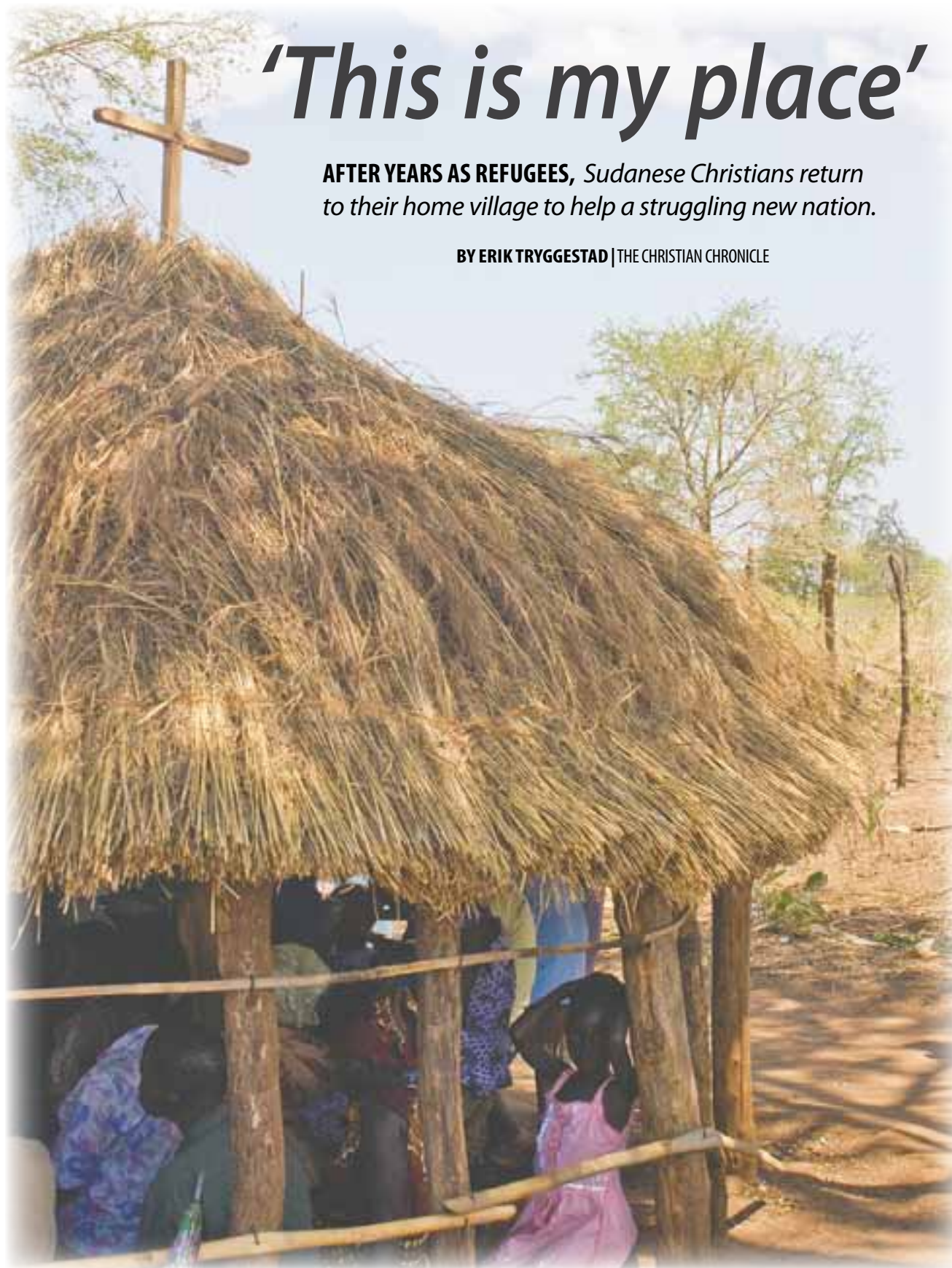
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# 'This is my place'

**AFTER YEARS AS REFUGEES,** *Sudanese Christians return to their home village to help a struggling new nation.*

BY ERIK TRYGGESTAD | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE



Christians gather for Sunday worship under the thatched roof of the Church of Christ in Parajok, Sudan.

**PARAJOK, Sudan** — A seven-hour drive separates Juba, the soon-to-be capital of South Sudan, from this humble village, just north of the Ugandan border.

It's a journey over dusty roads, past fields of unexploded land mines — remnants of the civil war that claimed millions of lives in this East African nation.

Isaya Jackson spends the entire trip in the back of a battered Nissan, crammed between suitcases and the window. When weary American visitors reach the Atebi River Hotel — a simple row of rooms with no electricity or running water — they stretch their legs as Jackson dutifully unties massive trunks from the top of the vehicle. The trunks contain the visitors' clothes and food for the next four days, plus soccer balls for a village school.

Only for a moment, Jackson pauses and motions to his guests.

"So, this is Pajok," he says quietly, using the pronunciation favored by his people, the Acholi. "This is my place."

Jackson, slender and unassuming, doesn't seem like a dynamic evangelist, instrumental in planting dozens of Churches of Christ in Sudan and Uganda.

But that is his story. An odyssey of faith took him from a refugee camp to a preacher-training school in Texas — and now has returned him to his homeland, set to become an independent nation on July 9.

Footsteps from the hotel, workers are laying, brick by brick, the walls of the South Sudan Bible School. The preacher-training school and an adjoining medical clinic are works of The Sudan Project, a collaborative effort of Sudanese Christians and the Mt. Juliet Church of Christ in Tennessee.

Jackson lives in Juba, where he has planted a small church, and makes frequent trips to Parajok to oversee the work. The buildings under construction here, in his home village, are more than brick and mortar, he says. They are "the result of many, many years of prayer."



Isaya Jackson teaches Bible and translates for U.S. Christians at the Parajok Church of Christ.

## MASSIVE CHALLENGES — AND A NEW HOPE

Before he unpacks, Mike Roman, a real estate developer and elder of the Norfolk Church of Christ in Virginia, walks from the hotel to the construction site to inspect the progress made since his last visit.

Jeremy Thompson, superintendent of the Era Independent School District in Texas and a member of the Era Church of Christ, pulls out his camera.

CONTINUED

PHOTOS BY ERIK TRYGGESTAD



Children watch workers at the construction site of a preacher training school and clinic in Parajok.

# After years of war, ‘God brought us here,’ minister says



Children at the Iyele Basic School run after Mike Roman, an elder of the Norfolk Church of Christ in Virginia, as he prepares to give sports equipment to the school.



Orjem Julius Ochan, 19, worships with the Church of Christ in Parajok.



Hellen Anek Sisto carries Bibles on her head as she walks with a group of women after Bible study at the Parajok Church of Christ in southern Sudan.



After a rainstorm, the twilight sun pokes through clouds over a “tukle,” a mud hut with a thatched roof, in the village of Parajok, Sudan.

CONTINUED

It’s Thompson’s first trip to Africa, where he plans to help develop a curriculum for the Bible school. As he takes photos, smiling, shirtless children crowd around him. Some have bellies swollen by malnutrition. For the Americans, it’s easy to see needs here. Women make daily pilgrimages to a muddy river, the only source of water in the village. Across the street from the construction site, children at the Iyele Basic School line the floors, sitting on broken concrete blocks as they write in baby blue UNICEF notebooks. Though they face huge challenges in the years ahead, the Christians who call Parajok home say they have a resource that was in short supply during the war — hope. Speaking in the Acholi language as Jackson interprets, Augustine Obama talks about his father, who was shot and killed here. Obama fled to a refugee camp in Uganda, where he studied the Bible and was baptized. Earlier this year, he prayed fervently that the people of South Sudan would vote to secede from the north, “and it happened exactly,” he says. “Now I am praying for more Christians.”

WAR, REFUGE AND PROVIDENCE

The open-air meeting place of the Parajok Church of Christ stands in front of the construction site. The Sudanese Christians want it to be the first thing people see as they approach the church’s property, explains Don Humphrey, a member of the Mt. Juliet church and coordinator of The Sudan Project. Under a roof of tattered blue tarp and thatch, Humphrey conducts a Bible class for Sudanese preachers and their wives. Jackson translates Humphrey’s words into Acholi. The Sudanese minister is no longer reserved, but animated and passionate, as he speaks in his native tongue. Jackson grew up here, in the days when the Muslim-dominated government of Sudan controlled education. Arabic was compulsory, and people felt pressure to convert to Islam, he says, but few did. “So many of us thought, ‘Why?’” Jackson says. “If religion is a choice, why use force?”

16th in a series

Global SOUTH

The changing face of the church



Gunfire and bombs interrupted his education. He fled to Uganda, then Kenya, as southern Sudanese forces fought the government. For three decades, he lived in and out of refugee camps, “not knowing what will happen tomorrow,” he says. Faith was one of few constants in his life. In the camps, he attended a Pentecostal church and carried a small Bible in his pocket. In the mid-1990s, Jackson’s family was relocated by the U.S. government to Houston. On the Sunday after they arrived, Jackson’s family and five other Sudanese families walked to the nearest church to thank God for his protection. “And, by God’s providence, it happened to be Westbury Church of Christ,” Jackson says. Westbury’s members adopted the Sudanese families, providing them with furniture and rides to the supermarket. Minister Bill Yasko studied Scripture with them. “Over there, people are very busy. No one has time for anybody,” Jackson says, remembering life in the

U.S. “But we found out that (Yasko) was really a man of God. So, the third week, all of us were baptized.” **TEACHING ‘UNDER THE TREE’** Yasko learned of the refugees’ desire to return to Sudan and plant churches. He helped five men from the group raise funds to attend Sunset International Bible Institute in Lubbock, Texas. Jackson graduated and, in 1998, moved to Uganda. He preached to the Acholi in Kiryandongo, a camp for thousands of Sudanese displaced by war and Ugandans fleeing a conflict between their government and the brutal Lord’s Resistance Army. Idleness, and alcoholism, were rampant in the camp. But people had time to hear the Gospel, Jackson says, “so we could teach under the tree from Monday to Friday.” Soon, 52 people were baptized, and a Church of Christ was born. In two years, the congregation’s membership swelled to 400. Believers took the message to other camps and planted churches. As tensions eased between Sudan’s north and south, small groups of refugees returned to their villages. A family converted in the camps started

a church in Pogee, Sudan. Jackson visited in 2001 and found more than 50 people worshipping there. During his years in Lubbock, Jackson saw his home country’s flag on a wall at the Sunset institute that represented nations unreached by Churches of Christ. In a September 2001 ceremony, Sunset students took the Sudanese flag from the wall and placed it among the flags of nations with Churches of Christ. Jackson, meanwhile, kept training preachers in Uganda, praying for the opportunity to plant more churches in South Sudan, including his village. **CHANGED LIVES, ANSWERED PRAYERS** Nearly 10 years later, members of the Parajok Church of Christ gather under their thatched roof and talk about how their lives changed after baptism. Ochola Dickson stopped drinking and concentrated on being a good husband and father. David Kitara stopped wasting money on alcohol, bought a grinding mill and launched his own business. John Otto, an orphan, found a new family in Christ. Margaret Okumu, haunted by thoughts of her six brothers and sisters killed in the war, finally found peace.

“We have been praying and fasting,” says Andrew Ocheng, minister for a 30-member Church of Christ in Magwi, near Parajok. “Now we are very happy.” But Ocheng worries that the faith of some Sudanese is slipping. As they focus on cultivating their fields and rebuilding their lives, he says, they forget that “God brought us here.” New churches continue to be born across the region. During a visit to Parajok, Robert Okongo, a refugee from Uganda converted in the camps, reports that there are 17 new Churches of Christ in northern Uganda, just across the border from Parajok. Some have memberships of up to 150, Okongo says. Training local ministers for these infant churches is vital, Humphrey says, as is helping the Sudanese improve their quality of life. In addition to building the South Sudan Bible School and clinic, The Sudan Project is working with Nashville, Tenn.-based Healing Hands International to repair old



Aleng

water wells and drill new ones across the region. The ministry also provides grape juice for communion, plus seed and farming tools for Sudanese returning from the camps. “Even with obstacles that would keep most congregations in our country from growing, the church in South Sudan is growing in a very encouraging way,” Humphrey says. Before they return to Juba, Humphrey and the other Americans join the Parajok church for Sunday worship. As the service concludes, the Christians stand, sing and exit one by one, forming a circle around their humble meeting place. In the process, each of the 150-plus participants shakes hands with every other worshiper. After the final prayer, Betty Aleng chats with her brothers and sisters in Christ. Unlike many of them, she wasn’t baptized in the refugee camp, but here in Parajok. A friend invited her to church a few months ago, she says, and Aleng stayed “because they teach the truth of the Bible.” Now, she adds, “I’m praying for this new church, and I’m praying that there will be no more fighting.”

**MORE INFORMATION:** [www.sudan-project.org](http://www.sudan-project.org)



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PHOTO PROVIDED BY ABILENE CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

Members of the 1961 team to Sao Paulo, Brazil, gather at Abilene Christian University.

# Fifty years later, Brazilian Christians honor historic team

BY ERIK TRYGGESTAD | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

Growing up in Sao Paulo, Brazil, in the 1960s, Lou Seckler didn't have the highest opinions of people from the U.S.

"The few Americans I had met through my work were executives who came to Brazil on business and did not seem to care much about the people of my country," Seckler said.

That changed when a fellow Brazilian who was teaching Seckler English invited him to a Bible study conducted by a mission team from the U.S.

These people were different, Seckler said. They loved his country, and they cared about his soul.

"Before that point, I never realized my country was great, that family life was something sacred and that joy was part of life," said Seckler, who was baptized by team member Glenn Owen on Nov. 27, 1962.

Seckler now works in ministry in Abilene, Texas, the city where the 13-family team trained for ministry at Abilene Christian University before

sailing for Brazil 50 years ago.

Christians in Brazil honored the team's golden anniversary at the National Encounter of Christian Workers, an annual meeting of minsters at a church-run camp near Sao Paulo.

More than 400 church leaders attended the event, said Glover Shipp, a member of another historic Brazil team that arrived in the city of Belo Horizonte in 1967 and planted churches.

"The church has multiplied greatly since our departure from there 25 years ago," Shipp said. "It was reported

that there are now at least 254 congregations in Brazil, spread over much of the country, with new ones started every month."

The evangelistic zeal of the U.S. missionaries lives on in Brazilian Christians, Shipp said.

"Youth I had helped teach 40 years ago are now capable church leaders," he said. "They have a sense of evangelism that appears to be much more aggressive than here in the U.S. ... Outreach also prevails, with unreached cities in that vast country targeted for future church planting."



The changing face of the church

Global  
SOUTH

BY LYNN McMILLON | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

Fifty years ago, the face of missions in Churches of Christ was shaped by the pioneering work of Howard Norton and 25 teammates who arrived by ship in Brazil on June 17, 1961. Five more joined the team six months later.

Howard Norton loves mission work and has most of his life. From 1961 to 1977, the Nortons worked as missionaries with the Sao Paulo, Brazil, mission team establishing what would become a model for modern mission work. Today, 254 Brazilian congregations and 11,000 members comprise the church that has grown from the beginnings of the Brazil mission team.

Mission work has been a major life emphasis for the Norton family. Today, they live in Tegucigalpa, Honduras, where Howard is president of the Amicus Association, which includes the Baxter Institute of Biblical and Cultural Studies and the James Moody Adams Clinic located adjacent to the Baxter Institute. Baxter is a training school for Christian leaders in Latin America.

From 1977 to 1996, Norton served as a professor of Bible and missions at Oklahoma Christian University; he was dean of the College of Biblical Studies from 1992 to 1996. Norton also served as editor of *The Christian Chronicle* from 1981 to 1996 and later as editor of the *Arkansas Christian Herald*. He serves on the boards of the Continent of Great Cities and World Bible School.

Norton joined Harding University's Bible faculty in 1997, directed the annual Lectureship and edited *Church and Family* magazine. He is on leave from Harding while leading the Baxter Institute.

He has served as a minister for churches in Brazil, Texas, Oklahoma and Arkansas. He has also served as an elder for the Memorial Road Church of Christ in Oklahoma City and the College Church of Christ in Searcy, Ark.

Norton holds degrees from Abilene Christian University and the University of Houston and a doctorate from the University of Sao Paulo.

He is married to the former Jane Pearce. They have three children and seven grandchildren.



ERIK TRYGGESTAD

Howard Norton speaks to an attendee at the Baxter Institute's annual seminar in Honduras.

## A conversation with Howard Norton

**LONGTIME MISSIONARY** to Brazil, Christian educator and minister discusses the 'plentiful harvest' of souls in Latin America and the need for workers.

### Why did you become a missionary?

Although I had known since childhood that I wanted to be a preacher and had begun preaching by appointment when I was 16, I never entertained the idea of being a foreign missionary until I went to Abilene Christian University in 1953.

I determined at the beginning of my freshman year that I would attend every religious activity on campus if at all possible. Mission study on Wednesday evenings before church was one of those activities. I heard appeals by those who had been on the mission field, those on the field and those who

were planning to become missionaries. They inspired me and made me ask if perhaps I myself should go.

Dating and marrying Jane Pearce sealed the deal because she had desired since childhood to be a missionary and live in Latin America.

### Why did your mission team choose Sao Paulo, Brazil?

We based our choice on need, prayer, a democratic vote and research. We learned that three new babes in Christ in Sao Paulo had no one to nurture and encourage them. This perceived need

pulled at our heartstrings and inspired us to consider Sao Paulo. Prayer also was a part of the decision process as we asked for guidance in determining the place God wanted us to go. Most of us never had been any farther beyond the borders than Canada or Mexico.

Our team chose three possible places of great importance: New York, Hong Kong and South America. I personally wanted to go to Hong Kong. We voted, and South America won. Continued research by teammates Ted Stewart and Ellis Long convinced us that the key country in South America was Brazil, and the leading industrial, middle-class city was Sao Paulo.

### How did the concept of going as a team come about?

Many of the first-wave missionaries after World War II were veterans. They were led through the experiences of war to travel the world, sense the spiritual needs and preach the Gospel to the lost. These pioneers usually had no missionary training and often went alone with their families. They were sold on what they were doing and convinced us that we also ought to become missionaries.

They often followed this plea with an exhortation that resonated with us: "Go to the mission field, but go as a team. Ask your friends to join you."

Several of us had known each other nearly all our lives. We were close friends, and many of us had worked together in student government. In a way, we were already a team just waiting to be called. The Lord Jesus had been preparing this team a long time before we realized it.

### What is your assessment of the growth of the church in Brazil in the past half-century?

On one hand, I am very pleased with the growth and stability of the church in Brazil since our team arrived there June 17, 1961 — or since Arlie and Alma Smith arrived in 1956. Although churches everywhere have their problems, I am continually amazed at the love, unity, doctrinal soundness, evangelistic spirit and qualified elders, deacons and preachers that are scattered over this vast nation.

Our whole team looks with wonder at what God did through our feeble efforts and what he is still doing through the

See **NORTON**, Page 22

# NORTON: Minister advises churches to 'never, never give up on mission work'

FROM PAGE 21

work of those who followed us.

On the other hand, I am disappointed that the church has not grown as rapidly as we had hoped. I don't know the number of members and congregations in Brazil, but I know that our dream was for grassfire growth throughout Brazil and South America. This hasn't happened yet.

## Why has the church grown in Brazil in the past 50 years?

God is the one who causes healthy growth. I do believe, however, that most of those who have worked there did many things right. They dedicated themselves to preaching and teaching God's word and avoided a social gospel approach to missions. They loved one another and showed Brazilians how to love one another in spite of disagreements. They modeled unity, morality and forgiveness in their relationships. They emphasized establishing churches that would follow the biblical example of choosing qualified men to serve as elders of local congregations. They recruited some of the best and brightest to take their places when it was time for them to leave the field.

Furthermore, they remained vitally connected to Brazil when they returned to the United States. To God be the glory, forever and ever!

## What do U.S. church leaders need to understand about missions in South America?

First, they need to understand that mission work in South America requires preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ, baptizing those who believe and then teaching those who are baptized to obey everything Jesus taught his disciples. There are no shortcuts.

Second, they need to understand that their missionary must gather the saved into a local church that submits to the lordship of Jesus Christ. This church must look like the one that Jesus envisioned when he built the church.

Third, they need to understand that their mission effort depends largely on the person they send to the field. The

high-quality missionary will be doctrinally sound, morally upright, a hard worker, have good common sense, know how to get along with people and persevere to the end. If he doesn't have these qualities, watch out.

## Are there any favorite moments from your years on the field, any stories that stand out?

Don Vinzant and I are first cousins, and we were both on the Sao Paulo team. Our team was divided philosophically over whether or not we should support national preachers with U.S. dollars. So were Don and I. He and I had been debate colleagues in college, so we knew how to argue a point.

We got into a huge debate over this issue during a Sao Paulo team business meeting. It spilled over into the coffee break. Don argued that it was all right to support national workers, and I fought fiercely against it. The discussion raged.

Finally, it occurred to both of us that I was helping support a national preacher and he wasn't. The lesson: It's very difficult to be consistent on mission methodology. The moral of the story: Don't let "how to do it" wreck a team.

## Are Brazilian Christians taking the lead in missions to their own people?

Yes, Brazilian Christians have always had the desire to preach to their own people. Relationships are important to them, so it is a natural step for Brazilian Christians to share their faith with loved ones and friends.

Besides personal evangelism, churches have been active in starting new congregations in neighboring parts of town or neighboring cities.

Continent of Great Cities, inspired by the Sao Paulo mission team model, recently guided a few groups of Brazilian friends to form teams and move to key locations in Brazil for the purpose of church planting.

We hear frequently about mission work that is generated by Brazilian churches, preacher-training schools or personal initiative. U.S. individuals and churches, however, do partner financially with Brazilians in their mission work.



ERIK TRYGGESTAD

Howard and Jane Norton at the Baxter Institute in Tegucigalpa, Honduras.

## What is your assessment of the receptivity to the Gospel in Central and South America?

Central and South America fit Jesus' description of the field that is "ripe for harvest." These two geographical areas are two of the most receptive areas on Planet Earth. I sometimes tell people that Honduras, where we are now serving, is so ripe that the fruit is falling off the trees.

What has happened in Latin America since 1950 is almost unbelievable. Whereas there were virtually no known works of Churches of Christ south of Mexico midway through the 20th century, churches are now scattered throughout a large portion of Latin America. Still, we have hardly scratched the surface of what needs to be done in this part of the world.

In the words of Jesus, "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few."

## What direction do new world mission efforts need to take?

First, we must restore the vision that Jesus is "the way, the truth and the life" and that no one comes to the Father except through him. This is Jesus' claim about himself. Since it is true, new world mission efforts must make preaching Jesus the central task. I agree with a friend of mine who told me recently, "We can upgrade people's lives physically, but we haven't helped them eternally unless

we've taught them about Jesus."

Second, American missionaries must learn to serve like the Christ who became a man, lived like a servant and died for his enemies. This is not the image we missionaries sometimes leave. We appear arrogant, come as gods, live like kings and smash our enemies. As professor Duane Elmer says, we must not only serve humbly, we must appear that way to those we serve.

## What advice do you have for U.S. churches involved in missions?

Choose your missionary wisely. Be as thoughtful when choosing him as you are when choosing your local preacher. What does he believe? How does he feel about Jesus and the church? Is he dependable? Can you trust him?

Choose your mission field carefully. Some places are hard as granite, and others are ready to harvest. While they all need the Gospel, it is imperative to be realistic about what you can expect from the field you choose. Don't send a person to work where the soil is rock-hard and expect amazing numerical results. On the other hand, don't accept excuses for poor results in a place that is ripe.

Finally, mission work is Jesus' last recorded commandment before he returned to the Father. It is not optional. Therefore, stay the course and never, never give up on mission work.



The changing face of the church

# THE SEARCH FOR OKLAHOMA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY'S 6<sup>TH</sup> PRESIDENT

A call for nominations and candidates for the presidency of Oklahoma Christian University is extended by a presidential search committee on behalf of the Board of Trustees. Oklahoma Christian's sixth president will articulate and exemplify the mission, convictions, and accomplishments of the university. A prospectus is located at [www.oc.edu/presidentialsearch](http://www.oc.edu/presidentialsearch).

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*To assist in gathering nominations, candidates, and dossiers, the OC Board of Trustees has authorized a Search Committee composed of representatives selected by its constituencies, including alumni, board members, faculty, staff, and students.*

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*Nominations and Letters of Interest should be directed to:*

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PO Box 11000  
Oklahoma City, OK 73136  
[presidentialsearch@oc.edu](mailto:presidentialsearch@oc.edu)



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## BIBLE CAMPS

**ARIZONA CHURCH OF CHRIST BIBLE CAMP**  
**TUCSON, Ariz.** — Extreme fire dangers that prompted the closing of the Coronado National Forest shut down the Arizona Church of Christ Bible Camp on Mount Graham, leaders said.

However, the board of Ponderosa Christian Camp in New Mexico made it possible for the Arizona campers to rent that facility at a reduced rate, said Jessica Knapp, youth minister of the Mountain Avenue Church of Christ in Tucson.

"Camp is a really special time for our kids," Knapp said. "These mountaintop experiences are often life-changing for the teens we reach."

## CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

### ARMS OF HOPE

**DALLAS** — Arms of Hope, a ministry associated with Churches of Christ that serves at-risk children and single mothers on two Texas campuses, is initiating a pilot program for single-mother families in Dallas County.

The Urban Together project will help families make the transition from homelessness, poverty and abuse to successful futures, said Kevin McDonald, Arms of Hope's president and CEO.

## HIGHER EDUCATION

### LUBBOCK CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

**LUBBOCK, Texas** — The LCU chorus, conducted by Philip Camp, recently completed its third concert tour in the eastern European nation of Ukraine.

The chorus coordinates its tours with Eastern European Mission. The tours are designed to encourage European



PHOTO PROVIDED BY PHILIP CAMP

The Lubbock Christian University chorus, Ukrainian supporters and friends in Kiev.



ISAAC SANYU

## A ministry that has Africans talking

Shanna Sanders practices English with a Ugandan in Kampala, Uganda. Sanders was one of five Christians from Arkansas who traveled to the African nation with Let's Start Talking, or LST. The Texas-based ministry, in partnership with 23 universities and campus ministries, will send more than 40 teams around the globe this summer, said Craig Altrock, director of project administration. LST teams help non-native speakers improve their English skills using the Bible.

In Kampala, "we were able to register more than 70 readers before the team arrived," said Ugandan evangelist Isaac Sanyu. About 60 percent of applicants knew enough English to participate in the program. "The blessing and beauty of LST projects is that participants (are) introduced to the church and taught the Word of God," Sanyu said.

churches and support possibilities for EEM's Bible distribution programs in new areas, Camp said.

Chorus members from past tours have returned to Ukraine to work in EEM's summer youth camps.

Caleb and Kendra Harrelson, former LCU choir students, serve as full-time missionaries in Kolentsi, Ukraine.

### PEPPERDINE UNIVERSITY

**MALIBU, Calif.** — With the theme "The Path of Discovery," the 31st annual Christian Scholars Conference promoted harmony between the scientific and Christian communities.

"Many in the academy are coming to see that science devoid of values is dangerous, while many Christians are discovering that faith without intellectual foundation is suspect," Pepperdine Provost Darryl Tippens said.



Olbricht

More than 300 scholars from 90 universities participated in the recent conference. Thomas H. Olbricht, distinguished professor emeritus of religion at Pepperdine, was awarded an honorary doctorate for long embodying "the highest academic and collegial standards in addition to founding the Christian Scholars Conference."

### SOUTHWESTERN CHRISTIAN COLLEGE

**TERRELL, Texas** — Guss Dunn Farmer Sr., who served as head of the Bible department and taught Bible and Greek during his 56 years with the historically black college, died June 8. He was 95.

"Dr. Farmer was probably the favorite professor of many at SWCC from the '50s till the '90s," said Matthew L. Terry Sr., minister of involvement for the Hutchins Church of Christ in Texas. "He taught a great number of



Farmer

## SPOTLIGHT

## Singing to Fourtify

**SEARCY, Ark.** — Fourtify, a quartet from Searcy, was chosen to appear on "America Sings," a competition airing on the Gospel Music Channel.

Kittrell Camp, Emily Eads, Lindsey Farley and Jordan Simpson, all members of the College Church of Christ, formed the quartet while they were students at Harding Academy.

Their repertoire includes a cappella gospel songs, such as "How Deep the Father's Love," as well as contemporary music such as "For Good" from the Broadway musical "Wicked."



PHOTO PROVIDED BY FOURTIFY

Kittrell Camp, Lindsey Farley, Jordan Simpson and Emily Eads make up Fourtify.

preachers in the brotherhood."

Terry praised the "awesome sacrifice, love and dedication" displayed by Farmer, who was white. The 1989 Southwestern graduate said that in the 1950s — "in the pre-era of civil rights" — Farmer dedicated himself to a "very poor, struggling black Christian college."

## PUBLICATIONS

### THINK MAGAZINE

**NASHVILLE, Tenn.** — Focus Press has reached an agreement to sell *Think* magazine in Borders bookstores.

The 5-year-old publication already was carried in Chapters bookstores in Canada.

"One of the goals Focus Press had from its inception was to get solid Christian material into secular bookstores — competing alongside of worldly magazines," said Brad Harrub, Focus Press director and co-founder.

## Lifepath Coordinator

This is a full-time position with benefits. A minimum of a Bachelor's degree in social work, child development, or a human services related degree is required. This position requires experience in working with high school juniors and seniors and young adults in college.

The successful candidate will: Be aware of licensing requirements, limitations and compliance; expand and teach the curriculum for Transitional Life Skills training; be responsible for teaching or finding teachers for the various life skills training modules; organize and facilitate bi-weekly training module classes; build mentor relationships with the eligible kids from the high school cottages (Juniors & Seniors); work with their house parents to integrate them into the Transitional Program; build a specific life path for each child and map out the steps to take to see that path become a reality; oversee and administrate the Transitional Duplex.



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**Submit resumes to [marylauren@christshaven.org](mailto:marylauren@christshaven.org).  
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The department of **Language and Literature** at **Oklahoma Christian University** invites applications for an **Assistant Professor** position to begin Fall 2012.

Candidates should emphasize their ability to teach composition, courses related to the Teaching English as a Foreign Language [TEFL] degree, and basic-intermediate language courses corresponding either to one of the university's overseas programs — German, Japanese, Chinese — or to one of the department's current language offerings: French, Spanish. Applicants with a Ph.D. or ABD are preferred, but other qualified applicants will also be considered.

Course load for the position is 4/4 with English courses in Linguistics, Structure of the English Language, and/or Teaching English as a Foreign Language, and Composition, and courses in the appropriate language.

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Applicants should send curriculum vita, teaching philosophy, statement of faith, and writing sample related to the particular specialization to **Dr. Cami Agan**, Chair of the department of Language and Literature at the following e-mail address: [cam.agan@oc.edu](mailto:cam.agan@oc.edu).

Electronic attachments and cover letters preferred. The search will continue through Spring 2012 or until a suitable candidate is found.

Oklahoma Christian University is an equal opportunity employer.



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## NEWSMAKERS

**NAMED:** Dale Brown to the Board of Regents, Pepperdine University, Malibu, Calif. Brown serves on the board of trustees for *The Christian Chronicle*. **Jada Mincy**, assistant women's basketball coach, Lipscomb University, Nashville, Tenn. Mincy was a standout player for Ole Miss from 2003 to 2007.



**Brown**

**AWARDED:** Angie Morgan, Professor of the Year by the student body of Ohio Valley University, Vienna, W. Va.



**Mincy**

**ANNIVERSARIES:** 73rd: Mr. and Mrs. W. D. Vestal Jr., Iowa Park, Texas. 70th: Hugh and Freda Bowie, Abilene, Texas. 50th: Ralph and Janice Wilcoxson and Jim and Pat Cook, Oklahoma City.

**BIRTHDAYS:** 99th: Herman Holmes, Indianapolis. 97th: Elton Talley, Altus, Okla. 96th: Larue Ashley, Frankston, Texas. 92nd: Johnson Kell, Denver. Dina Mitchell, Frankston, Texas. Leola Shackelford, Lindsay, Okla. 91st: Elton Dilbeck, Roswell, N.M. Dixie Cox, Frankston, Texas. 90th: Carolyn Eberts, Seal Beach, Calif. Isabel Grable, Frankston, Texas.



**Morgan**

**PASSAGES:** Norman Keener, 85, May 19, served 15 years as full-time minister, then served in Christian education at Lubbock Christian University, Lipscomb University and International Christian University, elder of the Brentwood Hills church, Nashville, Tenn. **Ruth Ralstin**, 99, June 16, Mullinville, Kan., a devoted member of the Mullinville, Kan., church.

**The Valley View Church of Christ, Jonesboro, Ark. seeks a Pulpit Minister. We have 800-plus members and are a positive, growth-oriented church. Please send resume and DVD sermon to us for consideration. Contact [allen710@aol.com](mailto:allen710@aol.com) or visit [www.valleyviewchurchofchrist.org](http://www.valleyviewchurchofchrist.org) for more information.**

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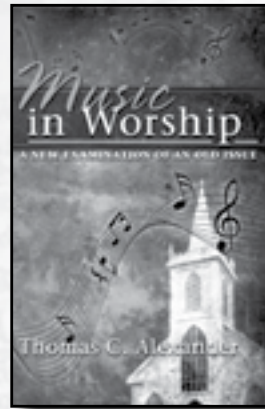
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We currently have a part time youth minister as well. Prefer 3-5 years or more pulpit experience. We are a Bible-based congregation that embraces the doctrines of grace. Please send a resume along with a video of both a sermon and a class to: Elders, Smith Springs Church of Christ, 2783 Smith Springs Road, Nashville, TN 37217. All resumes should be received by August 31, 2011.

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**July 7-10 Campus Ministry United Conference.** "Get Lit: Passing the Torch to the Next Generation." Harding University, Searcy, Ark. Contact [www.campusministryunited.org](http://www.campusministryunited.org).

**July 15-17 100th Anniversary, Laings, Ohio, church.** Contact (740) 472-5508 or [www.laingschurchofchrist.org](http://www.laingschurchofchrist.org).

**July 15-17 Mid-Atlantic Lectureship.** "Who is This Jesus?" Governor's Hall at Sailwinds Park, Cambridge, Md. Contact [www.cambridgecoc.com](http://www.cambridgecoc.com) or (410) 228-6333.

**July 21-23 Youth Vocal Ministry Camp.** Athens Intermediate School, Athens, Ala. Organized by the Southside church, Rogersville, Ala. Contact (256) 874-3457.

**July 25 Blue Ridge Family Encampment.** 61st annual. Black Mountains, N.C. Contact [blueridgeencampment.org](http://blueridgeencampment.org) or (865) 456-6165.

**July 27-31 Global Reunion Camp.** For TCKs/MKs and Parents. Oklahoma Christian University. Contact [www.oc.edu/tck](http://www.oc.edu/tck) or [nancy.hartman@oc.edu](mailto:nancy.hartman@oc.edu).

**July 28-31 Connect Conference.** "Ordinary Radicals: Shane Claiborne." Lipscomb University, Nashville, Tenn. Contact [www.campuscrosswalk.org](http://www.campuscrosswalk.org).

**July 29-31 Legacy Conference 2011.** Sponsored by Pacific Northwest Churches of Christ Women and Girls. Seattle-Tacoma Airport Marriott. Contact [www.legacyconferencenw.com](http://www.legacyconferencenw.com).

**July 30 Preston Road School of Preaching Reunion.** Contact Chris Vidacovich at [chrsv@cscoc.com](mailto:chrsv@cscoc.com).

**Aug. 12-18 Polishing the Pulpit 2011.** Sevierville, Tenn., Events Center. Contact [www.polishingthepulpit.com](http://www.polishingthepulpit.com) or (877) 338-3397.

**Aug. 19-20 Walled Lake Youth Rally.** Walled Lake, Mich., church. Contact [greg1730@sbcglobal.net](mailto:greg1730@sbcglobal.net) or (248) 624-4600.

**Aug. 19-20 Debate On Authority.** David W. Hester, Springville Road Church of Christ, and Robert Sungenis, Catholic Apologetics International. Pinson Valley High School, Pinson, Ala. Contact (205) 681-3252 or [dwhest@bellsouth.net](mailto:dwhest@bellsouth.net).

**Aug. 26-28 Texas Women's Empowerment Conference.** "My Position, My Promise, My Purpose — Becoming a Woman of Promise." Plano Marriott at Legacy Town Center, Plano, Texas. Contact [www.seesayseize.org](http://www.seesayseize.org).

**Aug. 27-28 50th Anniversary Reunion of the Ward Street Church of Christ.** Wallingford, Ct. Contact (203) 269-9898.

**Aug. 28-Sept.1 Crusade for Christ.** Washington Hilton Hotel, Washington, D.C. Contact [www.cofccrusade.org](http://www.cofccrusade.org).

COMPLETE CALENDAR at [www.christianchronicle.org](http://www.christianchronicle.org)

# Academic Freedom.... Where it is Might Surprise you!

There have been cries for academic freedom in American higher education for several decades. The prevailing sense is that public colleges and universities provide the environment that promotes freedom of expression and thought. For many issues that may be true. But as we become an increasingly secular society, the irony is that conversations about God and faith are increasingly unwelcome in such institutions. There seems to be the freedom to discuss anything — except a Christian perspective of the world.

Stated clearly by the former president of Rhodes College in Memphis, Tennessee, "Today, research universities are thoroughly secular and comprise one of the few places in America where openly acknowledged religion is not a life option. Consequently, academic freedom has become a casualty at these institutions."

Obviously, there are exceptions. Many faculty at public colleges and universities possess a dynamic faith and through it are Christian examples to their students. In addition, there are dedicated ministers who have accepted the call to campus ministry and serve Christian students at such institutions in admirable ways. It would be difficult, if not impossible, however, to prove that they are the norm rather than the exception to the norm of secular thinking and secular teaching on the public campus.

Ironically, the place where academic freedom exists as it relates to religion and faith are our Christian colleges. It is in our Christian colleges that the existence of God can be freely proclaimed. It is in our Christian colleges that important societal issues can be discussed with the Christian perspective asserted. It is in our Christian colleges that faith can be proclaimed as integrated into all of life, not just a subset of life. Those opportunities no longer exist in most of American higher education and particularly not at state-supported colleges and universities.

What does this mean? For most people it simply does not matter. But for tomorrow's college students and their parents, it is the difference between an

education that supports a vital Christian faith and one that will not. In a Christian college, academic freedom will allow life's most important questions to be asked, beliefs to be explored and faith to be expressed. As a Christian college environment demands critical thinking and pragmatic preparation for success in the real world, it also proclaims that God, faith and the Christian walk are part of that world, the world God created.

**Academic freedom.** Public colleges and universities talk about it, Christian colleges deliver it. Those of us in Christian higher education believe the difference is important...eternally important. What about you?



*L. Randolph Lowry  
President, Lipscomb University*

If you have comments on Christian higher education please contact me at [compellingmission@lipscomb.edu](mailto:compellingmission@lipscomb.edu).



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## EDITORIAL

# A legacy to reach the unreached

**W**hen Jimmy Judd returned from the Pacific after World War II, his life had changed forever.

Serving on the island of Guam, he met a man who introduced him to New Testament Christianity. Judd was baptized and enlisted as a soldier of Christ. In 1957, he crossed a different ocean — the Atlantic — and lived in mud huts as missionary to the African nation of Malawi.

Four years later, Howard Norton and a team of believers traveled to South America to win souls in Sao Paulo, Brazil.

Combined, the two men baptized thousands. They also trained future generations of Christians to take the Gospel to their people.

This month we join with Christians in the U.S. and Africa as we mourn Judd's death at age 85. We also rejoice that the legacy left by Judd — and hundreds of others like him — lives on.

We see evidence of this legacy on our front page, where we

report that African Christians are spreading the Gospel in their continent's newest nation — South Sudan. A new generation of indigenous believers is following in Judd's footsteps, boldly proclaiming their faith in foreign fields.

We also celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Sao Paulo team. In this month's Dialogue, Norton

reflects on the team's legacy in Brazil, where Churches of Christ now send local Christians to plant churches in unreached parts of their country.

Norton continues to leave a legacy for

Latin America as president of the Baxter Institute in Honduras, which equips evangelists to reach Spanish speakers around the globe — including the U.S.

Indigenous believers play vital roles in reaching countries that would be difficult fields for U.S. Christians. At Baxter, for example, instructors train students from Cuba to plant churches in their island nation.

Similarly, African Christians can, and must, take the Gospel to

their continent's final frontier — the predominantly Muslim north.

In this month's Currents section, we recount the story of Isaya Jackson, a Sudanese refugee who studied at Sunset International Bible Institute in Lubbock, Texas. After his training, Jackson returned to Africa and baptized countless numbers of his fellow refugees.

As the refugees returned to southern Sudan, students at Sunset moved the Sudanese flag from a wall of nations unreached by Churches of Christ to a wall representing nations with congregations. When South Sudan becomes an independent nation on July 9, that flag will need to be replaced with the flag of the new nation.

And, regrettably, the flag of Sudan must be returned to the wall of unreached nations.

Taking the next step — winning souls in north Sudan and other Muslim lands — will require partnerships between African Christians and U.S. supporters. It will not be easy, but it must be done.

How many potential Jimmy Judds are in north Africa right now, waiting for someone to introduce them to the life-changing power of the cross?

## Ever-Laughing Life

by Jonny Hawkins



## TO OUR READERS

### There's still time for your directory

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### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR: [letters@christianchronicle.org](mailto:letters@christianchronicle.org)

*The Christian Chronicle* welcomes and encourages feedback that promotes thoughtful and respectful discussion. Letters/comments should be 150 words or less and may be edited for length and clarity. Comments to the print or online editions are considered to be letters to the editor and may be published. Please include name, city and state of residence, as well as home congregation.

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# At church, recovering addicts must come out of hiding

**'My name is Janet, and I'm a recovering addict.'**

Usually, when I say those words, I'm in an Alcoholics Anonymous meeting. But when I say them to a group of Christian women gathered for a Ladies Day, there are usually audible gasps.

Sometimes, I can see looks of anguish and concern. On a few occasions, I've seen the eyes of an addict looking back at me acknowledging the shame before quickly looking away trying not to be noticed. Those are the ladies that I try to move to action whenever I give witness to my story.

On April 19, I went to the local AA noon meeting and received my 10-year sobriety chip. Most of the people attending the meeting clapped enthusiastically. One of them asked me how I did it. I smiled and said, "By the grace of God and the love of my friends and family."

It's very painful to talk about what I have done to myself and my loved ones during my life as an addict. It's painful to remember those years that I separated myself from God. It's especially painful after I stopped using and faced the reality that lives were changed because of the choices I made.

I grew up in a normal, loving home. My father is a retired Church of Christ minister. My mother taught school and was a wonderful minister's wife. I was raised with strong Christian values.

As a teenager, I didn't smoke, drink or try drugs. While attending Harding University, I met and married a wonderful man who also was a minister.

## Views



Janet Ney

I can give all kinds of reasons why I started drinking. I believe that, at some point, I stopped looking toward the cross and lost my way. By the time our third child was born, I was secretly drinking a bottle of tequila every night. Nine years later, I was twice-divorced and addicted to speed and cocaine.

I did all the right things as a minister's wife. I taught class on Sunday morning. I gave talks on faith and hope. People looked up to me. But as I sank deeper and deeper into an abyss of my own making I didn't know how to ask for help. I was too ashamed. So I drank more and got better at pretending.

Finally, I told the elders that I couldn't take it anymore and left my husband. I told them it was temporary, but I knew that was a lie. For the next several years, I drifted in and out of jobs, lost contact with most of my family, degraded myself daily to get my next fix and completely cut off any connection to God. I weighed 87 pounds and felt like I was going to die. I barely existed.

It was at my daughter's wedding that my sister reached out to me one more time. In an unguarded moment, she started to cry and told me that she wanted her sister back. My heart broke, and five months later, I was in Oklahoma at a rehab facility.

For me, quitting drugs was the easy part. Facing the pain I had caused and the damage I had inflicted on my loved ones was almost more than I could handle. Fortunately, I was blessed with friends and family who supported me

and kept me focused. I returned to worship services and connected to God in a way that I had never experienced.

For the first time in my life, I knew the true meaning of forgiveness.

But there was a problem. I was a recovering addict who needed to talk about my struggles as an addict. I wanted to connect to anyone who had my experiences.

I remember the first time I mentioned my addictive past in a Sunday morning adult class. I spoke about how the grace of God profoundly changed me and how I truly knew what forgiveness felt like. After I stopped speaking, there was a prolonged silence. The teacher, bless his heart, didn't know what to say. I could almost feel the shock in the air. They all knew me as Janet, the minister's daughter. Finally, someone said something and the class continued.

I was dismayed. I also was a little bewildered. That was the moment I decided to make it my ministry to seek out women in the church who were like me. I needed them as much as they needed me. AA is a much-needed organization, and I have spent many hours inside those meetings.

But I needed more. I needed to connect with other women with similar beliefs and values who would listen to me and nod their heads and say, "I know."

So I started speaking at women's groups and Ladies' Days. I started

speaking about addiction and forgiveness. I asked recovering addicts to be brave and tell their stories. I begged active users to come talk to me and I would do all I could to help them. But I was — I am — only one person. We need more.

In most every congregation, there is at least one person deeply involved in addiction of one form or another. These people need to be reached.

It will take more than a pat on the arm and a "I'm praying for you." It will take Christian women actively speaking out about their recovery.

We know what to say. We've been there. We know how to take the shame that grips our hearts and turn that shame into recovery. But it takes courage.

I believe that women in the church who have struggled with addictions and have overcome those addictions *must* come out of the shadows and speak out in order to help those still struggling.

I believe that women suffer in silence because the fear of discovery is more comfortable than the idea of recovery.

Unless more women step forward and talk bravely about their sobriety and how God has saved them from a life of addiction, more women will leave the church — or die — before they can be reached.

**'It will take more than a pat on the arm and a "I'm praying for you." It will take Christian women actively speaking out about their recovery.'**

**JANET NEY** is a member of the Ukiah Church of Christ in California and a grandmother of five. She contributes to the website [www.learningtobecontent.com](http://www.learningtobecontent.com). Contact her at [janetney91@yahoo.com](mailto:janetney91@yahoo.com).

## VOICES

**How would you describe your experience with the Future Preachers Training Camp?**

Asked by managing editor Bobby Ross Jr. of campers and counselors at the Bear Valley Church of Christ in Denver.



the young kids, the teenagers, the future preachers.

**David Fang** | Bear Valley Bible Institute of Denver student from China



has been) great teaching, a great message and fellowship.

**Ethan Hanson** | Member of Fremont Church of Christ in California



and how we do our sermon prep and stuff.

**Parvin Adu** | Member of Lone Tree Church of Christ in Colorado



of these guys who have a passion of just working for the Lord.

**Brett Petrillo** | Youth minister for Bear Valley Church of Christ in Denver

I took all the classes that the campers took. It's basically a learning experience for me. I'm most impressed with

It's incredible. I've been blown away all week ... by the activities and the time put into getting these kids a great experience. (There

I came to learn a lot about God. This is my second year. I love this camp, and I love the people. I love how they teach

Every single time I'm here, I'm getting something out of it. It improves my spirituality. ... It's always awesome to be around all

# Authors urge believers to practice purposeful parenting

BY LAURIE DILES | FOR THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

While the world clamors for our attention to tasks that we deem “urgent,” three authors remind us of something that’s truly important — our calling to be intentional in our parenting.

In **“Regret Free Parenting: Raise Good Kids and Know You’re Doing it Right,”** licensed psychotherapist Catherine Hickem reminds us that “raising children is the single most difficult job in the world.” The title of the book suggests that it is written for both parents, but mothers are the target audience.

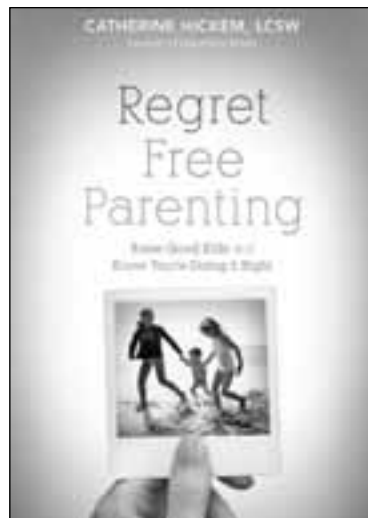
Hickem introduces seven principles of parenting in a long introduction, followed by chapters that develop each concept. Many sentences and phrases of the book are quotable and capture the reader’s attention, but the book lacks cohesion.

The most important principle Hickem proposes is that of being truly intentional about parenting — taking the time to think through the process of rearing our children.

Being present is a recurring theme throughout her book. Hickem writes, “True presence means you’re fully engaged emotionally, listening intently and respectfully interacting with your child.” These principles, while not new, are often ignored in our hurried lives.

Teresa Whitehurst, author of **“God Loves Single Moms,”** addresses some of the unique issues facing single mothers, using as a backdrop her personal experience as well as her expertise as a clinical

**‘Hickem writes, “True presence means you’re fully engaged emotionally, listening intently and respectfully interacting with your child.” These principles, while not new, are often ignored in our hurried lives.’**



Catherine Hickem. **Regret Free Parenting: Raise Good Kids and Know You’re Doing it Right.** Nashville, Tenn.: Thomas Nelson, 2011. 235 pages. \$15.99.

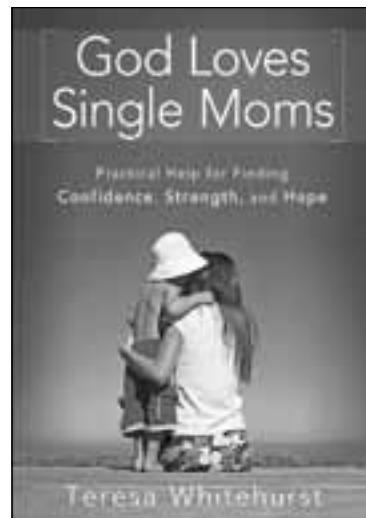
psychologist.

Adopting the metaphor of mother as CEO of family operations, Whitehurst begins with questions to help the single mom assess her own mental, emotional and physical needs, followed by an inventory to measure her children’s devel-

opmental needs. Subsequent chapters address these topics, so that the mother, as CEO, can formulate a plan of action. The “Recommended Reading” list at the end of the book provides an additional useful resource.

As the title indicates, the book is about the person who is playing the

role of mother, not necessarily about specific parenting strategies. Child-rearing is only one aspect of being a mom, especially for the single mom. Running the household, managing finances and spiritual leadership are examples of



Teresa Whitehurst. **God Loves Single Moms: Practical Help for Finding Confidence, Strength, and Hope.** Grand Rapids, Mich.: Revell, 2010. 187 pages. \$12.99.

other aspects of being a mom that extend beyond parenting. The recurring refrain of “stop, relax, evaluate and plan” appeared in most chapters, suggesting the need to take out time to be intentional.

Most of the topics addressed by Whitehurst would benefit any mother who would like a refreshing book to evaluate her progress and to help her set goals for herself and her family.

The topics would be of value to a mother working outside the home, but are especially encouraging for the single mother because they are addressed in the context of the one parent, where the “buck stops figuratively and literally.”

While the author claims that the book is for any single mom (including widows and women who have adopted children), the many references to a living father suggest that previously married women are the primary audience.

Jim Burns, senior director of HomeWord Center for Youth and Family, addresses the most common questions related to raising teenagers in clear language that gives parents encouragement that they are



Jim Burns. **Teenology: The Art of Raising Great Teenagers.** Minneapolis: Bethany House, 2010. 221 pages. \$14.99.

capable of parenting their teenagers into responsible adulthood. In **“Teenology: The Art of Raising Great Teenagers,”** Burns’ method of presenting research-based descriptions of typical teenage behavior and illustrating with examples from his own, now-adult children during their teen years engages the reader to

create personal applications.

Seven chapters discuss big-picture guidelines for developing a healthy home where teenagers may grow into responsible adulthood. Specific issues such as media, purity code, communication, the spiritual life of a teenager and our changing culture are solidly treated, supported with research and examples. Additional chapters address the marriage of the parents raising the teenager dealing with the troubled teen and specific issues such as tattoos, driving, or depression, related to teens.

While the material is thorough, each chapter is divided into self-contained sections that can be quickly read and applied. At the same time, the book flows easily for reading larger portions at once, if the reader chooses.

This book leaves the parent feeling ready and eager for the fun ride of the teen years. Of the three books, this volume is the one I’m recommending to my friends.

**LAURIE DILES**, a wife and mother of two teenage boys, teaches communication at Harding University in Searcy, Ark.

## NEW AND NOTEWORTHY

### DISCIPLESHIP

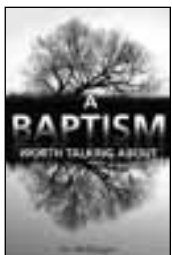
Shawn D. Anderson. **Living Dangerously — Seven Keys to Intentional Discipleship.** Eugene, Ore.: Wipf and Stock Publisher, 2010. 146 pages. \$19.



Based on a nationwide study of the role disciples play in helping people come to Christ, Pepperdine University graduate Anderson identifies seven qualities of people effective in discipling. The volume is filled with graphics of the statistical data and stories of Anderson’s experiences in Alaska.

### BIBLE STUDY

Jim McGuiggan. **A Baptism Worth Talking About.** Nashville, Tenn.: 21st Century Christian, 2010. 72 pages. \$6.99.



Is baptism essential for salvation? Does baptism really change anything about our relationship with God?

A longtime preacher and teacher in Churches of Christ, McGuiggan challenges believers to examine what the Bible says about baptism by taking them on a fresh exploration of the topic. The book includes questions for reflection.

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When Gary Washer began his studies at Heritage Christian University in 2007, he never dreamed where life was about to take him. The Tennessee native planned to complete his ministry studies on campus, but when his new bride's job took them to Malaysia, Gary never missed a beat.

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- **Teacher's Aide:** Individual to assist the Teachers at the West TN on-campus school.

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## Harding University Bible Lectureship

SEPTEMBER 25 - 28, 2011

Sunday, 7 p.m., Benson Auditorium

*Living as Children of God* • Dr. David Lane

Monday, 11 a.m., Administration Auditorium

*Seeing* • Devin Swindle

Monday, 7 p.m., Benson Auditorium

*Walking* • Dr. Chris Smith

Tuesday, 11 a.m., Administration Auditorium

*Warning* • Jacob Hawk

Tuesday, 7 p.m., Benson Auditorium

*Obeying* • Dr. Spencer Furby

Wednesday, 11 a.m., Administration Auditorium

*Loving* • Dr. Kevin Youngblood

Wednesday, 7 p.m., Benson Auditorium

*Knowing* • Dr. Alan Martin

Monday, 4:30 p.m., Celebration of Ministry dinner

Dr. Jesse Trice

## Shanks will bless the Northeast

Ohio Valley University's selection of Harold Shank as its next president will be a landmark for the Vienna, W.Va., university and for Christian education in the Northeast. Shank is a seasoned minister, church leader and biblical scholar. He will strengthen Ohio Valley University through his leadership.

I have a special place in my heart for Harold and his wife, Sally. They were students at Oklahoma Christian during the early years of my work at the school. I never had Harold in a class, but I knew who he was and knew of his work. He was a freshman in 1968 while I was chair of Language and Literature.

He declared Bible as his major and was active in Harvesters, an organization for students interested in ministry. His involvement was consistent throughout college, and somehow along the way he had time to meet and win Sally Tague.

After his graduation he worked as an admissions counselor for OC and also served as junior high youth minister for the College Church of Christ (now the Memorial Road Church of Christ).

The Shanks moved to Memphis, Tenn., for him to attend Harding University Graduate School of Religion. He worked for the Highland Street Church of Christ while he finished his degree.

During that time, the Shanks planned with another OC couple to plant a church in Milwaukee. The team worked for several years and planted a very strong north Milwaukee church. During those years, Harold completed his doctoral studies in Old Testament at Marquette.

Eventually, Highland called the Shanks back to Memphis to fill their pulpit. Sally and Harold established themselves as spiritual leaders for a church on the edge of inner-city Memphis. Through the years, I read each of his books. "Children Mean the World to God" is an amazing statement of God's concern for children and was related to his serving as national spokesman for the Christian Child and Family Services Association.

Harold's influence on the churches in Tennessee was deep and profound. My children in Nashville considered his moving to OC a great loss for the Kingdom in the South, even though

they are graduates of OC.

It gave me great satisfaction when the Shanks agreed to move to Oklahoma City for Harold to serve as Old Testament professor at OC. I knew that they would enrich the spiritual life of the commu-

nity, and he would build a strong foundation for Bible majors taking Old Testament courses and Hebrew.

In his years on the OC faculty, I never heard anything but praise for his courses. One semester, I asked him if I could audit his graduate course over Jeremiah.

I was impressed by

his spiritual approach to the class. He took time to get acquainted with all the students, and he began each class with a time for each person to share ideas and concerns for the prayer he led each meeting. The study was carefully organized, and he pushed students to dig deeply into the text and the resources of other scholars. The course cleared many of my problems in trying to grasp Jeremiah's story and his message.

Harold and Sally very quickly fit into life at the Memorial Road church. Sally became the lead speaker and trainer for the Center for Women's Bible Study.

He was appointed an elder and assisted with the planting of a new congregation in the Oklahoma City area. He taught frequently and preached some.

One quarter, Harold and Peter Cariaga, one of his students, taught an amazing class on the heart of God.

The material of that class eventually became the wonderful book, "The Heart

of God: Listening to his Heartbeat."

The book reveals much about the heart of God and just as much about the heart of Harold Shank.

Although I am deeply pained to lose Harold and Sally from OC, and equally pained that I did not take advantage to spend time with them here, I believe that God is behind this call. The Shanks will powerfully enrich OVU and bless the Northeast.

### Insight



Bailey McBride



Sally and Harold Shank

CONTACT [bailey.mcbride@christianchronicle.org](mailto:bailey.mcbride@christianchronicle.org).



**Do you have a heart for children?  
Come join our team!**

The Albuquerque Christian Children's Home provides a loving, safe home for neglected and at-risk children. The Home is located on six acres by the historic Rio Grande River. We are looking for a faithful couple to serve as houseparents.

Applicants need to be members of a Church of Christ in good standing. We provide a nice benefits package, medical insurance, long- and short-term disability, annual leave, and much more.

All interested couples should send both of their resumes plus a cover letter of interest to Everett White by email to [ewhite@acch4kids.org](mailto:ewhite@acch4kids.org) or fax to 505-899-4341. You can also view this information on our website: [www.acch4kids.org](http://www.acch4kids.org)

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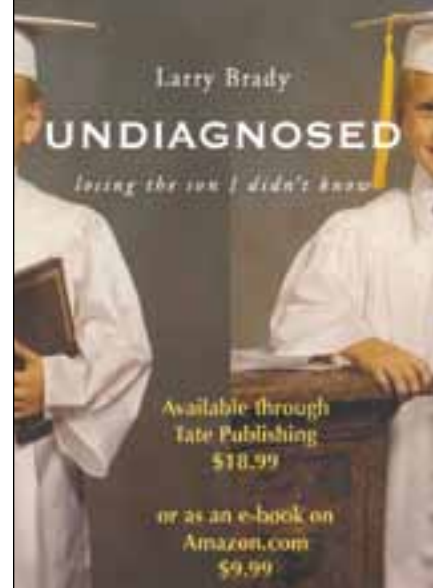
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As Larry Brady was returning home from church one Sunday, he was devastated by a call telling him his 29-year-old son Chris had committed suicide. Learn from the Brady family's experience as Larry explains the importance of an early diagnosis of mental illness in children.



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Travis Bow (pictured above) is an Oklahoma Christian Honors Program graduate now studying in Stanford University's engineering master's program. In our Honors Program and beyond, OC students gain confidence from rising to academic challenges. Through creative learning experiences, they are fully prepared to face the future.



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