



Ohio church's message: Families matter to God

BY BOBBY ROSS JR. | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

CINCINNATI — Look around you Sunday morning.

Is there a mom drowning in a sea of credit-card debt? A dad who can't seem to quit clicking Internet porn? A teen dealing with a hangover or worried about a potential pregnancy?

In the 21st century, the Christian family finds itself under constant siege: Sexual images. Financial debt. Addictions. Busyness. A digital culture that devotes more attention to texting than the sacred text.

What to do?

With the theme "Families Matter," a recent area-wide conference on marriage and family tackled modern America's uncomfortable realities. The Northeast Church of Christ, a 500-member congregation just off Interstate 275, about six miles south of Kings Island



BOBBY ROSS JR.

Caleb Thomas opens his Bible during class at the Northeast church in Cincinnati.

theme park, hosted the event. "If we're going to rescue our communities, stop the violence, stop the drug dealing, stop the porn, stop the marital infidelity ... you start in the home," Clyde Gray, longtime television news anchor and member of

the Gray Road Church of Christ in Cincinnati, said in a Friday night keynote speech.

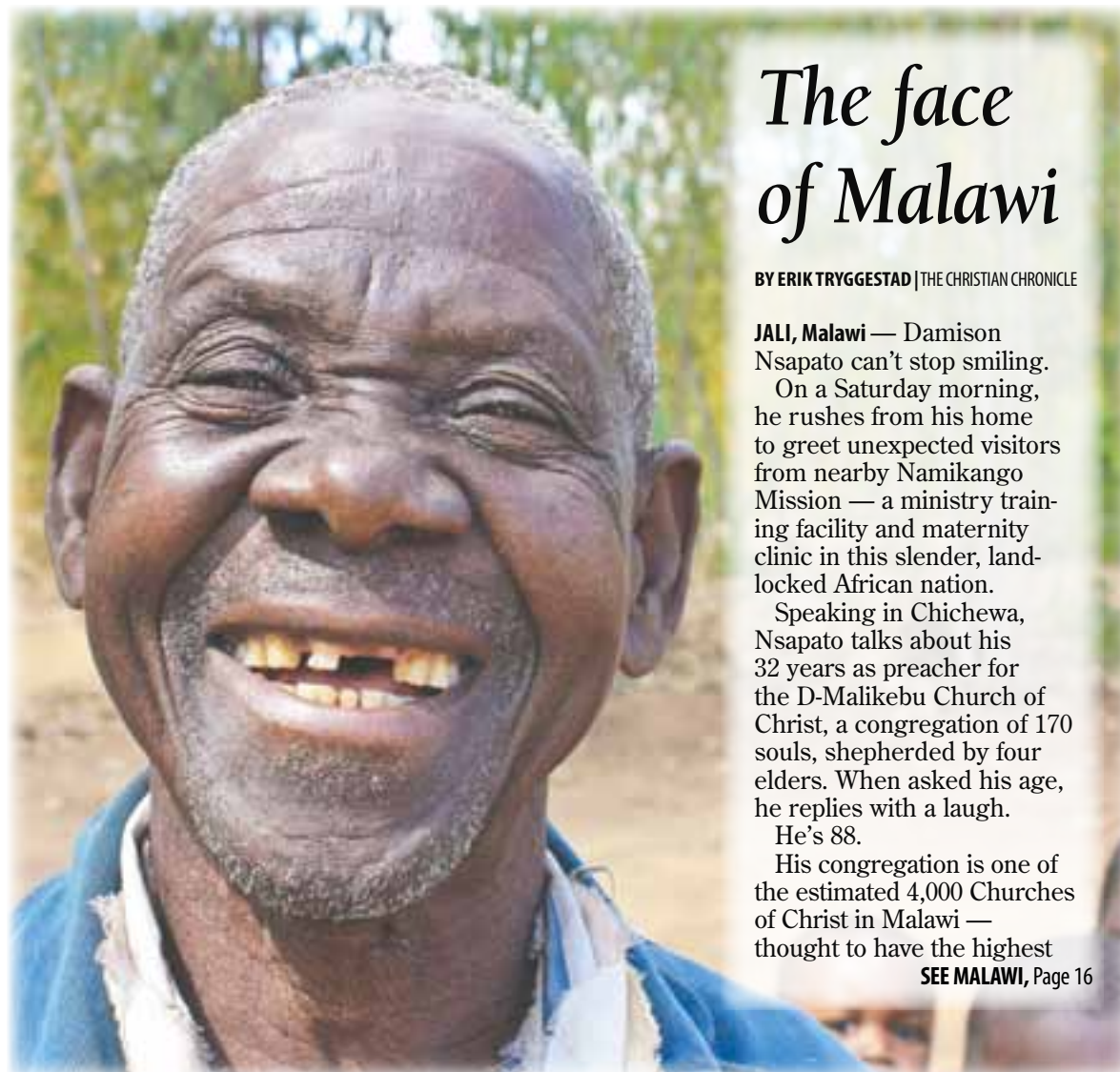
The newsman related lessons "ripped from the headlines" that he delivers each night on Cincinnati's ABC affiliate.

Lead by example, Gray urged parents: Don't honk and swear at other drivers. Study the Bible at home. Go to church often. Eat dinner

together as a family.

"Get your kids around the dinner table, and you'll make them less likely to use drugs," he said, citing research he did on the job. "Their grades will improve."

See **FAMILIES**, Page 14



The face of Malawi

BY ERIK TRYGGESTAD | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

JALI, Malawi — Damison Nsapato can't stop smiling.

On a Saturday morning, he rushes from his home to greet unexpected visitors from nearby Namikango Mission — a ministry training facility and maternity clinic in this slender, landlocked African nation.

Speaking in Chichewa, Nsapato talks about his 32 years as preacher for the D-Malikebu Church of Christ, a congregation of 170 souls, shepherded by four elders. When asked his age, he replies with a laugh.

He's 88.

His congregation is one of the estimated 4,000 Churches of Christ in Malawi — thought to have the highest

See **MALAWI**, Page 16

ERIK TRYGGESTAD

Damison Nsapato smiles outside the meeting place of the D-Malikebu Church of Christ in Jali, Malawi. The church was established in 1964. Nsapato, 88, has seven children and 18 grandchildren. As part of the ongoing *Global South* series, *The Christian Chronicle* presents a firsthand report from Churches of Christ in Malawi on Page 17.



An earthquake, a flood and God's love

The *Chronicle* reviews the stories of 2010.

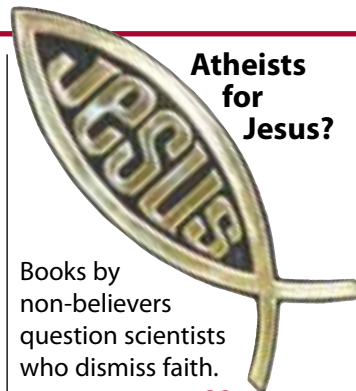
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Outdoors with Oprah

Church members get surprise visit at national park.

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Atheists for Jesus?

Books by non-believers question scientists who dismiss faith.

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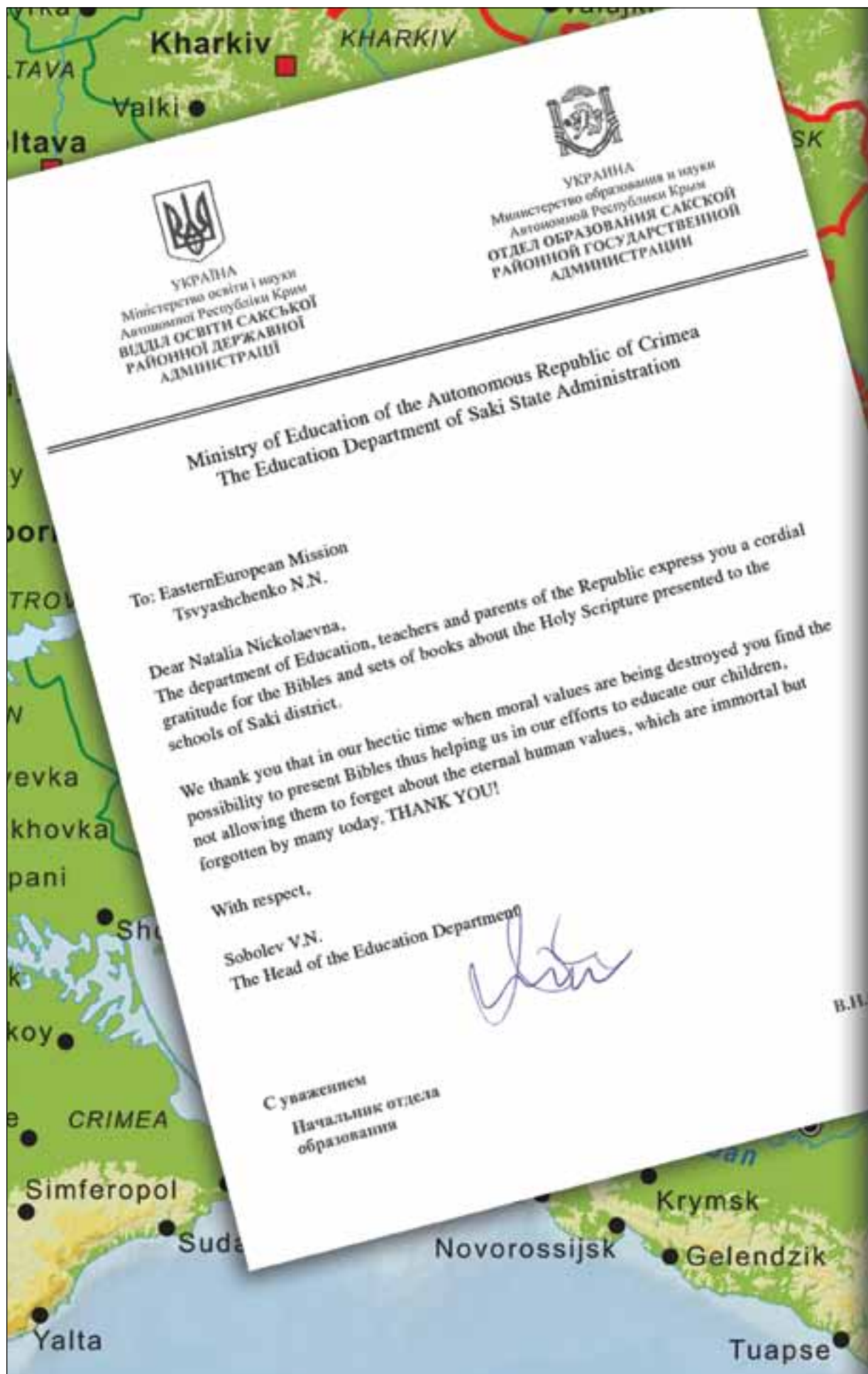
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We asked Churches of Christ and interested individuals to provide \$1,000,000 collectively to put Bibles and Biblical literature in 1,063 schools in Kranoyarsk, Russia, and Ivano-Frankivsk, Ukraine. The \$1,000,000 Sunday, for this effort, was held on October 31, 2010.

Many congregations responded on October 31, and others had their \$1,000,000 Sunday collections after the "official" date. Quite a number still plan to have their day later in the year, or even in January, 2011.

During this effort, we received a call from the Saki region in Crimea, Ukraine, asking if they could have Bibles for all of their schools by the end of August so they could present them to all of the schools on September 1, 2010. We couldn't say no and responded immediately, adding their request to the current \$1,000,000 Sunday effort, confident you would agree and help us cover the additional costs of these Bibles. To your left you can see a thank you letter from the Minister of Education of the Saki Region.

As we near our goal for "The \$1,000,000 Sunday" we wanted to share this news with you and say thank you to all who have already given and to those who are planning to do so.

The opportunity is still open and if you haven't participated we invite you to do so.

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True disciples don't bully God's children

Bullying has exploded into the news lately.

Headlines range from a CNN report that half of high school students admit to bullying someone in the past year to a National Public

Inside Story



Bobby Ross Jr.

Radio story linking anti-gay bullying to recent youth suicides.

The NPR headline in particular caught my attention: "Religious Undercurrent

Ripples In Anti-Gay Bullying."

NPR quoted a recent Minnesota high school graduate who said his teenage years were a living hell. From sixth grade on, the student said he heard the same taunts.

"People say things like, 'Fags should just disappear so we don't have to deal with them anymore' and 'Fags are disgusting and sinful,'" the student said. "And still, there was no one intervening. I began to feel so worthless and ashamed and unloved that I began to think about taking my own life."

From a reporting standpoint, the NPR story impressed me as long on conjecture and short on actual facts to back up the notion that Bible-toting bullies are to blame.

When I was little, I knew a scrawny, geeky kid with a squeaky voice who faced constant bullying — at the bus stop, in school hallways and in the lunchroom. That kid hated leaving his home in the morning.

One time, that kid — a

See **BULLIES**, Page 4



JEFF MONTGOMERY, HARDING UNIVERSITY

Farrar Center for Health Sciences dedicated at Harding University

Grace Farrar speaks at the recent dedication of the Henry and Grace Farrar Center for Health Sciences at Harding University in Searcy, Ark. She and her late husband, Henry, attended Harding in the 1940s and traveled the globe reaching out to others through their mission efforts. They began medical missions in Aba, Nigeria, in 1964 and helped establish Nigerian Christian Hospital. Henry Farrar died in February 2010.

Samoan sinner saved

CHURCH ELDER IN AMERICAN SAMOA shares story of his conversion and vision.

BY ERIK TRYGGESTAD | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

Tia Misa was wet from head to toe.

That wasn't his plan. In fact, the only reason he left his home on the island of American Samoa on that Sunday in June 1986 was to give his wife and children a ride to church in the pouring rain.

His wife, Seipua, had invited him to worship many times. Repeatedly, he declined. But as they pulled up to the Leone Church of Christ, missionary Robert Martin asked Misa to join them.

"I said, 'I can't come in because I don't have a proper shirt,'" Misa said. But the missionary insisted. So Misa sat on the back row and listened. Soon, he was "cut to the heart" and felt as if Jesus was calling him to repent of his wrongdoings. He responded to the invitation and was baptized.

When the family returned home, Misa's father-in-law asked the children, "Why is



ERIK TRYGGESTAD

Tia Misa points to his homeland, American Samoa, on the westernmost edge of a world map.

your father wet?" The kids told their grandfather what happened.

"And I heard him say, 'Well, how could he be baptized? He's a drunkard. He's a sinner,'" Misa said. "And I thought, 'Those are challenging words.' But I kept silent."

See **ELDER**, Page 22

Haiti earthquake, Atlanta blessings top 2010 news

BY BOBBY ROSS JR. | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

Relief efforts after the Haiti earthquake ranked as *The Christian Chronicle's* top news story of 2010.

A panel of ministers, church leaders and *Chronicle* editors picked the top 10 stories:

1. Church members and Christian university students rallied to help after a 7.0-magnitude earthquake struck the poor Caribbean nation of Haiti and killed more than 230,000 people, including hundreds of Christians. *February-March.*

2. At the North Atlanta Church of Christ, a donor who asked to remain anonymous gave \$1.5 million. The money was divided among everyone present one Sunday and spent on good works in the Lord's name. *May.*

3. An increasing number of colleges and universities associated with Churches of Christ draw more freshmen from outside the fellowship than within, a study found. *April.*

4. Facing their worst natural disaster in recent memory, Tennessee church members found signs of hope and embraced opportunities to meet flooding victims' physical and spiritual needs. *July.*

5. Church of Christ members in Africa shared the sentiments of a Pew Research Center study that found common ground among some African Christians and Muslims. But church members also identified with tensions between the continent's predominant faiths revealed by the study. *June.*

6. More than 2,000 years after Jesus' death and resurrection, a small congregation in Nazareth became the first Church of Christ in the Middle East to appoint elders. *December.*

7. Some K-12 schools associated with Churches of Christ felt the pain of tough economic times and were forced to close. *June.*

8. Churches of Christ in Chile delivered aid to victims after an earthquake left more than 800,000 people homeless. *May.*

9. In a changing world, missions and money intertwined in a debate over whether Christians in the United States should support African preachers. *November.*

10. Enrollment hit record and near-record levels at some colleges and universities associated with Churches of Christ. *November.*

QUOTES OF THE YEAR, Page 20

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• **More from Malawi:** Hear songs of praise from students at Namikango Mission and see video from Assistant Managing Editor Erik Tryggstad's reporting trip to the southern African nation.

• **Breaking news alerts:** Don't wait to read all the latest news or check out exclusive online features. To sign up for our breaking news alerts by e-mail, contact tamie.ross@christianchronicle.org.



ERIK TRYGGSTAD

A child in a village near Dedza, Malawi.

BULLIES: Spreading love, not hate, at school

FROM PAGE 3

preacher's son who moved often and always seemed to be the new kid in class — made the mistake of wearing his dad's checkered shorts to gym class. Fellow students nicknamed him "Checkerboard" and harassed him for months.

I felt for that kid. Really, I did.

He was *me*.

But I never blamed religion for the foul-mouthed Goliaths on the playground. They didn't use any kind of language that I'd ever heard from the pulpit.

When I served as religion editor of *The Oklahoman*, Oklahoma City's metro daily, I covered the 2001 Southern Baptist Convention's annual meeting in New Orleans. I'll never forget a protester I saw at that meeting: A little girl with blond hair and pink shorts held a sign with a derogatory remark that indicated homosexuals would die and God would laugh when they did. This was as Soulforce, a national gay-rights group, demonstrated nearby.

The girl's family was part of the Westboro Baptist Church in Topeka, Kan., a small fundamentalist group not affiliated with Southern Baptists that travels the country spreading a gospel of hate.

As I pointed out in *The Oklahoman*, "The child's sign did not reflect Southern Baptists' position. They teach that God loves all people but hates sin. They call homosexuality sin."

But in a society facing a barrage of gay-rights activism, it's easy for the news media — intentionally or not — to lump together disciples of hate and anyone who advocates traditional Bible teaching.

In Churches of Christ, we typically teach that the New Testament clearly states that the homosexual lifestyle is not what God intended. At the same time, it is understood that some people in our society and in the church struggle with this issue. As with any sin or issue, we seek diligently to

demonstrate compassion and care as we help people through their fight.

At least, hopefully, that's the example we're showing our children.

Here's what a church leader who did not want his name used had to say: "I think the claims the church's teachings on homosexuality lead to bullying are substantiated but blown well out of proportion by media. You can't deny that conservative Christianity has been the propagator of very serious anti-gay sentiment, prejudice and behavior. On the other hand, I believe this represents an increasingly small minority of churches and teens in particular."

Recently, the Gateway Church of Christ in Gilbert, Ariz., hosted a youth rally called "To Save A Life." The all-day event addressed the problem of cyberbullying, which involves harming others through computers, cell phones and social websites.

I asked Gateway minister John McCranie for his perspective on media reports that draw a connection between Christian teachings on homosexuality and suicides of gay young people.

"Great question," John said. "There is no disputing that some faith systems in America are hostile and even belligerent to those in the homosexual lifestyle. We grieve over this and feel compelled to compensate by showing authentic Christian love to victims of all types."

"Recent media reports have overfocused on gay victims only. Unfortunately, this issue also occurs to Christian youth who are being bullied because of their faith. What is not reported is (the story of) the believers who are emulating Jesus' compassion to abused gays and other victims of this global issue."

CONTACT BOBBY ROSS JR. at bobby.ross@christianchronicle.org. Read extended interviews with John McCranie and a Gateway teen at www.christianchronicle.org.

ALABAMA

SHEFFIELD — A retired couple on their way to the Wednesday night service at the Cox Boulevard Church of Christ were killed Nov. 17 when a car slammed into the rear of their vehicle, *The Daily Times* reported.

A Bible was found in the front seat of Foy and Julia Counts' mangled vehicle, an emergency worker said.

"They were a very happy couple together," a relative, Sandra Terry, told WAAY-TV. "They worked together on their home and their farm. They were very hard working people. They were loved far and wide in the community and their church."

FLORIDA

OCALA — The Maricamp Road Church of Christ served 240 meals and gave away 30 blankets, 22 sleeping bags and three racks of clothes — including hats and jackets — during a recent "Thanksgiving on the Square" event.

The event provided food and clothing for the area's homeless population, followed by worship and prayer, church member and organizer Jacob Medley said.

GEORGIA

FAYETTEVILLE — Precinct 14 voters, who cast ballots at the Fayetteville Church of Christ, were greeted with sweet smells coming from the church kitchen.

Election Day workers were surprised with coffee and cinnamon rolls for breakfast as well as soups and salad for lunch and dinner, *The Citizen* reported.

The congregation's Ladybugs (Ladies Better Understanding God through Service) fixed and served meals for the election workers.

IDAHO

MERIDIAN — The Linder Road Church of Christ recently hosted its ninth annual Spiritual Growth Lectureship. About 330 Christians from 11 states came together for four days of lessons on "The Nature of God," *Rocky Mountain Christian* reported.

MISSOURI

SPRINGFIELD — A local television station featured the Brookline Church of Christ in its "Pathways of Prayer" series.

The series by KSPR seeks to examine the most basic element of most faiths.

"I pray all day long informally, about different things," member Dirk Heston said on the recent broadcast. "It doesn't matter what I'm doing or where I am at. It's just an ongoing conversation with God the father."



ERIK TRYGGESTAD

'Moonlighting missionaries' spend Wednesday evenings with World Bible School

At the Westside Church of Christ in Round Rock, Texas, Martha and Wes Queen grade World Bible School lessons as Kodi, a Lhasa Apso, watches. The Queens and other church members spent a recent Wednesday night

preparing lessons and writing notes to students from the U.S., Zimbabwe and other nations who study in the Bible correspondence program, based in nearby Cedar Park. For more information, see www.wbschool.net.

NORTH CAROLINA

CHARLOTTE — The Providence Road Church of Christ recently hosted a "Give Thanks" dinner for foster children and their foster and birth families.

"This is our third year hosting the event," church staff member Kourtney Sells said. "We cook a Thanksgiving feast for all families. Games and other fun events are provided for the children and their families."

RALEIGH — The Brooks Avenue Church of Christ recently honored two leading North Carolina ministries.

Carolina Bible Camp and Retreat Center was recognized for its service and support to thousands of young people throughout the state.

Agape of North Carolina, which provides services in birth parent counseling, general counseling and adoption and foster care, was praised for its work with hurting families.

PENNSYLVANIA

SOMERSET — As part of its recent 100th anniversary celebration, the Somerset Church of Christ discovered a 97-year-old letter from Daniel Sommer, a key figure in the

Restoration Movement.

The correspondence was written on the letterhead of the *Octographic Review*, the newspaper that Sommer bought after the death of his mentor, Benjamin Franklin, thought to be a descendant of the Revolutionary War patriot's family.

"After digging into our records, I discovered that Daniel Sommer came to Somerset to preach the first sermons when our building was opened Sunday, Dec. 3, 1916," minister Jimmy Hinton said.

TEXAS

PHARR — A new mobile dental clinic established by the Church of Christ North offers free dental care to needy Texans.

Projects coordinator Randy Adcock recently completed the construction and equipping of the clinic.

In the clinic's first use, dentist Wilson Howell treated 29 patients from the community surrounding the Spanish-speaking Iowa Road Church of Christ. Howell is a member of the McDermott Road Church of Christ in Plano, Texas.

Health professionals interested in donating their time and skills should contact Craig Cooper at (956) 495-9876.

SPOTLIGHT**Faith and Facebook friends**

PLATTSBURGH, N.Y. — Amanda Monette, 15, posted this status on her Facebook page: "Click 'like' and I will answer a question sent as a message."

Doug Kashorek, minister of the Plattsburgh Church of Christ, saw Amanda's Facebook post and replied.

"I asked her if she believed that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of God, and only by being baptized in him would she have eternal life," Kashorek said.

"Yes, I do!" she replied. The conversation continued for a few days, and Kashorek baptized her that Wednesday.



PHOTO PROVIDED BY DOUG KASHOREK

Doug Kashorek baptized Amanda Monette.



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STEWART WALTERS

Gayle King, Woody Square, Judy Square and Oprah Winfrey at Yosemite National Park.

Minister gets Oprah's SUV keys, camper after chance meeting

BY BOBBY ROSS JR. | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

Talk show queen Oprah Winfrey doesn't make it out to the woods too often.

For a recent special, though, Winfrey and friend Gayle King hitched a pop-up camper to a Chevrolet Tahoe hybrid and hit the road to Yosemite National Park.

The purpose of Winfrey's adventure: to meet Shelton Johnson, a black park ranger who complained that few African-Americans visit America's national parks.

While exploring Yosemite, Winfrey ran into Woody Square, who has served since 1992 as youth and family minister for the San Leandro Church of Christ in California. Square is black.

"Hi, where are y'all from?" Winfrey asked Square and his wife, Judy.

"Guess why we're here?" King chimed in. "Because we were told black people don't normally come to the forest. And we go, 'There's a black man!'"

"Surprise!" Square replied with a laugh. "I'm the first one here."

The Squares, who were visiting Yosemite with friends from Australia, posed for photos with Winfrey and couldn't stop talking about the encounter.

"It was totally surreal," said Woody Square, who earned a bachelor's in Bible from Harding University in Searcy, Ark., and a master's in ministry from Pepperdine University in Malibu, Calif.

"The fact that we met her was amazing," said Judy Square, who served with her husband for six years as missionaries to Papua New Guinea.

A week later, an "Oprah" producer called and invited the Squares to fly to Chicago and appear on the show. The producer said the show would take care of everything — flights, chauffeurs, accommodations and all tips.

During the taping, the Squares chatted briefly with Winfrey. Near the end of the show, the host again smiled at them.

"Woody, it seems like camping just brings you so much joy, right?" Winfrey said to Square, who visits Yosemite yearly. "So, come on up here, guys."

As the Squares stood next to her, Winfrey said, "So, I would have to say that I thoroughly enjoyed my trip to Yosemite, and everybody should get there at least once in their lifetime, don't you think?"

"But the truth is," she said, "I have to finish the 25th season, and the next time I go, I'm going to find a butler."

"So, I won't be going anytime soon. So, I want to give you guys the keys to my Coleman camper. And, because you guys have been so great, you need something to pull it with. So, I'm throwing in the Chevy hybrid Tahoe."

Woody Square leaned his head back in surprise.

His wife put her hands over her face.

Winfrey didn't know it, but the Squares' 11-year-old Toyota Camry has 220,000-plus miles on it. They were hoping to make it last another two years.

"We really felt it was a God thing that brought us there at the right time at the right place," Judy Square said of crossing paths with Winfrey.

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Evening - Rick Atchley

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AUSTRALIA

SYDNEY — Matt and Tish Harris met with seven church-planting teams from Australia and New Zealand at a recent Christian conference in Sydney.

“One of the most significant messages we heard during the conference was the struggle that Australian churches experience regarding training and maintaining leadership,” Matt Harris said. “Although we do not have all the answers, one of our main desires and challenges in Australia will be to train disciples who will lead churches long after we are gone.”



TEAMIPSWICHAUSTRALIA.COM

Matt and Tish Harris

The Harrises plan to move to Ipswich, a suburb of Brisbane, Australia, to plant churches.

The Kings Crossing Church of Christ is collecting funds for the work. For more information, see www.teamipswichaustralia.com.

BRAZIL

RECIFE — Missionary Randy Short conducted his 11th two-and-a-half-hour study of theology with students at the School of Bible in Boa Viagem, a neighborhood in Recife.

“What a sheer blessing it has been to be with these folks hungry to learn the Gospel,” Short said. The class presented Short and his wife, Kathy, with gifts.

The best gifts came later, when six of the students were baptized, Randy Short said.

GAMBIA

BANJUL — “Finishing the unfinished task” was the theme of the annual joint worship service for Churches of Christ in this tiny West African nation.

Appropriately enough, the 223 attendees worshiped in the unfinished building of the Kanifing Church of Christ, said minister Isaac Daye. The minister challenged his fellow Christians to raise funds to complete the 300-seat facility, for which the church broke ground in 2008.

Daye seeks funds to complete the facility. For more information, contact the Center Street Church of Christ in Fayetteville, Ark., at (479) 442-8752.

GERMANY

NECKARZIMMERN — About 80 church members attended a recent men’s retreat in this southern German town.

“The retreat helps me to stay in contact with preachers and leading members



PHOTO PROVIDED BY ONG CHEE YONG

Born again in Borneo

Tuai Rumah Sunok smiles as he emerges from a river in Sarawak, a state of Malaysia on the island of Borneo. Sunok, 82, is the headman of a rural village called Kg Nanga Stamang. He studied the Bible with Ong Chee Yong, a church member in the city of Johor Bahru, Malaysia, just north of Singapore. Ong leads regular mission trips to Sarawak.

“Brother Sunok’s baptism has paved the way for more from the village to follow,” Ong said.

“Remarkably ... on the very night we preached to him, he made a swift decision to be baptized.”

from the whole German speaking part of Europe,” said Ivan Voser, a missionary in Thun, Switzerland.

“Though the unity of German-speaking churches is growing, I am disturbed over the kind of issues that still start off quarrels and split churches,” Voser said.

JAPAN

TOMOBE — Members of the Tomobe church said goodbye to Kimiko Usami, who died recently after a five-year battle with cancer. Usami was a leader among the women of the church and was active in Hitachi Christian Camp, said missionary Marlin Ray.

“She helped everyone she could, especially foreigners,” the missionary said.

“She was a Christian as Paul described. Her husband, who is not a Christian, was surprised to see so many people at her funeral (about 200). About three-fourths of the people there were Christians.”

NIGERIA

KURA — In this northern Nigerian town, a bus driven by church members struck a young Muslim boy who was carrying a heavy load of sugar cane and walked into the highway.

The church members were returning to Igarra from Kano, where minister Sylvester Imogoh spoke at a youth rally.

The boy’s left ankle was fractured, and the church members paid for his treatment, Imogoh said.



Imogoh

Christians from Kano helped the Igarra church members deal with local authorities.

“We were neither touched nor harassed,” Imogoh said. “Both our brethren and Muslims in that area attested to the fact that God was with us.”

UNITED KINGDOM

BRISTOL — Members of the Bedminster Church of Christ gathered in a hall near their outskirts of this British city to plot their “20/20 Vision” — a plan for the next 10 years.

Church members addressed the congregation’s strengths, weaknesses, and vision for the church in 2020, member Geoff Daniell said.

“Everyone contributed their thoughts,” Daniell said. “No ambition was considered too wild.”

SPOTLIGHT

Just another week in Mozambique

MONTEPUEZ, Mozambique — Alan Howell spent a recent Saturday sitting on his front porch with church leaders as they quoted Titus to each other.

Howell and his wife, Rachel, serve on a mission team in Montepuez. The Donelson Church of Christ in Nashville, Tenn., sponsors the couple.

The Howells hosted a get-together for 10 Mozambican church leaders from six villages. The leaders ate rice and goat meat and talked about the apostle Paul’s letter to Titus, which discusses requirements for church elders.

“These men committed to memorize the book of Titus together — most ... in Portuguese but some using Makua-Metto or Swahili,” Alan Howell said.

The missionary described the meeting in a recent blog post detailing a week in his family’s life. He also wrote about treks to rural villages — to meet with young congregations and visit the ill.

He dealt with a few unexpected problems during the week. A guard dog owned by the team chewed through a bamboo fence and ate a neighbor’s duck. Alan Howell and a guard who works for the team met with the neighbor and negotiated compensation. The conversation turned to spiritual matters.

“She asked us why the churches we worship with don’t require payment and a huge meal for burial services,” he said. “We talked about how the book of James says that true religion is to care for orphans and widows in their distress”

“Walking back ... the guard and I talked about how amazing God is — that he can turn something bad and inconvenient, like a dog eating a neighbor’s duck, into an open door for someone to see the Kingdom of God come near.”

READ THE POST at www.howellsinmoz.blogspot.com.



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Alan and Rachel Howell with daughters Katie Joy, Abby and Ellie.



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At gunpoint, kidnapped Kenya missionary keeps preaching

BY ERIK TRYGGESTAD | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

In an instant, Jim Scudder was living a nightmare.

The missionary and his son, John, had traveled from their home in Nyeri, Kenya, to the capital, Nairobi, to obtain a visa for John to attend Lipscomb University in Nashville, Tenn.

As they pulled up to a guesthouse on a recent Wednesday night, five armed men jumped into their car. The hijackers forced the Scudders into the back of the car and started driving.

They threatened the Christians and shoved guns into their chests. They took Jim Scudder's cash and bank cards and forced him to withdraw money from automated teller machines.

The hijackers also robbed other people, forcing them into the car.

All the while, said the missionary's daughter, Anna Edgeston, "Dad talked of being a Christian and the joy that he and John experienced due to being Christians. His missionary work never stopped, even in the midst of danger."

Jim Scudder has served in Kenya since the 1970s, said Roger Pritchett, missions minister for the Pleasant Valley Church of Christ in Little Rock, Ark.

The missionary's first wife died in childbirth, and he remarried Grace, a native Kenyan. The couple and three of their children work among the Kikuyu people. Pleasant Valley has supported



WWW.PVCC.ORG

Jim and Grace Scudder, missionaries in Nyeri, Kenya, with two of their children.

their work for 20 years, Pritchett said.

After driving around Nairobi for several hours, the kidnappers ambushed another motorist. They left the Scudders and their car outside an apartment complex.

"One of the kidnappers asked that Dad pray for them due to the work they do," Edgeston said.

In addition to cash, the kidnappers took Jim Scudder's wedding ring, which he had worn for more than 32 years, his daughter said. She asked fellow Christians to pray for her father and brother as they cope with the psychological effects of the ordeal.

After hurricane, Christians on island of St. Lucia face drinking water crisis

BY ERIK TRYGGESTAD | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

Less than a week before it skirted the coast of Haiti, Hurricane Tomas devastated the Caribbean island of St. Lucia.

"Our major roads, rivers, water dam and water system — in addition to our agriculture and tourism industry — have all succumbed tremendously to the wrath of this hurricane," said Botham S. Jean, a member of the L'Anse Road Church of Christ in the capital, Castries.

None of the church's 250 members were injured, Jean said, nor were any of the 50 members of another congregation in Vieux Fort. The homes of three

members sustained minor damage.

"However, our main plea at the moment is water," Jean said. The hurricane damaged the island's dam and electric pumps. Pipelines are contaminated with mud from the storm.

"The majority of the country has no access to treated water, and there has been major price gouging of potable drinking water," Jean said.

Churches of Christ in St. Lucia are scheduled to host the 41st Caribbean Lectures in July. Allison Jean, a member of the L'Anse Road church and Botham Jean's mother, said that the hurricane damage will not affect the lectures.

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.



*L. Randolph Lowry
President, Lipscomb University*

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?

Randy

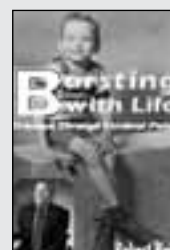
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Robert Reid has worked as a missionary in Portugal for more than 35 years. He is currently a volunteer at the John Middleton State Prison in Jones County, Texas, where he and his wife, Rosa, minister to inmates and tell them about the love of Christ. His passion is speaking to others about the blessings God has brought into his life and showing the ways that He can take our weaknesses and transform them into tools for His kingdom.

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PHOTO PROVIDED BY WORLD ENGLISH INSTITUTE

Bledi Valca takes Marsida Bobaj's confession of faith before baptizing her in the Cen River.

Where there is no Church of Christ: Believer baptized in Montenegro

BY ERIK TRYGGESTAD | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

Separated by thousands of miles, two sisters in Christ shared the Lord's Supper through Skype.

Jo Byrd-Huddleston, a church member in Arkansas, used the popular Internet chat program to commune with Marsida Bobaj, a recently baptized believer in Montenegro — a nation in Central Europe with 624,000 souls and no known Churches of Christ.

"I felt so sad that she didn't have anyone to partake with that I suggested we do that," Byrd-Huddleston said. "Neither Marsida nor I had webcams. We did it by typing Scriptures, praying together, then partaking and typing about it back and forth."

Montenegro was part of Yugoslavia during the Cold War. In the 1990s, the region was plunged into the Balkan conflict. After that war, Serbia and Montenegro formed a new nation. In 2006, Montenegrins voted to leave that union and become independent.

About 10 percent of Montenegrins are of Albanian descent, said Bledi Valca, minister for a Church of Christ in Tirana, Albania. Many come from a Catholic background, and few identify themselves as "evangelical Christians," according to a recent census.

Bobaj's father, Gjovalin, moved to Montenegro from Albania.

He had studied the Bible through World English Institute, a church-supported ministry with offices in

Oregon and Tennessee.

When Marsida Bobaj decided to study English, her father recommended World English Institute. The ministry paired the young woman with Byrd-Huddleston.

After studying English using Scriptures, Marsida Bobaj asked to be baptized. Her parents gave their blessing. Tom Bonner, a missionary in Lushnja, Albania, drove Valca and his wife, Valbona, to meet the family in Tuzi, Montenegro.

Valca — who also became a Christian through World English Institute — baptized Marsida Bobaj in the Cen River on July 19. The baptism was a birthday present for Byrd-Huddleston, who was born on July 19.

"I received an e-mail ... where Marsida told me she is praying for people who live in dangerous areas of the world, who are students of WEI like her and who want to be baptized, that they will have the courage," Byrd-Huddleston said. "She's a remarkable, intelligent, talented teenager."

Recently, the two Christians shared communion again — no Skype required — in Montenegro's capital, Podgorica. Byrd-Huddleston traveled there with Ellen Walker, a missionary in Albania, and two Albanian Christians. The group worshiped in a hotel room.

"It was so good for everyone," Walker said. "The guys and I got to serve, Jo and Marsida got to visit and hug face-to-face, and Marsida's mom got to see firsthand what Christian love is."



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In a letter to the appropriate dean, applicants should address their qualifications for the position. They should include in the application a statement of how faith informs their teaching and 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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FAMILIES: Churches aim to equip parents to raise godly children

FROM PAGE 1

Kids will talk more. ... Put that meatloaf, mashed potatoes and peas in them, and you will be amazed at what comes out of them!"



Gray

Churches must train fathers to serve as spiritual leaders in the home and equip parents to bring up godly children, said Cleavon Matthews, senior minister of the Northwest Church of Christ in Trotwood, Ohio.



Matthews

"Unfortunately, children don't come with a manual," Matthews said in a Saturday keynote presentation. "In our world, you need a license to drive, a license to fish, but you don't have to have a license to have a kid."

BUILDING HOUSEHOLDS OF FAITH

At the Northeast church, long-time pulpit minister Grady Smith and church elders determined 20-plus years ago that families would be key to growth.

At the time, attendance ranged between 100 and 150, elder Gene Smethers said. Now, two Sunday morning assemblies draw a combined 450 to 500 worshippers.

"Parents will go where they feel they can do the best for their kids," Smethers said. "So that has been our philosophy."

From building intimacy in relationships to making nutrition fun — from teen challenges to stages of marriage — the conference focused on the importance of strong families to the community, the church and God.

Inspired in part by *Christian Chronicle* reports on declining church membership, the conference involved a diverse group of churches — black and white, urban and suburban, said Tim Tripp, Northeast's family minister.



BOBBY ROSS JR.

Northeast members Doug and Carla Alcorn, with their children, from left, Tiffany, Amanda, Justin and Josh.

The 2009 edition of *Churches of Christ in the United States*, published by 21st Century Christian, identified 12,629 a cappella Churches of Christ with 1,578,281 adherents.

According to the 2009 directory, the number of men, women and children in the pews has dipped to the lowest level since a comprehensive effort to count members began in 1980.

"We believe that Christian families are not being equipped in the modern era to raise kids of faith in a secular culture," said Tripp, a graduate of Harding University in Searcy, Ark., who served 10 years as Northeast's youth minister before transitioning to the family minister role five years ago. "The aim of this conference is to convince all who come that families matter."



Tripp

That's a message that seems to be gaining resonance in Churches of Christ, said Robert Oglesby, director of the Center for Youth and Family Ministry

at Abilene Christian University in Texas.

"There is a growing interest in searching for a way for churches and families to work together in a common mission," Oglesby said.

While the number of full-time family ministers in Churches of Christ probably could be counted on one or two hands, some churches are retooling youth ministries to promote more emphasis on families, he said.

Brad Montague, a former youth minister, leads a new program at Freed-Hardeman University in Henderson, Tenn., called "GO!" It's designed to serve as a resource to young people and youth workers in churches across the nation.

When Montague recently asked ministers their advice for reaching young people, he said, he was surprised and excited that "almost all of them came back with a message about how to involve the entire family."

"It looks like churches are realizing the importance of partnering with the families," Montague said. "I think this is a step to some truly powerful things to begin happening."

But while many churches talk about family ministry, Oglesby said, most struggle with how to accomplish it.

"Family ministry is a mindset that should permeate all aspects of a church," he said. "It is having parents-and-teen combined classes. It is involving

your children in the worship assemblies. It is using teenagers as participants in your worship even though they are not professional.

"It is banquets that put teens and senior members together in dialogue about faith. It is celebrating births with young couples. It is celebrating couples who have been married 50 years or more."

This past summer, the Boone Center for the Family at Pepperdine University in Malibu, Calif., hosted the Family of Faith Conference.

Grant Goodvin, an elder at the Greenwich Road Church of Christ in Wichita, Kan., and an expert in legacy planning for family businesses, participated in the Pepperdine event.

"Experience has taught me that the main problem facing congregations is that families tend to be private, almost secretive," Goodvin said. "The danger of this inclination toward privacy is that family members are reluctant to pull back the curtain that would reveal struggles in transferring core biblical values."

Through preventative and therapeutic means, congregations such as Northeast help families

See CINCINNATI, Page 15



BOBBY ROSS JR.

Bill Towles, right, and his wife, Carmella, left, visit with Melody Baker during the marriage and family conference at the Northeast church.



BOBBY ROSS JR.

Andy and Leslie Spooner and their daughters, Piper and Susanna, leave after Sunday worship.

CINCINNATI: Strong families take hard work

FROM PAGE 14

pull back the curtain and build strong faith across generations, leaders said.

At the Westgate Church of Christ in Dothan, Ala., a comprehensive approach to families includes both premarital counseling and therapy for married members dealing with fidelity issues and addictions, associate minister Eric Greer said.

"We can provide evidence that our counseling ministry actually pays for itself in saved marriages," Greer said. "This means families within our church stay together and continue to contribute."

"The comprehensive nature sends the message that we are a safe church," he added. "Safety is vital to families in need because they don't need to tell their story and experience judgment or apathy. That only wounds them more."

At the Walled Lake Church of Christ in Michigan, leaders came to realize that a multigenerational approach to ministry made economic — and biblical — sense, minister and elder Roger Woods said.

On "Work for the Master Wednesdays," the Detroit area church's youth group helps with service projects for older members. The church's chorus, which sings at special events, mixes members as young as 15 and as old as 88. Each month, the congregation enjoys combined "youth and family" devotionals.

"Our overriding plan is to keep the generations connected so that the older can mentor the younger and the younger can honor and encourage the older," said Woods, whose church adopted "God's Family" as its ministry theme for 2011.

A FAMILY-FRIENDLY CHURCH

At Northeast, the family-friendly approach means frequent Sunday night cookouts for children and parents, Tripp

said. It means family retreats and scavenger hunts. It means "marriage mentoring" by older members. It means a professional counseling program where members can receive help — confidentially — for addictions and other hang-ups.

"Strong families take a lot of hard work," said Northeast member Jill Evans, wife of David and mother of Kaitlin, 17, and Will, 15.

The Northeast church provides a variety of Bible studies and activities to help build family bonds, she said.

David Evans and daughter Kaitlin traveled with a church group this past summer on a mission trip to Mexico. The last two years, the entire family joined nearly 100 other Northeast members at the Winterfest youth rally in Gatlinburg, Tenn.

Posters at the church promote Lads to Leaders spiritual training events and Dave Ramsey's Financial Peace University, which teaches families how to overcome financial debt using biblical principles.

After a recent assembly, Northeast children and their parents helped transform church classrooms into temporary bedrooms for homeless people. Volunteering with the Room in the Inn ministry proved "eye-opening" for the children of members Jason and Laura Couch.

"Before we could even leave the building, they were asking when we could serve again," said Jason Couch, father of Drew, 15; Tyler, 12; and Lindsey, 10.

The Couches said their children benefit from in-depth Bible study each Sunday.

"Every week our children interact with adults other than Mom and Dad who know they know love them and love God," the father said. "Having godly people who hold our children accountable in addition to encouraging and supporting them is an incredible blessing."

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

Ephesians 5:18

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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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MALAWI: Nation is 'the Israel of Africa'

FROM PAGE 1

number of church members per capita in the world. In 2000, church researchers Mark Berryman and Wendell Broom estimated that one out of every 50 Malawians was a member of a Church of Christ.

"Malawi is the Israel of Africa," said Priestly Nkhonjera, a longtime minister in Malawi. Gospel seed fell on fertile soil here more than a century ago, he said.

Congregations developed strong roots throughout the narrow country's three regions — Northern, Central and Southern. Here, unlike many African nations, gray hair is common in Churches of Christ, as are second- and third-generation members.

In the Central Region, it's hard to go more than 10 miles in any direction without finding a congregation, said Evance Mwapasa, an elder of the Area 47 Church of Christ in Malawi's capital, Lilongwe.

Mwapasa grew up in a Church of Christ in Zomba — Malawi's first capital when the country gained independence from Britain in 1964. Mwapasa's father also served as an elder.

"I have never tasted any other church," Mwapasa said.

13th in a series

Global SOUTH

The changing face of the church



village of Rumphu.

Judd's son, Randy, celebrated his 10th birthday in Rome, en route to Malawi. He remembers the family's old mimeograph machine, churning out gospel tracts.

"We would get letters saying, 'My brother picked this up and was laughing at it, and handed it to me. But I want to do what it says,'" Randy Judd said.

A lot of Malawians did what the tracts said. The Judds helped launch a Bible college in Mzuzu and traveled the region, teaching, preaching and planting. Hundreds of churches sprang to life.

To the south, U.S. Christians settled in the Zomba area and established Namikango Mission. Mark Thiesen, a second-generation missionary, now serves as director of the mission.

From humble beginnings, Churches of Christ have prospered. The president of the country himself, Bingu wa Mutharika, attended a worship service in the city of Zomba in 2006, recognizing the centennial of Churches of Christ in his nation.

Thiesen called the celebration "a watershed event" that reminded the church of its purpose and energized it to continue serving the Lord.



Mwapasa

LABOR FOR LOVE — NOT MONEY

Today there are at least 12 Churches of Christ in the city of Zomba — and many second- and third-generation church members.

Laitoni Misomali grew up in the church and now serves as one of three ministers for the Zomba Central Church of Christ. The church has eight elders, 10 deacons and more than 300 members. Nearly 100 more meet in a prison where the church works.

Few ministers in Malawi are paid for their labor. In the village of Jali, Nsapato works as a farmer, growing enough food to feed his family.

Misomali, 80, gets a little financial support from the church in Zomba, but not enough to live on. But, like his smiling counterpart in the village, Misomali has no plans to stop preaching the Gospel, he said in Chichewa.

"He will minister until he is called up," an interpreter translated.



Misomali

The miracle of MALAWI

AFTER A CENTURY of dramatic growth, Churches of Christ focus on unity and the need for urban ministry.

BY ERIK TRYGGESTAD | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

THONDWE, Malawi

Huddled in a tiny dormitory room at Namikango Mission, seven young preachers talk about their favorite hymns.

One of them, Innocent Nyasulu, flips through the well-worn pages of a paperback hymnal until he finds No. 234, “*Mundimvere Mbuye*

Wanga.” In Chichewa, it means “Hear me for my praise,” he says.

Nyasulu and his fellow preachers take those words literally. In boisterous harmony, they belt out the lyrics, their voices echoing across the mission’s campus — and clear up to heaven.

The preachers come from across this nation in southern Africa to study in Namikango’s ministry training program. Twice each day — 6 a.m. and 6 p.m. —

they gather on woven floor mats for a time of devotion and prayer.

Another student, Gift Kapitawo, flips to his favorite song, “Come with a happy heart.”

“We should be happy in our hearts, because of the son of God,” Kapitawo says. “We should be singing.”

Malawians have reason to rejoice. Their nation, known as “the warm heart of Africa,” has enjoyed peace unknown

by its war-ravaged neighbors.

Though poverty, famine and AIDS take countless lives here, the country remains among the most densely populated in Africa.

Malawi has a significant Islamic population — and once had a Muslim president — but religious conflicts are rare.

No less miraculous is the growth of Churches of Christ among the gentle

CONTINUED



PHOTOS BY ERIK TRYGGESTAD

Though Malawi is increasingly urban, the majority of its 15.4 million people live in villages like this one in the country’s Central Region, near the Mozambique border.



Children play near Dedza, Malawi, where church members plan to build a Christian school, hospital and orphanage.

Republic of Malawi

LOCATION: Southern Africa, bordering Mozambique, Tanzania and Zambia
CAPITAL: Lilongwe (pronounced “lil-ONG-way”)
POPULATION: 15.4 million, one of the most densely populated nations in Africa.
RELIGION: Christian: 79.9 percent; Muslim: 12.8 percent; other/none: 7.3 percent
HISTORY: In 1859, explorer and missionary David Livingstone encountered Lake Malawi. Livingstone adopted the motto “Christianity, Commerce and Civilization.” Missionaries brought education and medicine, and Malawians began to associate Christianity with a better life, said Bisani Mphongolo, assistant director of Namikango Mission. Formerly the Nyasaland Protectorate, Malawi became independent of Britain in 1964 and adopted its current flag July 29, 2010.
CHURCHES OF CHRIST: Malawian Elaton Kundago planted the first congregation in 1906. U.S. missionaries arrived in the 1950s. Today the country, about the size of Pennsylvania, has 4,000-plus congregations. Churches of Christ that have supported work in Malawi include the Pleasant Valley church in Mobile, Ala.; the Thomaston Road church in Macon, Ga.; the St. Augustine Road church in Valdosta, Ga.; the Mill Street church in Cassville, Mo.; the Elm and Hudson church in Altus, Okla.; and the College Hill church in Fort Worth, Texas.
FOR MORE INFORMATION: missionmalawi.org, ccbcmzuzu.org, malawiproject.org

SOURCES: interviews, “Churches of Christ Around the World” by Mac Lynn, cia.gov, news.bbc.co.uk



The miracle of MALAWI

CONTINUED
people of Malawi, church members say. Researchers estimate that the country has more than 4,000 congregations — accounting for more than a quarter of known Churches of Christ on the African continent.

When the first missionaries from Churches of Christ arrived, they concentrated their efforts where most of Malawi’s people lived — rural villages.

It was an effective strategy, said Roderick Maluwa, an administrator for Namikango Mission.

“I just want to thank our fathers who came here years back,” he said, because they “chose to prioritize those who were then in the majority — out in the village. They went again and again, and the Gospel spread.

“The poverty of the Malawians helped them to cling to Jesus, who enriched them with the Gospel,” he added.

Churches of Christ also offered a faith of simplicity, said Wilson Tembo, Namikango’s warehouse and distribution officer. No buildings were required. Congregations could meet under a tree.

“Most of the churches in Malawi don’t allow members to join without a monthly or annual contribution fee of some sort — and long-term lessons before one is actually baptized,” Tembo said. “This is not the case with the Church of Christ,” which offered free membership to anyone “heeding to the Word.”

Though training is available for preachers, it is not a strict requirement, Tembo added. Anyone who wants to preach may do so.

“There is no compromise with the Gospel,” said Moses K. Banda, a Malawian minister studying at African Christian College in Swaziland. “We tell people plainly, ‘No Christ, no salvation.’”

Churches of Christ also are known for their generosity and kindness, especially during times of need, Banda said.

“The help we give people during funerals and sickness outbreaks makes

them believe what we tell them about Gospel,” he said. “It’s love in action.”

DIVISION AND UNITY

Despite acts of benevolence, “One sad note is that many of the Malawian congregations do not fellowship with each other,” missionaries Wimon Walker and Robert Reese wrote in the book “100 Years of African Missions.”

Some African leaders have broken away from the church and formed their own religious groups, the authors wrote. Missionaries from Churches of Christ that believe using one cup in

communion is the only scriptural model have planted numerous congregations, as have churches that oppose support of church institutions.

In recent years churches have split over the issue of singing during communion. Malawian Christians note that many of the divisions have roots in missionaries from the West.

The lack of unity frustrates young preachers, including Nyasulu, who came to Namikango Mission from the northern city of Rumphi, where he works with a Bible institute.

“There is lots of division here — one cup, choir or no choir. *Ay-yi-yi-yi!*” he said, using a Malawian expression of



A sign points to a Church of Christ in the Malawian city of Salima.

dismay. “I think the main problem is pride and leadership issues.”

Recently, about 250 elders, deacons, ministers and their wives — representing Churches of Christ across southern Malawi — gathered at a police barracks in the city of Blantyre for in-depth discussions of the challenges they face in the 21st century.

The meeting was part of an ongoing dialogue among the churches, said Arthur Msowoya, an elder of the Red Cross Church of Christ in Blantyre.

“There was a time when we were leading at bringing people to the Lord,” Msowoya said. “Over time, it has sort of gone down.”

“We have the right message,” he said, “but ... we are not good at shepherding. We have overemphasized things that we shouldn’t have been emphasizing.”

In the past, evangelists have been divisive and territorial, said Rabson Kaliso, minister for the 70-member Soche Church of Christ in Limbe, Malawi, who attended the meeting.

This behavior has contributed to a decline in church growth, he said.

“Little by little, leaders are going here and there, saying, ‘Let’s work together,’” Kaliso said. “We are contributing equally. ... This meeting was very, very successful.”



Kaliso

A NEED TO REACH GROWING CITIES

Christians in suits and ties worship at the Red Cross church — one of the oldest and largest congregations in Malawi. About 400 people attend the English-language service, and another 400 attend the Chichewa service that follows. A new auditorium, complete with balcony, is under construction next door.

Many of the church’s seven elders are second- and third-generation members. Among them are business owners, lawyers and government officials.

After the English service, Dorothy Chiwaya and Rita Chiphaliwali watch their grandchildren scamper across the church’s courtyard, playing tag. Both ladies came into the church through their husbands, and have worshipped here for 20 and 30 years, respectively.

Their children grew up in the church, but not all of them stayed. Two of Chiphaliwali’s sons live in Lilongwe and worship with fast-growing charismatic churches.

“What they want (is that) the church should be more alive,” Chiphaliwali said. Young people want to know more about what they read about in the Bible — including the Holy Spirit, she added. In Malawi’s big cities, they find religious groups that promise them answers.

Malawi is increasingly urban. In the past decade, the population of Lilongwe has nearly doubled, according to census figures. Though Churches of Christ have excelled at rural evangelism, they



Malawian church leaders listen during a unity meeting of elders, deacons, ministers and their wives in the southern Malawian city of Blantyre. About 250 people attended.



Malawians fish on the shores of Lake Malawi. Often called “the calendar lake,” Lake Malawi is about 365 miles long, 52 miles wide and is fed by 12 rivers.

are not well equipped to reach educated people in big cities, Maluwa said.

“I have seen some evangelists who, when sent to go work in towns, they shiver,” he said. “Something has got to be done.”

Church leaders believe education is the key to reaching souls in big cities.

Outside the town of Dedza, workers are setting the foundations for a new Christian school, hospital and orphanage. The project is a partnership between the Red Cross church, the Area 47 Church of Christ in Lilongwe and the Green Valley Church of Christ in Noblesville, Ind. The Malawi Project, an Indiana-based nonprofit overseen by church members, is partnering in the work, along with Sunset International Bible Institute in Lubbock, Texas.

Though Malawi has many ministry training programs, “we realize that we’ve lost a lot of time in this country”

when it comes to Christian education, said Evance Mwapasa, an elder of the Area 47 church. Today, many longtime church members send their children to Catholic schools, he said.



Edward Mbeta teaches Fixon Mnanga and Robert Paul at a ministry school in Salima.



Stone pews line the walls of the D-Malikebu Church of Christ in the village of Jali, Malawi.

2010: The year in quotes

COMPILED BY BOBBY ROSS JR. | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

Sometimes, a quote says it all. From heartwrenching natural disasters to inspirational faith journeys, *The Christian Chronicle* captured the news in Christians' own words during 2010. Here are the *Chronicle* staff's favorite and most memorable quotes of the year:

"If the New Orleans Saints can win the Super Bowl, then the church in New Orleans can grow."

ERIC DISHONGH, *Saints' season-ticket holder and minister of the Hickory Knoll Church of Christ in Harahan, La., a New Orleans suburb.*



"I'm sorry, but men just really don't know what it's like to be a girl, especially not a teenage girl."

JANNA BETH HUNT, *team member for RAVE Ministries, which focuses on issues of concern to teenage girls.*

Hunt

"We're not in the condemning business. We're in the saving business."

PHIL SANDERS, *a speaker for the "In Search of the Lord's Way" television ministry, during an areawide campaign and gospel meeting in Parkersburg, W.Va.*

"I usually preach from a script. It would be nice if I could get a teleprompter like I have at the TV station."

CHASE GALLIMORE, *Texas minister and TV news anchor.*



Morris

"These are kids that need that second chance. And I am the king of second chances. All of us are — Jesus died for all of our sins."

JIM MORRIS, *"The Rookie" and member of the Kerrville Church of Christ in Texas, on his work with Arms of Hope's children's home in Medina, Texas.*

"I launched on June 15th, and so I haven't had a shower since June 15th."

DOUG WHEELLOCK, *International Space Station astronaut, joking about his months in space while addressing an Oklahoma Christian University chapel assembly from 250 miles above Earth.*



ERIK TRYGGESTAD

"This place is broken."

LAURA LEE, 7, *resident of Son Light Children's Home in Port-au-Prince, Haiti.*

A battered office chair sits among the remains of the Delmas 28 Church of Christ in Port-au-Prince after the Jan. 12, 2010, earthquake that claimed more than 230,000 lives. A class of nursing students was studying in the building when the quake hit. A doctor who cared for members of the congregation died, as did 36 nursing students. In addition, 51 of the church's 650 members perished in the quake, and 350 were left homeless, minister Jean T. Elmera said.

"Kaden was the sunshine of everybody's life."

BILLY BLAKENEY, *minister of the Foreman Church of Christ in Arkansas, on a 3-year-old boy killed along with his mother, Leslie Jez, 23, by a flash flood.*

"You look for that extra grandma at church or those extra aunts and uncles that are going to help you raise your kids when your husband is gone and you need somebody else to give you a break."



Coleman

CINDY COLEMAN, *wife of an Army soldier and member of the Lakeview Church of Christ in Tacoma, Wash., on the support her family receives when her husband deploys overseas.*

"He's the real deal. He's one of those guys that I would always take our players to and say, 'This is the way that you behave.'"

MIKE LANE, *retired Northern Alabama baseball coach, on Washington Nationals slugger Josh Willingham, a member of the Cross Point Church of Christ in Florence, Ala.*

"There's certainly the disaster that goes beyond the disaster."

STAN HELTON, *minister of the Tammany Oaks Church of Christ in Mandeville, La., on challenges faced by New Orleans area congregations five years after Hurricane Katrina.*



Helton

"If I'm busy, I don't have a whole lot of time for foolishness."

GARY SMITH, *pulpit minister of the Fifth Ward Church of Christ in Houston, on Christians focusing on the Lord's work.*

"I learned about Jesus, God and the Bible. Praise be to the Lord."

RURU, *a Taiwanese student in Arkansas, on her experience with the "FriendSpeak" ministry.*

"We used to spend a lot of time talking about bricks and mortar, paint and parking lots, but we decided to spend the majority of our time dealing with people, not things."

CRAIG LONEY, *elder of the Park Plaza Church of Christ in Tulsa, Okla., on the congregation's growth.*



TED PARKS

In Nashville, Tenn., volunteers work at the headquarters of Churches of Christ Disaster Relief Effort, boxing supplies for Tennesseans affected by the May 2010 flood.

QUOTES: Words that told stories of 2010

"All of y'all are going to be wearing white one day, too. We just got a jumpstart."

RODNEY, member of an inmate Church of Christ, referring to his white prison garb stamped with "Alabama Dept. of Corrections" in bold black letters.

"You never know how your life's going to end up or where God's going to put you."

NORMAN CHEE ATCHISON, a Navajo Indian and housefather at Manuelito Navajo Children's Home in Gallup, N.M., on the tumultuous journey that brought him back to the home where he was raised.

"It was just a magical evening."

LUCRETIA McMICKEN, housemother at Christ's Haven for Children in Keller, Texas, on the experience of three girls recognized before a Texas Rangers' game.

"In Africa, the pew and the pulpit live in two different worlds — and we are all to blame."

RONALD WASILWA, minister of the Kitale Church of Christ in Kenya, on the financial discrepancies between some U.S.-supported ministers and African church members.

"They have never let us walk alone. It is as though they've always known us."

ABURIME EHIMARE, Nigerian church member, on the support his family received from the Northlake Church of Christ in Tucker, Ga., after his wife delivered quadruplets at a nearby hospital.

"I don't know if it was a personal favor to me, but it really has helped."

LESTER HOLT, weekend co-anchor of NBC's "Today" show, on the Manhattan Church of Christ moving the Sunday start time to 9:30 a.m., 30 minutes later than before.

"I would rather teach Romans than eat when I'm hungry, and I love to eat."

JIMMY ALLEN, retired Harding University Bible professor, best known for conducting hundreds of gospel meetings.

"This is more groceries than I've ever had in my cart in all my 58 years. It's like a miracle from God."

CARI THORNTON, member of the North Atlanta Church of Christ, quoting a woman named Carolyn who benefited from an anonymous \$1.5 million gift used by church members to do good works in the Lord's name.

"I hope we're planting a mustard seed here, and that by bringing in people literally from all over the United States and from around the world, we will create a rich new understanding of a cappella music."



Tippens

DARRYL TIPPENS, co-convenor of "The Ascending Voice II," an international symposium of sacred a cappella music at Pepperdine University in Malibu, Calif.

"The violence is escalating and spreading. There is no way to exaggerate how bad things have gotten ... and I have no idea how or when it will end."

RICK OWENS, longtime American church builder in Mexico, on his decision to stop organizing U.S. mission groups south of the border.

"I do believe that when God closes one door, he'll open another one for me. So I'm hoping there's a job out there where I can still teach Bible to students and incorporate that into my classroom."

JANICE DOUGLASS, longtime teacher at Aletheia Christian School in Newark, Del., on her outlook as the financially troubled school closed.

"The Harpeth River flows through here in a serpentine fashion. Well, the snake bit us."

STEVE BLACKMAN, pulpit minister of the Bellevue Church of Christ in Nashville, Tenn., on devastating flooding that struck the Nashville area.

MORE TOP QUOTES OF 2010, www.christianchronicle.org

SERVICE

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. HCU's online program allowed him to continue his studies from the moment his boots hit the ground, and the Distance Learning staff is keeping him on track... so Gary can minister to the people of Malaysia and continue working toward his degree. That's the kind of service you can expect from HCU. It's our focus.

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ELDER: Misa teaches, preaches, translates

FROM PAGE 3

Twenty-four years after his baptism, soft-spoken, 70-year-old Misa says he is still a sinner — though he's no longer a drunkard. He's also an elder of the Tafuna Church of Christ.

FAITH-BUILDING AND CHURCH-PLANTING

American Samoa, a small group of islands in the South Pacific with a population of about 65,000, is an unincorporated territory of the United States.

Misa grew up in the Independent State of Samoa, another island group west of American Samoa with its own government. He first came to American Samoa in the 1970s.

Missionaries helped plant the first Churches of Christ in American Samoa in the 1960s. Today the territory has four congregations with a combined membership of about 250, said David Willis, a missionary who has served as minister for the Tafuna church since 2005.

Misa said his wife's Christian example played a significant role in his conversion. But church leadership is not a role he envisioned in the days after his baptism. He grew up in the Congregational Christian Church but rarely attended or studied Scripture.

Martin, the missionary who invited him into the church, gave Misa a Bible and studied with him. Martin challenged him to help serve communion.

"I was shaky a little bit of the time," Misa said.

Later, Martin encouraged Misa to preach a sermon.

Misa and his wife helped launch the Tafuna church in 1994. Their first meeting place was the home of Lynn Ashley, a lawyer from the U.S. mainland.

As Misa's faith has grown, so has his role in Samoan culture, Ashley said.

"Both Tia and Pua are 'matai' (chiefs) in their families," Ashley said, "and Tia was often called on by his employers to serve as 'tulafale' (orator chief) on ceremonial occasions. Or he would be called on as a 'faifeau' (minister) to lead prayers on those same occasions."

In 2000, the Tafuna church gave Misa a new role. He and Ashley became the church's first elders.

CROSS-CULTURAL MINISTRY

Today, Misa serves a congregation of about 80 souls that meets in a rented building. Christians of American and Samoan descent worship together in English and the Samoan language. The

church has purchased land and plans to build a facility.

The congregation sponsors an annual South Pacific Lectureship, attended by Christians from western Samoa, New Zealand, the U.S. and other locales.

During the five-day lectureship, Misa translates from English to Samoan — and, occasionally, vice-versa.

Kent Hartman, a missionary in residence at Oklahoma Christian University in Oklahoma City, spoke at the lectureship in 2009. Misa translated.

"I was worn out with one lesson, and he was doing at least three," Hartman said. "And he really did a great job."

Ashley described his fellow elder as "a great Bible teacher and preacher, as well as translator." And his wife "is one of the best at inviting people to come to church," he added.

"In our 'Cross-cultural' congregation, they help us understand one another — not just the words, but also the cultural points of view."

FROM MOCKER TO BROTHER IN CHRIST

In American Samoa, many Christian converts move to other nations for jobs, Ashley said. Often, the church's young people leave home after high school and don't return.

"Even though we have converted quite a few, it is very difficult to grow a congregation," Ashley said.

Though growth is slow, Misa said he has seen the Gospel penetrate the hearts of Samoans over time.

For years after Misa's conversion, his father-in-law looked at him with "the face of mockery — laughing at me when I go to church," he said. But Misa continued to attend. Eventually, his father-in-law started asking him difficult questions about the Bible, and Misa answered.

"Finally, one day he said, 'Son, I see you going to church, and we are left out,'" Misa said. Soon after, his father-in-law and mother-in-law were baptized.

Misa said that his dream for the church is to see young Samoan Christians become evangelists, "hammering the pulpit for the Word of God."

He hopes that the Tafuna church will one day have a building that will accommodate from 250 to 300 members, and he prays that the church will outgrow it.

"We are doing the groundwork for other people to come," he said.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, see tafunachurchofchrist.webs.com.



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BY LYNN McMILLON | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

WAILUKU, Hawaii

Bob Harp, 82, spent much of the past half-century teaching the Gospel in the South Pacific. Born in Floydada, Texas, he first visited Japan as a soldier stationed there from 1946 to 1947.

Harp returned to the U.S., where he began youth ministry work with the Manhattan Church of Christ in New York. For the next 15 years, he served churches in four states: New York, Texas, California and Maine. The congregations included the Broadway Church of Christ in Lubbock, Texas, and the College Church of Christ in Abilene, Texas.

In 1963, while serving as a minister for the Culver Palms Church of Christ in Los Angeles, Harp traveled through the South Pacific on a gospel campaign in Wellington, New Zealand. He was struck by the need for Jesus to be taken to the U.S. territory of American Samoa, a group of islands in the South Pacific Ocean about halfway between Hawaii and New Zealand.

With the help of their sponsors — the Northeast church in Indianapolis — Harp and his wife, Jackie, along with their three small children, Scott, Eric and Vicki, moved to Lauli'i, American Samoa, in 1964. Under difficult physical circumstances, they remained there for six-and-a-half years. During that time he began the first Church of Christ among the islanders in Lauli'i. Three years later he built the first church building for the Church of Christ in the village of Nu'uuli. Periodically, Harp rode freight ships to Tonga and Fiji, where he helped plant churches.

During the 1970s, he worked as a minister, counselor and social worker on the Hawaiian island of Oahu. Today he serves as the associate minister for the Church of Christ on the island of Maui.

What attracted you to the South Pacific?

As I returned to the U.S. after the Campaign for Christ in New Zealand in 1963, I briefly traveled through Polynesia. I found Samoans and other Polynesians to be so endearing, highly responsive and genuinely interested in my work as a minister and matters of church and the Gospel.

A group of ministers and I took a tour on an old truck around the island of Tutu'ila in American Samoa and stopped by the tropical seaside village of Lauli'i. A Samoan lady by the name of Tolua Tavai invited us into her beautiful thatched home for refreshments.

Immediately after telling her of my hope to do mission work in Samoa, she said, "Come back to Samoa with your family. You make Jesus' church in my home." And we did.

How did you establish new congregations in Samoa?

At the outset of our mission work, we constantly met people and invited them to join us to worship, pray and study the Bible in homes.

By our second Sunday in Samoa, we were using Tolua Tavai's large thatched house for church services. Our numbers were small at first, but within three years the church had grown so much that we began searching for land to build a church building.

In the Tongan islands, the men converts built jungle-style thatched huts that immediately became our church buildings. We always sat on mats placed on the ground and worshiped there.

An unexpected and effective method was my camera and slide projector. The Polynesians loved to see pictures of themselves on the screen and would come anytime there was a showing, so I often showed slides after a service so they would attend.

What was the response of the islanders?

One of the truly heartwarming experiences was the open-



GARY SWATZEL

Bob Harp serves as associate minister for the Maui Church of Christ.

A conversation with Bob Harp

MISSIONARY REFLECTS on 40 years in the South Pacific.

armed, welcoming attitude of the Polynesians toward our family.

Our children were great missionaries because they made so many wonderful contacts through their friends. The Tongans were so poor and lived in such a remote part of the South Pacific that they were attracted to us partially because of their fascination with our family.

Tolua Tavai and all of the people of Lauli'i immediately accepted us as family and treated us with affection and kindness. Polynesians do not require a blood connection to establish

family bonds. Where there are feelings of love, day-to-day relationships and a sharing of life, there is family.

As for acceptance of the Gospel and baptism, the Samoans unquestioningly accepted Jesus Christ. Within just two years many Samoans were baptized. And in the Tongan islands, there were even more converts numbering in the hundreds.

What challenges does mission work put on a family?

The greatest challenge is adjusting to a very different culture, language, environment

and hot, humid climate.

The lack of privacy was a major challenge. The thatched houses often are shared with other families and offer little privacy. Sometimes people would actually stand outside just to watch this curious American family. At first there was no running water and only an oil cook stove.

Other challenges are emotional — facing long periods away from loved ones and friends back home, a sometimes difficult feeling of isolation or remoteness.

What reflections do you have on your years in the Pacific?

What made our mission work so successful was the enduring support of the people at the Northeast Church of Christ in Indianapolis. The Northeast church was our financial sponsor and continued to support the mission work in Samoa after my family and I returned to Hawaii.

The people of the Northeast church were so loving and emotionally supportive that it helped us through difficult times.

Additionally, we received support from the Culver Palms Church of Christ in Los Angeles where I had served as the minister from 1960 to 1964.

Numerous individuals also made our mission work possible, and one was my late uncle Johnny Owen of Amarillo, Texas.

The greatest feeling of gratification is knowing that, after 40 years, the Churches of Christ have thrived and grown in Samoa. At the Maui Church of Christ, where I currently serve as associate minister, we have young Samoan-American members in their 20s and 30s who are such fine, dedicated Christians.

Sometimes, I dare to wonder that if I, along with my family, hadn't gone to Polynesia in early 1964, whether I would now know these fine Samoan members of the Church of Christ who are children of the original members of the church in Samoa and other locations in Polynesia.

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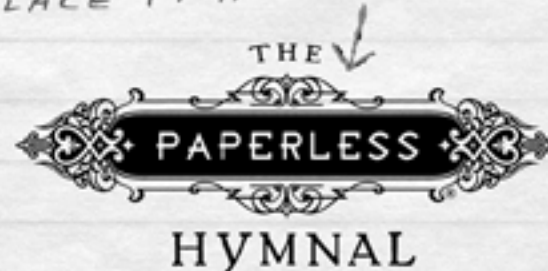
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CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

FOSTER'S HOME FOR CHILDREN

STEPHENVILLE, Texas — Sherwood and Myrtie Foster's Home for Children recently celebrated its 50th anniversary.

Foster's Home began in 1960 with one cottage and has grown to 12 homes housing more than 50 children.

More than 600 people attended the anniversary celebration, which included the dedication of two new homes.

"We appreciate those who have stood behind the home and its mission," President Glenn Newberry said.

CHRISTIAN CAMPS

GANDER BROOK CHRISTIAN CAMP

RAYMOND, Maine — Gander Brook desperately needs donations to make it through the winter, said Don Keiser, a board member who edits the camp's newsletter.

Higher-than-normal infrastructure repair costs and decreased donations have eliminated the camp's small reserve, said Keiser, minister of the Southern Aroostook Church of Christ in northern Maine. "New England does not have any large congregations that are in a position to make major donations to the camp," he said.

Donations can be sent to Gander Brook Christian Camp, P.O. Box 1423, Littleton, MA 01460. For more information, see www.ganderbrook.org.

CHRISTIAN MEDIA

THE LIVING WORD

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. — For 44 years, Jerry Jenkins served as minister of the Roebuck Parkway Church of Christ and speaker for "The Living Word" television broadcast.

The 74-year-old host of Alabama's longest-running religious program died Oct. 26 after an extended hospitalization.

His legacy includes two preacher sons: Jeff Jenkins, minister of the Lewisville Church of Christ in Texas, and Dale Jenkins, minister of the Spring Meadows Church of Christ in Spring Hill, Tenn.



Jenkins



PHOTO PROVIDED BY DAVID KEE

37 baptized on Georgia Christian school's 'Road to Emmaus'

Thirty-six young people and one adult from Arlington Christian School in Fairburn, Ga., were baptized at a recent three-day mountain spiritual retreat dubbed "Road to Emmaus."

"We have been blessed to witness the Holy Spirit's power at Arlington over the last two years," said Ron Edwards, the 110-student high school's Bible department chairman and campus minister.

The adult baptized was Lady Grooms, girls' head basketball coach and director of basketball operations. Grooms also recently accepted the position of assistant coach with the New York Liberty women's professional basketball franchise. However, she'll also keep working with the school.

HIGHER EDUCATION

ABILENE CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

ABILENE, Texas — The ACU College of Business Administration recently named a new executive in residence: David Swearingen, former vice president of corporate communications for Johnson & Johnson.

Swearingen's appointment "strengthens our educational offerings and enhances our ability to offer distinctive Christian leadership within our programs," said Rick Lytle, the college's dean.

Before moving to Abilene, Swearingen served as an elder of the Manhattan Church of Christ in New York.

FAULKNER UNIVERSITY

MONTGOMERY, Ala. — Faulkner broke ground recently on the Allen Law Center.

The \$2.5 million facility will add 17,000 square feet to the existing law school building.

The expansion will accommodate the law school's elder law, family violence and mediation clinics, which provide low-income clients with student representation.

HARDING UNIVERSITY

SEARCY, Ark. — On a steel beam that will soon be a part of the College of Business Administration facilities upgrade is a Bible verse written alongside hundreds of Harding University business students' signatures.

The verse is Matthew 7:24: "Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock."

After a departmental chapel assembly, business students walked over to the construction site to sign the steel beams that will be used in the addition.

"The purpose behind letting the students sign the beam is to make them feel like a part of the construction and to help instill a pride in the program," said Bryan Burkes, business dean.

OKLAHOMA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

OKLAHOMA CITY — Oklahoma Christian President Mike O'Neal has announced plans to step down in June 2012.

When hired in 2002, O'Neal said, he and his wife, Nancy, committed to 10 years in the president's role.

"Though the future of OC holds many wonderful possibilities, with God's blessings and your help, many of our original

SPORTS

'Puttering around' at OVU

VIENNA, W.Va. — Sue "Goldie" Goldcamp has redefined "puttering around" in retirement. At age 52, Goldcamp joined the Ohio Valley University women's golf team.

"I'm just as surprised as anyone to be part of the team," Goldcamp said.

She took up intercollegiate golf after visiting with head coach Amy Colgrove this past summer. "I found myself one player short late in the summer for the college's team and kind of joked about recruiting her to play for the Fighting Scots," Colgrove said.



Goldcamp

Goldcamp earned a degree in the 1970s from the University of Charleston, where she played basketball and softball. "I had a semester of eligibility available still and so here I am," she said. "I've always been interested in taking additional education courses, and this was a unique opportunity to play a sport that I love."

goals our nearing completion," he said in a note to the Oklahoma Christian community.

"By virtually every measure, Oklahoma Christian has never been in better condition, and we feel it is time to begin an orderly transition to the next president who will lead the university to reach even greater levels of service and excellence."



O'Neal

K-12 CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS

JACKSON CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

JACKSON, Tenn. — Jackson Christian's recent second annual "Fill the Truck" campaign was deemed a huge success, organizers said.

Students brought items such as toilet paper, soap and deodorant for Tennessee Children's Home in Spring Hill.

"I thought it was great," said Larry Ivery, home director. "The hygiene products donated mean a great deal."

The relationships developed with Jackson Christian students will benefit the home in the future, he said.

New From the Best-selling Author of *Seasoning Your Words*



Women live in a jungle — not of vines and trees but of relationships. Some relationships are beautiful and helpful. Others can be downright toxic. Poisonous words of gossip and jealousy can bite us hard when we're not looking, making us forget the kindness and generosity we're supposed to have as Christians.

We need a way to transform the treacherous relationships and establish healthy bonds with the women around us.

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Wal-Mart helps relief ministries serve Haiti

ABILENE, Texas — Retail giant Wal-Mart volunteered 18 of its wheels recently to help relief ministries associated with Churches of Christ serve cholera-stricken Haiti.

A tractor trailer bearing the iconic logos of Wal-Mart and Sam's Club backed up to the warehouse of Abilene-based Global Samaritan Resources and loaded supplies bound for Miami.

Wal-Mart supplied transportation, free of charge, for about 30,000 pounds of supplies, said David Catalina, warehouse manager for Global Samaritan. From Miami, Trans Haiti Corporation transported the goods to the northern Haitian city of Cap-Haitien. Among the supplies are furnishings for a house in Cap Haitien for future teams of relief workers.

"We very grateful for organizations like these who step forward and assist us in the delivery of aid across the globe," Catalina said.

The shipment represents "a new collaboration between numerous Churches of Christ," said Dave Heath,



PHOTO PROVIDED BY DAVID CATALINA

A Wal-Mart trailer is loaded with Haiti relief supplies at Global Samaritan Resources.

onsite coordinator for World Radio Gospel Broadcasting and WFR Relief Ministries, both ministries of the White's Ferry Road Church of Christ in West Monroe, La. Ben Adkins is the director of the ministries.

"We are coordinating between churches so that we do not miss areas that need help and do not duplicate areas," Heath said.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, see globalsamaritan.org or wfrchurch.org/relief.

Medical mission serves folks who fish

BY ERIK TRYGGESTAD | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

As the name suggests, the new Fisherfolks Clinic in northern Tanzania will serve people in predominantly Muslim fishing villages along the East African nation's coast.

"The only way in and out of these villages is by foot, bicycle or boat," said Tom Carr, executive director of International Health Care Foundation, which oversees the clinic.

"These isolated villages will be able to load their sick into boats and bring the boats up the coastline to the clinic, where they can be treated," Carr said. "This will be much better than the current situation — in which the sick are carried many miles over rough paths to receive care."

In its first two weeks of operation, the

clinic treated more than 40 patients per day, Carr said.

Bob and Michele Bentley are working at the clinic, providing leadership during its start-up phase, Carr said. Bob Bentley is associate minister for

the Singing Oaks Church of Christ in Denton, Texas. He also is an accountant, and his wife is a nurse. Both speak Swahili.

Searcy, Ark.-based International Health Care Foundation serves more than 70,000 patients per year in seven locations in Tanzania, Ghana and Nigeria,

Carr said. The ministry seeks partners to provide volunteer medical personnel and finances for the clinic.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, see www.ihcf.net or call (501) 268-9511.



PHOTO PROVIDED BY BOB BENTLEY

Village leaders and staff pose for a photo during the opening of the Fisherfolks Clinic.



HARDING

U N I V E R S I T Y

FACULTY POSITIONS AVAILABLE FALL 2011

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

COLLEGE OF PHARMACY. Seeking full-time professor in the Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences. The 12-month position primarily includes creating, coordinating and delivering instruction within the pharmacology program as part of the Doctor of Pharmacy curriculum. Engagement of students in research and the establishment of an active research program will be supported. Qualified applicants will be active members of the church of Christ who possess a Ph.D. degree in pharmacology. Preference will be given to applicants with a strong interest in cardiovascular and/or endocrine pharmacology with postdoctoral experience as well as to those with two or more years of academic experience. A professional degree in pharmacy is desirable but not required.

Submit resume to Dr. G. Scott Weston, search committee chair, Box 12230, Searcy, AR 72149-2230, or sweston@harding.edu.

Seeking candidates for pharmacy practice residency partnered with ARcare, a private, non-profit corporation, aiming to provide affordable care to meet primary medical, behavioral health, and dental care for residents in rural Arkansas. A one-year program, it is designed for the individual seeking to develop the expertise to assess, design, implement, and monitor a safe and effective evidence-based, individualized medication therapy plan in an ambulatory care rural setting. Participants will gain experience in community-based rural health clinics involved in direct care of a diverse patient population. The resident is expected to become proficient in the management of diabetes, hypertension, hyperlipidemia, behavioral health, and special populations such as immunosuppressed and geriatric patients. Eligible candidates will have a Doctor of Pharmacy degree and will be eligible for Arkansas licensure.

Submit inquiries or curriculum vitae, college transcripts, letter of intent, and three letters of recommendation to Dr. Julie Kissack, director, Box 12230, Searcy, AR 72143, or jkissack@harding.edu.

DEPARTMENT OF EXERCISE AND SPORT SCIENCES.

Seeking full-time position for an athletic trainer. This position is a nine-month assignment and provides faculty/staff benefits. The position will include teaching responsibilities in the CAATE accredited program, clinical responsibilities in athletic training facility, and direct supervision of students as an approved clinical instructor. Additional responsibilities will include serving on university and departmental committees, advising students, and other departmental duties as assigned. Qualified candidates will

have a master's degree in athletic training or a related field (terminal degree preferred), will hold current credentials by Board of Certification for Athletic Trainers, and be eligible for state of Arkansas licensure. Also, they will have three years of experience as a certified athletic trainer, have current CPR/AED certification, and be physically capable to provide the athletic training functions described above. Teaching experience preferred.

Submit resume and letter of interest to Dr. Randy Lambeth, director of athletic training education program, at rlambeth@harding.edu.

Seeking full-time faculty position. A Ph.D. (or equivalent) in exercise science or related area is required. Demonstrated potential for independent research and grant writing is preferred. Primary responsibility of the position is a commitment to quality classroom instruction of undergraduate/graduate courses in exercise science and kinesiology. Establishment of a research agenda is strongly encouraged. Additional responsibilities will include advising students, serving on departmental and university committees, and community service.

Submit resume and letter of interest to Dr. Kenneth R. Turley, chairman, to KRTurley@harding.edu.

PHYSICAL THERAPY PROGRAM. Seeking full-time faculty members to teach courses in the basic sciences and/or clinical sciences. The academic rank of each position will be commensurate with applicant's experience. Expertise is sought in basic sciences (gross anatomy, human physiology and/or exercise physiology, neuroscience, and biomechanics). Candidates should have a Ph.D., Ed.D., or other advanced degree in content to be taught. Other positions sought in clinical sciences (cardiovascular and pulmonary physical therapy, acute care and integrative physical therapy, adult neurological physical therapy, and pediatric physical therapy). These candidates should have eligibility for physical therapy licensure in Arkansas, D.P.T. with extensive documented clinical experience in content area, or D.P.T. with clinical certification. Preferred candidates will have an advanced doctoral degree (Ph.D., Ed.D., D.Sc.) with a clinical degree in physical therapy. Preference will be given to applicants with experience in higher education, post-doctoral research experience and/or clinical specialization.

Submit inquiries or letter of application and current curriculum vita to Dr. Mike McGalliard, director, at mmcgalliard@harding.edu or Harding University, Box 12292, Searcy, AR 72143.

Harding University is a private, liberal arts institution with more than 6,800 students from all across the United States and more than 50 foreign nations. Harding has eight academic colleges: Arts and Humanities, Bible and Religion, Business Administration, Communication, Education, Nursing, Pharmacy, and Sciences.

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Go to www.TampaChurch.org to see the Position Description and application instruction. We are looking for candidates who have a passion for and demonstrated experience in:

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- Leading individuals to Christ
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Apply to
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by Jan. 15, 2011

The 30-year-old **AMEN Ministry** connects Christians in the United States military with local churches of Christ both overseas and in the U.S. Please send name, contact information and especially e-mail addresses to:



AMEN Ministry
<http://amenministry.info>
135 Larchmont Drive
Hendersonville, NC 28791
Phone: (828) 891-4480
E-mail: amen@amenministry.info

YOUTH AND FAMILY MINISTER

Northeast Church of Christ in Kingsport, Tennessee, is seeking a full-time **Youth and Family Minister**. We are located in the scenic mountains of East Tennessee and are part of a family-oriented community with excellent public schools. The Northeast church is led by elders and consists of a loving, generous membership of approximately 200. We are mission minded in the local community and internationally. Our current Youth Program is an active and spiritual group of more than 40 students with strong elder, congregational and parental support.

For more details see: www.northeastyouth.org.
To apply please send resume, with references, to
northeastchurchofchrist@gmail.com.



The **Department of Psychology and Family Studies** at Oklahoma Christian University is currently seeking a full-time **professor of Psychology**. Qualified individuals should hold the Doctorate degree in psychology, or a related field, with demonstrated ability and experience to teach undergraduate courses in a variety of areas — including the university's general education class in psychology. Since the department emphasizes the science of psychology, the successful candidate will also demonstrate strong research and statistical skills. Individuals who are ABD will be considered and academic rank and salary will be based upon experience and qualifications. Qualified applicants must be active members of the churches of Christ and should include the following materials:

- A cover letter indicating interest in the position
- A vita
- A statement of teaching philosophy specific to a Christian, Liberal arts institution
- A statement of church affiliation and acceptance of institution's values
- A list of at least three academic/professional references and one reference from a local church leader — with telephone and e-mail contact information
- A copy of all academic transcripts (an official copy must be submitted prior to formal employment)
- A statement of research interests, including any publications and conference presentations.

The review of applications will begin immediately with the successful applicant beginning employment in the fall semester of 2011. The position will remain open and the application process will continue until the position is filled.

Please send all application materials to:

Ryan Newell, Ph.D.
Chair, Department of Psychology and Family Studies
Oklahoma Christian University
P.O. Box 11000
Oklahoma City, OK 73136-1100
Phone: (405) 425-5450
ryan.newell@oc.edu

NEWSMAKERS

NAMED: David Waldron to the Harding University Board of Trustees. **Toni DeVore**, chair of School of Graduate Education at Ohio Valley University in Vienna, W.Va.

CHOSEN: Jason Hernandez, senior vocal performance major at York College, in Nebraska, to perform in the 2011 American Choral Directors Association National Men's Honor Choir in Chicago.



Hernandez

NEW ELDERS: David Campbell, Norm Clothier, Charles Hanson, Lin Johnson, Chris Stewart, and Dennis Thompson, the Saturn Road church, Garland, Texas.

ANNIVERSARIES: 75th: Lyle and Colleen McGuffin, Kerrville, Texas. 60th: Charles and Bonnie Sheppard, Abilene, Texas. Ray and Imogene Smith, Byron, Okla. 55th: Jim and Gloria Elliott, Memphis, Tenn. Wayne and Kate Stafford, Houston. 50th: Billy and Bonnie Reid, Sugar Land, Texas.

BIRTHDAYS: 106th: Willie W. Henry, Dallas. 100th: Irene Sparks Williams, Albion, Neb. 94th: Faye Parks, Plainview, Texas. 90th: Lorraine Naylor, Mount Juliet, Tenn.; Evelyn Huffard Perry, Ontario, Canada.

PASSAGES: Shirley Catherine Boyd, 80, Oct. 5, Searcy, Ark., Former missionary in Germany and a retired adjunct German teacher at Harding University in Searcy. **Roger Collins**, 57, Oct. 25, York, Neb, professor at York College for 29 years, chair of the Elijah A. Levitt School of Business and elder of the East Hill church in York. **Richard Floyd Daughtry**, 80, Oct. 24, senior adult minister for The Hills church, North Richland Hills, Texas, and former minister for churches in Oklahoma, Texas and New York. **John Estes Jr.**, 87, Oct. 25, Abilene, Texas, elder of the University church in Abilene, and did mission work in Haiti, Africa and on Indian reservations. **Marcus Ewing**, 27, member of the Central church in Cincinnati. **Dale C. Gaither**, 77, Nov. 9, Edmond, Okla., longtime minister for churches in Oklahoma and Arizona, member of the Memorial Road church in Edmond. **Cynthia Dixon Gore**, 100, Oct. 30, Bella Vista, Ark, longtime member of the Waterview church in Richardson, Texas, and the Bentonville, Ark., church. **Jeremy King**, 31, worship leader for the Rochester church in Rochester Hills, Mich. **June Lemmons**, 80, Nov. 20, member of the Memorial Road church in Edmond, Okla. **John Renwick**, Oct. 6, longtime minister in Stirling, Scotland.



Collins



Daughtry



King

Dec. 3-4 Ladies Lectureship. Southside church, Durham, N.C. Contact (301) 894-5412.

Dec. 9-12 Winter Wonderland Rendezvous. West Yellowstone, Mont. Contact (800) 548-9551.

Dec. 16 Mid-Atlantic Preachers Meeting. "Revitalizing the Congregation." Olney, Md., church. Contact (301) 894-5412.

Dec. 30-Jan. 1 Polar Bear Weekend. For ninth graders and above. Camp Wamava, Linden, Va. Contact www.wamava.com.

Jan. 14-16 Winterfest Arlington. "Worthy. Worship is 31556926." Arlington, Texas. Contact www.winterfest.org.

Jan. 16-19 2011 Christian Education Conference. "Remember, Revive, Renew, Rejoice." Sheraton Gunter Hotel, San Antonio. Contact www.cec2011.com or Chris Frizzell at (817) 573-2613 or cfrizzell@granburycoc.net.

Jan. 19-22 Sunset Vision Workshop. "O Worship the King." Sunset International Bible Institute, Lubbock, Texas. Contact www.sibi.cc or (800) 658-9553.

Jan. 21-22 Women of Hope conference. Third annual. "An Anchor of Hope in the Eye of the Storm." Embassy Suites Hotel, Franklin, Tenn. Contact www.hhi.org or (615) 832-2000.

Jan. 21-22 Medical Missions Seminar. 29th annual. "... unto one of the least of these." Fort Worth, Texas. Contact IHCF African Christian Hospitals at www.ihcf.net or (501) 268-9511.

Feb. 6-10 West Coast Preachers and Leaders Forum. 48th annual. "Kingdom of God (On Earth)." North Las Vegas church, Las Vegas. Contact (702) 648-8283 or coconmlk@earthlink.net.

Feb. 6-11 75th Annual Freed-Hardeman University Bible Lectureship. "Proclamation and Promise: Major Themes in the Minor Prophets." Freed-Hardeman University, Henderson, Tenn. Contact www.fhu.edu.

Feb. 18-20 Winterfest Gatlinburg. "Worthy. Worship is 31556926." Gatlinburg, Tenn. Contact www.winterfest.org.

Feb. 25-26 Affirming the Faith Seminar. "To Him be the Glory in the Church and in Christ Jesus!" North MacArthur church, Oklahoma City. Contact www.affirmingthefaithok.com.

Feb. 26 Great Southwest Bible Bowl. 27th annual. Chisholm Trail church, Duncan, Okla. Contact ctduncan@swbell.net or (580) 255-7038.

March 12 New England Church Growth Conference. Manchester, Conn. church. Contact (203) 265-2787 or info@newenglandcgc.org or www.manchesterchurchofchrist.org.

March 23 - 26 The Tulsa Workshop. "Let the Chains Fall Away." Contact www.tulsaworkshop.org or workshop@memorialdrive.org.

March 29 - April 2 67th Annual National Lectureship. "God's Today Truth: Ancient, but not Antiquated." Hotel Pennsylvania, New York. Contact www.67anl-coc.org.

April 29-May 1 16th Annual Celebrated Seniors Seminar. "Give Me This Mountain." Hosted by Kingsley Terrace church, Indianapolis. Contact www.ktcoc.com or (317) 924-9055.

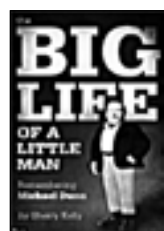
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YOUTH MINISTER NEEDED

The Central Avenue congregation in Valdosta, Georgia, is seeking a full-time Youth Minister. A congregation of 475, we are located in a community of 100,000 people in Southern Georgia. Local institutions include a state university of 12,000 students, an Air Force Base, a regional airport offering direct flights to and from Atlanta, and a number of wonderful private, public, and Christian schools. Both the Gulf and Atlantic coasts are within driving distance. We are looking for an experienced youth minister to work with our children and teens. We are biblically sound yet progressive in methodology. Salary is negotiable, based upon education and qualifications. For further information and a job description, contact John Klimko, Church Administrator, at johnklimkojr@yahoo.com



COLLEGE OF PHARMACY

The mission of Lipscomb University College of Pharmacy is to integrate academic excellence with Christian faith and practice. Lipscomb University is centrally located in Nashville, Tenn., near a diverse network of health care facilities, renowned academic and research institutions, and a life science center created for innovative biotechnology and pharmaceutical companies. The University is associated with the churches of Christ and members with an advanced degree in pharmacy, pharmacy administration, biomedical sciences, or pharmaceutical sciences are encouraged to apply.

FACULTY POSITIONS AVAILABLE: BEGINNING JUNE 1, 2011

Five faculty positions in the Department of Pharmacy Practice are available to meet the educational responsibilities of the professional program and to create innovative teaching or research opportunities among existing pharmacy practice sites, academic health centers, research institutions and emerging biotech companies.

QUALIFICATIONS INCLUDE:

- An earned doctorate degree (PhD, PharmD, MD or equivalent);
- Evidence of or the potential for excellence in teaching, service, research and scholarly activity;
- Post-doctoral experience or a background in pharmacy or pharmacy education preferred.

DEPARTMENT OF PHARMACY PRACTICE

FACULTY POSITIONS:

Five tenure or nontenure track positions are available in the department for applicants that have an earned doctorate degree with specialization in pharmacy practice or pharmacy administration that include ambulatory care pharmacy practice, general internal medicine pharmacy practice, hematology/oncology pharmacy practice, critical care pharmacy practice, or social and administrative pharmacy practice. Applicants will be expected to maintain a clinical practice within local institutions and are expected to meet the educational responsibilities of the professional program and to create collaborative research opportunities among existing academic and commercial health centers.

RANK AND SALARY:

Experience and qualifications will determine academic rank and salaries are nationally competitive by AACP standards for 12-month appointments at private institutions.

APPLICATION INFORMATION:

Interested candidates should submit contact information for three references, a curriculum vita, teaching portfolio and a letter of application that briefly addresses scholarly interests, career goals, and teaching philosophy. Electronic submissions are encouraged and review of applications will continue until all positions are filled.

J. Richard Thompson, Pharm.D., MBA,
Chair, Department of Pharmacy Practice
College of Pharmacy, Lipscomb University
One University Park Drive, Nashville, TN 37204
T: 615-966-7186 • F: 615-966-7163
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EDITORIAL

Taking steps to protect children

In Georgia, a former youth minister faces statutory rape charges. He's accused of a sexual relationship with a 15-year-old church member.

In Indiana, a minister pleaded guilty last summer to sexually assaulting a teenage girl.

These cases — both involving Churches of Christ — remind us of the vulnerability of church leaders to Satan's attacks.

Even more strikingly, however, these cases point out the need to take steps to protect children.

Yes, we all sin and fall short of the glory of God. Yes, God can forgive any of us. Yes, we should pray for

the men — and in other cases, women — who violate our trust.

But we must make children, God's precious gift, our top priority. We must pray for the victims and minister to them. We must never blame the victim.

No one should suggest — as a few did after one of the recent cases — that the teen shared in the culpability. It is this simple: A child *cannot* consent to sexual contact with an adult.

In one case, church elders acted quickly to make counseling available to victims.

In another case, leaders committed to conduct more in-depth screenings and background checks before hirings.

In still another case, leaders openly discussed the case and made clear they were praying for all involved. "Especially for the victims," an elder said.

We applaud such positive Christian responses. As the elders of one church put it, "God can bring good even out of awful circumstances."

The automatic reaction of some is to attribute the recent cases to

young, single ministers. In the cases referenced, though, the ministers were married. One perpetrator is in his 50s.

Despite the actions of a few, ministers deserve respect and support. We praise God for the faithful Christians — young and old — who work so diligently with children and teens.

Nonetheless, we live in a sex-saturated culture. Many members, preachers and even

elders struggle with sexual temptation and the easily accessible nature of Internet porn.

In such a society, it should not surprise us that sexual sins — and crimes — occur. We can't stop all abuse, but we can take responsible steps to limit the potential for it:

- Make sure your church has procedures for selecting and evaluating employees and volunteers. Check references. Conduct criminal background checks. Search the Internet. No exceptions.

- Set appropriate limits for adults' interactions with young people. Have two adults present at all times if possible. Avoid any hint of immorality — or flirting — in text messages and other contacts.

- Be vigilant in reporting and responding to abuse. In many cases, people later say, "We had suspected it for years." May we not avoid our responsibility by such denial.

When abuse happens, it is easy to want to sweep it under the rug, under the guise of protecting the church. Heaven forbid such a response!

Protecting institutions in cases of abuse is neither right nor responsible, but protecting our children is.

'It should not surprise us that sexual sins — and crimes — occur. We can't stop all abuse, but we can take responsible steps to limit the potential.'

Ever-Laughing Life

by Jonny Hawkins



TO OUR READERS

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We praise God that, even amid a changing media environment, the monthly circulation of *The Christian Chronicle* keeps increasing.

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P.O. Box 11000, Oklahoma City, OK 73136-1100
Delivery: 2501 E. Memorial Road, Edmond, OK 73013

Editor, President and CEO: Lynn A McMillon
lynn.mcmillon@christianchronicle.org

Managing Editor: Bobby Ross Jr.

National, Partners news: bobby.ross@christianchronicle.org

Assistant Managing Editor: Erik Trygggestad

International news, features: erik@christianchronicle.org

Advertising Director: Tamie Ross
tamie.ross@christianchronicle.org

Editor Emeritus: Bailey B. McBride
bailey.mcbride@christianchronicle.org

Reviews Editor: Harold Shank
harold.shank@christianchronicle.org

Circulation Manager: Lynda Sheehan
lynda.sheehan@christianchronicle.org

Associate Editor: Joy McMillon
joy.mcmillon@christianchronicle.org

Administrative Assistant: Tonda Stafford
tonda.stafford@christianchronicle.org

Administrative Assistant: Virginia Ware
virginia.ware@christianchronicle.org

Correspondent: Ted Parks

TO SUBSCRIBE:

See www.christianchronicle.org
e-mail virginia.ware@christianchronicle.org
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What kind of Christian will I be at age 70?

I am 40 years away from turning 70. But that doesn't keep me from thinking about the kind of person I will be when, Lord willing, I reach that age.

When I'm 70, my wife, Kayci, and I will celebrate our 49th year of marriage. My kids will be in their 40s — and my grandkids might be graduating from high school.

I'll still be faithfully cheering for the Cowboys, Mavs, Rangers and Huskers. Hopefully, one of them will have won a championship by then.

I'll still read books (most likely, on an electronic device of some kind). Unfortunately, I won't eagerly be awaiting the 58th season of "24."

Most importantly, I hope I will be active in life-engaged ministries of reconciliation.

I don't know what the church will look like in 40 years. If I read my generation right, I think the lines between denominations will be very thin. I think more churches will be actively involved in a number of humanitarian efforts — meaning that they will have a voice at the table of worldwide conversations concerning AIDS awareness, value of life, child-slavery, global poverty, education and women's rights.

I think the best evangelism will happen in neighborhoods, jobs and in places where Christ-followers choose to live with intentionality and purpose. It won't happen so much with persuasive arguments, but with lives that bear the fruit of something to be imitated.

I have been in ministry for a decade now. I have seen a lot. I have experienced a lot.

One of the great pleasures and challenges as a minister in the Western world in the 21st century is that I speak to five generations every Sunday.

Some of our oldest members vividly remember World War II.

Some of our teens, about to graduate from high school, weren't even born until the early 1990s — when "Saved by the Bell" was going off the air. That makes me feel old at the humble age of 30.

After years of observing the multiple generations that comprise our church, I have developed four principles I want to live by when I'm 70:

• **I do not want to be driven by fear.** I want to learn to live the central message of Galatians 5 — that in Christ we have been set free. I want to witness all forms of impossibilities bowing down to the power of the resurrection of Jesus. I want to be fearless.

Views



Josh Ross

'When it comes to the church, I don't want comfort to be the key to a joyful existence with my brothers and sisters in Christ. I hope to be at a place where I am eager to join in daring, creative, adventurous attempts to present Jesus to everyone in every way.'

• **I want mission to trump all forms of traditionalism.** Traditions aren't bad. I know that. But when traditions become doctrine, they become toxic.

Too many times we want to be part of a church that does Sunday morning "right" before we are interested in joining in its mission or vision.

I don't want to live that way. I want to join in a faith community because I am eager to get in on the mission of God in that place.

• **I don't want to care about comfort.** Yes, I'm sure that comfort will be a major concern when I'm 70. I will be popping in all kinds of vitamins and pills, and I likely will invest in a comfortable recliner.

When it comes to the church, I don't want comfort to be the key to a joyful existence with my brothers and sisters in Christ. I hope to be at a place where I am eager to join in daring, creative, adventurous attempts to present Jesus to everyone in every way.

• **I want to be an encourager to help people dream with God, especially for young ministers.** I don't want to confine future leaders by relentlessly asking them to duplicate the church of my past.

I want to be able to let go of the church of my upbringing and to help the generations under me to dream with God of what the Gospel needs to look like to reach the people of the second half of the 21st century.

If it means that I need to sing songs that just don't do it for me, I want to sing them with passion. If it means that I need to serve in a soup kitchen full of prostitutes and drug addicts, I want to be at the table. If that means that I need to dye my hair blue to reach some kids, I want to do it.

I want the spirit of Paul to be in me. "I have become all things to all people, that I might by all means save some."

Age 70 seems like it's a long way off, but I want to set in motion some principles and disci-

plines that will form me into a person who thinks, lives and breathes the gospel story of Jesus.

When I turn 70, I hope someone will dig up this column and hold me accountable.

JOSH ROSS is preaching minister for the Sycamore View Church of Christ in Memphis, Tenn. He and his wife, Kayci, have two boys, Truitt and Noah. Contact him at joshross15@gmail.com.

LETTERS

Christian softball coach succumbs to cancer

I wanted to let you know that coach Donna Newberry passed away Nov. 10.

Thanks for writing the amazing article ("Coach's light shines as she fights for her life," Page 27, December). It meant a lot to those of us who are close to her.

Kari Hoying | New Concord, Ohio

Appointment of elders in Nazareth draws praise

This is fantastic — knowing that the Lord's church is alive and well in the very city of his childhood ("In hometown of Jesus, church names elders," Page 1, December).

I visited Israel in 1998 and traversed the whole country, reveling in its rich history. I left a part of my heart there.

I am encouraged by this momentous step in installing elders. May the church there grow as it did in Acts.

Ben Little | Cape Town, South Africa

Bosnian Christian's zeal, passion appreciated

Snezana's life story is so providential, and she shares it with such joy and thankfulness with those she meets ("Baptized three times," Page 3, December). My husband and I were blessed to become acquainted with her at the 2010 Harding Lectureship. She is so alive in the Lord. Her zeal and passion to serve him are so encouraging and uplifting.

Jeanne Gardner | Morton, Ill.

VOICES

What is your prayer for your church or ministry in 2011?

Asked by Erik Tryggstad, assistant managing editor.



My prayer is that we, the members here, continue to climb higher in our spiritual walk with Jesus Christ, that we be a shining light in this community and neighboring cities and cays. Also, I pray that we may have brothers who would stay onboard until the end.

Jason Quashie | Marsh Harbour, Bahamas



I pray that our efforts at Hope for Haiti's Children will help prevent the cholera epidemic from touching the lives of our sponsored children and their families. HFHC is assembling "Cholera Prevention Kits" to distribute to children in the most at-risk areas.

Tonya Hunt | Cincinnati



My prayer is that church leaders forge for unity ... and that there will be strengthened partnerships among Kenyan churches. May God use the church to heal our nation and provide direction during this new constitutional dispensation in our country.

Leonard Chumo Falek | Nairobi, Kenya



Father, your church in Barnaul has suffered wounds that only you can heal. Forgive us. We got distracted. As we humble ourselves before you, please, lift us up. Change us, starting with our hearts. Help us love all that you love. Then, help us all see and do your will.

Joseph Rhodes | Barnaul, Russia

Atheists for Jesus? Books question faith in science

BY VAN SPRAGUE | FOR THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

The famous atheist Richard Dawkins calls Christians “dyed-in-the-wool faith-heads.”

The authors of three recent volumes on science and Christianity disagree. Each is a former — or current — atheist. And each, in some way, defends the Christian position.

Michael Ruse, a self-avowed “conservative non-believer,” lays a broad foundation for understanding the debate between science and religion in **“Science and Spirituality: Making Room for Faith in the Age of Science.”** Those investigating philosophies regarding morals, conscience or purpose of life will benefit from the information he provides.

Ruse does impressive work presenting others’ beliefs, information and discoveries with little personal bias. This approach makes the book a good overview of the evolution (excuse the pun) of scientists’ philosophies, specifically showing the “triumph of the machine metaphor since the Scientific Revolution” in illustrating the ways the material world works.

Despite Ruse’s attempts to involve the reader with questions and vivid illustrations, phrases like, “the fundamental problem of biology becomes a problem sui generis” negate whatever momentum of interest one may have.

Being an atheist, it is not a shock that Ruse views creation as “an idiosyncratic legacy.” He says such Christians imagine that God looks like

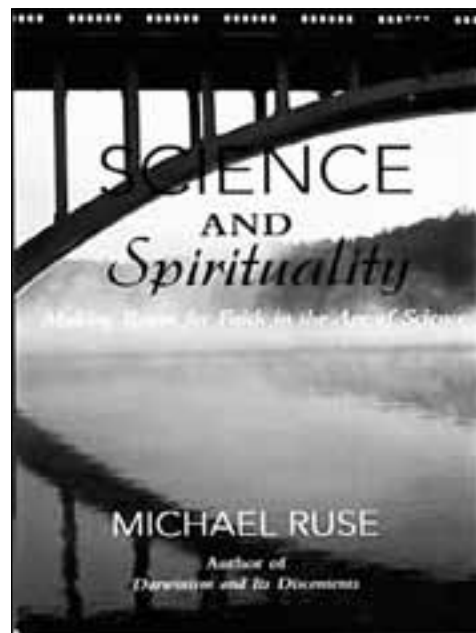
“Charlton Heston dressed in a bed sheet,” an image he draws from the way Michelangelo depicts God on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel.

But there is more to Ruse than mockery. What is surprising (even to him) is his assertion that he could be mistaken for a theist, based on the implications of his work.

Though he denies most supernatural events, he concludes that Christianity’s “central core claims ... by their very nature go beyond the reach of science.” Therefore, he argues, since science cannot provide a concrete answer for things such as conscience, morality or the purpose of life, these are rational areas for religious thought.

While this is still an unacceptable

‘Is Christianity a valid form of belief in the age of science? While many think the battle between the two has subsided, these books illustrate that it thrives.’



Michael Ruse. **Science and Spirituality: Making Room for Faith in the Age of Science.** New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010. 264 pages. \$30.

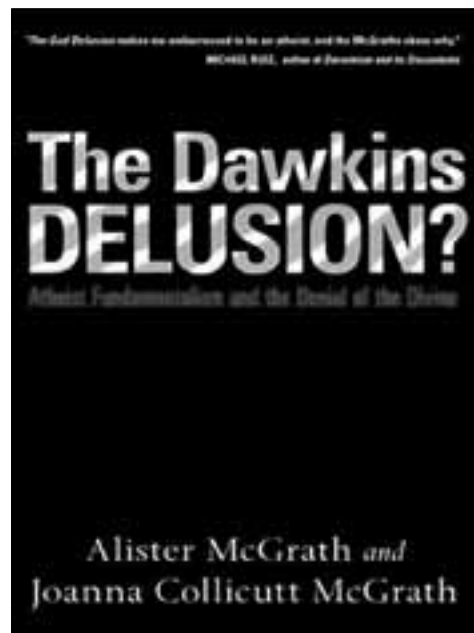
worldview for many, it is quite a middle ground for an atheist or agnostic seeking to avoid extremism on both fronts.

Alister and Joanna Collicutt McGrath also take up the call for a more balanced perception in the atheism-verses-theism debate in **“The Dawkins Delusion? Atheist Fundamentalism and the Denial of the Divine.”** The book is a

response to Dawkins’ 2006 book, “The God Delusion.”

The McGraths admire Dawkins’ fine scholarship and complement his previous works as being clear, helpful and well-researched. But they criticize “The God Delusion,” as using “weak and recycled arguments” that make it “a work of propaganda.”

Considering that the McGraths are dealing with someone they describe as “one of the most successful and skillful scientific popularizers” in the world, the authors of “The Dawkins Delusion” prove themselves to be worthy opponents. On top of being a former atheist, Alister McGrath is a graduate of Oxford (so is Dawkins), and demonstrates his views with the sound research one would expect from a writer with his credentials.



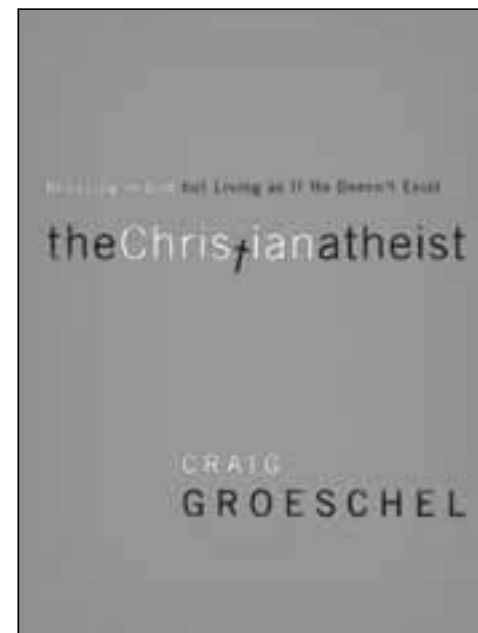
Alister McGrath and Joanna Collicutt McGrath. **The Dawkins Delusion? Atheist Fundamentalism and the Denial of the Divine.** Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 2007. 118 pages. \$13.

Drawing attention to misinformation and assertions in “The God Delusion,” Alister McGrath exposes areas where Dawkins failed to practice such scholarly integrity. For instance, Dawkins argues that religion is responsible for violence, citing the attacks on 9/11. The McGraths provide evidence that render his point baseless. Referring to the studies of Robert Pape, who documented every known suicide bombing, worldwide, from 1980 to 2003, they establish that “religious belief of any kind is neither necessary nor sufficient” to create such atrocities.

The authors do not write a defense of theism, but of reason and fairness. While refuting the claims of Dawkins, they teach the valuable lesson that we must also take care in the arguments we use.

Christians who have read “The God Delusion” will be enlightened by the criticism that the McGraths provide, but the authors’ target audience is actually the atheists “whose minds are not yet locked into a pattern of automatic Dawkinsian reflexes”

In **“The Christian Atheist: Believing in God but Living as If He Doesn’t Exist”** Craig Groeschel presents himself as a former atheist of a different kind. While he was never a denouncer of the existence of God, he admits that he once



Craig Groeschel. **The Christian Atheist: Believing in God but Living as If He Doesn’t Exist.** Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 2010. 241 pages. \$19.99.

lived as if God did not exist. The fact that many Christians live this way gives this title of his book inherent value.

Using personal stories and illustrations, he handles real Christian struggles in a witty, easy-to-read way.

For the preacher, the book provides ideas for topics that need to be addressed — guilt, forgiveness, prayer — and supplies tangible allusions that powerfully illustrate such subjects.

One should take caution, though. Groeschel attempts to swing away from the “heavenly to-do list” kind of Christianity, but teeters and falls into an “attend-the-church-of-your-choice” evangelicalism.

Is Christianity a valid form of belief in the age of science? While many think the battle between the two has subsided, these books illustrate that it thrives.

In fact, the debate attracts the attention of great minds on all sides of the issue.

Christians cannot afford to proceed silently and uniformed. Naysayers are attacking our principal beliefs. We stand at the front lines. These books can help equip us with the armor we need in such an onslaught.

VAN SPRAGUE has preached for six years. A graduate of the West Virginia School of Preaching, he serves with the Church of Christ in Lubeck, W.Va.

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In the December of our lives, we set goals to maximize use of God's gifts

When I was young, Frank Sinatra sang a love song called "September Song." The melody was haunting and — for a young romantic — the words were appealing. *Oh, it's a long, long while from May to December, but the days grow short when you reach September.*

When the autumn weather turns the leaves to flame, one hasn't got time for the waiting game.

Now I am thinking that if the metaphor of a lifetime is one year, I first heard and loved that song when I was completing my "January."

Having marked my 77th birthday last July, I am aware that I am in "my December," and the days are "dwindling down to a precious few."

Always being conscious of time, I have tried to make good use of every day, especially these past 50 years. Today I am blessed to be able to teach full time, remain connected to my church family and see my children and grandchildren as they have time.

If I am honest with myself, I am still a workaholic and am missing wonderful opportunities with my family. And I certainly should be serving the Kingdom much more effectively.

As Joyce and I have planned wills, burial plots, distribution of prized positions, sorting treasures from stuff, the end of life has been on my mind.

Although I am like most in secretly believing that I will never die, I keep wondering, "When?" I know it's in God's hands, but wouldn't it be great to know when?

Or would it?

Recently, in studying the Gospel of Luke, I noticed that every time Jesus was asked about the time for restoring the Kingdom, he put aside the question. A friend observed that Jesus was putting the question out of the realm of concern.

Puzzling about the end of life only diverts from the important work of living fully. The opportunities abound to such an extent that doing everything is impossible. So in the "December" of life I must focus and stay dedicated to what is most important to maximizing God's gifts to me.

Here are a few of the priorities we are setting. Hopefully, what we are considering about ourselves can help readers no matter their time in life.

- The great joy and source of genuine

satisfaction is our family. We have six great children (three by birth and three by marriage) and 10 grandchildren (eight by birth and two by marriage). We are letting time slip by without the time and fun we owe to ourselves to enjoy them.

Insight



Bailey McBride

- Through nearly 55 years on campuses of Christian universities, we have had bountiful friendships with wonderful human beings who share a common love for God and humanity. Yet devotion to meaningful service and boundless commitments mean we rarely have time with those friends and mentors who have added color and life to our existences.

- Bible study and prayer have been central to our lives together, but the fury of our current schedules means that only routine prayers for meals and preparation for a group Bible study constitute the extent of what we share. The bonding that began over our dinner table when we were first married is needed as we take advantage of every new day.

- My daily Bible study began about the same time I first heard "September Song." Years of study have been a blessing, but I confess that I need to start afresh with new questions and perceptive study — not just to know the Bible, but to let God reshape my life and spirit.

- Joyce and I always have felt that we have gifts from God to teach and mentor.

Joyce has focused on pre-K children, loving, training and nurturing at the age when the formative development of minds is most responsive to information, ideas and God's will. All our lives she has taught and loved children in Bible school and in the neighborhood. Without this work she would feel lost.

As for me, at age 22 I walked into my first college class. I felt so much at home that I can hardly think of not having the chance to study and learn with these amazing people as they begin their adult journey.

In the "December" of our lives, we struggle to know how to do all we have done and do even more.

We are trusting in God to help.

CONTACT bailey.mcbride@christianchronicle.org.



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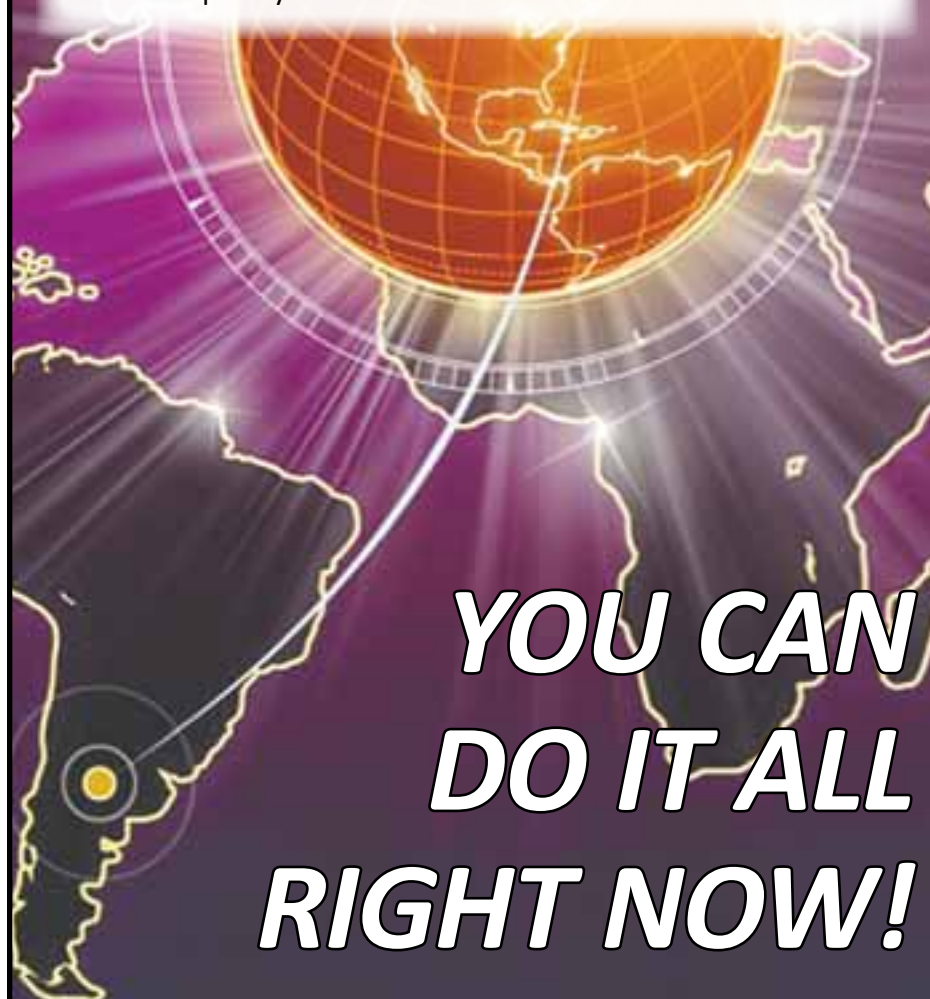
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