



ERIK TRYGGESTAD

Muslim and Christian women stand near crops grown in their cooperative drip-irrigation garden in Burkina Faso.

Can Christians and Muslims coexist?

Study shows tolerance, yet tension, in Africa

BY ERIK TRYGGESTAD | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

KOKOLOGHO, Burkina Faso — In this poor African village, Christians and Muslims unite against a common enemy — the arid, unyielding soil.

Side by side they toil in this landlocked nation plagued by drought. Using drip irrigation, they grow cucumbers and

manioc — a starchy root vital to the West African diet.

The 20 members of the co-op learned the gardening technique from Tapsoba Mathurin, who trained in Senegal at a seminar hosted by Tennessee-based Healing Hands International. He shared what he learned with his countrymen — Christian and Muslim.

“We’re all one family, and in this together,” said Mathurin, a member of the Patte d’Oie Church of Christ in

Burkina Faso’s capital, Ouagadougou.

Muslims and Christians across Africa share that sentiment, according to a new study by the Pew

Research Center’s Forum on Religion and Public Life. Researchers compiled data

See **COEXIST**, Page 12

Global SOUTH
Eighth in a series



CHRISTIAN EDUCATION IN HARD TIMES

Facing financial woes, more schools closing

BY BOBBY ROSS JR. | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

NEWARK, Del. — Thirty-six years ago, Newark Church of Christ leaders founded Aletheia Christian School and Child Care as a community outreach.

The dream: to educate children and nurture faith in Jesus Christ.

“It enabled us to serve the community, and through that service, it brought people to Christ,” said Richard Duzan, the school’s principal and one of five Newark church elders. “We touched the lives of thousands of kids and their families.”

But in June, the school will close — the victim of rising costs and declining enrollment.

In Charlotte, N.C., the same fate awaits the 24-year-old Providence Christian School — a ministry of the Providence Road Church of Christ — at the school year’s end.

“It hurts us deeply to have

to take this action,” said Lee Thrasher, the Providence Road church’s executive minister.

Schools associated with Churches of Christ are feeling the pain of tough economic times. That’s particularly true, leaders say, for schools outside the fellowship’s traditional geographic strongholds.

The latest closures follow at least five Christian schools that did not reopen this past

fall — one in Michigan, one in Florida and three in Ohio.

Overall enrollment at the 100-plus schools nationwide associated with Churches of Christ fell 6.7 percent this school

year, according to the National Christian School Association. The total dropped to 33,733, down from 36,139 last school year.

“It’s an eye opener,” said Philip Patterson, president of the Oklahoma City-based association.

See **SCHOOLS**, Page 14



BOBBY ROSS JR.

A banner hangs at the Newark, Del., church, home of a Christian school.



80 years and still working

Houston’s historic Fifth Ward church finds joy in serving its community.

17



Lads, ladies and leaders

Youths show their skills at national conventions.

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Tragedy in El Salvador

Minister gunned down in church doorway.

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Friendly faces in the City of Brotherly Love

PHILADELPHIA

It's a small, small world in Churches of Christ. I don't mean that in terms of numbers. Size-wise, our a cappella fellowship of Bible

Inside Story



Bobby Ross Jr.

believers is significant: 1.6 million men, women and children in U.S. pews alone.

That makes Churches of Christ the 16th largest Christian group in America, according to the National Council of Churches.

Despite our size, though, we remain a close-knit family of Christ-followers. I've heard it said that most of us can visit any Church of Christ in the nation and find somebody who knows someone we do.

With nearly 13,000 congregations, that sounds next to impossible. In my travels with *The Christian Chronicle*, however, I find it to be true.

But does that "small, small world" extend to a white Christian journalist covering the 66th annual National Lectureship of the Churches of Christ, the largest yearly gathering of black churches?

We have lamented in this space that black and white churches tend to operate in parallel universes — with their own brotherhood events, their own favorite speakers and singing groups, even their own styles of worship.

On the *Chronicle's* editorial page, we have urged churches to break down racial barriers.

With the support and encouragement of Editor Lynn McMillon, the

See **LECTURESHP**, Page 4



NOAH DARNELL

2,000 join in Harding's annual Day of Service

Students from Harding University in Searcy, Ark., clean up debris in nearby Center Hill, where a March tornado left a path of destruction. More than 2,000 Harding students, faculty and staff members spent a recent afternoon serving the Searcy and White County communities as part of the annual Day of Service by Bisons for Christ. The 150 service projects included jailhouse visits, trash pickup and work with housing authorities and after-school programs. Harding athletes conducted sports clinics.

Church members from 36 states attend 66th National Lectureship

BY BOBBY ROSS JR. | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

PHILADELPHIA — For 17 years, Doris Norman has traveled to the National Lectureship of the Churches of Christ — the largest yearly gathering of black churches.

"It's spiritually uplifting," said Norman, a member of the Valley Road church in Warrington, Pa., north of Philadelphia. "It's great seeing so many Christians together and seeing so many people that you've met through the Lectureship. And then I have so much family that's members of the church, it's even a family reunion and a vacation."

This year was different: Philadelphia area churches hosted the recent 66th annual National Lectureship. Brittany Mitchell, 14, from the Overbrook Park church in Philadelphia — the host congregation — joined Norman in helping at a hospitality

table for the 850 participants from 36 states.

Dan Cooper, minister of the Pitman church in Sewell, N.J., south of Philadelphia, used a church van to shuttle fellow Christians to the Downtown Marriott.

"We saw this as a way to increase our diversity, offer goodwill to our African-American brothers and try to build unity among the churches in the area," said Cooper, who is white.

R.C. Wells, minister emeritus of the Harlem church in New York, served as the event's national chairman. Willie L. Rupert Jr., former minister of the Overland Park church, now

at the Central church in Baltimore, was the host minister. Organizers said the recession hurt attendance.

"We average around 1,300," said Kevin Bethea, minister of the East Baltimore church. "In good days, we can go as high as 2,000 people. The economy really hit us."



BOBBY ROSS JR.

Dorothy Clemons, Lawrence Clemons Sr. and Lavera Otoyoy, at the National Lectureship.

El Salvador minister killed during service

BY ERIK TRYGGESTAD | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

Christians in El Salvador and across Central America are mourning the death of Antonio Lara. The longtime preacher and church leader was gunned down in the doorway of the church where he served as minister.

Lara, 59, died April 25 during Sunday morning worship at the El Platanar Church of Christ in San Miguel, El Salvador. Lara had left the service momentarily to get a drink of water.

A man wearing a long-sleeved, plaid shirt and a hat apparently was waiting for Lara at the door, according to police.

The man shot Lara at least seven times with a .38-caliber pistol and fled in a vehicle, police said.

Inside the building, church members were praying when they heard the gunshots.

"We all ran out in shock. Others went to find the children who were in Bible school with the preacher's wife," an unidentified church member told news service elsalvador.com.

Police did not comment on possible motives for the apparent assassination and, at press time, were searching for the shooter.

"For us ... and for the brotherhood in general, it has been very shattering news," said Carlos Ingles, a Salvadoran Christian who serves as a missionary in Bogota, Colombia.

Jon Nelson lived with Lara and his family for nearly two years while serving as a missionary in El Salvador.

"Antonio truly had a servant heart," said Nelson, who now lives in the Dallas area. "In situations where most people complained and grumbled, Antonio smiled and volunteered."

Ingles asked church members worldwide to pray for Lara's wife, Milagro, and their children, Cindi and Leo.

"We know that our brother, through his faithfulness and devotion to the Lord, now enjoys a better place than we do," Ingles said.

SEE UPDATES, TRIBUTES at www.christianchronicle.org.



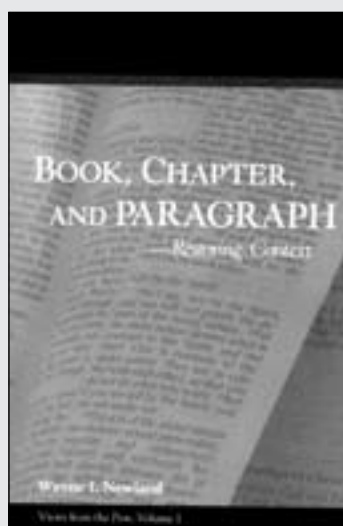
Lara

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Go online to find all the news in the print edition plus an expanded calendar, classifieds and much more.

• **Church That Works:** See more photos from the Fifth Ward church in Houston.

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TAMIE ROSS

Children sing during a Sunday Bible class at the Fifth Ward church in Houston.

LECTURESHIP: 'Small, small world' evident in Philly

FROM PAGE 3

Chronicle itself has made a concentrated effort to improve our news coverage of black churches, our relationships with black Christian leaders and our subscriber base among black members.

How are we doing?

Undoubtedly, we have a long way to go. But we're making progress.

As I mingled among the National Lectureship crowd — mostly black faces — at the Philadelphia Downtown Marriott, I kept running into people I know.

Roy Johnson, a member of the Newark, N.J., church, spotted me in the registration line.

Johnson and I met last fall at his friend Ken Brown's house. Brown, a member of the Echo Lake church in Westfield, N.J., had invited me to watch an Oklahoma Sooners football game on his big screen. I was in the area that weekend to cover the Northeastern Lectureship at the Apollo Theater in New York.

Johnson rooted against my Sooners, and they lost, but I forgave him. That Sunday, we drove to the Apollo together. After worship, we enjoyed lunch at a barbecue restaurant in Harlem.

Among other familiar faces I ran into here in the City of Brotherly Love:

- Thomas Jackson, minister of the Ferguson Heights church in Ferguson, Mo. I met Jackson a couple of years ago on a reporting trip to the St. Louis area.

- Kenneth Jackson, minister of the Lewis Street church in Little Rock, Ark. I interviewed him at the Crusade for Christ in Tampa, Fla., in 2007.

- Kevin Bethea, minister of the East Baltimore church. I interviewed him in Baltimore in 2005. He's doing exciting work with Northeast Baltimore Bible Institute and College.

- David L. Lane, minister of the

Marsalis Avenue church in Dallas. I heard Lane preach in 2008 at a Unity in Christ event sponsored by black and white churches in the Detroit area.

Lane and James O. Maxwell, vice president of institutional expansion at historically black Southwestern Christian College in Terrell, Texas, are featured this month in a Dialogue interview on page 21.

Although I had not met Maxwell until seeing him at the National Lectureship, I recognized his name and that of his son, James A. Maxwell, minister of the Holgate church in Seattle.

I was surprised, though, that *they* knew my name.

"Oh, you're Bobby Ross," the senior brother Maxwell said. "You look younger than your picture."

Also in this issue, starting on page 17, we spotlight the Fifth Ward church in Houston in our Churches That Work series. That congregation is Houston's oldest black church and traces its roots to a 1930s series of tent meetings by Marshall Keeble.

The Fifth Ward church hosted the third annual National Lectureship back in 1947. Christians from across the nation stayed at Fifth Ward members' homes, and a white tent was put up behind the worship building and used as a cafeteria.

At Fifth Ward, I was privileged to meet faithful *Chronicle* reader Barry Gibson.

Gibson, a deacon, teaches a 13-week Bible class that trains members to share their faith one on one. He told me how much he appreciated our "By the numbers" series on the growth and decline in our fellowship.

It's a small, small world in Churches of Christ.

CONTACT BOBBY ROSS JR. at bobby.ross@christianchronicle.org

ALASKA

ANCHORAGE — The Anchorage church recently began offering its entire Sunday assemblies on its website, anchoragechurchofchrist.org. Leaders say the move came after several people in outlying areas asked for more than sermons to use for their own services.

CALIFORNIA

SAN FRANCISCO — The Golden Gate church conducted bilingual worship — and trilingual a cappella singing — with the help of those fluent in English, Spanish and Tagalog. The Lake Merced church will expand on the concept June 6 by hosting ACAPINOY, which will add three more languages to the mix: Ilokano, Pangasinan and Cebuano.

CONNECTICUT

MANCHESTER — About 200 Christians from Northeastern states gathered for the recent third annual New England Church Growth Conference. The theme was “I have many people in this city,” based on Acts 18:10. For more information on the 2010 conference and dates for next year’s event, see www.newenglandcgc.org.

FLORIDA

BRANDON — A church bus carrying 27 youth and sponsors from the Bell Shoals church was involved in a fatal crash April 24 as the group returned from a service project in a nearby community.

“Thankfully, God protected all of our young people,” associate minister Chris Hodges said.

Witnesses said a car spun out-of-control from the opposite lane into the path of the church vehicle. Bell Shoals bus driver James Adair, 63, was praised for his quick reaction and ability to stop the bus. The car’s driver was pronounced dead at the scene.

GEORGIA

MARIETTA — Congregations from five states partnered with the East Cobb church to fill seven trailers with supplies for Haiti earthquake victims.

Those who helped included the Archer City, Texas, church; Burnt Hickory church in



COREY LOWENSTEIN, THE NEWS & OBSERVER

Painting a smile on North Carolina girl’s face

Rebekah Venditelli, 7, is mesmerized by her reflection in a mirror, as her sister Isabel, 9, rear left, and her mother, Shannon, also enjoy the moment. The family joined more than 600 people at the recent spring carnival for children with special needs at the Brooks Avenue church in Raleigh, N.C. The carnival started 10 years ago as a community outreach effort.

Marietta; Camp Creek church in Atlanta; Collegedale church in Troy, Ala.; Eatonton, Ga., church; Grace Chapel church in Cumming, Ga.; Hillcrest church in Decatur, Ga.; Lakewood church in Atlanta; Liberty City church in Savannah, Ga.; Littleton Colorado church in Littleton, Ga.; Meadowbrook church in Ocala, Fla.; Moreland Avenue church in Atlanta; North Atlanta church; Shannon Church in Union City, Ga.; Schaffer Road church in Marietta; Southlake church in Morrow, Ga.; West End church in Atlanta; and White’s Ferry Road church in West Monroe, La.

KENTUCKY

MURRAY — The Glendale Road church’s Caring and Sharing building is used every day of the week. On any day, volunteers may be found distributing food, sorting and giving out clothing, preparing supplies for shipping to mission workers or assisting those who need to borrow furniture or household items after a fire or other catastrophe.

MISSISSIPPI

YAZOO CITY — An early morning tornado cut through this community of 15,000 on April 24, killing at least 10 people, leaving dozens more injured and causing millions of dollars in property damage.

Within hours, relief workers from the White’s Ferry Road’s relief team in West Monroe, La., were headed to the area to assess needs and begin making plans for cleaning crews, said Carol Ogle, ministry coordinator.

OKLAHOMA

EUFALA — The Eufaula church averages 100 in attendance each week. The three websites it maintains, however, are visited by tens of thousands each year.

Seekingthelost.org, histruechurch.org and eufaulachurchofchrist.org are consistently among the top-ranked searches for seekers asking questions having to do with biblical topics on Internet search engines, said Eufaula church member James Goddard.

TEXAS

COPPELL — The Riverside church is mourning the loss of elder Phil Gage, 54, and his daughter, Raychel, 20, who were killed in an automobile crash April 18.

Injured were Debbie Gage, wife and mother of the victims, and 14-month-old Zach, Raychel’s son. Both are expected to make full recoveries.

Riverside members have created a Facebook site, keywords “In loving memory of Phil and Raychel Gage” for friends and fellow Christians to share stories and offer support to Debbie and Zach.

ORANGE — Michael Lee “Mickey” McNamara, 76, was beaten with a bat and killed April 21 during what police say was a robbery at his insurance office. The victim served as an elder at the Ninth and Elm church for 15 years.

“Mickey McNamara was a man of peace and of love ... one of the finest men I’ve ever met,” fellow elder Charles Block told KFDM-TV.

SPOTLIGHT**Member’s illness still undiagnosed**

JACKSON, Tenn. — After struggling with respiratory problems much of his life, Bryan Britt, 33, of Jackson was examined by the National Institute of Health’s Center for Undiagnosed Diseases in Bethesda, Md.

The clinic opened in May 2009 and has accepted only about 12 percent of its applicants. Britt recently spent a week in the clinic, where 28 specialists focused solely on his illness.

Britt, who is unable to work, received a diaphragmatic pacemaker in November 2009 and is on oxygen, which has helped make his condition livable.

Prior to his illness, Britt was a high school teacher and soccer coach at Jackson Christian School. He and his wife, Jenna, graduated from Freed-Hardeman University in Henderson and attend the Campbell Street Church of Christ in Jackson with their two children, Abby, 6, and Nathan, 4.

The NIH was unable to diagnose Britt but will continue to work with him for as long as he needs. To help support the Britt’s financially, go to www.wthfoundation.org/makeadonation, click on the “Community Funds” link, register as a user and select “Bryan Britt Fund” from the dropdown menu.



CALEY KING NEWBERRY

Bryan Britt is pictured with his wife, Jenna, and their two children, Abby, 6, and Nathan, 4.

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BOBBY ROSS JR.

Kinwood H. DeVore, a Church of Christ minister and executive director of the Metropolitan Fresh Start House, believes in treating drug offenders — and sharing Jesus with them.

Prayer helps drug abusers make a Fresh Start in San Francisco

BY BOBBY ROSS JR. | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

SAN FRANCISCO — It's still dark outside as three-dozen men — some wearing hoodies, others button-down shirts — crowd into an inner-city house.

At precisely 5:30 a.m., they gather to pray and recount the previous day's battle to stay clean from drugs — the foe they all share.

"In this world, it's about you and God," program coordinator Samuel R. DeVore tells them. "What did you do in his favor? How close did you get to him? Did you serve his purpose or serve others?"

The meeting is a part of the routine — a daily fresh start — at a faith-based substance abuse program started in 1989 by Church of Christ minister Kinwood H. DeVore, Sam DeVore's brother.

"Kinwood, his brother and others that work with him have succeeded in touching lives positively that others did not want anything to do with," said Richard Blythe, minister of the Lake Merced Church of Christ, one of the area congregations where Fresh Start frequently baptizes recovering addicts.

"I have an appreciation for what they do, and they don't have a lot of competition, I guarantee you," Blythe said. "There's not a lot of people saying, 'Move over and let us work with the same people you're working with.'"

A one-time state prison chaplain,

Kinwood DeVore said he grew tired of seeing so much community violence, and going to so many funerals, directly tied to drugs.

So he launched the Metropolitan Fresh Start House — a 24-hour, live-in treatment center. The Metropolitan Church of Christ serves as the parent organization.

The program attempts to deal not just with the symptom of the problem but also with the root cause.

"A whole lot of it is pain, and they use drugs to medicate that pain," said Kinwood DeVore, noting that most of the offenders sent to Fresh Start grew up without fathers. "So that's what we try to do is help them deal with those issues."

Fresh out of jail, some clients last only a day or two at Fresh Start.

Others stay for months.

Out of 3,000 program participants over 20 years, Kinwood DeVore estimates that at least 600 to 700 defeated the enemy and live free of drugs.

Fresh Start aims to restore dignity, responsibility and personal pride to drug abusers, he said. That's accomplished through hard work and a change in thinking — from self will to God's will.

"Jesus Christ put out a net, and he's pulling them in — catching all kinds of people," Sam DeVore said. Fresh Start "is part of the net, but the one who's pulling the net is God and Jesus Christ."

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SPOTLIGHT



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Fanaah Radebe talks about her faith.

From witchdoctor to witness for God

SEBOKENG, South Africa — From the days of her youth, Fanaah Radebe had a divine calling.

A member of the Sotho people of South Africa, she was raised to be a sangoma — a traditional healer who communicates with ancestral spirits. After marrying and giving birth to two children, she began sangoma training.

During the training, she was troubled by bizarre dreams. Her teachers said that her ancestors were speaking to her.

When she completed the training, she killed a goat and drank its blood — a ritual thought to seal the bond between a sangoma and her ancestors. She later became ill, and doctors could not determine the cause. They released her to go to her home village to die.

As she languished, Radebe's sister, Malinge, read to her daily from the Bible. Her uncle made frequent visits and prayed to God for her health. She recovered.

"With a strength found in a growing relationship with the God of the Bible, she recalled how, with the encouragement and advice of her sister and uncle, she destroyed all her potions and paraphernalia," said missionary Jeff Kenée.

Kenée's brother, Patrick, oversees a ministry training and equipping program called Reaching and Teaching. Radebe is "a very active, evangelistic first-year student in our equipping program," he said.

Reaching and Teaching uses materials on evangelism from missionary Roger Dickson, International Bible Institute and World Bible School. The ministry feeds and cares for children orphaned by HIV/AIDS and oversees other benevolence programs. More than 140 people have been baptized so far this year through the ministry's work, Jeff Kenée said.

The Exchange Street Church of Christ in Union City, Tenn., supports the work. For more information, see www.fundiswe.org.



THE SUDAN PROJECT, WWW.SUDAN-PROJECT.ORG

Let's shake on it: Growing church in Sudan has a new home

Paul Otto, in cap and coveralls, shakes hands with members of the Church of Christ in Opari, a town in southern Sudan, on a piece of land that will become the church's home. Otto, the chief of Opari, offered nearly 142 acres

of land to the church. Members of The Sudan Project visited Opari recently as they scouted locations for a preaching school and kindergarten. For more information, see www.sudan-project.org.

BANGLADESH

KHULNA — A small group of Christians has reestablished the Kalishpur Church of Christ, said Mike Brooks, an Alabama minister who works with Christians in Bangladesh.

"A congregation of the Lord's church has met in the Khulna suburb of Kalishpur for more than a decade," said Brooks, minister for the Highland Park church in Muscle Shoals, Ala. "A few years ago, however, problems arose which led to its disbanding."

Barnard Biswas, who works with the Bangladesh Bible Correspondence School in Khulna, helped relaunch the church in a rented facility near his home. One year later, the church has several new members, including two couples who recently were baptized, Brooks said.

BENIN

AZOVE — Missionary George Akpabli and students from the Benin Bible Training Center work with congregations in the Azove area of western Benin. U.S. missionaries helped plant the congregations, Akpabli said.

"Several have ceased meeting," he said, "so the need (is) to revive them and also to strengthen those that are still active. Several of them are very strong and have good leadership."



Akpabli

Akpabli and the students hosted a gospel meeting in the village of Eglime, attended by 127 people.

CANADA

SAINT JOHN — A small congregation in the province of New Brunswick, northeast of Maine, sent 1,366 invitations to people who live near the community center where the church meets. The mail-out drew one visitor to the church for a fellowship meal. Members of the Moncton church in New Brunswick also attended.

INDIA

CHANDIGARH — "India continues to be the ripest field in the world for harvesting souls," said Russel G. Bell, an evangelist from Topeka, Kan., who makes regular trips to India. But evangelism is slower in northern India than in the country's south.

Nonetheless, about 70 preachers from a dozen Indian states attended a recent lectureship and graduation at the North India Bible College, an extension program of Bear Valley Bible Institute of Denver, Bell said. The McEwan, Tenn., church supports the work in Chandigarh.

THAILAND

BANGKOK — Anti-government protests have claimed at least 21 lives, stalled traffic, and closed schools in this Southeast Asian capital, said Kathryn Miller, who serves on a mission team with her husband, Andy.

The team ministers to Bangkok's massive student population.

Ramkhamhaeng University in Bangkok has an estimated student body of 600,000.

But many students have left the city for their homes due to the protests, Kathryn Miller said.

The team has talked with Thai Christians "about (how) our faith is not dependent on government, but on God," she said. "Also, with non-

Christians, we have been able to share our peace that only God can give."

ZAMBIA

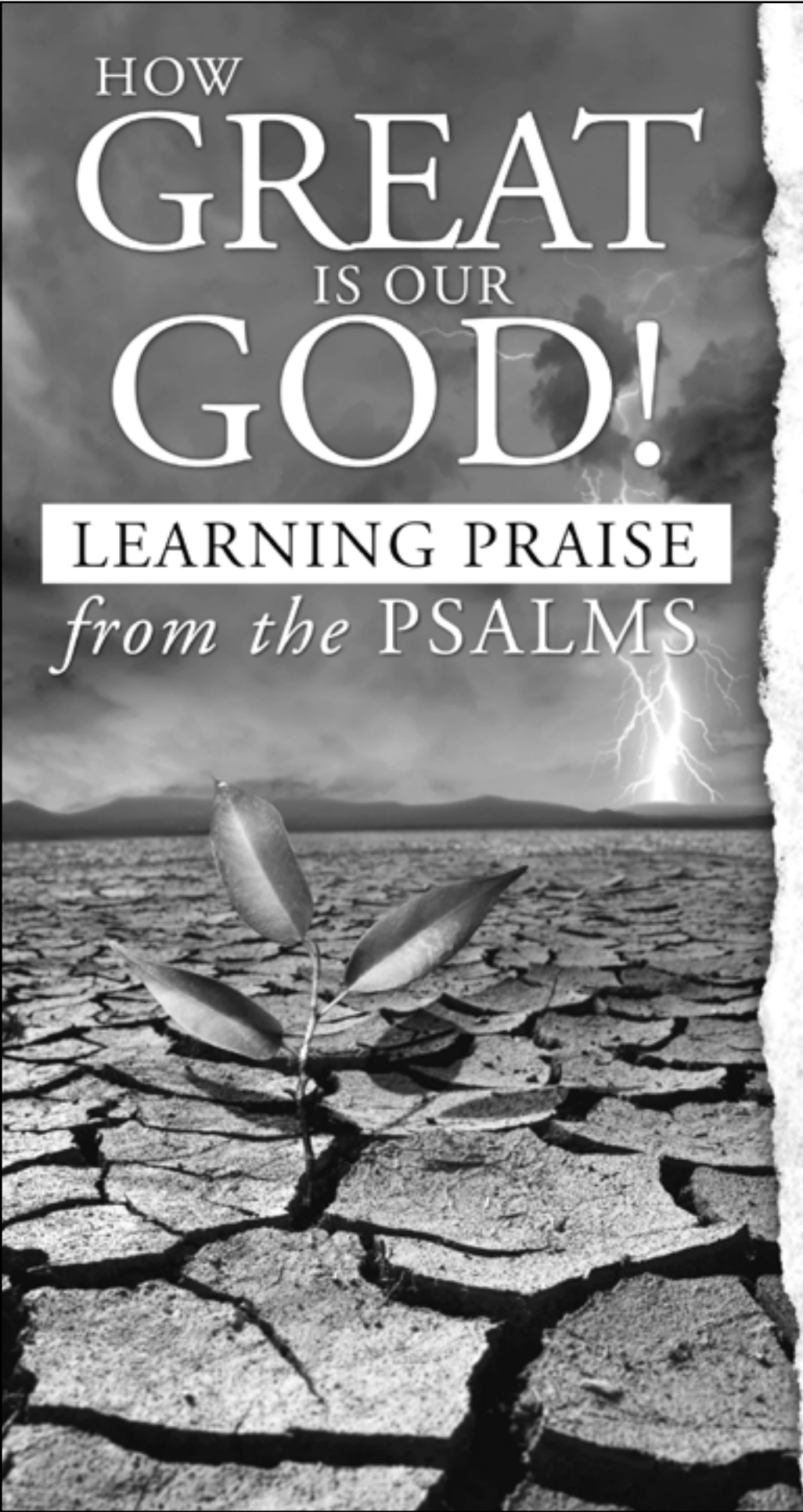
SIMALUNDU — This community in southern Africa was created in the late 1950s when the government moved the Tonga people from their native lands to construct a dam.

"They were torn from the fertile areas of the Gwembe Valley they had farmed for centuries and dropped into the barren, desolate area that is now called Simalundu," said missionary Linda Gregersen. Without government assistance programs, they struggled to survive. Today they have a medical clinic building but no people to staff it, Gregersen said.

Gregersen, Eleanor Hamby and Elizabeth Halale of Namwianga Mission traveled to Simalundu recently to help train teachers. Members of five Churches of Christ in the area attended. The workers plan to return with a medical mission team in July.



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PHOTO PROVIDED

Radio minister counsels, and baptizes, couples in Kenya

Morisho Mutupeke speaks during his daily radio program in Mombasa, Kenya. In addition to hosting the Bible-based program, Mutupeke, a Congolese refugee, does marriage counseling. Recently he counseled a couple that had been divorced for seven years. "They met me in the studio, and after counseling, they both forgave each other and hugged ... while crying, then agreed to stay together." Days later Mutupeke found the couple again waiting for him at the radio station — this time to be baptized. Louisiana-based World Radio Gospel Broadcasts sponsors the radio program.

Volcanic ash cloud stalls mission teams, but not Icelandic church

BY ERIK TRYGGESTAD | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

Ash spewing from a volcano on the island of Iceland canceled flights worldwide and left passengers stranded at points around the globe.

The cloud traveled south and west of Iceland's capital, Reykjavik.

"We can sometimes see the ash plume from the city's outskirts," said Sigridur Hilmarsdottir, a church member in Reykjavik. "But where the ash has fallen, things are bad. It has devastated many farmlands and affected seriously a small town lying in its path."

"You might say that Europe has been hit harder than us," Hilmarsdottir said, "because all flights are now in chaos."

The massive cloud drifted east of the Scandinavian island and floated across northern and central Europe, grounding flights at the continent's key hubs.

Members of a mission team from the U.S. bound for Volgograd, Russia, were stranded at points along the journey, including Madrid, Spain, and Zurich, Switzerland, said Eileen Emch, a missionary in Russia.

Lyle Asbill, pulpit minister for the

Grapevine, Texas, Church of Christ, experienced repeated delays as he tried to return from a mission trip to Ukraine.

"We trust our God and know he will get us home safe," Asbill wrote in a Facebook post. "Our prayers are with those who are waiting in uncomfortable airports and dealing with the crowds. We are still in our apartment, just waiting to leave."

The ash cloud also delayed mission trips that included plane changes in Europe. Church members traveling to and from nations including Uganda and India experienced delays, church members told *The Christian Chronicle*.

But the cloud did not keep U.S. Christians from worshipping with the tiny church in Reykjavik, which began in 2002. About five years ago, missionary Royce Sartain set up an interactive video-conferencing system that allows him to "join" the Icelandic Christians for Sunday worship from his home in Pennsylvania.

"Until this past year, I was preaching (in Iceland) on Sundays," Sartain said.

Now he teaches Bible classes using the system. Church members in Texas and Alabama rotate preaching duties for the Reykjavik church.

EARTHQUAKE RELIEF UPDATE

Ministries focus on refugees living in cities across Haiti

BY ERIK TRYGGESTAD | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

As Christians in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, continue to recover from the January earthquake that leveled their city, Churches of Christ are expanding relief efforts to assist refugees spread across the Caribbean nation.

The population of Gonaives, a small city about 106 miles north of the Haitian capital, has exploded, and refugees continue to arrive, said Gueston Pacius, a minister in Gonaives.

"Families are relocating and children are going to live with family members in other parts of the country," said Monica Gautney of Manna Global Ministries. The Indiana-based ministry works with a school in Lagosette, Haiti, that provides education and hot meals for more than 300 children.

Meanwhile, churches and ministries continue to distribute aid across Haiti:

- In a seven-day period, church members helped load and ship 291,500

pounds of food and relief supplies to Haiti, said John Kachelman, minister for the Judsonia, Ark., church. Haitian Christians

in Gonaives have loaded containers of food and transported it to displaced people who have received little aid thus far, Kachelman said.

- The Estes Church of Christ in Henderson, Tenn., restructured its annual spring break medical campaign to accommodate more patients, said church member Jesse Robertson. The Estes church supports Son Light Children's Home in the Santo neighborhood of Port-au-Prince. This year the medical team treated more than 2,000 patients.

- Abilene, Texas-based Global Samaritan Resources donated two water purification systems to Haiti and plans to install others near villages and orphanages in the Port-au-Prince area.

The units have the capability of purifying 25,000 gallons of water or more a per day. Global Samaritan plan to send

workers to Haiti to teach Haitians how to operate the purifiers — and to stress the need for clean water, said warehouse manager Gordon Dowell.

- Fort Worth, Texas-based Rapha International sent a 40-foot container with tents, a generator, medical supplies, exam tables, crutches, walkers and other items to Haiti. In the future the ministry plans to offer micro-loans and food preservation workshops to help Haitians become self-sufficient, said worker Marilyn Holland.

- Workers with Louisiana-based White's Ferry Road Relief Ministries

are giving food to refugees in Cap Haitien in northern Haiti. "Each time we start a food giveaway, we end up stopping when the crowd gets to unruly," said relief worker Dave Heath. "There are a lot of hungry people here."

- Church members from the Jamaica School of Preaching and Biblical Studies traveled to Haiti. The team coordinated its efforts through Jacques Phanor and Ivio Rosier, graduates of the school who work with Haitians living on the islands of



WFR RELIEF MINISTRIES

A child in a Cap Haitien, Haiti, hospital receives a bottle of juice from White's Ferry Road Relief Ministries.

Turks and Caicos.

The group visited congregations in rural northern Haiti and gave assistance to church members housing refugees in their homes.

They also traveled to Port-au-Prince and visited church members clearing away rubble from the Delmas 28 Church of Christ, which collapsed during the quake.

Churches in Jamaica have endured devastating hurricanes, said Gladwyn Kiddoe, director of the Jamaica school.

"The Lord and his people have rebuilt destroyed buildings in Jamaica," Kiddoe told the Delmas church members. "The same will happen in Haiti."

TO CONTRIBUTE TO HAITI RELIEF, see a list of ministries and churches accepting aid at www.christianchronicle.org



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This is a 12-month position. The candidate selected must be available to assume the duties of the position for the Fall of 2010. This position is funded. Applications will be accepted until the position is filled. The review of applications will begin immediately.

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COEXIST: Conflicts in Africa have religious, ethnic and economic roots

FROM PAGE 1

from more than 25,000 face-to-face interviews conducted in 19 countries of sub-Saharan Africa.

The majority of respondents said they see freedom of religion as a good thing. Christians and Muslims said they hold favorable views of each other and consider each other tolerant, honest and respectful of women.

Linda Benskin saw evidence of this when she served as a missionary in the predominantly Muslim city of Yendi, Ghana.

"The Islamic old men expressed gratitude when I, a Christian woman, prayed for them as part of their medical treatment," Benskin said.

Several Muslims apologized to Benskin and her husband, Richard, for the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, "saying they were ashamed that it was done in the name of their religion," she said.

ARE MUSLIMS VIOLENT?

While most Africans support religious tolerance, the study also found evidence of tension between the continent's two predominant faiths.

On the average, 40 percent of Christians surveyed said they think of Muslims as violent. About 20 percent of Muslims said the same of Christians.

Nigeria, Africa's most populous country, has been a flash point for conflicts between groups claiming Islam and Christianity as their faiths. Francisca

Ike, a Church of Christ member in Orlu, Nigeria, described Islam as "a religion of hate" and said she has a hard time trusting her Muslim neighbors.

Missionary Ron Pottberg said he saw evidence of anti-Christian violence during a recent trip to Nigeria's largest city, Lagos, where Churches of Christ have converted many Muslims.

One Sunday Pottberg

witnessed the baptism of a young Nigerian — whom a group of Muslims nearly killed two days later.

"They beat him, kicked him and almost cut off his left ear," Pottberg said of the Muslims.

"I don't care what anyone writes or says," he added, "They are not tolerant and, in the end, they will not be peaceful."

CONFLICT: RELIGIOUS, ETHNIC?

In Nigeria, 58 percent of the respondents to the Pew study said they see religious conflict as a very big problem. In Rwanda, the same percentage agreed.

But most Africans said such conflicts are modest compared to issues including unemployment, crime and corruption.

Though the degree of concern about religious conflict varied from country to country, it tracked closely with the degree of concern about ethnic conflict, according to the study.

In Africa, conflicts often contain elements of religion, tribalism and economics, said missionary Steve Worley, who works with the School of

Biblical Studies in Jos, Nigeria.

In recent months Jos, a city at the crossroads of Nigeria's predominantly Muslim north and Christian south, has been an epicenter of violence. Hundreds have died, including Theodore Essemu Ebulla, a student at the School of Biblical Studies, who was massacred

by machete-wielding rioters.

"There has been no shortage of frames for the perennial orgy of bloodletting in Jos," Worley said. "Some have framed it as a religious conflict, primarily between Muslim and Christians. Others have framed it as an ethnic conflict. ... Still others have framed it in economic terms as a conflict between farmers and pastoralists (ranchers)."

'In fact, to a big extent, religious groups are becoming the new tribal identities in Uganda as the old ways are dying off.'

Grace Nyanga
Minister in Jinja, Uganda



ERIK TRYGGESTAD

Idrissa Kabore, left, a Muslim, thanks Church of Christ member Tapsoba Mathurin for his work in establishing a 20-member co-op garden in Burkina Faso. Co-op members grow vegetables to eat and sell at a roadside stand.

In Uganda, tribal identities often are closely linked to religion, said Grace Nyanga, who works with Churches of Christ in the Ugandan city of Jinja.

"In fact, to a big extent, religious groups are becoming the new tribal identities in Uganda as the old ways are dying off," Nyanga said. Some "holy wars" are simply old tribal conflicts, repackaged for a new era.

Politicians often use "religion, ethnicity and anything else" to fuel conflicts, said Arthur David, a minister in Liberia, a nation that endured 14 years of civil war. "Religion is used as a cover-up to get others to blindly support their campaign," he said.

When Africans commit atrocities in defense of their faith, they are "actually fighting for a hidden motive unknown to the majority of them," David said.

PEACE-BUILDERS NEEDED

The Pew study did not include respondents from Sudan, where a conflict between the Muslim north and Christian south raged for nearly two decades.

Peter Lasu Ladu, minister for the Juba Church of Christ in

southern Sudan, said religion was a major factor in his country's war. But Christians should be willing to foster healing in communities divided by conflict, regardless of the source of the conflict, he said.

"The Church of Christ can help these communities through peace-building initiatives and conflict mitigation — for example, training, workshops, seminars and rallies," Ladu said.



David

Peace-building is one outcome of the workshops sponsored by Healing Hands International, said David Goolsby, the ministry's agricultural director.

In 2008 the Wulari-Jerusalem Church of Christ in the northern Nigerian city of Maiduguri hosted a food preservation workshop, attended by Muslims and Christians.

"Muslims saw that Christians also desire to better feed their families," Goolsby said. "Christians saw that not all Muslims are terrorists."

The next year, gangs of radical Muslims swept through Maiduguri, burning churches and killing pastors. But the local Muslims protected the church members from the gangs, Goolsby said.

SOWING SEEDS OF LOVE

When Mathurin left his home in Burkina Faso for the workshop in Senegal, he didn't know anything about drip irrigation — or any kind of gardening. He thought he was attending a conference on evangelism.

In a way, he was.

When a small group of U.S. Christians visited the co-op in Kokologho, Muslims and Christians gathered to show off their crops and thank Mathurin.

"In spite of the difficulties, he is still humble and courageous," Raymond Kiettyetta, head of the co-op, said of the church member.

Idrissa Kabore, a Muslim leader in the village, told the visitors that God had used Mathurin to bless the community.

"Thank you for showing God's true love," Kabore said.

In Africa's 'power environment,' demon possession, healings are common beliefs

BY ERIK TRYGGESTAD | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

Isaac Daye remembers watching the young woman writhe in agony.

"She's jerking. She's shaking. She's moving. ... I had to hold her head," said Daye, an African missionary in Gambia, a tiny nation in West Africa where most people profess Islam as their faith.

The woman's parents, both Muslim, had taken their daughter to traditional healers, but to no avail. Desperate, they brought her to the Church of Christ minister and asked him to pray for her.

For Daye, the woman's convulsions weren't as scary as what happened next. She went limp and collapsed on his office floor.

Silently, the minister pleaded with God.

"Father, would you allow her to die here in my house? That would be a disgrace. ... I beg you at least, Father, just let her get up and go home!"

After another round of convulsions, the woman sat up and asked for a glass of water. Daye brought her two — and recommended that she seek medical treatment.

Coping with demon possession is part of the job for Daye and many of his fellow ministers. A recent study by the Pew Forum on Religion and Public life shows that many Africans — even those who consider themselves Christian or Muslim — experience their faith in an intense, personal way.

In several countries, 3 in 10 respondents said they have experienced a divine healing, witnessed the devil being driven out of a person or received a direct revelation from God, according to the study. On the average, more than 60 percent of professed Christians believe Jesus will return during their lifetime.

"Most Africans tend to be 'today' thinkers," said Shawn Tyler, an American who has worked for nearly 30 years in East Africa and currently helps equip churches in Uganda. "Additionally, Africans with animistic roots tend to see themselves as capable of solving personal problems through the use of witchcraft or a powerful God."

In Mozambique, some Muslim imams sell magical services for those seeking luck or blessings, said missionary Alan



Daye

Howell. "A common practice here is to write down verses from the Quran, put them in water and then drink that water to receive a blessing," Howell said.

Divine healing and exorcism are characteristic of traditional African religions. They're also common among Africa's charismatic Christian groups, including Pentecostal churches.

Churches of Christ have grown substantially in Africa in the past century. The continent now has more than 1 million members and has surpassed the U.S. in number of congregations.

But that growth pales in comparison to Pentecostalism. About a quarter of all Christians in four sub-Saharan countries — Ethiopia, Ghana, Liberia and Nigeria — belong to Pentecostal denominations, as do at least 1 in 10 Christians in eight other countries, according to the Pew study.

Several Church of Christ ministers in Africa told *The Christian Chronicle* that they've lost members to charismatic churches. Willie Gley, a missionary in Ghana and Togo, said some Africans attend Churches of Christ on Sunday mornings and go to Pentecostal services for divine healing on Friday nights.

In the Central African Republic, some Christian denominations preach a gospel of prosperity, claiming a life of faith leads to earthly riches, said Worlanyo Bor, a Ghanaian missionary in the nation's capital, Bangui. Education, through correspondence courses, radio programs and ministry training schools, is vital to save Africans from exploitation, he said.

Ministers and missionaries also must engage Africa's traditional beliefs, Howell said.

"Appreciating the animistic understanding of the powers should radically shape how we evangelize as a church," he said. "When I teach about the cross, I talk about how Jesus has defeated the powers of sin, death and Satan and that we don't need to live under the fear of witchcraft and demon possession anymore."

Africa "is a power environment," Daye said. "Everybody is looking for some power. So how can you take a powerless religion to the African man and expect him to believe in it?"

"In terms of me possessing apostolic miraculous power, I don't have the ability," the minister added. "But I believe in a God who has miraculous power ... who, at his own will, can decide to do anything."

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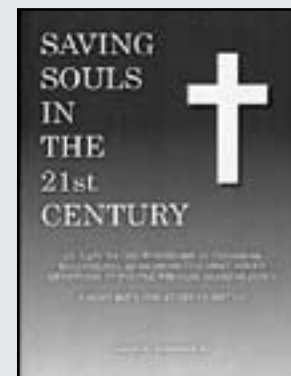
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PHOTO PROVIDED BY MICHELLE ROBERTS

The recently laid cornerstone for Clarksville Christian School in Tennessee.

Some Christian schools thriving despite recession

BY BOBBY ROSS JR. | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

Tennessee is Church of Christ country, with roughly 170,000 men, women and children in the pews each Sunday.

Could that explain why Christian schools there — including Columbia Academy, Clarksville Christian School and Jackson Christian School — seem to be thriving while others struggle?

"It is true that the Church of Christ is historically strong in our area, but we also face very stiff local competition," said Rick Brooks, president of Jackson Christian School.

For the second straight year, Jackson Christian enrolled more than 1,000 students this past fall, Brooks said.

"Despite the economic challenges many families are facing, folks still place a high value on quality academics and a Christian environment," Brooks said.

Clarksville Christian School opened in 2007 at the Hilddale Church of Christ in Clarksville, near Fort Campbell, Ky. In three years, it has almost tripled in size to 150 students.

South of Nashville, Columbia Academy has announced plans to open a satellite campus in the fast-growing community of Spring Hill.

A one-time training center for General Motors employees will house the new school, which will serve kindergarten through sixth grade, Columbia Academy President James Thomas said.

"We know there are many ... that have not chosen Christian education for their children because of the logistics of coming to and from Columbia daily," Thomas said. "We are excited to be able to remedy that situation."

SCHOOLS: Economy contributes to enrollment declines

FROM PAGE 1

Hughson Christian School in California's Central Valley is among those struggling to survive.

"We ran out of money in December and could not pay a teacher ... until after the first of the year," said Don Bigelow, principal of the 36-student school, started in 1978 at the Hughson Church of Christ.

After prayers and pleas, donations poured in, he said. "We are going to make it this year. It is still going to be tight."

At the Christian Academy of St. Louis, enrollment has dropped to 140 in kindergarten through 12th grade, down from 200 a few years ago, administrator Carla Payne said. The school opened in 1976.

"Sometimes, families are forced to choose between everyday survival and a Christian education for their child," Payne said.

At Anderson Christian School in Anderson, Ind., enrollment hit 300 less than a decade ago. It has fallen to around 200 as the central Indiana community deals with the loss of 20,000 General Motors manufacturing jobs, school administrator Tom Snell said.

Yet the school, housed at the Lindberg Road Church of Christ for 34 years, added the ninth grade this past fall and plans to expand to remaining grades in future years. "Anderson Christian School is holding its own and even making small gains," Snell said.

But he added, "Our existence as a school is somewhat fragile since we have no endowment to tide us over if there were a sudden downturn that caused us to lose significant numbers of students."

N.C. SCHOOL LED TO CONVERSIONS

At Providence Christian School, enrollment in prekindergarten through eighth grade dropped to 173 this school year, down from 250. Only half of current K-8 families committed to return next year, and the church faced a potential three-year deficit of \$1 million to keep the school afloat, Thrasher said.

"Less than 10 percent of our (students') families attend area Churches of Christ," Thrasher said. "We have seen numerous families over the years become Christians as a direct result of this outreach ministry of our church."

Providence's school head, Jack Exum, has accepted a new position leading Hickory Valley Christian School in Chattanooga, Tenn., which he said is in a stronger financial position.

"We must help parents see the value



PHOTOS BY BOBBY ROSS JR.

Aletheia Christian School students play in the sand. The Newark, Del., school is closing in June.



Richard Duzan, left, and Steve Mahoney stand by the school sign at the Newark, Del., church.

of a Christian education that is distinctly Christian and is safe and academically strong," Exum said.

THE FINAL STRAW IN DELAWARE

In Newark, roughly halfway between Baltimore and Philadelphia, enrollment reached 225 in Aletheia Christian's heyday.

But a combination of factors conspired against the school, from the growth of homeschooling to the nearby opening of a large Catholic school and a free public charter school.

This year, Aletheia's enrollment fell to 80, forcing the consolidation of grades and creating a six-figure deficit for the church.

"With the economy a big factor ... on top of all those other things, that was just kind of the final straw," Duzan said.

As the school year wraps up, the 250-member congregation is giving extra to help erase the debt and thanking God for the blessings Aletheia Christian has brought, minister Steve Mahoney said.

Church leaders are determining future uses for the building and focusing on other ministries, such as the congregation's Blue

Hens for Christ outreach at the University of Delaware, Mahoney said.

For Duzan, a Texas native who came to Newark in 1967, the closing is bitter-sweet. The Abilene Christian University graduate was part of a much-heralded effort by Churches of Christ in the 1960s to evangelize cities in the Northeast. The Exodus Movement involved Christians in the South and Southwest moving to places such as Newark.

Duzan accepted his elementary education degree one day and married his bride, Andrea, the next. For their honeymoon, they pulled a U-Haul trailer 1,600 miles to Delaware. He taught public school for a few years before Aletheia Christian became his life's work.

Most of his five children and 15 grandchildren live within an hour of Newark, so he has no intention of moving.

"Everybody knows that there is no choice," he said of the school's closing.

"I look back and feel like the Lord led me here. ... And I feel like we've had the opportunity to teach the Bible and affect a lot of lives for Christ."

At age 23, Janice Douglass left her home congregation — the Biddeford Church of Christ in Maine — and came to teach at Aletheia Christian in 1982.

Twenty-eight years later, she's still here.

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



Douglass

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Teachers, parents, education coordinators, deacons, elders, ministers and others are cordially invited to attend. Opportunities will be made for participants to network and share ideas that work. More agenda details and registration information will be available at www.brooks.org

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This individual will assist the Dean of the College of Biblical Studies in the planning, directing, and monitoring of the operation of the College. The Assistant Dean of Biblical Studies will also teach a course load as assigned by the Dean. Candidates must have an earned doctorate from a regionally accredited institution and a significant record of teaching, research and scholarly achievement. Administrative experience desired. The start date for this position is August 1, 2010.

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Busy doing the Lord's work

MARSHALL KEEBLE'S TENT REVIVALS *launched Houston's oldest black church, still thriving after 80 years.*

BY BOBBY ROSS JR. | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

HOUSTON
The Fifth Ward Church of Christ lets its light shine — in a big way.

East of downtown, the city's oldest black church sits just off heavily traveled Interstate 10 in view of high-rises and Minute Maid Park, home of baseball's Astros.

With five elders and 30 deacons, the congregation of 800 to 1,000 on any given Sunday believes in staying busy.

"If I'm busy, I don't have a whole lot of time for foolishness," said pulpit minister Gary Smith, a Houston native who played football at Southern Methodist University alongside former NFL star Eric Dickerson.

Smith, whose family has attended Fifth Ward for 40 years, joined the church staff as youth minister 20 years ago.

Working with Thomas Foster, Fifth Ward's former longtime preacher, Smith developed a favorite saying: "I don't want anything to take my joy away

from working for the Lord."

Fifth Ward members express that joy through 40 active ministries, from evangelism, missions and children's Bible hour to home repair, legal advice and healthy cooking.

One member, David Butler, started a YouTube ministry via a weekly video posted on the church website.

To accommodate future

growth, the church is renovating its main building. In the

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

Gary Smith
Minister, Fifth Ward church

meantime, members assemble under basketball goals in the family life center.

"Fifth Ward is a vibrant work that attracts members from all over Houston," said Frank Devine, an elder at the Memorial Church of Christ, a predominantly white church that conducts twice-

CONTINUED



Fifth Ward Church of Christ, Houston

LOCATION: East of downtown Houston, just off Interstate 10.

WEBSITE: fifthwardcoc.info.

PEOPLE: Sunday attendance ranges between 800 and 1,000.

MINISTERS: Pulpit minister Gary Smith, youth minister Dennis Murphy and Hispanic minister Gerbi Arguera.

ELDERS: Robert Adams Sr., Herman Brown, Leonard Patterson, Bencil Smith and Andrew Washington.

MINISTRIES: Benevolence and homeless. Bus. Calling/delinquents. Church historian. Critical needs. College. Couples. Education. Employment. Evangelism. Facility management. Family life center. Fellowship. Finance. Health, wellness and first aid. Healthy cooking. Hispanic outreach. Home cleaning. Home repair and new construction. Hospital and nursing home visitation. Information and technology. Legal advice. Missions. New member orientation. Photography. Prison. Security. Senior members. Singles. Sisters. Sound and reproduction. Transportation. Tutoring. Video/television/radio. Website. YouTube. Young adult men. Youth ministry/children's Bible hour. Zone shepherding.

SCRIPTURE: "As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another as good stewards of the manifest grace of God." (1 Peter 4:10)



PHOTOS BY TAMIE ROSS

Ginger Ross, left, holds Anopawuia Spinks' hand as the Fifth Ward church prays. Also pictured are Spinks' grandchildren Noimi and Zakari.

'We have people getting baptized. And we've saved about eight brothers with prostate cancer that didn't know they had it — just from this church.'

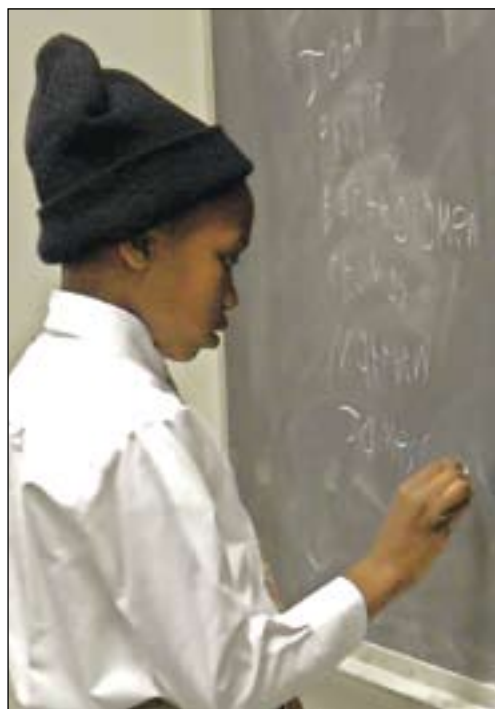
— **Leroy Mobley**, deacon, discussing the spiritual and physical blessings of the church's health-and-wellness fair.



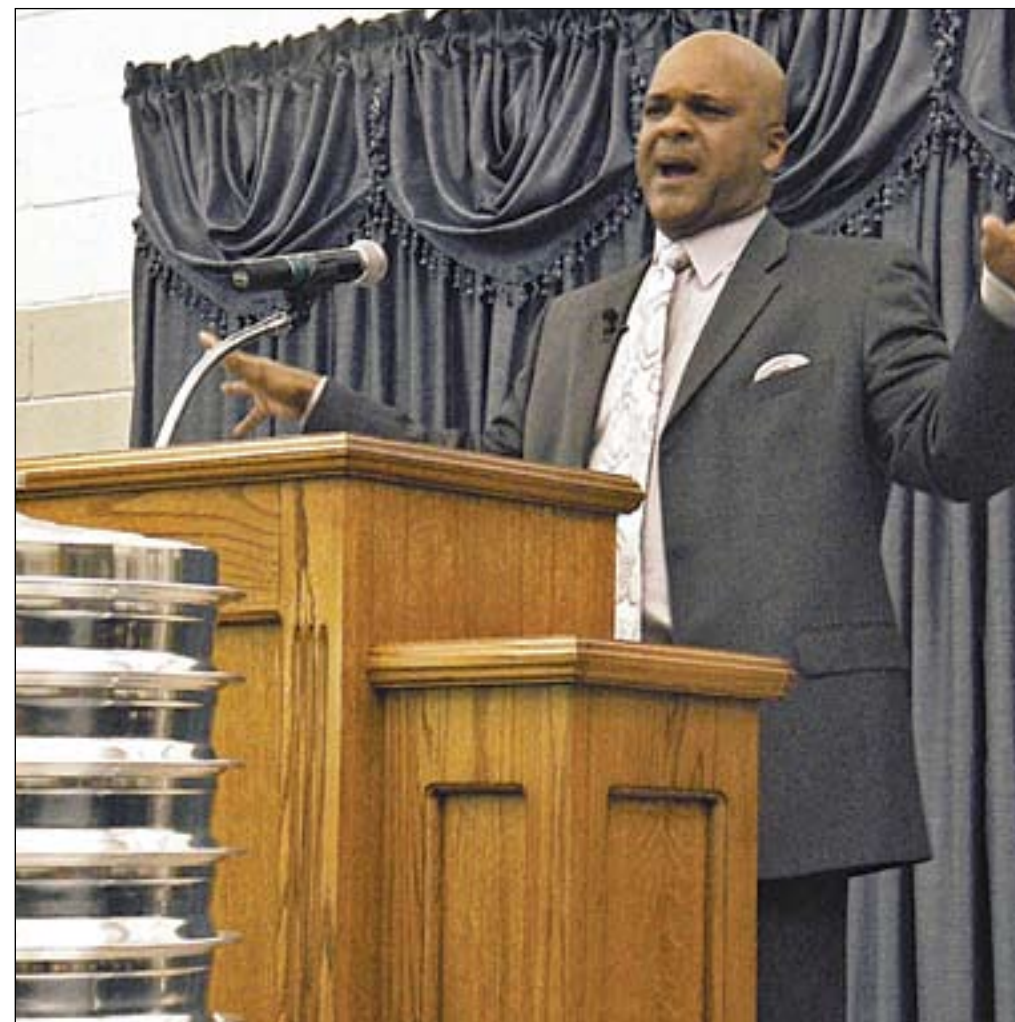
Cassandra Carmouche, right, prepares a DVD of the service, as Vertia Deal watches.



Connie O'Neal, husband Ron O'Neal and Ricky Johnson, from left, enjoy a Sunday morning Bible class discussion addressing financial conflicts that all families face.



A boy writes the names of Old Testament kings on the chalkboard during a Sunday class.



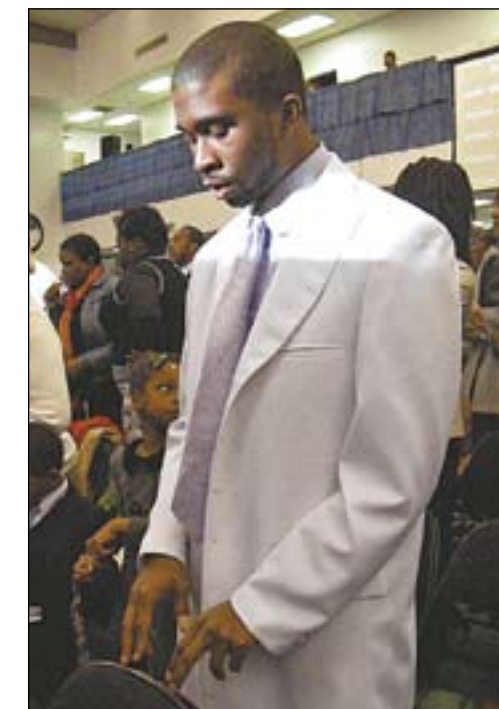
Minister Gary Smith preaches on Sunday morning. Smith first came to the Fifth Ward church at age 9 with his mother, Odell. His father, Bencil, was converted and has served as an elder since 1975.

'I'm in Zone 11. So what the sisters do in Zone 11, we get together ... for a prayer breakfast.'

— **Sheila Crosby**, member, on the church's support network.



Nicole Anderson participates in the Sunday morning offering at Fifth Ward.



Timothy Matthews bows in prayer during the Sunday morning worship assembly.

From gospel meetings to health fairs, Fifth Ward church members endeavor to share Jesus

CONTINUED

annual joint Sunday night services with Fifth Ward. "The elders and the pulpit minister work side by side to stay doctrinally strong while encouraging an excited and motivated congregation. ... They have cultivated a definite feeling of family at Fifth Ward that is obvious to those who visit."

As the congregation sang "Softly and Tenderly" on a recent Sunday, 10 men and women came up front. An elder greeted them and, one by one, put the microphone to their lips. Some sought prayers for loved ones in the hospital. Others confessed sins and asked for forgiveness. "I just want y'all to pray that I'll put God first," one young man said.

Behind the wheel of a church van, Smith showed a visitor the neighborhoods — aging, poor, beaten down by crime — that surround the church.

At a low-income apartment complex near the church, calm and quiet prevailed on a Saturday morning. But at night, this would not

be the best place to venture, the minister said. "One of the things that being in a community like this does provide," Smith said, "is a lot of opportunity for ministry."

Once all black, neighborhoods near the church reflect an increasingly Hispanic makeup. Members of a nearby Spanish-speaking Church of Christ began meeting at



A Spanish-speaking church member leads the Hispanic Bible class on Sunday morning.

Fifth Ward in 2008 after they lost their building. Gerbi Arguera serves as Fifth Ward's part-time Hispanic minister.

"We're really trying to incorporate our Spanish-speaking church into our regular service," Smith said. "We meet together every fifth Sunday ... and do a bilingual service."

While it has only a handful of white members, Fifth Ward's part-time youth minister — Dennis Murphy — is white. "Dennis is an extra-special guy," said Smith, voicing his desire for Fifth Ward to be the kind of church that God desires — racially and otherwise.

The Fifth Ward church traces its roots to a series of 1930s tent revivals by the late Marshall Keeble, the influential African-American minister who baptized thousands. Nearly 80 years later, the church still sees the value of holding regular Gospel meetings and inviting neighbors to attend, Smith said.

But the minister said he came to the realization about five years ago that changing

times require new approaches to evangelism.

That led to the idea of a Saturday open house at the church. Bible skits and displays featuring the church's ministries were highlighted. Free school supplies and clothing were given away. The first year, more than 2,000 people came.

"Then we invited them to come back Sunday, the next day, to worship, and we had more visitors on that day than we'd ever had before," Smith said.

From those 200 visitors, he said, two entire families were baptized. Five more families were baptized after the next open house.

The idea stuck — and grew. Two to three times a year, members don special T-shirts and canvass a three-mile radius around the church.

They invite the community to special events such as a church-sponsored health-and-well-



Mobley

ness fair with free prostate exams, diabetes screening and blood pressure checks.

The first year, the health fair drew 1,000 people. That has grown to about 3,500, said deacon Leroy Mobley, a personal trainer who coordinates the health and wellness ministry.

"We have people getting baptized," said Mobley, who also leads a Saturday morning exercise class for members in the family life center. "And we've saved about eight brothers with prostate cancer that didn't know they had it — just from this church."

Mobley also remains active with Fifth Ward's benevolence and homeless ministry, which provides a hot meal on Wednesday and sack lunches throughout the week.

Mobley, 51, aspires to serve as an elder. "I always try to live that example," he said. "I've had enough bad examples in my life as an African-American, so if I see other men that can do it, I can do it."

Among the church's more well-known members are Astros center fielder Michael

Bourn, the team's 2009 Most Valuable Player, and DeMeco Ryans, a star middle linebacker for the Texans, Houston's NFL team.

Last year, Ryans and two other Texans — Andre Johnson and Dunta Robinson — partnered with H-E-B stores to donate 1,000 Thanksgiving dinners at the church.

"It's even more special to be able to come



Fred and Olivia Franklin are among the church's longest-married couples.

back to this church, this community," said Ryans, who frequently attends Sunday evening services when the NFL team has an early game. "To see faces that I know, familiar faces, and see the smiles ... it's a real special feeling."

Like roughly three-fourths of members, Sheila Crosby commutes to worship at Fifth Ward. The divorced mother of two drives about 25 miles each way from the suburb of Katy. A member since 1993, she describes the church as a close-knit family. That, she said, makes the drive worth it.

"I'm in Zone 11," Crosby said, referring to geographic shepherding zones. "So what the sisters do in Zone 11, we get together every third Saturday for a prayer breakfast."

Recently, a burglar broke into Crosby's apartment and stole her laptop, television, jewelry and other belongings.

Distraught, she called Smith and the elders. "They gave me a check," she said. "That's the type of love and support."

ABOUT THE SERIES

The Christian Chronicle launched Churches That Work in 2005. The staff consulted the Faith Communities Today (FaCT) study, an examination of the character and vitality of religious congregations in the United States.

Churches That Work should be: **evangelistic**, reaching the unchurched at home or abroad; **biblical**, making Bible instruction central to their mission; **united**, possessing a spirit of internal vitality; and **visible**, known and appreciated for service in their community. Read the series at www.christianchronicle.org:

- 2005: Highland church, Memphis, Tenn. Metro church, Gresham, Ore. Fairfax, Va., church.
- 2006: Southern Hills church, Dallas. Northern Hills church, Spearfish, S.D.
- 2007: Cordova church, Rancho Cordova, Calif. Orange Avenue church, Eustis, Fla. Canyon church, Anthem, Ariz.
- 2008: Anchorage, Alaska, church. Lynn Street church, Parkersburg, W.Va. White's Ferry Road church, West Monroe, La.
- 2009: Dalton Gardens church, Coeur d'Alene, Idaho. Pitman church, Sewell, N.J.
- 2010: Northwest church, Chicago.



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- Reg Cox
- Charlton Taylor
- Rick Atchley
- Andy Wall
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Special Guests

- Kimberly Rivers Roberts
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ABILENE
CHRISTIAN
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BY LYNN McMILLON | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

James O. Maxwell and David L. Lane have spent the majority of their lives behind the pulpit. Combined, they have more than 50 years of experience training preachers. Both have written books and articles on preaching and theology.

Both believe that mentoring is an essential part of the ministry-training process. Lane counts Maxwell among his own mentors at Southwestern Christian College. Maxwell serves as vice president of institutional expansion at the 230-student, historically black college in Terrell, Texas.

Maxwell earned a Doctor of Ministry from Southern Methodist University and is minister emeritus of outreach and development for the Roswell Avenue Church of Christ in Kansas City, Kan. He and his wife, Betty, have three children and five grandchildren.

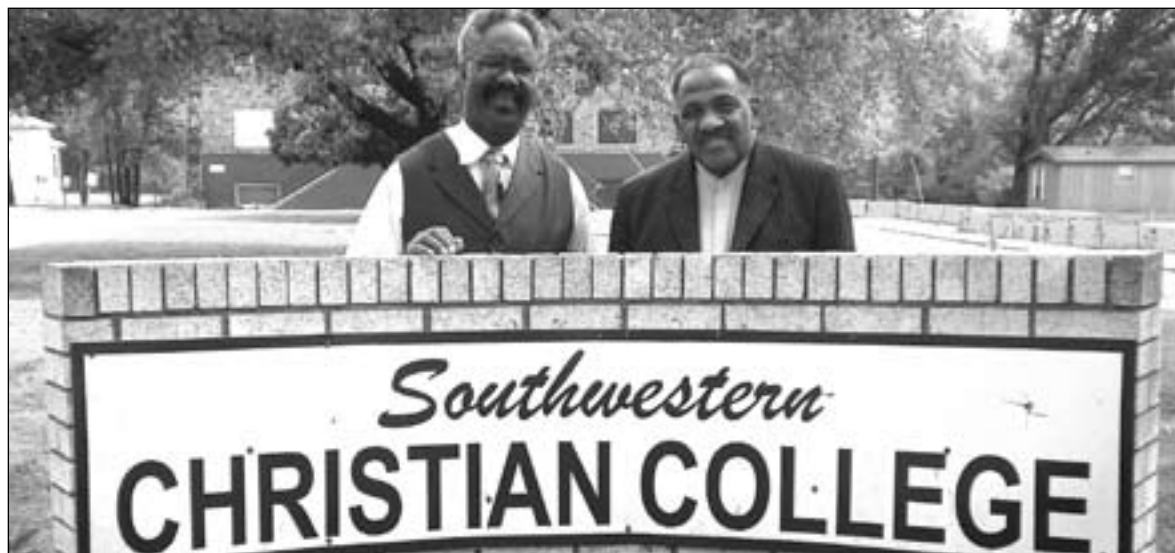
Lane ministers for the Marsalis Avenue Church of Christ in Dallas. He has a Doctorate of Philosophy in Clinical Theology from Aspen University. He and his wife, Stephanie, conduct marriage enrichment conferences. They have three children and two grandchildren.

How did you receive your preacher training?

Lane: As a child, my grandmother taught me how to pray, walk by faith, seek intimacy with God, the filling of the Holy Spirit and how to exegete Scripture. As a result, I started preaching at age 12.

I was serving as the minister of a congregation while a junior in high school. That is when I met my preaching mentor, Eugene Lawton. During my freshman year at Southwestern Christian College, James Maxwell became another mentor. These men have impacted my ministry the most. What they and my grandmother poured into my ministry ignited the passion to train ministers as my life's mission.

Maxwell: I was inspired to



MAURICE PARKER

David Lane and James Maxwell stand on the campus of Southwestern Christian College in Terrell, Texas.

A conversation with David Lane and James Maxwell

LONGTIME PREACHERS, AUTHORS AND EDUCATORS discuss ministry training for African-American churches.

preach when I attended Southwestern and witnessed students preaching at such an early age. Before this time, I believed that preachers had to be “perfect,” but when I saw that many of those students’ deportment was not as good as mine, I was convinced that I could preach.

I also was influenced by R.N. Hogan’s great preaching ability and J.S. Winston’s skill in the development of the local church, including conflict resolution. For more than 20 years, I assisted him in conflict resolution in Churches of Christ.

Is there an adequate supply of preachers for African-American churches?

Maxwell: There is not an adequate number of preachers with formal training and experience to deal with the complexities of a church with more than 150 members. A great number of “self-made” and congregationally trained ministers are not equipped to be pulpit ministers for larger churches, though there are exceptions.

What are the main means for producing preachers for African-American churches?

Maxwell: The main sources are the local congregation and Southwestern Christian College. Many of Southwestern’s graduates have honed their skills by continuing their education at Abilene Christian University, Oklahoma Christian University and Harding University. Some have continued their training at schools of preaching.

Describe the mentoring process for African-American preachers.

Lane: Most ministers are taught, trained and ordained by a seasoned minister and are sent out with either a letter of recommendation or an ordination certificate from the local congregation into the world to serve in ministry.

Usually the mentor maintains a very close and personal relationship with the mentee for the duration of his ministry. The mentor serves as a resource person during the points of crisis

in ministry, a sounding board for doctrinal or personal challenges as well as the encourager during bouts with discouragement.

The mentee is expected to do the same for another younger minister. His ministry to him should include helping him understand the philosophy of ministry, preparation and delivery of sermons, ministry expectations, setting up ministry committees, the art of church administration, project management, as well as the training and ordination of elders and deacons.

What challenges face African-American preachers today?

Maxwell: Adequate financial support, including retirement, is a major challenge for preachers. Because of this, an estimated two-thirds of these preachers need additional jobs to make up for this lack of financial support.

A second challenge is ministering to a church without elders, deacons or a desire for scriptural leadership.

A third challenge is churches that need assistant ministers,

youth and family ministers, education ministers and outreach ministers — and to compensate them appropriately.

Finally, there is always the challenge of burnout because ministers have carried so many roles for too long.

What is the typical relationship in an African-American church between the preacher, elders (if they have elders) and members?

Lane: Leaders in our congregations tend to operate as either servant leaders or authoritarian leaders. We must avoid the extremes of authoritarian elders and authoritarian ministers.

Elders and ministers are to be servants and leaders — not bosses. Problems occur for most congregations when ministers and elders fight over position instead of focusing on function. Christ and his word is the authority in the church, and because he has all the power there is none left for the minister or the elders.

When the elder performs his role as shepherd and the evangelist performs his role as minister, the congregation operates in an environment of growth and good health.

What expectations do African-American churches have of their preachers?

Lane: Ministers are expected to not only serve as preacher, teacher, trainer, but also as an administrator, setting in order things that are wanting. His skill set must include all four areas if he is to be successful.

One’s approach to ministry depends largely on how he and his mentor interpret Paul’s statement to Titus to “set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders,” on Crete (Titus 1:5, King James Version).

Many interpret “setting the church in order” as ordaining elders only. But if that were true, ordaining elders would have set the church in order.

Instead, Paul says “and,” suggesting that they are two different responsibilities.



247 individuals • 145 congregations • \$478,000 contributed

ALL FOR ONE PURPOSE

In Haiti, there is a proverb, "Men anpil, chay pa lou." Translated, it reads, "With many hands, the load is not heavy." To those who have contributed to the Haiti Disaster Relief fund sponsored by the Southwest Church of Christ in Ada, Okla., *we say thank you.* And so do thousands more. With many hands, we'll continue to help hundreds of families heal, rebuild and grow.

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Sociology

The Department of Sociology and Family Studies invites applications for a tenure-track position in Sociology or a closely related field (e.g., criminal justice). Applicants at all levels of instructional rank will be considered; a terminal degree or ABD status is preferred. Responsibilities include teaching general undergraduate sociology courses, pursuing scholarly research, and performing service for the department and the university community.

In a letter, 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. ACU is affiliated with the fellowship of the Churches of Christ. All applicants must be professing Christians and be active, faithful members of a congregation of the Churches of Christ and deeply committed to service in Christian higher education. The mission of ACU is to educate students for Christian service and leadership throughout the world. ACU does not unlawfully discriminate in employment opportunities.

Freed-Hardeman University Faculty Position Available 2010

Freed-Hardeman University, a private, liberal arts Christian university offering undergraduate and graduate programs, is inviting applicants for the following position:

Director of Nursing Position Available

Department of Nursing invites applications for the *Director of Nursing* position. The Director of Nursing serves as the chief nurse administrator for Freed-Hardeman University. This position is responsible for leading and managing the nursing department and nursing education unit according to the policies and procedures of the School of Sciences and Mathematics and the University. Responsibilities include, but are not limited to, assessing program quality and effectiveness, achieving program accreditation, hiring and training faculty, implementing departmental plan for student recruitment, scheduling classes, preparing and managing the budget, and mentoring, monitoring and evaluating performance of faculty and staff. Ph.D. or other equivalent doctoral degree in nursing or a related science with 5 years of college level teaching experience or equivalent combination of education and clinical experience is preferred.

Rank and Salary: Academic rank is dependent upon academic qualifications and experience. The salary is commensurate with

highest degree earned and years of experience. Benefits package is included with the position.

All candidates should submit a letter of application with teaching philosophy, comprehensive resume, transcripts of all undergraduate and graduate work, and names and addresses of three references to: Dr. LeAnn Self-Davis, Dean of the School of Sciences and Mathematics, Freed-Hardeman University, 158 East Main Street, Henderson, TN 38340, ldavis@fhu.edu, (731) 989-6032 Office, and (731) 989-6996 Fax.

The position will remain open until filled, with employment to begin in August of 2010. All applicants need to be members in good standing of the churches of Christ according to university policy. See <http://www.fhu.edu/humRes/humRes.asp> for an application and further details. Freed-Hardeman University is an equal opportunity employer.

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HIGHER EDUCATION

ABILENE CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

ABILENE, Texas — ACU's student newspaper, *The Optimist*, has become the first student newspaper to publish on Apple's new iPad tablet device.

"We had a nine-week window to set goals, prioritize and implement our vision," said Kenneth Pybus, faculty adviser to *The Optimist*.

The Department of Journalism and Mass Communication established a Mobile Media Task Force. Its goal: to use students and faculty leaders from three disciplines — journalism, information and technology — to develop the newspaper's new digital platform. The project hub location was ACU's converged media newsroom, one of only a handful of such student newsrooms in the U.S.

LIPSCOMB UNIVERSITY

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — Lipscomb will offer a doctorate of education starting this fall.

The Doctorate of Education in Learning Organizations and Strategic Change is focused on preparing leaders for both academic settings and public and private organizations. It's the first doctorate offered by Lipscomb's College of Education.

OHIO VALLEY UNIVERSITY

VIENNA, W.Va. — OVU recently dedicated the A.E. Johnson Center for Biblical Studies on its main campus. The center, connected to the Stotts Administrative Building, has been under renovation for two years and now includes faculty offices as well as classrooms and meeting space.

The center is named after Alfred Elmore Johnson, a minister and missionary.

Johnson and his wife, Marie, have strong ties to the university. Their second son, James Johnson, served as OVU's second president. Youngest son Timothy Johnson is a member of OVU's advancement staff, and daughter-in-law Lesa Johnson serves as the university's director of health and wellness.

K-12 CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS

OBONG CHRISTIAN HIGH SCHOOL

OBONG NTAK, Nigeria — More than 500 students gathered at Obong Christian High School recently to take Nigeria's Joint Admission and Matriculation exam.

"The federal government agency responsible for admission of students into Nigerian universities and colleges chose our high school campus as one of the national examination centers," said administrator Moses Akpanudo. "That



PHOTO PROVIDED BY HARDING PLACE

Balloon takes retirees somewhere over the rainbow

Jo Helm, Marie Yingling and Annette Guilmette, from left, prepare to float above Harding Place, a Christian retirement center in Searcy, Ark. Hot-air balloon rides were just part of the fun as the center recently celebrated its 13th anniversary. The staff planned a celebration titled "There's No Place Like Home" and based on "The Wizard of Oz," the classical musical film that some Harding Place residents remember seeing when it premiered in 1939. Residents, ages 61 to 106, followed a yellow-brick road under a rainbow balloon arch into a dining room with tables adorned with red ruby slippers.

makes us so happy."

Some of the students may attend Obong University, a four-year university overseen by Akpanudo's family. The university's curriculum includes daily chapel and Bible study.

ORGANIZATIONS

CHURCHES OF CHRIST FOR SCOUTING

ABILENE, Texas — As Boy Scouts of America celebrates its 100th anniversary, members of Churches of Christ for Scouting will provide 11 chaplains to serve at this summer's National Jamboree in Fort A.P. Hill, Va. The Church of Christ group also will distribute 10,000 Bibles to Scouts.

"It's our plan to distribute the majority of the Bibles during our worship services on Sunday, August 1," said Steve Leddy, the organization's chairman.

Executive director Kent Barnett said, "Our goal is to conduct worship services at multiple locations near the troops instead of conducting one service requiring Scouts to walk many miles in order to worship."

For more information, go to www.good-servant.org.

RELIEF MINISTRIES

GLOBAL SAMARITAN RESOURCES

ABILENE, Texas — Eight motorcycles donated

SPORTS

Tebow speaks at Lipscomb

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — Tim Tebow, a Heisman Trophy winner and two-time national champion as quarterback for the University of Florida, recently spoke to a sellout crowd of 5,500 at Lipscomb University.

Tebow's speech at the second annual Don Meyer Evening of Excellence culminated a full day of activities at Lipscomb by Tim and his parents, Pam and Bob Tebow.

Tebow said he already knew about coach Meyer — who spent 24 years at Lipscomb and is the all-time leader in wins in NCAA men's basketball history — before he was asked to speak.

He had heard Meyer at the EPSY Awards and was impressed with what the coach had to say about faith, family and striving for excellence every day.

"I was inspired by a man I had never heard of, but a wonderful man," Tebow said. "I thought, wow, if every coach was like this then the youth of America would be totally different."



PHOTO PROVIDED BY LIPSCOMB UNIVERSITY

Lipscomb basketball player Josh Slater, right, prays for Heisman Trophy winner Tim Tebow at the Don Meyer Evening of Excellence.

by the U.S. Border Patrol will be used by church members in Nicaragua, Honduras, the Philippines and Zambia.

Abilene-based Global Samaritan Resources will ship the motorcycles to the mission points.

First, the motorcycles will be tuned up and serviced by the Christian Motorcyclist Association, an Arkansas-based group that sponsors evangelistic efforts and relief projects in the motorcycling community.

Lucky Moore, a member of the association, is working on the motorcycles to ensure they work properly.

"I enjoy it because I can do something for somebody else," Moore said. "It's awesome, it really is."

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MATT ROBERSON

Just three of 10,000 lives touched by Faulkner University

Brandy Garrett, Rebecca Foster and Leslie James were among many students at Faulkner University in Montgomery, Ala., who helped with a "rolling closet" during one of the university's days of service. The students not only helped to distribute clothing to the needy but also helped children with English skills as they played with them. The United Way and the Junior League recently recognized Faulkner's "Touch 10,000 Lives" campaign, an effort to impact thousands with acts of service.

Oklahoma Christian receives \$1.5 million endowment gift

OKLAHOMA CITY — A donor who asked to remain anonymous has contributed \$1.5 million to create the "Dr. Lynn and Joy McMillon Endowed Chair for Biblical Studies" at Oklahoma Christian University.

The chair will honor Lynn McMillon, who is stepping down after 14 years as dean of Oklahoma Christian's College of Biblical Studies, and his wife, Joy.

Lynn McMillon plans to keep teaching as a distinguished Bible professor and remain in his role as CEO and editor of *The Christian Chronicle*.

He serves as an elder at the Memorial Road church.

"We are so proud to be able to establish an endowed chair in the McMillons' honor," Oklahoma Christian President Mike O'Neal

said. "Lynn and Joy have been such a vital part of this university for almost 45 years and have made tremendous contributions to the success of the university, particularly the College of Biblical Studies."

Alan Martin will succeed Lynn McMillon as Bible college dean on June 1. Martin, a native of Cape Town, South Africa, has served as an associate professor of family life at Oklahoma Christian since 2006. He and his wife, Linda, attend the Edmond, Okla., church, where he serves as community outreach minister.



Martin



PHOTO PROVIDED BY OKLAHOMA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

Lynn and Joy McMillon's 45 years of service to Oklahoma Christian University was recognized with a \$1.5 million endowment gift.

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Getting Along
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CHRISTIAN CARE CENTERS senior living communities serve more residents in the Dallas/Fort Worth Metroplex and surrounding area with its Continuum of Care than any other senior living organization. Christian Care Centers, a ministry of Churches of Christ, is "committed to providing housing and health care services for senior adults and others with special needs in a loving and compassionate environment, which encourages relationships, independence, and dignity through spiritual, physical, social, and recreational programs." Services are provided by a combined staff of over 700 dedicated employees to approximately 1,700 residents regardless of race, color, creed, religion, or national origin. Our residents are encouraged to participate in our Wellness Philosophy – that wellness is an evolving and changing process, which includes spiritual, emotional, physical, vocational, social, and intellectual well being. "Caring is our Calling" is more than a tagline to Christian Care Centers – it is a way of life.



Fort Worth

Lakewood Village is just minutes from downtown Fort Worth. It is nestled among 46 acres of rolling countryside with a fully stocked lake. Opened in 1982, Lakewood has grown to offer services to more than 239 residents.

Services include:

Retirement Living
Assisted Living
Skilled Nursing
Rehabilitation
Home Health

817-451-8001

Lakewood Village
5100 Randol Mill Road
Fort Worth, TX 76112



Gunter

Hilltop Haven, established in 1947, was one of the first nursing communities in TEXAS to be CERTIFIED for Alzheimer's care. Its long-tenured staff (some with 35 years of service) is known for its professional and compassionate care.

Services include:

Retirement Living
Skilled Nursing
Rehabilitation
Hospice

903-433-2415

Hilltop Haven
308 East College
Gunter, TX 75058



Mesquite

Christian Care Center, in Mesquite, opened in 1973 as a skilled nursing community. The campus has grown to 26 acres, currently offering a total "Continuum of Care" to its residents.

Services include:

Retirement Living
Assisted Living
Alzheimer's and Memory Care
Assisted Living
Skilled Nursing
Rehabilitation
Home Health and Hospice

972-686-2400

Christian Care Center
900 Wiggins Parkway
Mesquite, TX 75150

www.ChristianCareCenters.org



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

Ephesians 5:18

The Principle:
Focus on the important things, avoid the things that cause you trouble.

"Blood, which is intended by God to be life-giving, therefore, may continue to stain the highways because of ethyl alcohol, but not by the approval of dedicated Christians! Ethyl alcohol may continue to bring shame and disgrace to the home, but not by the approval of dedicated Christians! Society may continue to crumble and decay because of ethyl alcohol, but not by the approval of dedicated Christians! Ethyl alcohol may continue to wound the innocent and promote health and moral problems by the score, but not by the approval of dedicated Christians!"

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

To find out more, go to our website.



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CHRISTIANITY**

www.alcoholfreechristianity.org

ChurchofChristMusic.com

The Best of Dallas Christian Sound

#1 The Best Of Dallas Christian Sound: Jesus Is Lord

- I Can Only Imagine
- Jesus Is Lord
- Jesus, Name Above All Names
- I Want Jesus To Walk With Me
- Thomas' Song
- Jesus, Flow Like A River
- Heavenly Love
- Awesome Power
- Nobody Fills My Heart Like Jesus
- There Is Strength In The Name Of The Lord
- I'm Telling The World About His Love
- Reach Out To Jesus
- He Is Ever Over Me
- Jesus, Savior Pilot Me
- Instruments Of Your Peace
- We Are One In The Spirit
- There's A Stranger At The Door
- Go Light Your World
- There's Not A Friend Like The Lowly Jesus
- The Steadfast Love Of The Lord
- Sing Hallelujah To The Lord
- Holy Father, Grant Us Peace
- Do You Know My Jesus?
- Tho' Your Sins Be As Scarlet
- There's A String
- The Lily Of The Valley
- Savior, Lead Me Lost I Stray
- Alleluia
- Under The Water
- I Awaited
- Down In The River To Pray



#7 I Can Hear My Savior Calling

- Be With Me Lord
- He Leadeth Me
- Jesus, Savior Pilot Me
- Does Jesus Care?
- I Can Hear My Savior Calling
- Walking Alone At Eve
- Have Thine Own Way Lord
- Blest Be The Tie That Binds
- O God, Our Help In Ages Past
- Eternal Father, Strong To Save
- The Sands Of Time Are Sinking
- The Lord Bless You And Keep You
- Day Is Dying In The West
- How Great Thou Art
- Face To Face
- In The Land Of Fadeless Day
- Wonderful Words Of Life
- Yes, For Me He Careth
- O Jesus, I Have Promised
- Dear Lord And Father Of Mankind
- God's Family
- Because He Lives
- If That Isn't Love
- Morning Has Broken
- I Love The Lord

#2 Requested Favorites & New Songs

- Under The Water
- I Awaited
- Let Us Break Bread Together
- Do You Know My Jesus?
- Learning To Lean
- Crying In The Chapel
- As The Deer
- My Faith Looks Up To Thee
- How Shall The Young Secure Their Hearts?
- Never Grow Old
- Every Time I Feel The Spirit
- Jesus Is Calling
- There's A Gold Mine In The Sky
- The Golden Rule
- Jesus Rose Of Sharon
- Rescue The Perishing
- Mansion, Robe And Crown
- The Steadfast Love Of The Lord
- Sing Hallelujah To The Lord
- Holy Father, Grant Us Peace
- Give Thanks
- I Am A Sheep
- I Am Thine, O Lord
- Heaven Is Going To Shine
- Will You Not Tell It Today?
- Let Him Have His Way With Thee
- Reach Out To Jesus
- There's Room At The Cross
- Are You Coming To Jesus Tonight?
- Holy And Anointed One
- Shout To The Lord
- Light The Fire
- There's A String
- Lord, I Lift Your Name On High
- I Will Celebrate
- Great Are You Lord
- These Are The Days Of Elijah
- Here I Am To Worship
- Ancient Words
- Lord, Reign In Me

#8 Eternal Hymns Of Praise by The Harding University Concert Choir

- Oh, The Depth Of The Riches
- Lead Me To Calvary
- Each Step I Take
- Let Us Break Bread Together
- His Grace Reaches Me
- The Love Of God (Highfield)
- The Love Of God (Lehman)
- Amazing Grace
- Only In Thee
- He's My King
- Where No One Stands Alone
- Won't It Be Wonderful There
- Grace Greater Than Our Sin
- Follow Me
- A Wonderful Savior/Precious Lord, Take My Hand
- His Eye Is On The Sparrow
- He Lives
- Peace In The Valley
- Heaven Came Down/Paradise Valley
- God's Family
- Crown Him With Many Crowns
- God Is The Fountain
- Because He Lives
- The Steadfast Love Of The Lord
- We Shall Rise
- Yes, I'll Live In Glory
- Bless His Name
- Great Is Thy Faithfulness/Heaven's Really Gonna Shine
- Teach Me Lord To Wait

#3 Classic Hymns & New Songs

- We Have Come Into His House
- In Moments Like These
- The Way That He Loves
- Bless God
- Learning To Lean
- Thomas' Song
- He Is Ever Over Me
- Jesus Flow Like A River
- Go With God
- God Will Make A Way
- Hallelujah
- Heavenly Love
- Ivory Palaces
- O Sacred Head
- One Day
- Be With Me Lord
- How Beautiful
- Awesome Power
- Walking Alone At Eve
- Were You There?
- Beauty For Ashes
- Sweeter Than All
- Take Time To Be Holy
- Lord Be There When I Call
- Redeemed
- Boundless Love
- Praise God
- The Lord Reigns
- No Tears In Heaven
- Highest Place
- The Majesty And Glory Of Your Name
- When The Night Is Falling
- Just A Closer Walk With Thee
- I Just Want To Be Where You Are
- I Can Only Imagine
- Above All
- Send Your Rain
- I Want To Love You More
- All The Heavens
- My God Reigns
- Refiners Fire
- Ancient Of Days

#4 The Best of Congregational Singing

- Lord We Come Before Thee Now
- Guide Me, Oh Thou Great Jehovah
- I Am The Vine
- Ready To Suffer
- The Church's One Foundation
- Just As I Am
- God Is Calling The Prodigal
- I Love Thy Kingdom Lord
- Out Of My Bondage
- There's Not A Friend
- The Great Physician
- Break Thou The Bread Of Life
- Only A Step
- Who At The Door Is Standing?
- Almost Persuaded
- Give Me The Bible
- Alleluia
- I Know The Lord Will Make A Way
- Hallelujah, Praise Jehovah
- I Am Resolved
- Sweet Hour Of Prayer
- There Shall Be Showers Of Blessing
- I Gave My Life For Thee
- Wonderful Love Of Jesus
- More, More About Jesus
- What A Day That Will Be
- I Want To Be A Worker
- Work, For The Night Is Coming
- Careless Soul
- There's A Stranger At The Door
- Jesus Loves Me
- Tell It To Jesus
- There's Within My Heart A Melody
- There Is A Habitation
- Why Did My Savior Come To Earth?
- Far And Near
- Hark! The Gentle Voice Of Jesus Falleth
- We Shall See The King Someday
- Where The Gates Swing Outward Never
- The Last Mile Of The Way
- When We Meet In Sweet Communion
- Closer To Thee
- Wonderful Story Of Love
- Tarry With Me
- Kneel At The Cross
- True Hearted, Whole Hearted
- Father Of Mercies
- Yield Not To Temptation
- My Hope Is Built On Nothing Less
- Love, Love, Love
- God Of Our Fathers
- Lead Me To Calvary
- Trust And Obey
- Though Your Sins Be As Scarlet
- Is Thy Heart Right With God?
- O Praise The Lord
- Take The Name Of Jesus With You
- I Love The Lord
- Come To The Feast
- Nothing But The Blood Of Jesus
- O Why Not Tonight?

Most Requested Traditional Hymns by The Harding University Concert Choir

- Holy, Holy, Holy
- Precious Memories
- No Tears In Heaven
- Blessed Assurance
- Crossing The Bar
- O Love That Will Not Let Me Go
- Rock Of Ages
- Beyond The Sunset
- Come Ye Disconsolate
- Old Rugged Cross
- Only In Thee
- Safe In The Arms Of Jesus
- The Garden Of Prayer
- In The Sweet By And By
- Never Grow Old
- An Empty Mansion
- Amazing Grace
- It Is Well With My Soul
- Fairest Lord Jesus
- Whispering Hope
- My God And I
- Savior Breathe An Evening Blessing

#5 Title Songs Both Old And New

- Mansion Over The Hilltop
- I Need Thee Every Hour
- Only In Thee
- Greatest Commands
- Follow Me
- He Lifted Me
- Walking Alone At Eve
- You Are The Words And The Music
- Stand By Me
- I Go To The Rock
- Teach Me Lord To Wait
- People Need The Lord
- Does Jesus Care?
- Blessed Assurance
- Who At The Door Is Standing?
- Just As I Am
- Under The Water
- Shall We Gather At The River?
- Sweet Will Of God
- An Empty Mansion
- Nobody Fills My Heart Like Jesus
- Hold To God's Unchanging Hand
- There Is Strength In The Name Of The Lord
- Lord, I'm Coming Home
- I Can Hear My Savior Calling
- Hills Of Glory! Salvation Has Been Brought Down! I'd Like To Stay Here Longer
- Lord, Feed Your Children
- I'm Telling The World About His Love
- If I Stand
- Glory
- There's A Fountain Free
- The Potter's Hand
- When I Look Into Your Holiness
- Keeper And Sustainer
- Fear Not My Child
- Who Am I?
- Had It Not Been The Lord
- To The King
- And Can It Be
- Bless The Lord
- Let Your Glory Fall

#6 The Best of Dallas Christian Sound: The New Songs

- Come Into His Presence
- Worthy The Lamb That Was Slain
- Hear, O Israel
- We Shall Assemble
- My Eyes Are Dry
- We Bow Down
- Spirit Of The Living God
- In His Presence
- Poured Out Like Wine
- Come Share The Lord
- Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus
- I Stand In Awe
- Thank You, Lord
- A Common Love
- Glorify Thy Name
- Faithful Love
- Gentle Shepherd
- There's Something About That Name
- As The Deer
- There's A String
- O How He Loves You And Me
- The Greatest Commands
- You Are My All In All
- How Beautiful The Body Of Christ
- Sanctuary
- Awesome God
- The Battle Belongs To The Lord
- Shine, Jesus Shine
- Thou Art Worthy
- Above All Else
- He Is Exalted
- I Love You, Lord
- Lord, Take Control
- Thank You Lord
- Lamb Of God
- He Is Able
- I Love You With The Love Of The Lord
- God Is So Good
- I Will Call Upon The Lord

Follow Me by The Harding University Concert Choir

- Boundless Love
- Follow Me
- The Love Of God
- Learning To Lean
- Praise God
- Thou Art Worthy, Great Jehovah
- His Grace Reaches Me
- He Is Exalted
- Blessed Be The Lord God Almighty
- He Has Made Me Glad
- Sing, Amen!
- When He Comes In Glory By And By
- Each Step I Take
- The Battle Belongs To The Lord
- The Family Of God
- Let Us Break Bread Together
- I Keep Falling In Love With Him
- Great Is The Lord Almighty
- I Just Came To Praise The Lord
- Easter Song
- Peace In The Valley
- Shine, Jesus, Shine
- Above All Else
- You Are My All In All
- Lord, Let Us Now Depart In Peace
- He Touched Me
- Step By Step
- Holy God, We Praise Your Name
- He Lives
- Lead Me To Calvary
- Oh, The Depth Of The Riches
- Freely, Freely
- Awesome God
- Sanctuary

#1 Jesus Is Lord

#2 Req. Fav. & New

#3 Class. Hymns & New

#4 Best Cong. Singing

#5 Title Songs

#6 New Songs

#7 I Can Hear My Sav. Calling

#8 Eternal Hymns

#9 Most Req. Trad. Hymns

#10 I Need Thee Ev. Hour

#11 Follow Me

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STEDDON SIKES

A youth chorus from the East Hill church in York, Neb., gives an encore performance during the closing ceremony of a Leadership Training for Christ convention in Kansas City, Mo.

Studying God's word, learning to lead

ACROSS THE NATION, *thousands of young people take part in LTC and Lads to Leaders/Leaderettes conventions.*



PHOTO PROVIDED BY SOUTHWEST LTC

A child receives encouragement at a Leadership Training for Christ convention in Phoenix.

Nicole Henry, 12, was nervous about her first Lads to Leaders/Leaderettes convention in Nashville, Tenn. But Nicole, who attends the Waverly Church of Christ in Tennessee, said she learned a tremendous amount about God's word by taking part in events such as Bible Bowl, Know the Books and Songs of Praise.

"I did gain the courage to stand before an audience and lead singing and pray," said Nicole, who was asked to lead a song the next week at the Ladies' Day at her church. She and her 9-year-old sister, Maddie, were among thousands of young people across the nation who participated in Leadership Training for Christ and Lads to Leaders/Leaderettes events over Easter weekend.



NIA JOHNSON

Brenna Conner and Ty Seamon win honors at a Lads to Leaders event in North Carolina for special-needs children.



BOBBY ROSS JR.

Young people from the Ulysses, Kan., church are all dressed up for a drama performance at an LTC convention in Rogers, Ark.



JOHN LINDSAY

Puppeteers from the Canyon church in Anthem, Ariz.

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

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

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

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

Ironically, the place where academic freedom exists as it relates to religion and faith are our **Christian colleges.** It is in our Christian colleges that the existence of God can be freely proclaimed. It is in our Christian colleges that important societal issues can be discussed with the Christian perspective asserted. It is in our Christian colleges that faith can be proclaimed as integrated into all of life, not just a

subset of life. Those opportunities no longer exist in most of American higher education and particularly not at state-supported colleges and universities.

What does this mean? For most people it simply does not matter. But for tomorrow's college students and their parents, it is the difference between an education that supports a vital Christian faith and one that will not. In a Christian college, academic freedom will allow life's most important questions to be asked, beliefs to be explored and faith to be expressed. As a Christian college environment demands critical thinking and pragmatic preparation for success in the real world, it also proclaims that God, faith and the Christian walk are part of that world, the world God created.

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



*L. Randolph Lowry
President, Lipscomb University*

Randy

If you have comments on Christian higher education please contact me at compellingmission@lipscomb.edu.



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NEWSMAKERS

NAMED: Mike James, director of Harding University's international program in Athens, Greece. James previously was dean of Harding's College of Communication. **Steve Morgan**, executive vice president of Ohio Valley University, Vienna, W.Va. Morgan is minister for the Rockport, W.Va. church. **David Hamm**, chair of Ohio Valley University's School of Business and Information Technology. Hamm is an elder of the North End church, Parkersburg, W.Va. **Larry Muller**, dean of the College of Business, Ohio Valley University. **Milton Jones**, CEO of Christian Relief Fund, Amarillo, Texas. **Jamie Sinutko**, program director for nursing; **Sharon Heskitt**, assistant professor of nursing; and **Deborah Schummer**, director of online learning for Rochester College in Rochester Hills, Mich.



James



Morgan

AWARDED: Harding University student **Weston Castleberg**, the Science, Mathematics & Research for Transformation (SMART) Scholarship through the U.S. Department of Defense. Castleberg is a junior computer science major from Fort Worth, Texas. **Tom Burton**, the 2010 Mary Morris Award for Exemplary Service to Society by Lipscomb University. Burton is executive director of AGAPE, a children's services and counseling agency in Middle Tennessee. He is an elder of the Harpeth Hills church, Brentwood, Tenn. Greater Atlanta Christian School's principal, **Norma Miller**, Educator of the Year by the National Christian School Association. **Mary Rydl**, of Valley Christian Heritage School, Alamo, Texas, the Vaughn D. Luster Administrator of the Year Award by the National Christian School Association.



Hamm



Muller



Burton

ANNIVERSARIES: 62nd: Jim and Connie Brasher, Atlanta, Ga.

BIRTHDAYS: 99th: Bernice Johnson, Moulton, Ala. 91st: Ellen Prior, Hastings, Neb. 83rd: Judy Miller, Pasedena, Texas 85th: Jim Brasher, Atlanta. 80th: Connie Brasher, Atlanta.

PASSAGES: Smith Kite, 89, April 18, Gothenburg, Neb., former trustee of York College who served for 62 years in eight churches in Texas, Kansas, Wyoming and Nebraska. **Melvin Euyless Weldon**, 84, April 12, Tualatin, Ore., served churches in Stevens Point, Wis., Winslow, Ariz. and the California cities of Richmond, San Leandro, San Francisco and Barstow.

May 17-19 Retirees Ministry Conference.

"Connecting Retirees to Ministry." Abilene Christian University, Abilene, Texas. Contact www.acu.edu/gerontology or (325) 674-2350.

May 20-22 North Canton, N.C., church Gospel Meeting. "Glorify Jesus and Show Him to Others" by Jeff Walling. Contact northcantonchurch.org or (33) 499-4303.

May 22-23 75th anniversary of the Montwood church, El Paso, Texas. Contact James Jones Jr. (915) 855-9896.

June 6 Acapinoy. "Tell the Story of Jesus". Lake Merced, Calif. church. Contact (415) 584-7095, (415) 336-5105 or agmadlaing@hotmail.com.

June 9-11 National Jail and Prison Ministry Workshop. 37th annual. Madison, Ala. church. Contact www.alprisonworkshop.com, (256) 772-3911, wcedwards@knology.net.

June 11-12 Northeastern States Men's Retreat. Kent School, Kent, Conn. Contact www.cocmensretreat.com.

June 12-13 40th anniversary of the Westlake church, Indianapolis. Contact www.westlakechurch.org or reunion@westlake.org.

June 15-19 Quest: A retreat for all ages. "Love One Another." Wisconsin Christian Youth Camp, Black River Falls, Wis. Contact Jim Frost (312) 420-0859 or www.wcyc.org.

June 20-25 National Deaf Christian Workshop. "Sound Doctrine". Faulkner University, Montgomery, Ala. Contact Elba, Ala. church (334) 897-2057 or www.deafworkshop.com.

June 21-27 Morro Bay Family Encampment. "Islam, the Quran and New Testament Christianity" Morro Bay, Calif. Contact (805) 772-7248 or morrobaycc1@hotmail.com.

June 26-30 Red River Family Encampment. 24th annual. "Listening to the Heart of God". Pre-register at www.rrfe.org. Contact (806) 468-7676.

July 8-11 Campus Ministry United Workshop. Harding University, Searcy, Ark. Contact www.campusministryunited.com.

July 11-14 Caribbean Lectureship. 40th annual. San Fernando, Trinidad and Tobago. Contact Ken Dye at kdye@comcast.net.

July 29-Aug 1 Connect 2010 Conference. "Breathe ... Bringing your campus ministry to life". Contact www.campuscrosswalk.org.

Aug 7 OVU Teacher Training Workshop. Contact kim.haynes@ovu.edu or (304) 865-6025.

Aug 21 Arkansas Statewide Lectureship. "That they all be one". Airport Holiday Inn, Little Rock, Ark. Hosted by Southeastern Arkansas churches. Contact Jodie Carter at (501) 240-4722.

Aug 26-28 European Christian Workshop. "The Kingdom of God". Lancaster University, Lancaster, UK. Contact www.europeanchristianworkshop.com, (615) 893-1520 ext 137 or stephen.woodcock@hotmail.co.uk.

Aug 27-Sep 2 Polishing the Pulpit Workshop. Sevierville Events Center, Sevierville, Tenn. Contact www.polishingthepulpit.com or (877) 338-3397.

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EDITORIAL

Thank you for your partnership

Otis Gatewood, the great, post-World War II missionary to Germany, once told a group of students, "Always try to give something when a missionary or other person is raising funds because you want to have fellowship in every good work."

When we share in good works and ministries, we not only strengthen the kingdom, but we also strengthen our relationships with other Christians.

And we strengthen our own faith.

The Christian Chronicle is a ministry, and we are thankful to you for sharing in it with us.

You graciously and generously respond to the appeals we send each year, making it possible for us to tell the inspiring stories of churches and Christians across the country and around the world.

Because advertising covers only about half of our production costs, your donations allow us to reach around the globe and tell stories that inform, inspire and connect.

Your contributions have

enabled our writers to travel to more than 40 states and more than 30 countries to report firsthand on Churches of Christ.

For example, assistant managing editor Erik Tryggstad traveled to Haiti soon after the earthquake and told the story of our Christian brothers and sisters affected by that tragedy.

Last year managing editor Bobby Ross Jr. traveled to New

York City to cover a historic church lectureship at the Apollo Theater. He also launched the series "By the Numbers," examining growth and decline in our churches. And associate editor Joy McMillon told the story of an Afghan girl who touched the

hearts of U.S. church members and sparked a ministry.

You have helped us weather severe economic and financial storms. Thanks to your support, we have not only weathered the storms thus far but have become the largest church-related publication in our fellowship.

More than that, you trust the *Chronicle*. In our most recent reader survey, 91 percent of

you agreed that you trust what you read in these pages.

All of us associated with the *Chronicle* are grateful for the continued support of our longtime donors and friends.

You understand that the *Chronicle* is more than a newspaper. It is a ministry to the Lord, and you are a partner in it.

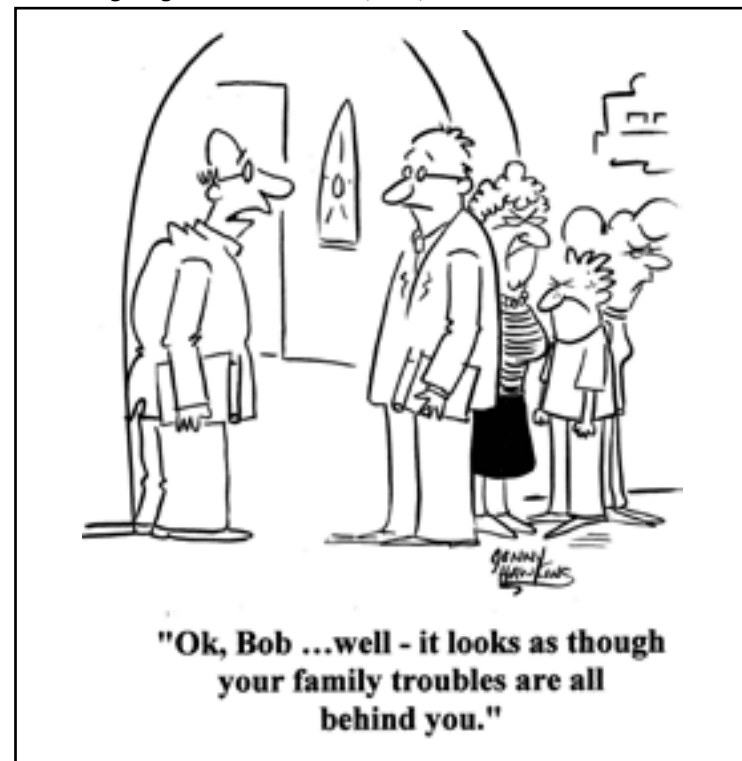
The 20 Christian men and women from across the country who govern the *Chronicle* have charged us by stating: "*The Christian Chronicle* exists so that Christians worldwide are increasingly informed about the activities impacting Churches of Christ in a manner that inspires, connects and promotes constructive dialogue, at a cost that demonstrates an effective stewardship of all resources provided by God."

James Bliss of Chesterfield, Mo., recently wrote to the *Chronicle*: "To cover the world with news of the church is a mammoth task, but it helps to unify the body and keep us informed. Yours is the only source of such news that I am aware of."

You, like he, understand that our fellowship desperately needs that kind of connection and information, and we work to provide it.

Ever-Laughing Life

by Jonny Hawkins



TO OUR READERS

Check out our new blog

At *The Christian Chronicle*, we constantly strive to find new ways to serve and connect with our readers.

Our latest effort: We have launched a news blog at www.christianchronicle.org/blog.

An addition to the breaking news stories we already offer online, the blog features videos, photos, behind-the-

scene details on stories and links to news about Churches of Christ from other media.

The blog also provides one more avenue for Christian advertisers to promote products and services to the *Chronicle's* more than 250,000 readers.

For information on advertising, call advertising director Tamie Ross at (405) 425-5071.



Our mission: To inform, inspire and unite

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Valuing the news: The Chronicle's vital role

What do editorial columns, political blogs, talk radio rants and late-night monologue jokes have in common?

All derive from a common source that Alex S. Jones describes as the "iron-core" of fact-based, objective, original news reporting. Other forms of journalism emanate from this nucleus of news and are fueled by the information it provides. Jones, a Pulitzer Prize recipient and a fourth-generation member of a newspaper family, sounds an alarm about the significant decline of "iron-core" reporting and identifies threats to its future in his 2009 book "Losing the News: The Future of the News That Feeds Democracy."

As I read Jones' case for the essentiality of "the news of verifiability" and the preservation of journalistic standards like objectivity, accuracy and fairness, I repeatedly found myself reflecting on the value of *The Christian Chronicle* to our fellowship in Churches of Christ.

A great variety of publications exists within our brotherhood: scholarly journals, periodicals with a teaching and doctrinal emphasis and materials designed to equip and train. With few exceptions, each makes a needful contribution to the life of the church, our understanding of Scripture, the constructive discussion of God's will for his people and brotherly debate about our differences.

However, the *Chronicle* — with its extensive circulation, broad-scale appeal and mission to "inform, inspire and unite" — plays a unique role in providing a sense of "informed connectedness" among a diverse, worldwide family of autonomous congregations.

With its global reach, the *Chronicle* makes available a volume of information to which few of us otherwise would have access. With the demands of local ministry and responsibilities to my family consuming most of my time and energy, "I don't get out much," in the sense of being highly networked and connected to Christians in other places. For me and a multitude of others, the *Chronicle* provides a reliable source of "the news that we use" from churches around the world.

The *Chronicle's* print edition, supplemented with e-mail blasts and a regularly updated Web site, shares news that can prompt our prayers, affirm our faith, inspire our actions, break our hearts and stir our concern. The breadth of coverage ensures that news is gathered from churches large and small, urban and rural, affluent and poverty-stricken, foreign and domestic.

The newspaper's commitment to objective reporting means that its stories generally lack both the latest buzzwords and the most sacred shibboleths that often appear in other publications.

Editorials and opinion pieces are clearly identified and distinguished from news items. Events and activities are advertised and reported from across the full spectrum and landscape of Churches of Christ. The achievement of objectivity and fairness in its reporting is validated by the fact that periodic criticism of the *Chronicle* includes charges that its news coverage and editorial positions reflect a stance that is both "too conservative" and "too liberal."

I interpret such disparity of criticism as an indication of a journalistic "mission accomplished." Each of us has the freedom to agree or disagree or be encouraged or disheartened by the information that the *Chronicle* provides.

This level of excellence has not gone unnoticed in the larger world of journalism: In 2009, the *Chronicle* was recognized as the top national newspaper in the "Best of the Christian Press" contest sponsored by the Associated Church Press.

The *Chronicle* makes this great variety of news available at virtually no cost to its readers. With revenue for the paper largely generated through advertising and private donations, I have received the *Chronicle* for years based on a \$20 subscription fee that I paid long ago. I spend nearly that much every single month to receive the *Tulsa World*, a daily newspaper often filled with disturbing and depressing information and nothing that approaches the news of eternal significance that I receive from the *Chronicle*.

I periodically make additional donations to the *Chronicle* and encourage you to do the same if you share my appreciation of its value.

While only the Spirit of God possesses the power to unite us through faith in Jesus Christ, the *Chronicle* serves to ensure that we are aware of what is happening among Christians in other places and that congregational autonomy does not mean isolation and insulation from our brothers and sisters around the world.

When I am sometimes tempted to think that Churches of Christ are hopelessly polarized and separated from one another, the *Chronicle* reminds me that far more unites us than divides us in the body of Christ. Alex Jones believes that the "iron core" of news is essential to our freedom and the well-being of democracy in America. Similarly, I believe that the journalistic excellence of the *Chronicle* significantly and positively contributes to our spiritual health and awareness as a brotherhood of believers.

TIM PYLES is the preaching minister at the Broken Arrow Church of Christ in Oklahoma. His Thinking Out Loud blog can be read at www.timpyles.com. Contact him at tpyles@bacoc.org.

Views



Tim Pyles

'For me and a multitude of others, the *Chronicle* provides a reliable source of "the news that we use" from churches around the world.'

VOICES

What did you do for this year's Lads to Leaders/Leaderettes or Leadership Training for Christ convention? What was your favorite part?

Asked by assistant managing editor Erik Tryggstad



I participated in seven events in this year's Central Texas LTC. My favorites were Christian Art and Sign Language. I really enjoyed Bible Bowl as well. It was interesting to learn things about David and his family that I never knew before.

Cole Billingsley, age 12 | Sugar Land, Texas



This was my second year in LTC and I did 15 events. We did a skit about building your house on the rock and performed it in front of 1,000 people. There were so many Christian kids at the convention, I was amazed by how many of us there were.

Brooke Engle, age 9 | Chandler, Ariz.



I've been involved with LTC since third grade. I did 11 events this year. This was by far the best year because I was involved with lots of events and got to really know the middle schoolers, an opportunity I hardly ever get. I will miss it so much when I leave for college.

Marissa Hale, age 18 | Flower Mound, Texas



I got an award (at the Lads to Leaders convention in Nashville, Tenn.) because I did the books of the Bible and did the Good Samaritan. I liked everything. I am going to do a speech about Jesus, paint something and sing "Faithful Love" next year.

Presley Dishman, age 3 | Waverly, Tenn.

LETTERS

1.5 million blessings give reason to rejoice

What a powerful story ("1.5 million blessings," Page 1, May). Amazing what God can do when we step out in faith. The people who are touched by this anonymous donor's faith will be never ending. Not only did those who were helped see Jesus, but those that share their story with others will see Jesus also. I believe the angels and God are rejoicing in heaven over this.

Pam Ellis | Weatherford, Texas

Reading this story made me cry tears of joy and praise God!

Jon Box | Fairfax, Va.

Wow! What wonderful news. We read in the Bible that the First Century brethren sold their possessions and kept it for the Lord's work. Apart from the Bible, once again we heard the great news about North Atlanta Church of Christ. They overwhelmed in living the doctrine of the First Century brethren.

N.V. Jeevan Jessy | Hyderabad, India

Member uses Facebook to connect with Christians

I don't think that Facebook is doing any harm at all ("Will Facebook kill the church?" Editorial, May). In fact, it allows me to keep in touch not only with members at Lynn Street, but my church friends all over the world. It is great to have this to keep in touch and find Christian friends I have not been able to find for a long time.

Frank Quaranta | Parkersburg, W.Va.

Today's preaching lacks a 'bush bursting into flame'

BY BOB ODLE | FOR THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

Many consider Thomas G. Long to be one of the most thoughtful and intelligent preachers in America. His latest book demonstrates why.

Although Long writes primarily to preachers and for preachers, every Christian concerned about the life of the church and its weakening voice within our culture needs to read **"Preaching from Memory to Hope."**

Throughout the book, he urges ministers to deliver — and churchgoers to demand — a bold and joyful approach to preaching. Preaching that lovingly proclaims the story of God's people and courageously announces what God is doing among us.

Long, professor of preaching at the Chandler School of Theology at Emory University in Atlanta, begins by exploring the attacks on narrative preaching. He acknowledges that some of these attacks are valid. He warns the church not to overreact to such criticism.

I am a preaching minister, so Long's advice helps keep my ministry centered and balanced. It is easy for me to lean too heavily on the teaching component of my craft. The professor reminds us that a preacher is not only a teacher, but also a storyteller and an instrument

through which God-breathed Scripture exhorts all of us to ethical living. These three components of good preaching must remain in healthy equilibrium.

Long laments the fact that much of today's preaching avoids speaking of God in the present tense. This kind of preaching proclaims good things about God and offers helpful advice for successful living but never contains "a

desert bush bursting into flame." Such sermons are nothing more than "oral religious essays." Preaching of this sort fails to point to a direct encounter with God.

Long demands that we identify the present activity of God in our preaching.

"Either God is present and active in our preaching or we are ... pathetic fools," he writes.

His Paul-like rebuke may strike the reader — as it initially struck me — as overly caustic. But if we will reflect on it more carefully and respond to it less defensively, we will be better for it.

Preaching must be more than a recitation of historical facts about God. Preaching must point out the present activity of the living God in us, through us and, sometimes, in spite of us.

Midway through the book, Long confronts our culture's new spirituality — capsulated in the jingle, I want to be "spiritual but not religious." Many

describe this sentiment as a new spiritual hunger, but Long identifies it as a modern-day form of Gnosticism, that ancient enemy of Christian teaching.

This section of the book may prove to be the most challenging, especially to those who have little or no insight into the history and nuances of Gnosticism. But for those who think through the argument carefully, Long's analysis is enlightening and relevant to our present situation.

Long argues that what may appear to be a harmless jingle is in fact an ancient heresy that has again reared its ugly head within the church. He asserts that this form of teaching creates an impulse within many believers to embrace Christianity as an intellectual and emotive enterprise rather than a practical one.

Long urges the church to call its members back into the practical life that Christ modeled for — and demands from — all of his followers.

He then laments the fact that language of heaven, hell, Christ's second coming and the final judgment is strikingly absent from much of today's preaching.

I am a member of the Boomer generation, so his assertion that there is a "veil

of embarrassment ... over the whole matter" shakes me to my core. When was the last time I engaged in the hard work of digging out the Bible's teaching on Last Things?

Long urges all of us to demand

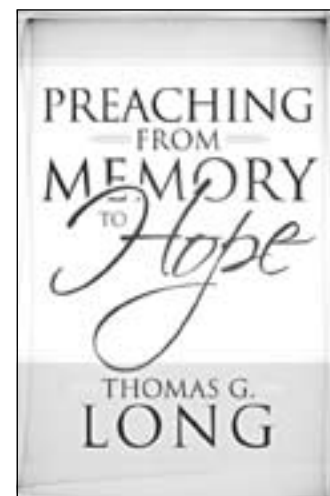
sermons that tell the story we are living from the end backwards — sermons that help "our people know that the eschatological and apocalyptic language of the Bible is not about predicting the future; it is primarily a way of seeing the present in light of hope."

Long abhors complacency. Instead, he seeks to provide a way to survive our most recent nervous breakdown.

In accomplishing his objective, he embraces the criticism being leveled against the institutional church and finds what is helpful within it. He then charts a solid path through the theological

issues facing the church and gives us a wonderful gift — a renewed memory of where we've come from and a glorious hope of where we are going.

BOB ODLE is preaching minister for the Three Chopt Church of Christ in Richmond, Va., and is working toward a Doctor of Ministry Degree at Abilene Christian University in Texas.



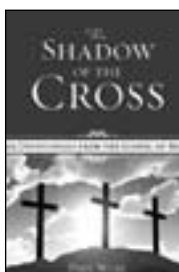
Thomas G. Long. **Preaching from Memory to Hope.**

Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox Press, 2009. 152 pages. \$19.95

NEW AND NOTEWORTHY

DEVOTIONAL GUIDE

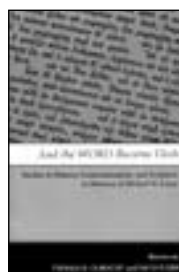
Phil Ware. **The Shadow of the Cross: 365 Devotionals from the Gospel of Mark.** Abilene, Texas.: Leafwood Publishers, 2010. 374 pages. \$13.99.



Ware, preacher for the Southern Hills Church of Christ in Abilene, Texas, provides a daily devotional guide using the Gospel of Mark. Each day's entry includes the Easy-to-Read Version of the text from Mark, followed by a "Key Thought," a prayer and references for related passages. His daily devotional guides at www.heartlight.org are read by people from more than 180 countries.

CHURCH HISTORY

Thomas H. Olbricht and David Fleer, eds. **And the WORD Became Flesh: Studies in History, Communication and Scripture in Memory of Michael W. Casey.** Eugene, Ore.: Pickwick Publications, 2009. 318 pages. \$37.



Twenty scholars present essays on Restoration history, homiletics and pacifism in a volume that honors the late Pepperdine University scholar Michael Casey. Entries include analyses of Alexander Campbell's lectures at Bethany College and Ronald Reagan's relationship with the Stone-Campbell Movement.

SPIRITUALITY

Ken Jones. **A Prodigal Return.** Mustang, Okla.: Tate Publishing & Enterprises, LLC, 2009. 448 pages. \$29.99.

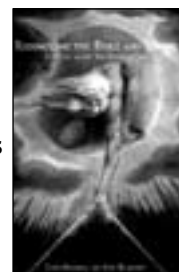


Jones, minister for the Melbourne, Fla., Church of Christ, seeks to help people build their faith. He weaves stories of his own struggle with alcohol — and later experiences as a counselor — with biblical insights about Christian fundamentals.

Most of the one- or two-page chapters begin with a Scripture citation, followed by a personal and often-humorous story and a spiritual or encouraging point.

SCIENCE AND RELIGION

Lynn Mitchell and Kirk Blackard. **Reconciling the Bible and Science: A Primer on the Two Books of God.** North Charleston, S.C.: BookSurge Publishing, 2009. 265 pages. \$18.99.



A theologian and a lawyer present the origins and history of the science-versus-religion debate before offering an analysis of the current status of the issues and their own conclusions.

Mitchell is a minister for the Heights Church of Christ, and Blackard attends Bering Drive Church of Christ, both in Houston. The book includes extensive references and an index.

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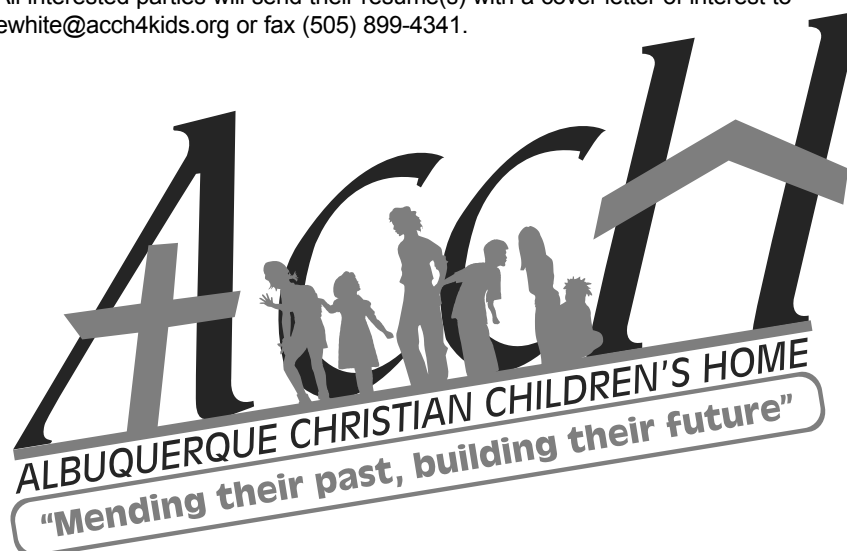
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Can the church reclaim its place as a shared community of faith?

Years before the time of Jesus, Socrates lived in Athens, teaching his lessons about government, concepts of truth and eternal values. Plato records his remembrance of Socrates being charged for corrupting the youth of Athens and teaching about false gods. In the trial, Socrates is condemned and given the option to live as an exile from Athens or to drink hemlock to end his life. He accepts the death sentence because he views death as a better alternative than leaving the city that gave him life and understanding.

Three days before he is to die, a close friend comes and offers to help him escape. Socrates explains again that Athens is his home, the place where he has learned about life and the place he has wanted to teach more perfect ideas.

Socrates believed that life assumes greater meaning in community, an idea with universal appeal, except in America where rugged individualism has survived since our pioneer days and community may not be highly valued.

That may be especially true when people consider the church. That was the case of my mother when I was a child. She taught me about God and the powerful work of Jesus, but church attendance was optional even though her childhood was marked by fond memories of the Sundays when her parents and siblings spent the day at church — worshipping, having dinner on the grounds, more singing, visiting, playing with neighbor children and then a closing worship period. She never found a duplicate of that community.

I, on the other hand, found a meaningful community in the church. In San Leandro, Calif., I found great teaching when I was in the sixth grade in the person of a great preacher and a powerful, elderly grandmother who knew the Bible better than I ever will. I found it again at the East Side Church of Christ in Tulsa, Okla. There I found a spiritual community that loved me, supported me and encouraged my intellectual and spiritual growth.

I preached my first stumbling sermon when I was in the ninth grade. The praise and compliments are still fresh in my mind. That amazing community nurtured me and helped me think about leadership and service.

Throughout my life, I have been blessed to share the life of communities

eager to honor God, care for each other and imitate Acts 2:

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. ... All the believers were together and had everything in common. Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need. Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad



Bailey McBride

and sincere hearts ... And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved. (Acts 2:42-47)

Try to imagine that church.

Such a community changed the world. In 50 years, the church spread around the Roman world, creating similar fellowships among Jews and all nations. And those focused communities prepared their members to endure hardships and death for the Christ who brought these communities into being.

When most of us consider the shared life of the early church, we can't fathom making time in our calendars for more community. Families are overbooked and have little time for serious communication and healthy interaction. Jobs require much more time and concentration.

So how can individuals and families share in a community of faith like that described in Acts 2?

There is no easy answer, but we all really need a community of faith that helps us be godly people in an increasingly pagan world. We need each other to support our children as they develop faith in God and a sense of mission for their lives. With marriage constantly under attack, couples need other couples who can encourage, speak the truth in love and love without judgment.

Creating a meaningful community of faith requires faith in God and determination to bring his joy and peace into the lives of all members of the community. In most cases we do not need to sell our goods to care for each other, but we must give time, love and empathy.

God has always wanted communities of faith to change people and the world.

CONTACT bailey.mcbride@christianchronicle.org.



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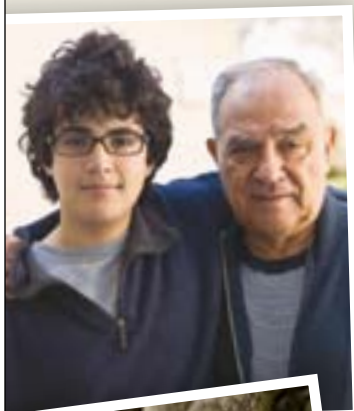
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AN OPEN LETTER TO ALL GRANDPARENTS



To grandparents (and parents may eavesdrop) from a grandparent:

As grandparents, we are blessed to share in so many good things with our grandchildren – traveling with them to interesting places, attending their athletic events, visiting with them on the phone, having them home for a holiday, and beaming with pride at their graduations.

As important as these occasions are, it's more important to help them "Make the Main Thing the Main Thing." And the "main thing" is going to heaven.

At a recent Chapel talk at OC, I urged our students to use "going to heaven" as the measure for all they do. When they select a career, choose friends, decide whom to marry, evaluate where they will live, spend their time and money, or plan their church participation, they need to ask how this decision can help them go to heaven.

Encouraging our grandchildren spiritually involves many things, but one of them certainly is their college choice. Study after study shows that where a young person attends college is a huge factor in their spiritual life and, thus, in their ultimate destiny.

Oklahoma Christian has daily Chapel, an emphasis on service and mission trips, extracurricular activities that encourage spiritual integrity, a Bible class each term, Christians that teach all classes, many Christians from whom to choose friends and dating partners, and standards for conduct that exalt Christian morality.

If you believe in the importance of your grandchild attending that kind of university, here are some things you can do:

- Be sure they are on the mailing list by contacting the university's Admissions Office, even before they're juniors or seniors in high school. At OC, call 1-800-877-5010 or email info@oc.edu.
- Carefully and naturally drop into conversations with them your hope that they will attend a Christian university.
- Help them make a visit to the campus, maybe bringing along a friend or two.
- Offer to pay some of their cost of attending a Christian university, maybe even setting aside funds for this purpose for your grandchild to use later. What better legacy to leave?

What you do about where your grandchildren attend college can make a big difference in where they choose to go. And where they go to college can make a big difference in the ultimate outcome of the "main thing."

Let me know if I can be of any help to you in getting your grandkids to come to OC.

Dr. Stafford North - Professor of Bible
Oklahoma Christian University



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Man of God

OC is also working to create more interest among young men to enter the preaching ministry because the number seeking to serve churches in this way has declined. One way OC is reaching these is with a newsletter for young men wanting to know more about preaching. To see the newsletter, go to www.oc.edu/manofgod. To add your name and the names of young men to the list, write occr@oc.edu.

Good News

OC publishes a monthly online newsletter called "Good News" (www.oc.edu/goodnews) that reports on good things churches are doing to reach out to those around them. To put your name, the names of your elders, and others on the list to receive "Good News" each month, send them to occr@oc.edu.